BUDDHIST AND VEDIC STUDIES



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A Miscellany

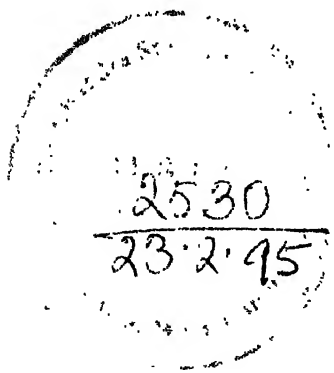
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1

The Buddha and Metaphysics*

The Buddha's so-called silence on certain fundamental metaphysical problems has given rise to a variety of interpretations. Consequently, we find Buddhist philosophy condemned, mostly by its Western critics, as negativism, scepticism, agnosticism, nihilism, materialism, pluralism, etc. Sympathetic students of the subject, generally Hindu writers, incline to the view that Buddhism is some kind of idealism; according to the more orthodox among them it is a mere footnote to Vedānta idealism. But even to these friends of Buddhism, the Buddha, if he be an idealist, is a mistaken, or at best, a half-hearted one.

Professor Radhakrishnan, somewhat baffled by the 'silence' of the Buddha, concludes: 'The only metaphysics that can justify Buddha's ethical discipline is the metaphysics underlying the Upaniṣads'.[1] He is one who fights hard against the 'nihilist' and 'agnostic' interpretations of hostile critics, but even he is heard to complain mournfully that 'the central defect of Buddha's teaching is that in his ethical earnestness he took up and magnified one-half of the truth and made it look as if it were the whole'.[2] No wonder, then, that Radhakrishnan himself is compelled to admit that Buddhism is 'metaphysical agnosticism'.[3] It seems, therefore, a mere matter of courtesy when he accords to it the title 'Ethical Idealism'.

In the face of these and other criticism Buddhists have contented themselves with the facile admission that the Master was 'indifferent' to all metaphysical problems. But to a serious student of Buddhist thought who approaches the subject from an historical standpoint, and who does not stand with any preconceived metaphysical theories, it becomes increasingly clear that all these judgments are biased and therefore necessarily ill-founded. Nor was the Buddha, he

* *Ceylon Daily News, Vesak* Number, 1941.

discovers, so obstinately silent on all fundamental questions as is generally believed.

Now, metaphysical theories are notoriously vague and also arbitrary however much they may be garbed in learned language and made to look profound by hair-splitting dialectics. Metaphysics, according to one modern philosopher, are only variations on the theme of cosmic lying. The gibe, it must be admitted, is not altogether without point if we mean thereby the ontological abstractions of most idealists. Such philosophers generally strive to find some *a priori* principle whence everything in life and nature can be derived, and thus they seem, as Viscount Samuel once remarked, to construct the roof first and then hang the house from it!

The significance of the metaphor lies in this, that all ontological speculations are meaningless and lead us nowhere. This does not, however, mean that all questions discussed in metaphysics are absurd and mere moonshine. Even if we do not resort to Kant's famous distinction of 'transcendent' and 'immanent' metaphysics, the fact remains that Buddhism accepts at least a few doctrines from the earlier philosophy of India such as the *karma* doctrine with its correlate, the idea of *saṃsāra* or repeated birth and death, which must in the final analysis belong to the sphere of metaphysics.

To begin with, then, let us be clear as to what we mean by metaphysics, at least for the purpose of this discussion. Metaphysics, we are told, is the inquiry which attempts to discover the ultimate reality underlying the universe. The common-sense world, the metaphysician holds, is an appearance only, an appearance of a reality underlying it, which is the ultimate substance supposed to be there once the qualities or features are stripped off. This notion common to all idealistic philosophies, whether they be Indian or European, is the root of all metaphysics. Hence we may define it as the inquiry into ultimate reality, or, as the ancient seers of India called it, 'the real of reals' (*satyasya satyam*). This inquiry has three fundamental aspects according as it concerns itself with the problem of the Absolute (God), of soul, or of the cosmos (i.e. external reality).

These appear to be the main questions that have engaged the attention of metaphysicians of all ages and of all countries. It will be our endeavour here to discuss what attitude the Buddha had in regard to these fundamental conceptions of the metaphysicians. In short, what exactly did the Buddha think of the Absolute, God, individual soul and cosmic existence?

In attempting, however, to get at the exact opinions held by the Buddha on such matters we are confronted with a difficulty of considerable magnitude. It seems to be the practice of most students of the subject to base their conclusions solely on the study of the canonical literature of Buddhism, the earliest parts of which must have been written at least a century after the demise of the Master, without any reference to the previous development of thought in India where this whole literature grew. They completely ignore the philosophical, religious and social background of Buddhism, provided in particular by the *Upaniṣads* and generally by the whole of the later Vedic literature. This method of approach, to say the least, contravenes all canons of what is known as the historical method. No system of ideas can be correctly understood by a mere internal analysis without reference to the previous evolution of each factor analysed, for ideas like all phenomena of life are organic and develop gradually. This 'genetic' method compels one to commence the study of Buddhism with an evaluation of the philosophy of the *Upaniṣads*, since, as we have already observed, they form the background of Buddhist thought.

In fact, I may hazard the conjecture that future researchers will establish beyond a shadow of doubt that the Pali Canon, which I hold to be the oldest and the most reliable source of information as regards 'primitive Buddhism', contains in the main the Buddha's answers to the metaphysical problems posed in the *Upaniṣads*. The India of the sixth and seventh centuries B.C., just before the birth of Gotama presents a remarkable spirit of deep philosophical reflection and earnest quest after truth. Speculation was rife concerning the problems of existence. This struggle of man to probe into the mysteries of life, to understand its meaning and purpose, is recorded in the *Upaniṣads* which have been preserved to us by the ingenuity of the Hindus.

Now, what are these *Upaniṣads*, and what metaphysical conclusions do they contain? The *Upaniṣads* form the concluding portion of the Vedic literature; hence also called the Vedanta or 'the end of the Veda'. They date from about the tenth century B.C. and are generally counted to be 108, but of which about a dozen are considered pre-Buddhistic and of inestimable value for the history of later Indian thought, inasmuch as they are the repositories of a heterogeneous mass of mystical, philosophical and psychological matter which forms the source of almost all the later philosophical

systems (*darśanas*) even including Cārvāka materialism.

The transition of the early Indian mind from the naive realism of the *Ṛgveda* and the cold ritualism of the *Brāhmaṇas* to the earnest philosophizings of the *Upaniṣads* forms an important landmark in the history of Indian thought. Bold speculations about the origin of the world from one God are not altogether wanting even in the Saṃhitā period, and the *Ṛg* and *Atharvavedas* contain many hymns where for the first time the riddle of the universe is attacked with considerable philosophic insight and ability. In these hymns we find the Vedic seers attempting to grasp some principle that could be regarded as the unity behind all the diverse powers of nature, the One Being (*ekam sat*) who was above all other gods, identified subsequently with *Prajāpati, Viśvakarman, Brahmaṇspati, Skandha, Kāla*, etc.

He is also conceived anthropomorphically as a Cosmic Person or *Puruṣa*. The former tendency is seen to develop further resulting in the conception of *Brahman* in the *Upaniṣads* while the latter idea of an Universal *Puruṣa* leads to the Upaniṣadic notion of a World-Soul or *Ātman*. The *Upaniṣads* carry out these two tendencies to the furthest limits possible. It should be noted however, that it is by a process of extrospective observation that these conceptions are reached. By another circuitous route, a sort of introspective analysis, the sages arrive at the conception of an individual soul (*ātman*), an essential being that persists through all vicissitudes and experiences of the empirical self, underlying all states of consciousness such as the waking, the dreaming and that of deep dreamless sleep. This real soul of man is said to be eternal being (*sat*), pure intelligence (*cit*) and spontaneous bliss (*ānanda*).

The central concept of the *Upaniṣads* is, of course, that of *Brahman*—a neuter word meaning 'the growing' or 'the swelling one'—and hence the philosophy of the *Upaniṣads* has been called *Brahma*-ism. It is the ultimate reality behind all appearances or the world-ground, and *Puruṣa* or *Ātman* conceived as the World-Soul is no other than this selfsame cosmic essence or *Brahman*. But the highest stage in the evolution of Upaniṣadic metaphysics is reached only when the individual soul or *Ātman* is affirmed to be the ultimate reality or the Universal Soul, i.e., *Atman* or *Brahman* itself, a conclusion summed up in the famous equation "Thou art That" (*tat tvam asi*). This identity is further affirmed by the statements 'I am Brahma' (*aham Brahma asmi*) and 'I am this whole world' (*aham idam sarvam asmi*).

Thus it is a striking fact that so far back as the period of the *Upaniṣads* the Indian mind had concluded that reality was spiritual, that *Brahman* or *Ātman* was also *cit*. This ultimate reality of the Absolute is affirmed to be the ground and source of our psychical life and of the multiform external world (*sarvam idam brahma*). In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*[4] it is said: "As a spider might come out with his thread, as sparks come forth from fire, even so from this soul (*ātman*) issue forth all vital energies, all worlds, all gods and all beings; the mystic meaning (*upaniṣat*) thereof is 'the real of the real' (*satyasya satyam*)." Hence there is no doubt that the Absolute is conceived as the ontological principle, the source of all beings and the diverse phenomena of nature. The Absolute is both immanent and transcendent. This metaphysical conclusion of the *Upaniṣads* has been hailed as the grandest form of pantheism or absolutist monism ever reached anywhere in the world. It is this philosophy that compelled Schopenhauer to bestow the highest praise on those thinkers and say 'they (the *Upaniṣads*) have been the solace of my life, and will be the solace of my death'.

Now, Gotama the Buddha, was born and bred in an atmosphere entirely surcharged with the spirit of this mystical pantheism. As such during the course of his long career as the exponent of somewhat revolutionary philosophy he had frequent occasion to meet various philosophers of the Upaniṣadic and other (i.e. heretical) schools. The whole of the *Aṭṭhakavagga* of the *Suttanipāta* seems to refer to these metaphysicians, their doctrines (*dhammas*) and views (*diṭṭhis*), and, abundant evidence of such contact is forthcoming from other early parts of the Canon as well, those like the *Digha, Majjhima, Saṃyutta* and *Aṅguttara Nikayas*.

Thus it is natural to expect that the Master would have expressed some opinion or other on the fundamental metaphysical problems of the day. Everybody was asking: 'Who is Ātman, what is Brahma? (*ko nu ātmā kim brahma*)'. It is, of course, claimed by some that the Buddha wisely remained silent on these ultimate questions. But, unfortunately for them, the evidence of the Canon does not support this view. It may be true that the Buddha disliked all *a priori* metaphysical constrictions[5] regarding an ontological Absolute or World-Soul. But he did not always remain silent on these problems as is generally believed. Let us see how he dealt with the question of the World-Soul (*Ātman*) and its theistic counterpart God (*Īśvara*).

It is admitted by all that the Buddha denies the existence of a

personal God or Creator. In this sense he was undoubtedly an atheist. He vigorously attacked all the 'creation theories' of the earlier religion. The world is neither the work of God (*issara-kuttam*) nor of Brahma (*Brahma-kuttam*). Professor Radhakrishnan says, however, that, though the Buddha denied the existence of a 'capricious' and 'interfering' God, there is nothing to tell us that Buddha denied the reality of an eternal self-sustaining spirit, the active mind of the universe'[6].

According to him in Buddhism this intelligent principle is *karma*. In the same context, Radhakrishnan affirms that 'Buddha will not say that the principle of *karma* is an entirely mindless energy'. For Mrs Rhys Davids, the 'first Sakyans' had their own notion of Deity as Dharma (Pali: *dhamma*), 'the great self who is to be revered'.[7] What is meant by these authorities as that the Buddha's conception of law and regularity in the Universe is implied in *karma* and *dharma* must point to some 'deep design' of a 'cosmic idea' of an Universal Spirit.

I claim that this interpretation is based on a prejudiced view of the whole matter. The conception of *karma* must not be confused with the idea of the presence of regularity in life and nature. The one is purely personal and volitional (*cetanā*) and the other is universal and neutral. Again, if the Buddha affirmed *dharma* as cosmic law, he also believed there was an equally great proportion of *adharma* or chaos as well in the world. In short, to talk of 'deep design' is to ignore the Buddha's greatest contribution to Indian thought. On the fundamental question of the existence of any reality behind all the diverse phenomena of nature or the presence of a designing and planning mind in the cosmos, the Master expressed himself quite clearly when he answered the inquisitive Mogharājamānava with a categorical negative: 'Look upon the world (*loka*) as void (*śūnya*), O Mogharāja, being always thoughtful; having destroyed the pre-conception of an *Ātman* one may overcome death. . .'.[8] We cannot fail to see here that the Buddha believed the *Ātman* or World-Soul (or world-ground) to be a mere fiction of the imagination, even though the *Ātman* whose reality is refuted here is not the individual soul (*ātman*).

On this latter question, that is to say, the existence of an individual self or *Ātman* in man, the Buddha's attitude was clear. The earlier thinkers had taken two fundamental positions on this issue. The idealistic metaphysicians of the *Upaniṣads* had regarded it, as we

have already seen, as an absolute unchanging existent (*sat*), an eternal intelligence (*cit*), whose innate nature was bliss (*ānanda*).

The Buddha referred to this doctrine as *sassatavāda* or the 'eternalist theory'. In opposition to this idealistic school and as a reaction to it had arisen even in the Vedic period a powerful body of materialist philosophers (Cārvākas, Lokāyatas, Pāṣaṇḍas, etc.) who, very much like the materialists of our own day, called their system a 'science' (*śāstra*, as opposed to philosophy or *darśana*) and opposed the doctrine of an eternal soul from a 'scientific' angle. The Pali books mention them as 'heretics' (*titthiyas*). These thinkers rushed to the opposite extreme of affirming only the material factors in man to be real in any sense whatsoever; even mind is an emergent from their concatenation, consciousness being a mere by-product of matter. There is no such thing as a soul (*ātman*) in man who is completely cut off, annihilated, on the disintegration of the body at death (*kāyassa bheda param-maraṇā ucchijjanti*).

It is characteristic of the dogmatism of the period that every thinker was compelled to accept the one or the other of these two extreme positions, viz., eternalism or annihilationism. The Buddha persistently evaded these two extremes (*ubhayante*).

The *Saṃyutta Nikaya* tells us that when the wandering ascetic Vacchagotta came to the Buddha and asked him: 'How now, Gotama, is there a soul (*atthi atta*)?' the Master remained silent, and, when he was asked whether that meant he denied a soul, once more he was silent. To idealist interpreters like Radhakrishnan the Buddha's silence in this instance means that 'Buddha declines to deny the reality of a permanent self', and, therefore, the neutral attitude of the Buddha must show that he tacitly admitted the metaphysical position of Upaniṣadic pantheism and idealism.

On the other hand, to most Western critics this silence means a categorical denial leading to nihilism or even materialism.[10] Both these interpretations are, of course, the result of an enthusiasm of the critics for their own metaphysical outlook, and, in my opinion, unwarranted. When Vacchagotta had departed unsatisfied, Buddha himself explained his silence to Ānanda saying that a negative answer would have put himself (i.e. the Buddha) on the side of those who professed 'annihilation' (*ucchedavāda*) and a positive reply would have committed him to the idealist, eternalist position (*sassatavāda*).

Furthermore, if the Buddha did accept the metaphysical stand-

point of the *Upaniṣads*, as is claimed, and actually believed in the existence of an eternal, unchanging spontaneously blissful soul, he, the honest, outspoken thinker that he was, would have *affirmed* it, but not remained silent. On the contrary, as he himself further explains to Ānanda, he was convinced that all phenomena, psychic as well as physical, were devoid of a soul in the Upaniṣadic sense (*sabbe dhammā anattā*).

Now, it must be plain to the thoughtful reader that whatever the much disputed doctrine of *anatta* may mean it cannot point to a purely materialistic conception of the individual (*puggala*) just as it does not imply eternalism. In the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*[11] it is clearly asserted by the Master that there is a *puggala* who is the bearer (*bhārahāro*) of the burden of the five aggregates (*pañcūpādānakkhandhā*), viz., the individual who has such and such a name, clan, etc. (*yo ayam āyasmā evamnāmo evamgotto evam vuccati bhikkhave bhārahāro*). It is therefore definitely wrong to say as some Buddhists have done 'that the individual represented a complex of physical and mental elements without soul or personality. . . .' an unguarded statement that reduces Buddhism to the level of nihilism or annihilationism from which the Master tried to save it by his silence to Vacchagotta.

Then how can we understand the negative description of personality as *anattā*? The answer to this question is found in the Buddha's pregnant conception of *bhava* or 'becoming', a continuous flux. It is not change, for to change there must be a substance, which Buddha denied. It is the individual himself who is the 'becoming', there is no immanent 'becom-er'. There is *bhava* but no *satta* or eternal being behind the process. Personality or *puggala* is *bhava* individualized by the limiting force of *karma* (*upadhi-saṅkhāra*). It is significant that the Jainas, most probably before Buddhism came into being, had used *pudgala* for karmic matter or materialized karma.

Now, it is said in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*[12] that this 'becoming' is characterized by three signs (*tilakkhana*): that is to say, it is impermanent, sorrowful and of an 'evolving' nature (*sabbe bhavā aniccā, dukkhā, viparināmadhammā*), and this is the very same formula that is found in other places as *aniccā dukkhā anattā*. It is therefore quite legitimate to conclude that the negative *anattā* is synonymous with the positive *viparināmadhammā* or 'evolving'.

That is to say, both in the individual of *saṃsāric* experience and

in the material world the Buddha saw only an 'evolution'. At any given moment in this process of 'evolution' or 'becoming' the individual is called *bhūta* or 'the become'. Thus it is said in the *Sutta Nipāta*:[15] 'Becoming is dependent on grasping and "the become" (*sci.* the individual) falls into ill' (*upādānapaccayā bhavo, bhūto dukkham nigacchati*).

Hence it will be clear that while not denying the reality of an 'evolving' *saṃsāric* individual the Master positively refused to accept an eternal, unchanging, ontological entity partaking of the nature of eternal Being as is understood by the Upaniṣadic conception of the soul or *ātman*.

Let us finally turn to the question of the Absolute. The *Brahman* of the *Upaniṣads* was an ontological entity or principle; that is to say, it is the source or first cause from which all beings and everything in the cosmos are derived, and, to which everything returns in the end. Radhakrishnan believes that Buddha's conception of *nirvāṇa* is also similar if not the same. 'The illusion of becoming is founded on the reality of Nirvaṇa.[14]' But the Master never speaks of *nirvāṇa* as the first cause or the world-ground; it is for him no ontological principle.

In the only place in the Canon where he defines the Absolute he pictures it as 'that which is unborn, unbecome, unmade, uncompounded, the presence of which makes possible the escape from what is born, become, made and compounded'.[15] In this sense he applied even the word *Brahma* to it, as when he calls himself *brahmabhuta*.[16]

It is, however, not to be conceived by *a priori* methods. It is a state to be realized by the individual by his own efforts (*bhāvanā, samādhi, jhāna*, etc.). When the escape (*nissaraṇa*) from desire and craving (*chandarāga*) is achieved, that is *nirvāṇa*.[17]

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1. S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, vol. I p. 470.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 171.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 457.
4. *Brhad. Up.* II.1.20.
5. *pakappita diṭṭhi, vide Suttanipāta* (*Sn*) 786, 802.
6. *Loc. cit.*, p. 460.
7. Vide pp. 49, 279, *The Birth of Indian Psychology and its Development in Buddhism*, 1936.
8. *Sn*, 1119.
9. *Loc. cit.*, p. 687.

10. See, for instance, Spengler, *Decline of the West*, pp. 350. 352 et seq.
11. *SN*, III.25.
12. *AN*, I.258; II.177.
13. *Sn*, 742.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 449.
15. *Udāna*, VIII.3.10.
16. *Sn*, 561.
17. *Yam loke chandaragavinayo chandarāgapahānam idam loke nissaranam, AN, I*, p. 258.

2

Buddhist Evidence for the Early Existence of Drama*

In his masterly survey of the evolution of the Sanskrit drama, Professor Berriedale Keith summarily disposes of the relevant Buddhist evidence with the unequivocal statement that: 'The extreme dubiety of the date of the Buddhist Suttas renders it impossible to come to any satisfactory decision regarding the existence of drama at an early date, while the terms employed, such as *visūkadassaṇa*, *nacca* and *pekkha*, and reference to *samajjas* leave us wholly without any ground for belief in an actual drama'.[1] But a critical examination of the Pāli *nikāyas* shows us that the evidence afforded by these collections of dialogues throws much more light on this obscure problem than may be implied in a cursory allusion to the occurrence of such terms as *visūkadassana* etc., and, that the available facts establish, with an appreciable degree of certainty, for the beginnings of dramatic spectacles in India, if not for the Sanskrit drama in a primitive form, a date that anticipates the one assigned to it by Keith *at least by a century, if not more.*

Professor Keith bases his main argument for the conclusion that '. . .the Sanskrit drama came into being shortly after, if not before, the middle of the second century B.C.'[2] on the criticism of Kātyāyana's rule regarding the use of the imperfect tense and the occurrence and import of the words *naṭa, śobhanika* (or *śaubhika*) and *kathaka*, etc., as found in the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali whom he places 'with reasonable assurance' about 140 B.C.[3] For him, Indian literature before Patañjali contains no positive evidence for the existence of drama even in a primitive form. Referring to the mention of 'Naṭasūtras' in Pāṇini (IV.3.110 f.) whom he places in the fourth

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century B.C., he remarks: 'But we unfortunately are here as ever in no position to establish the meaning of Naṭa, which may mean no more than a pantomine'.[4] It is regarded as significant that *naṭa* does not occur in the *Yajurveda* list of 'persons of every kind covering every possible sort of occupation'. In the *Mahābhāṣya*, however, he sees more certain evidence:

> We seem in fact to have in the *Mahābhāṣya* evidence of a stage in which all the elements of drama were present; we have acting in dumb show, if not with words also; we have recitations divided between two parties. Moreover, we hear of Naṭas who not only recite but also sing. . . We cannot absolutely prove that in Patañjali's time the drama in its full form of action allied to speech was present, but we know that all its elements existed, and we may legitimately and properly accept its existence in a primitive form.[5]

Now, it is difficult to understand how the important word *naṭa* which occurs a number of times in the Pali literature has escaped the notice of Keith. In the *nikāyas* there are references to *naṭas* and even *naṭagāmaṇis* who were not merely mimes or dancers, but were clearly 'comedians' who *by mimicry and words* delighted audiences at fairs and shows. In the *Gāmaṇi Saṃyutta* we meet with the following:

> *'Ekamantaṃ nissinno kho Tālapuṭo Naṭagāmaṇi Bhagavantam etad avoca: Sutam me taṃ bhante pubbakānaṃ ācariya–pācariyānaṃ naṭānaṃ bhāsamānaṃ: Yo so naṭo raṅgamajjhe samajjamajjhe saccālikena janaṃ hāseti rameti so kāyassa bhedā paraṃ maraṇā Pahāsānaṃ devānaṃ sahavyatām upapajjatīti. Idha Bhagavā kim āhāti.'*[6]
>
> "Then Tālapuṭa, the chief of the village of dancers, came to the Exalted One, saluted him and sat down at one side. So seated Tālapuṭa said to the Exalted One: 'I have heard, lord, traditional teachers of old who were actors speaking (in this wise): "A player who on the stage or in the arena makes people laugh and delights them with truth and falsehood, on the dissolution of the body after death, is reborn in the company of the Laughing Devas'. What does the Exalted One say regarding this matter?"

It goes without saying that the above passage is of great importance for the subject, origin of dramas, in that it contains not only the important word *naṭa*, but also refers to a number of other facts. One important fact that emerges from a careful scrutiny of the above

quotation is that a *naṭa* was originally a figure of mirth (*hāseti, rameti*), thereby supporting the contention in favour of an at least partly secular origin for the drama. Let us take the important terms one by one.

First of all, the name of the interlocutor itself is highly suggestive of the source of the main inspiration of comedy. The name Tālapuṭa (*not* Talapuṭa, Tāla—being supported by two Burmese Mss. and Cy.; cf. also *Th.* 1.1145, p. 103) alludes to the custom quite common in ancient India of using nicknames for reputed persons (cf. 'Kaṇāda', name of the author of the *Vaiśeṣika Sūtras*, which literally means 'atom-eater'). Here *tāla-* must mean 'musical rhythm' or 'beating time' as found in the ancient texts on musical theory. The second member of the compound, viz., *-puṭa* means the 'hollow of the folded palm'.[7] The reference is no doubt to the practice prevalent even today among Indian musicians of beating time by clapping in either leading an orchestra or teaching pupils the rudiments of rhythm. This sense agrees perfectly well with the connotation of the word *naṭagāmaṇi* or 'leader of *naṭas*', a term that later obtained vogue in dramatic theory as a designation for *sūtradhāra* or *nāṭyācārya*.[8] This identification of *naṭagāmaṇi* and *sūtradhāra* leaves no room for doubt as to the former's connection with drama proper. Moreover, we may dismiss the suggestion of the commentator Buddhaghoṣa as unwarranted, though highly amusing, when he explains Tālapuṭa as referring to the person's 'bright complexion which was like the colour of a ripe palmyra-nut severed from the stalk' (*bandhanā-mutta-tāla-pākavaṇṇo viya mukha-vaṇṇo vippasanno ahosi, Sāratthappakāsinī,* III.102). Woodward's 'basket of woven palm-leaves' for 'Tālapuṭa' is clearly beside the point.[9]

'Next, the phrase '*pubbakānaṃ ācariyapācariyānaṃ naṭānaṃ*', despite its stereo-typed phraseology, must be taken in this context to refer to a genuine tradition regarding generations of such '*naṭa*-preceptors' of the past—a fact that cannot be ignored in discussing the nature of the *Naṭasūtras* mentioned by Pāṇini. As for the keyword *naṭa* itself, the succeeding sentence proves without a shadow of doubt that the persons referred to here were *at least comedians if not actors of comedies,* who entered the stage (*raṅga*) to delight and make people laugh, with—and this is the most important fact—*truth and lies* (*saccālikena*; Buddhaghoṣa: '*saccena ca alikena ca*', *Sāratth.*, III.193, which also shows that Woodward's 'counterfeiting of the truth' falls far short of the actual significance). So these *naṭas* were much more

than mere mimes or dumb actors. Furthermore, we may suggest with some plausibility that the word *alika* here might contain an implicit reference to 'fiction', that is to say, fabricated anecdotes which form part of the stock-in-trade of comedians everywhere in the world. Important also is the word *raṅga*[10] inasmuch as it must needs refer in the context either to an arena in general or to a play-house or theatre. The term is found in Pāṇini (VI.4.27) and the Petersburg Dictionary has (*s.v.*) 'Theater, Schaubühne, Schauplatz, Arena'; in the technical literature *raṅga* is universally used for 'stage'[11]. Similarly, this passage makes it certain that the word *samajja* denotes a concourse of people come together for amusement, a 'show' where the *naṭas* took a leading role. In this connection we may observe that the *Rāmāyaṇa* in one of its genuine portions (II.67.15) refers to *samājas* where *naṭas* and *nartakas*, comedians and dancers, delight themselves.[12] According to Professor Winternitz,[13] this part must have been composed earlier than the third century B.C., and as we shall see later the Buddhist reference is equally old, if not older, from which it may be inferred that at this time the *samājas* or *samajjas* were a recognized institution. It may be mentioned that *naṭa-nartakāḥ* occurs in the *Anuśāsana Parva* of the *Mahābhārata* (XIII.33.12), and that the commentator Nilakaṇṭha takes the compound to mean 'comedians' and 'dancers', a sense that may not seem so improbable as Keith supposes (p. 28) when taken in the light of the *Saṃyutta* passage.

We may suggest, *en passant*, that the older root *nṛt* (vide *naṭa*, Petersburg Dict.,) with its derivatives *nartaka*, *nṛtya*, etc., in Sanskrit, and *naṭṭaka*, *naṭṭaki* (*Th.* 1.267), *nacca*, *naccaka*, etc., in Pali referred to *dancing*, whereas its dialectical form *naṭ* which gives *naṭa*, *nāṭaka*, *naṭi* (also *nāṭya* in Skt.), etc., signified *gesticulation* and in course of time came to be applied to the art of the 'comedian' and thence to 'acting' proper. As for Pali, the distinction seems to have been preserved at least in pre-Christian times,[14] though the commentators often confuse the two (*VvA* 210 *naṭati* = *naccati*). In the face of the above facts the conclusion is irresistible that the *naṭas* were originally a class *of comedians who performed on the stage or at assemblies using words to delight their audiences*, and that Pāṇini's *Naṭasūtras* may, therefore, legitimately be taken to refer to something more than mere rules regulating the mode of gesticulation of the pantomine.

Another important passage bearing on the subject is found in the 'Brahmajāla Suttanta' of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, containing as it does a list of terms denoting various amusements and shows (*visūkadassana*):

Yathā vā pan 'eke bhonto samaṇa-brāhmaṇā saddhā-deyyāni bhojanāni bhuñjitvā te evarūpaṃ visūkadassanam anuyuttā viharanti seyyathīdaṃ naccaṃ gītaṃ vāditaṃ pekkhaṃ akkhānaṃ pāṇissaraṃ vetālaṃ kuṃbhathūnaṃ Sobha-nagarakaṃ. . . iti vā iti evarūpā visūkadassanā paṭivirato Samaṇo Gotamo ti (*D.N.* I., p. 6, §13)

Professor Rhys Davids rendered this passage as follows:

Or he might say, 'Whereas some recluses and Brāhmaṇas, while living on food provided by the faithful, continue addicted to visiting shows, that is to say, nautch dances, singing of songs, instrumental music, shows at fairs, ballad recitations, hand-music, the chanting of bards, tam-tam playing, fairy scenes. . . Gotama the recluse holds aloof from visiting such shows.[15]

Here *naccaṃ gītaṃ vāditaṃ* refer to the old conception of *saṅgīta* or 'triple symphony', viz., dancing, singing and instrumental music. Such entertainments are said to have been held at public assemblies such as those already referred to, concourses or fairs, *samajjas*,[16] and at the so-called mountain-fairs or *giragga-samajjas*[17] said to be frequented by ministers and other high personages.[18] The word *nacca* may refer to the dancing of both sexes; female dances are specifically called *lāsa*[19] and the four are sometimes mentioned together.[20] The last no doubt refers to an old practice and it is of significance for the later division into *tāṇḍava* and *lāsya* types attributed to Śiva and Pārvatī respectively.[21]

Of doubtful, but not negligible, importance is the word *pekkhaṃ* which is clearly a *collective abstract* formation with the suffix *'a'* from *pekkhā* (Skt. *prekṣā*>**praikṣaṃ*) as most words in the list are (cf. *pāṇissaraṃ*<*pāṇissaro*). The Sanskrit is not found in any work earlier than *Manusmṛti*[22] and *Harivaṃśa*.[23] Rhys Davids refuses to agree with Weber, Neumann, Burnouf and others who saw in the Pali *pekkhā* 'theatrical representations', and remarks: 'But it is most un-likely that the theatre was already known in the fifth century B.C.'[24]. It is significant though that Buddhaghoṣa equates the word to *naṭa-samajjam*[25] a gloss that establishes the connection, at least in tradition, between *pekkhā* and *samāja* as evidenced by the quotations from the Sanskrit sources, and also connects these shows with the activity of the *naṭas* who, as seen from the *Saṃyutta* passage, performed also at *samajjas*.

Commenting on *akkhānaṃ* the exegetist says that it refers to 'recitations of Bhārata and Rāmāyaṇa' (*'Bhārata-Rāmāyaṇādi, taṃ*

yasmiṃ ṭhāne kathiyati. . . Sum. I.84); the word *kathīyati* no doubt refers to the work of the *kathakas* mentioned by Patañjali. But, if these recitations were of any 'epics', it is clear on chronological grounds that the reference is not to the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa* as we now have them but to the original 'ballad' form of these legends. In the case of the former, Winternitz calls it 'the old heroic poem' which he believes[26] is *contained* in the so-called 'nucleus' of the *Mahābhārata*. The latter, according to him, '. . .was composed in the third century B.C. by Vālmīki on the basis of ancient ballads,'[27]. The word *vetālaṃ* meaning 'the chanting of bards'[28], also alludes to similar recitations of wandering minstrels. The occurrence of these two terms in the list is of considerable importance for the subject of the origin of drama for, as Keith himself points out, 'while the epics cannot be said to know the drama, there is abundant evidence of the strong influence on the development of the drama exercised by the recitation of the epics' (p. 29).

The *Sigāla Sutta*'[29] gives *akkhānaṃ* as one of the six features of the *samajjas* where, as we have already seen, the *naṭas* took a leading part, and, thereby establishes the contact between the 'comedians' and the 'ballad reciters'. Moreover, our passage proves that these ballad recitations, from which probably developed in the course of time the vocation of the *kathakas*, were at least as old as the oldest dialogues of the Pali Canon, if they were not already popular in the time of the Buddha. Consequently, the inspiration for the origin of drama from this source must be admitted to be much older than the middle of the second century B.C. as has been supposed by Keith (p. 45).

But the most important word in the list is undoubtedly the term *Sobhanagarakaṃ*—a term that has intrigued both the old and the new commentators. The reading itself is far from settled. The Sinhalese MSS read *Sobhanagarakaṃ*, *Sobhanakārakaṃ* and *Sobhanagaraṇaṃ*, whereas a Burmese MS of the text has *Sobhaṇakam*. The Sinhalese MS of the commentary gives the reading *Sobhanagarakaṃ*, a Burmese MS of the same having a variant *Sobhaṇagaṃ*. It may be observed that the Burmese MSS of text and commentary do actually agree, for the *-g-* of the latter can easily be explained as phonetic variation of *-k-* in the former, the presence of the cerebralized *-ṇ-* in both (as opposed to the dental in all Sinhalese MSS) supporting the identification. These variants may point to two main traditions: *Sobhanagarakaṃ* among the Sinhalese, and *Sobhaṇakam* among the Burmese. Now what is important is that both these forms can be

satisfactorily explained, though the latter is by far the more likely historical one, as we shall presently see. If the reading is taken to be *Sobhanagarakaṃ* the allusion may be to the city of Sobha which as Weber discovered,[30] may refer to the city of the Gandharvas by that name. He quotes from a commentary on *Śatarudrīya*: '*Sobha iti Gandharva-nagaram*' referred to also by Rhys Davids.[31] So this compound, viz., *Sobha-nagarakam* may mean 'a collection of Sobha-denizens', i.e., 'a troupe of Gandharvas', with a probable reference to the traditional connection of these celestial musicians with the drama. On the other hand Rhys Davids' translation 'fairy scenes' is only a surmise based on the gloss *paṭibhāna-citta* of the commentary, which as we shall see below, is not what Buddhaghoṣa considered as the more probable sense. Now to take the other reading, viz., *Sobhanakaṃ*, this is grammatically to be explained as a *collective formation*, of the same order as *pekkham* discussed above, from a Pali masculine noun *Sobhanaka*. This brings us to the most important observation that this is no other than the Pali counterpart of Sanskrit *Sobhanika* as found in the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali, the suffixes *-aka* and *-ika* being syntactically interchangeable. Now, Patañjali, in justification of the use of the present tense for deeds of the remote past as found in such sentences as 'He causes the death of Kaṃsa' etc., says that the *present* is permissible 'because the sense is, not that they are being actually done, but that they are being described'[32]. He then sets out three such modes of description of which the first refers to the profession of the *Śobhanikas*: '*ye tāvad ete śobhanikā* (v.l. *śaubhikā*) *nāmaite pratyaksaṃ Kaṃsaṃ ghātayanti pratyaksaṃ Baliṃ bandhayanti*' (III.1.26). Here Keith argues that these were pantomimists: 'The obvious view, that of Weber, that we have a reference to a pantomimic killing and binding, seems irresistible' (p. 33).The only doubt according to him is whether the *Sobhanikas* used words (p. 34). Anyway he leaves the question open whether the reference is to 'actors' in the proper sense. Whatever the real sense of the term may be, the fact is clear that the Pali word *Sobhanaka* also refers to the same, or at least a similar, class of performers Once this identification is regarded as plausible the word *Sobhanakam* in the *Dīgha* passage must be taken to mean 'a troupe of *Śobhanikas*', and, this is exactly how Buddhaghoṣa seems to have understood it, for he comments: '*Sobhanagarakaṃ* (v.l. *Sobhanagaṃ*) *ti naṭānaṃ abbhokiraṇaṃ, Sobhanagarakaṃ* (v.l. *Sobhanakaraṃ*) *vā paṭibhānacittan ti vuttaṃ hot*' [33]

The hesitancy of the editors regarding the reading and syntactical considerations incline one to the view that what Buddhaghoṣa meant to say was: '*Sobhaṇagan ti naṭānaṃ abbhokiraṇaṃ Sobhanagarakaṃ vā* (*sci. ti pi pāṭho*), *paṭibhāna-cittanti vuttaṃ* hoti', the first word *Sobhaṇagaṃ* occurring in the Burmese MS of the commentary being only the phonetic variant of *Sobhaṇakaṃ* found as Burmese variant for the text. In any case, the important fact is that Buddhaghoṣa was more inclined to favour the meaning *naṭānaṃ abbhokiraṇaṃ* than the sense *paṭibhānacittaṃ*; hence he places the former phrase at the beginning and gives the latter only as a possible alternative introduced by *vā*. As for the exact significance of *naṭānaṃ abbhokiraṇaṃ* it seems fairly likely that what is meant here is 'a troupe (*lit.* crowd, concourse) of actors'. The verbal noun *abbhokiraṇaṃ* is formed from the root *kṝ*, to scatter, with the prefixes *abhi* -and *ava*-. Syntactically, we may regard this as equal in sense to *ā-kiraṇa* (cf. *ākiṇṇa*. crowded), for it is observed that the use of the compound prefix *abhi+ ava* corresponds, probably with slightly more intensive sense, to that of *a*.[34] Hence we may conclude that the term *Sobanagarakaṃ* or *Sobaṇakaṃ* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* alludes, as is implied in the gloss of Buddhaghoṣa, to some class of *naṭas*—an interpretation that has the support of Indian tradition as recorded by Kaiyaṭa in his comment on the word *Śobhanika* of the *Mahābhāṣya*[35] and that these *naṭas* were either the *same* persons as referred to by Patañjali's *Śobhanikāḥ* or at least were *their precursors* in the art.

We have seen that Professor Keith's reluctance to discuss the Buddhist evidence is based on two presuppositions: first, to use his own words, 'the extreme dubiety of the date of the Buddhist Suttas', and second, the supposed paucity of information contained in the Pali literature—he refers only to *nacca, pekkhā* and *visūkadassana*—concerning the question of dramatic origins (p. 42). We hope that the second point has been somewhat satisfactorily answered by the foregoing discussion. Now it remains to be seen how far the expression 'extreme dubiety of the Buddhist Suttas' is historically justified. It is admitted on all sides that the Pali Canon *en masse* is a growth of considerable duration and that the last word is yet to be said on the question of chronology. But this or any such consideration must not blind us to the important fact that, as far as the early *nikāyas* and the *vinaya* are concerned, there is enough evidence to prove that in substance, apart from their literary form, they go back to a period considerably anterior to the third century B.C. With certain reserva-

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tions and limitations, we may say with Winternitz that, our Pali Tipiṭaka, at least the Vinaya and the Sutta Piṭaka does, on the whole, correspond to the Māgadhī Canon of the third century B.C'.[36] This is proved by the edicts of Aśoka, particularly the Bairāt or Bhābhrū Edict (249 B.C.) which shows, in the opinion of the same authority, that the Pali Canon on the whole is pre-Aśokan (p. 25). Now this Māgadhī Canon must have taken at least a century to have evolved into the hypothetical form in which we conceive it, and the language itself must have closely resembled the canonical Pali. Indeed we must not, as is usually done, unduly exaggerate this linguistic, properly dialectical, difference because, as Winternitz himself admits, the 'Canon of the Vibhajjavādins', a century after the Buddha's demise, was probably in an older form of Pali (p. 13). Furthermore, we may accept as a historical fact that Moggaliputta Tissa, 236 years after the demise of the Master, convened an assembly of monks at Patna 'with the object of compiling a Canon of texts of the true religion or the Theravada' (p. 6) and that the *Kathāvatthu*, ascribed to Tissa himself who presided at the council, presupposes not only the texts of the *Vinaya Piṭaka* and of *all the nikāyas* of the *Sutta Piṭaka* but the other books of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* as well. 'It would be quite feasible', says Winternitz,' to assume that the book (*Kathāvatthu*) was not written until the time of the compilation of the Canon by Tissa himself. . .' (pp. 11-12). These considerations would suffice to show that Bühler was not far wrong, when, in the last work he published, he expressed the opinion that the *nikāyas* as we have them in the Pali 'are good evidence certainly for the fifth, probably for the sixth, century B.C., a conclusion that was endorsed by Rhys Davids who added: '. . .that will probably become, more and more, the accepted opinion. And it is this which gives to all they tell us, either directly or by implication, of the social, political and religious life of India, so great a value'.[37] It is, of course, true that these statements must necessarily be modified in the light of later reserach, but no such consideration, we believe, can invalidate the main proposition that the early *nikāyas*, at least the *Dīgha*, *Majjhima* and *Saṃyutta*, do on the whole, contain 'good evidence' if not for the period of Buddha's own activity (*c.* 535-485 B.C.), at least for that of his very early disciples to whom must be ascribed the creation of the original tradition embedded in these works. As for the genuineness of the particular passages forming the subject-matter of our present investigation, we may without hesitation observe that neither the *Brahmajāla Sutta* nor

the *Gāmaṇi Saṃyutta*, from which we have quoted, betrays any evidence whatsoever, whether linguistic or other-wise, of lateness or spuriousness of composition; on the other hand, the Naṭagāmaṇi dialogue shows every sign of being a record of an actual event both by the tone of naturalness running through the whole narrative and also in point of style and method, while the *Brahmajāla Sutta*, though obviously a résumé of the existing philosophical and religio-social institutions of the time, contains material that is proved to be old by the very obscurity of its terminology and the close resemblance of doctrines discussed to the ideas of the ancient *Upaniṣads*.[38]

We hope we have succeeded in proving that the evidence afforded by the *nikāyas* is of considerable importance for the problem of evolution of drama in India, particularly for the history of the keyword *naṭa* and also of *śobhanika*, and, that the available evidence would take back its origin to at least *the third or fourth century* B.C., if they do not conclusively prove that there were dramatic spectacles of some kind, probably comedy *in nuce*, in the time of the Buddha himself. This conclusion is supported by the further consideration that if, as Prof. Keith himself admits, 'the Vedic ritual contained within itself the germs of drama' (p. 23), and if, as Winternitz has shown with great plausibility, the beginning of the Vedic literature was nearer to 2500 or 2000 B.C. than to 1500 or 1200 B.C. as generally held[39] then it makes the belief well-nigh impossible that, with such materials as present in the Vedic culture, the ballad recitations which seem to be pre-Buddhistic, as shown above, and other tendencies reflected both in Sanskrit and Pali literature, the drama, at least in some crude form, could not have come into being all throughout the course of a whole millennium. The fact that the *naṭa* of the *Saṃyutta* is a 'comedian' shows that in its origin the secular influence on the drama was also considerable and that it was not evoked solely 'by the combination of epic recitations with the dramatic moment of the Kṛṣṇa legend'[40], a contention that gains strength by the fact that the earliest dramas we possess, viz., those of Asvaghoṣa, have very little in common with the epics or the Kṛṣṇa legend in point of theme and subject-matter.

REFERENCES

1. Keith, *Sanskrit Drama*, p. 43.
2. Ibid., p. 45.
3. Ibid., p. 31.

4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., pp. 36, 37.
6. *SN*, IV, p. 306 §3.
7. Cf. *Miln.* p. 87, '*hatṭha-puṭa*'.
8. Keith, op. cit., p. 360.
9. *Book of Kindred Sayings*, p. 214, fn 1.
10. Cf. *Vinaya*, II.10.12.
11. Keith, p. 359; cf. *Manu*, IV. 215 '*raṅgāvataraka*', 'stage-player' according to Bühler.
12. Keith, op. cit., p. 29.
13. Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature*, vol. I. p. 516.
14. *Miln.*, p. 359 '*nata-naccaka*'.
15. Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, Pt. I, pp. 7, 8.
16. *Vide.* D. III.183.
17. *Vin.*, II.107.
18. *Vin.*, II.150.
19. Skt. *lāsaḥ*; cf *Miln.*, p. 331; *lāska* = female dancer.
20. *Vin*, II.10 '*naccanti pi gayanti pi vādenti pi lāsenti pi*'.
21. *Nāṭyaśāstra*, 1.2; Keith, op. cit., p. 12.
22. '*Prekṣā-samājaṃ*, IX. 84; IX. 264.
23. '*Prekṣāsu tu subahuiṣu*' 8702, 8685.
24. *Dial*, I.7. fn. 4.
25. *Sum*, I.84; cf. III.946.
26. *Sum*, I. p. 459
27. Ibid, p. 517.
28. Rhys Davids; cf. 'naṭavaitālika-stotra nartakaḥ sūtamāgadhāḥ', *M.Bh.* I. § 940, *Hariv.*, 8575, referred to *sub* Naṭa in the Petersburg Dict.
29. *DN*, III.183.
30. *Indische Studien*, II.38.
31. *DN*, I.6. fn 1.
32. Keith, op. cit., p. 32.
33. *Sum*, I. p. 84.
34. Cf. Pali *abbhokāsa*, open = *ākāsa*, Skt. *abhyavaskandana* = *āskandana*, attacking; *abhyavahāra-āhāra*, food etc.
35. *Kaṃsādyanukāriṇāṃ naṭānāṃ vyākhyānopādhyāyā*', *vide* Keith, op.cit., p. 33 fn. 11.
36. Winternitz., vol. II, p. 5; cf p. 608
37. *Dial.*, I. p. xx.
38. Cf. Rhys Davids, *Dial.*, 1. p. xxvi.
39. *Calcutta Review*, Nov. 1923.
40. Keith, op cit., p. 45.

3

Buddhism and the Moral Problem*

It is universally recognised that Buddhism can claim to be the most ethical of religio-philosophical systems of the world. No less an authority than Professor Radhakrishnan himself calls it 'Ethical Idealism' and says that the Buddha gave an 'ethical twist' to the thought of his time. 'We find in the early teaching of Buddhism', he remarks, 'three marked characteristics, an ethical earnestness, an absence of any theological tendency and an aversion to metaphysical speculation.'[1] Even Albert Schweitzer, a leading Western philosopher and one of the most astute critics of Indian thought has not grudged the Buddha the honour of being 'the creator of the ethic of inner perfection'. He writes: 'In this sphere he gave expression to truths of everlasting value and advanced the ethics not of India alone but of humanity. He was one of the greatest ethical men of genius ever bestowed upon the world.'[2] Professor T.W. Rhys Davids who spent a lifetime in the study of Buddhism has admirably brought out in his American Lectures the importance of the study of Buddhist ethics in modern life and thought:

> The point I stand here to submit to your consideration is that the study of ethics and especially the study of ethical theory in the West has hitherto resulted in a deplorable failure through irreconcilable logomachies and the barrenness of speculation cut off from actual fact. The only true method of ethical inquiry is surely the historical method. . . and I cannot be wrong in maintaining that the study of Buddhism should be considered a necessary part of any ethical course and should not be dismissed in a page or two but receive its due proportion in the historical perspective of ethical evolution.[3]

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* Ceylon University Buddhist Brotherhood, Third Anniversary Lecture, Colombo, 1945.

Oswald Spengler, the greatest philosophical student of world culture, believes that Buddhism, which for him expresses 'the basic feeling of Indian civilisation', 'rejects all speculation about God and the cosmic problems; only self and the conduct of actual life are important to it.'[4] Such statements as these emphasising the ethical importance of the Buddha's teaching can be quoted from numerous other authorities. But to any unbiased and careful student of religion or philosophy it would be needless to stress this importance too much, for, as we shall attempt to show here 'Early Buddhism'— by which term we refer to the doctrines as found in the *Sutta Nipāta, Dīgha Nikāya, Majjhima Nikāya,* etc.—presents a unique synthesis of ethics and philosophy, of morality and knowledge, of action and thought.

To estimate correctly the greatness and the universality of the Buddha's ethic, one has to obtain a mental picture of the moral ferment and the spiritual unrest that prevailed in India just before the appearance of the Buddha. Traditional religion as professed by the theologians and the metaphysicians of the *Upaniṣads* was being undermined by the constant and vehement attacks of materialists and sceptics. Therefore, before we turn to the actual ethical system of Early Buddhism it is essential to discuss as briefly as possible the development of the moral consciousness during the time of the pre-Buddhistic *Upaniṣads* as well as the attitude to the moral problem of the various heretical philosophical schools such as those promulgated by the numerous *titthiyas* and *ājivakas.*

There were some Upaniṣadic thinkers who had discovered and formulated the main principles of moral behaviour in conformity with their respective views of life. Earlier, Brahmanism had established a rigid and dreadfully static morality by its insistence on the universality of the ritual act (*karma = yajña*). Hence the practical morality inculcated did not go beyond what was practically necessary in the conduct and successful performance of the sacrifice. Thus evolved a conception of *dharma,* originally 'ritualistic duty', and its ethical correlates such as *śraddhā*, the faith needed in bestowing gifts (*dakṣinā*) and alms (*dāna*) to the priesthood who were the mediators between man and his gods. Such was the moral code of the ritualistic religion.

The earliest *Upaniṣads* carry out these very moral tendencies and thus it cannot be said that they had completely transcended the ethical externalism of the Brahmanic religion. When Sākalya in the

Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad asked Yājñavalkya: 'And on what is sacrifice based?', 'On gifts to the priests', replied Yājñavalkya. 'And on what are the gifts to the priests based?' 'On faith (*śraddhā*), for when one has faith one gives gifts to the priests', replied Yājñavalkya. 'Verily, on faith are gifts to the priests based.'[5] Similarly, *Chañdogya, Upaniṣad* enumerates three branches of duty: 'Sacrifice, study of the Vedas, alms-giving—that is the first; austerity, indeed, is the second; a student of sacred knowledge (*brahmacārin*) dwelling in the house of a teacher is the third'.[6] Though Upaniṣadic ethics start with such compromises to ritualism, an attempt is progressively made to conceive a higher kind of morality. For example, the Upaniṣadic thinkers attribute the highest power to truth (*satya*) in contrast to untruth (*anṛta*). Speakers of falsehood were put to the test by the ordeal of the heated axe. Says the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*: 'Speaking untruth he covers himself with untruth; he seizes hold of the heated axe and is burned. Speaking truth he covers himself with truth; he seizes hold of the heated axe and is not burned'.[7]

It is important to observe here that what is true is held to be in conformity with the natural order of things, the cosmic law (*ṛta*),[8] and that what was untrue was what went against that order (*anṛta*). It is to the credit of Indian culture that at a very early period in its history[9] from the cosmological conception of world-order (*ṛta*) they had derived a notion of an ethical order in man. Thus the gradual development of a practical code of ethics is seen in these *Upaniṣads*. Quarrelsomeness, tale-bearing (*piśunā*), slander (*upavāda*) are regarded as evil traits tending to make people small (*alpāḥ*) of character.[10] The threefold ofispring of Prajāpati, gods, men and *asuras* are respectively taught by him that to restrain (*dāmyata*), to give (*datta*), and to be compassionate (*dayadhvam*) are the three greatest virtues.[11] There was also a certain conception of social ethics as is implied in the declaration of Aśvapati Kaikeya:

> Within my realm there is no thief,
> No miser, nor a drinking man,
> None altarless, none ignorant,
> No man unchaste, no wife unchaste.[12]

It is important to students of Buddhist ethics to find the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* condemning to rebirth in the form of small creatures those who commit theft, drink liquor, invade the teacher's bed, kill brahmins, as well as those who consort with them. *Brahmacarya*

which generally means 'the chaste life of a student of sacred knowledge' is extolled, and, its goal is set forth as the Brahmā-world.[13] In the very next paragraph this life of abstinent religious duty (*brahmacarya*) is said to include all other forms of moral behaviour such as sacrifice, silent asceticism, fasting and hermit life in the forest.[14]

There are many passages in the *Upaniṣads* establishing as the highest moral ideal or goal of the spiritual life the Brahmā-world which is identified with immortality (*amṛtam*).[15] It is also necessary to point out that the *raison d'être* of ethics in the *Upaniṣads* is derived from metaphysics: 'Verily, O Gārgi, at the command of that Imperishable (*akṣarasya praśāsane*) men praise those who give, the gods are desirous of a sacrificer and the fathers (are desirous) of the Manes-sacrifice.'[16] Further, according to the *Upaniṣads* the criterion of moral judgment is merely *conventional*, being nothing other than the practice of elderly and learned brahmins: 'Now if you should have doubt concerning an act, or doubt concerning conduct, if there should be these *brāhmaṇas*, competent to judge, apt, devoted, not harsh, lovers of virtue (*dharma*)—as they may behave themselves in such a case, so should you behave yourself in such a case.'[17]

In the last phase of the development of Upaniṣadic thought morality dwindles into insignificance. This results from the static conception of spiritual life as is inevitable from the identity of the human soul *as it is* with the highest ideal, *Brahman*, sometimes referred to as the highest Self (*Ātman*).[18] This metaphysical abstraction naturally removes all urgency and necessity for any ethic, for, if man *as he is*, is already one with his ideal, what would be the need for spiritual effort, why worry about a moral life at all! 'Whoso were to know me (*Ātman*)', teaches the *Kauṣītakī Upaniṣad*, 'not by any action of his can the world be injured, not by murdering his mother or his father, not by stealing or by killing the embryo. . . .'[19] This overemphasis of the *ātman*-knowledge and the consequent disregard of the moral life discloses the inner weakness of absolutist pantheism of the *Upaniṣads*. Two of the most critical Hindu students of Upaniṣadic thought, Ranade and Belvalkar, regard this as the worst trait of the philosophy of absolutism:

> Here indeed is touched what may be called the danger line of Upaniṣadic ethics. To say that the *ātman* dies not is legitimate. To say that weapons cannot cut him nor fire burn him is also a legitimate varying of the phrase. But to argue that therefore the murderer is no murderer, and there is nobody really responsible

for his action is to carry this 'śāśvata' or 'akriyā' doctrine to a point which, if seriously preached, would be subversive of all established social institutions and religious sacraments.[20]

These considerations not only indicate to us that the absolutism of the *Upaniṣads* inevitably ended in a kind of amoralism but also that there could be a dangerous side to religious and spiritual conservatism. It was as a reaction against such dogmatism in philosophy and ethics that there arose several heterodox philosophies which not only denied the authority of the conservative ethics of the *Upaniṣads* but even went to the extent of declaring moral scepticism, moral nihilism and moral anarchism. It is significant that our earliest sources for the study of these doctrines are the Buddhist *nikāyas* themselves.[21] There was a strong school of philosophical opinion which encouraged a downright ethical nihilism (*natthikavāda*).

There is no such thing as alms, sacrifice or oblation; good and bad actions bear no fruit or consequence; there is no (distinction between) this world and the next; there is no (moral obligation towards) father and mother; there are no beings of spontaneous generation, and there are no recluses and brahmins in this world of virtuous conduct who with insight (*abhiññā*) have realised and proclaimed (the true nature of) this world and the next.[22]

This moral nihilism was based on a crass materialism in philosophy:

Man as he is, is constituted out of the four elements; when he dies earth combines with earth, water with water, heat with heat and air with air; the sense functions are merged in the ether and all that is left of him are his greyish bones after the cremation; the value of the alms-giving is merely in the imagination of the giver and to affirm the moral consequences of the act is a hollow assertion; both the foolish and the wise are annihilated and completely cut off at death.[23]

This was the doctrine that Ajita Kesakambali, among others, is supposed to have professed. Then there were others who denied moral causation (*ahetu-vādins*). Their main thesis was as follows:

There is no cause or reason for the depravity of beings; they become depraved without cause or reason; they become pure

without cause or reason; there is no such thing as self-agency or the agency of another or human effort; there is no such thing as power or energy or human strength or human endeavour; all animals, all creatures, all beings and all living things are without initiative, without power and strength of their own; they just evolve by fate, necessity and fortuitous concatenation of events; and it is according to their peculiar nature as belonging to one of the six classes that they experience ease or pain and it is only at the end of the appointed period—after one has passed through the 84,000 periods of wandering in *saṃsāra*—that there shall be an end of pain; thus there is no such thing as that one should experience the result of *kamma* and thereby put an end to it either through virtuous conduct or precept, asceticism or *brahmacarya*; consequently there is neither spiritual growth nor decline, neither depravation nor exaltation, inasmuch as in *saṃsāra* pain and pleasure are determined and circumscribed. As automatically as a ball of thread thrown up rolls along unreeling itself, so do both the foolish and the wise reach their salvation at the termination of their appointed course in *saṃsāra*.[24]

The foremost leader of this school was Makkhali Gosāla,[25] and from the importance attached to the refutation of his theories in the early Buddhist books we may infer that he had a large following. It roundly denied all *initiative* and *choice* in man, being rigidly deterministic. The only redeeming feature of this philosophy was its belief in some form of moral ideal, however wrongly the process of its accomplishment was conceived. Therefore the Buddhist books disparagingly call this 'the purity through *saṃsāra*' (*saṃsārasuddhi*), because the theory postulated that purity occurred just by *saṃsāric* evolution over which man had no control. This was further condemned as *akiriyavāda* or 'theory of non-action'. Another teacher, Pūraṇa Kassapa, held the opinion[26] that the act had no moral consequences, that merit (*puñña*) did not result from good action and demerit (*pāpa*) from bad action; 'giving (generosity), restraint, self-control, and truth-speaking did not conduce to merit'. This doctrine too is condemned as *akiriyavāda* or a denial of the efficacy of the act. Another school professed a fatalistic pluralism[27] and the most prominent teacher of this doctrine was Pakudha Kaccāyana:

The following seven things are neither made nor commanded to be created; they are barren (and so nothing is produced out of

them), steadfast as a mountain-peak, as a pillar firmly fixed. They move not, neither do they vary, they trench not one upon the other, nor avail aught as to ease or pain or both. And what are the seven? The four elements—earth, water, fire, air—and pleasure and pain and the soul as the seventh. So there is neither slayer nor causer of slaying, hearer or speaker, knower or explainer. When one with a sharp sword cleaves a head in twain, no one thereby deprives anyone of life; a sword has merely penetrated into the space between seven elementary substances.[28]

As this doctrine is obviously based on the Upaniṣadic doctrine of the indestructibility and the unchangeability of the *ātman* it has been called *sassatavāda* or eternalism.[29] In ethics it also leads to an *akiriyavāda* or amoralism like the previous philosophies. Then there was the ethical scepticism of the agnostic philosopher, Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta,[30] who refused to pass final judgment on any such metaphysical problem as the existence of a future world or any ethical question. When questioned about the moral consequences of good and bad acts he would resort to the four-membered formula of prevarication,[31] and refuse to set down a definite opinion. The doctrines of these rival teachers not only led to clashes with the dogmatism and orthodoxy of the upaniṣadic moralists but also resulted in interminable conflicts among themselves, thus creating that state of moral ferment to which we referred earlier and which characterised Indian religion just before the advent of the Buddha. It was a critical epoch in the history of Indian religion, and the Buddha with his principle of the golden mean (*majjhimapaṭipadā*) brought sanity and a sense of poise to a society harassed by ideological disturbances and shaken about by heated metaphysical wranglings and ethical disputations.[32] Apart from these doctrines which led to a moral upheaval there was the Jaina system of ethics with its rigid formalism and externalism frequently criticised in the Buddhist books. Niganṭha Nāthaputta emphasised the external act in preference to the mental act.[33] In addition to all these ethical doctrines the *Dīgha* and *Majjhima Nikāyas* make constant reference to the inevitable moral upshot of philosophical materialism in general, referred to as the perverted philosophy (*viparīta-dassana*)[34] that denied all morality; it is branded as the heresy *par excellence* (*micchādiṭṭhi*),[35] the evil doctrine (*pāpakaṃ diṭṭhigataṃ*)[36] and moral nihilism (*natthikavāda*).[37] This view which is prominently attributed to a

prince known as Pāyāsi-rājañña, asserted the following three propositions: (1) There is no world beyond; (2) there are no beings reborn otherwise than from parents; and (3) there is no result or consequence of good or bad acts.[38] As opposed to this *micchādiṭṭhi* early Buddhism sets forth *sammādiṭṭhi* or the correct view of life on which it bases its ethic.[39] Let us now examine the fundamental philosophical basis of Buddhist morality.

According to Early Buddhism man's appearance in this world is clearly not due to a mere concatenation of physical factors. Many statements in the dialogues make it clear that a non-physical factor is necessary for successful parturition.[40] Such concatenation is due to *upadhisaṅkhāras* generated by previous *saṃsāric* experiences[41] and it is precisely in this context that it is affirmed that the reborn individual is neither the same nor another (*na ca so na ca añño*).[42] It may be observed that in the latter portion of this statement moral responsibility is definitely asserted. Life thus come into being is said to be characterised by several marks (*lakkhaṇa*) such as impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, liability to disease and corruption, extraneousness, subjection to dissolution, voidness and insubstantiality.[43] These characteristics are sometimes brought under the three headings of *anicca, dukkha,* and *anatta,* or *anicca, dukkha* and **vipariṇāmadhamma.*[44] Thus is set forth the Noble Truth of the Unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha-sacca*)[45] of *saṃsāric* existence (*bhava*), which is sometimes analysed as threefold *dukkhatā* (*dukkha-dukkha, saṅkhāra-dukkha* and *vipariṇāma-dukkha*).[46] This unsatisfactoriness is due to the continuous change or *becoming* that is *saṃsāra.*[47] This very dynamic nature of *saṃsāric* life with its self-generated potentialities tends to a continuation of individuality (*nāma-rūpa*)[48] or personality (*attabhāva*).[49] Thus is it asserted in early Buddhism that there is a life beyond (*atthi paro loko*),[50] which is proved by the supernormal experience of the Perfect Ones (*arahants*) who are perceivers of the world beyond (*paralokaviduno*)[51] by virtue of their having acquired the faculties of recollecting past births (*pubbenivāsānussati*) and observing the passing away and rebirth of beings (*sattānaṃ cutûpapatti-ñāṇa*),[52] the latter being also termed the super-normal vision (*dibba-cakkhu*).[53] Buddha himself exercised this power on several occasions when required to explain the bourne (*gati*) of his departed disciples.[54] The early Buddhist conviction of this fact of *saṃsāric* continuity is therefore beyond doubt and it is no wonder that those who refused to admit a life beyond were dubbed

micchādiṭṭhikas. It is clear then on what foundation the ethical system of early Buddhism rests. Once this *saṃsāric* continuity with all its attendant *dukkha* is granted. the ideal of man's perfection turns out to be the release (*nissaraṇa*) therefrom.[55] This is the goal of Buddhist ethics which consequently is conceived as the cessation of becoming (*bhava-nirodha*)[56] or the ending of *dukkha*,[57] generally called *Nibbāna*. Thus we discover the *raison d'être* of Buddhist ethics is the fundamental fact of *saṃsāric dukkha*. Hence the essential basis of the Buddhist moral life (*brahmacariya*) lies not in some metaphysical hypothesis conceived by *a priori* reasoning but, as Buddha pointed out to Mālunkyaputta, on the conviction that 'verily there is birth, there is decay, there is death etc.', of which the destruction is declared to be possible in this very life.[58] Thus the mere speculation on metaphysical problems, usually referred to as ten is condemned as unprofitable.[59] So Buddha tells Udayi that such ultimate questions as those that concern the origin (*pubbanta*) and the end (*aparanta*) of things, being solvable only by developing the highest faculties (*vijja, abhiññā*) but not by the exercise of mere reason,[60] it becomes imperative for man to accomplish the ethical process which alone could lead to the acquirement of such faculties.[61] Therefore, the importance of the ethical process for the realization of *Nibbāna* is unquestionable, and, as Dhammadinnā points out to Visākha, the moral life finds its apex, goal and consummation in *Nibbāna*.[62]

The foregoing discussion of the fundamental basis of the Buddhist ethic, its *raison d'être* and its goal, will help the student of Buddhism and the student of ethics to appreciate the important bearing that the Buddhist view of morality has to the burning questions of ethics such as the problem of evil,[63] and the problem of ethical relativity.[64] To a keen student of Buddhism it appears that early Buddhism offers definite solutions to these problems and as such it has a claim to serious consideration in this respect.

Our brief presentation of the philosophical basis of Buddhist ethics will have stressed the extreme urgency of the problem of evil for early Buddhism as well as its all-embracing and profound nature as indicated by its *saṃsāric* context. The problem of evil as discussed by Western thinkers, pertaining as it does to merely this visible life covers only a minute aspect of the problem, but it can be seen that fundamentally there is no difference between the two issues, for, as early Buddhism viewed it *dukkha-dukkhatā*[65] which is defined as man's conflict with his environment is only one aspect[66] of the

general unsatisfactoriness of *saṃsāric* becoming (*bhava-dukkha*). Thus it is to be expected that a thinking person (*viññū puriso*) cannot but be impressed by the obtrusiveness of evil or *dukkha* around him.[67] But this was exactly the point on which Professor Joad condemned Buddhism in a book published in 1929, in which he complained that 'for Buddhism as for Job man is born to trouble as sparks fly upwards'[68] and declared: 'I differ therefore from the dominant philosophy of the east in not despising the ordinary life of struggle and enjoyment of effort and reward.'[69] But it is significant, that, after the lapse of only *thirteen* years, he has been compelled to radically alter his opinion, for in his recent book, *God and Evil,* he admits: 'I conclude that attempts which are made. . . . to show that evil is *not* a real and fundamental principle belonging to the nature of things *are unsuccessful.*'[70] Such agreement as this between early Buddhism and modern philosophers on the problem of evil must, however, be necessarily partial because early Buddhist philosophy did not restrict its scope to the experiences of human reason alone as confined to this life. For, as we have pointed out earlier, Buddhism is based on a wider vision (*dassana*) which is the outcome of inner development (*bhāvanā*).

Now, since the wider import of the general unsatisfactoriness of *saṃsāric* life, and also the possibility of release therefrom, has to be accepted on the validity of the experiences of the Perfect Ones, early Buddhism recommends *saddhā* or the reliance on the experience of such *arahants* who have realised the higher vision and on their statements, after adequate investigation as to their worth.[71] Hence *saddhā* is held up to be the basis of the ethical process which ultimately leads to the realisation of the highest truth (*parama-sacca*)[72] and therewith the goal. Thus in practical ethics *saddhā* comes to be regarded as one of the five good things to be cultivated (*paricaritabbaṃ*),[73] although the definite warning is given that mere faith in the teacher is not sufficient for complete ethical progress.[74] The faith (*śraddhā*) of Vedic morality to which we have previously referred, is considered to be mere *blind* faith (*amūlikā saddhā*) and is consequently condemned by the Buddha in a talk with the brahmin Bhāradvāja. [75] It is on account of this that *saddhā* in early Buddhism is said to be twofold.[76] We cannot escape the conclusion that the *saddhā* encouraged in early Buddhism is only the result of an inference from the realisation of *arahants* as to the possibility of one's own realisation of the goal. Hence the only kind of faith that is

advocated, if it could be called faith at all, is what is designated 'logical faith' (*ākāravatī saddhā*).[77] The conversion of laymen to the belief that it was necessary to lead the higher moral life under the Buddha or his disciples was always prompted by this kind of *saddhā*—a fact attested to at numerous places in the Canon.[78]

The layman who thus takes up the spiritual life through his reliance on (*uddissa*) such a teacher is said to have started his career (*paṭipanno*) along the Path (*magga, paṭipadā*)[79] to *Nibbāna*. The Path is said to consist of three stages or parts usually called the three *sampadās*[80] or the three *khandhas*.[81] The first of these stages is *sīla* or ethical conduct, and practical morals have a meaning for the disciple only till such time as he arrives at the next stage of the Path, namely, concentration (*samādhi*). But the goal is not reached even then, and a still higher stage of development must be gone through and this is technically known as *paññā*. What is generally believed to be the Eightfold Path in Buddhism is included within these three, as the learned Dhammadinnā explained to Visākha.[82] How far, then, practical morality is of significance to one aspiring for the Buddhist goal becomes clear when it is considered that *sīla* forms only the initial stage of such process. In fact, early Buddhism administers a warning to the aspirant to master morality but not allow morality to get the better of him,[83] and it is clearly laid down that even virtuous conduct has to be given up at one stage. It need not, therefore, appear paradoxical when it is asserted that the disciple should try to put a final end to meritorious forms of good conduct.[84] Thus for Buddhism morality is not an end in itself. It is considering these features of the Path which, it is obvious, transcend Ethical Perfectionism, as is understood by Western moralists, and also the metaphysical perfection implied in the *Upaniṣads* that it is claimed that the Exalted One is the originator and proclaimer of a unique way.[85]

It is to be observed that in the spiritual evolution as indicated in this Path the question of Happiness as the ideal of morality finds a perfect solution. It is said that in the stage of concentration when the aspirant reaches the fourth *jhāna* both happiness and its opposite cease to concern him for he becomes indifferent to both pleasurable and painful feeling (*vedanā*). Up to that moment the aspirant is to experience inner happiness (*ajjhattasukhaṃ*).[86] This inner form of happiness is clearly differentiated from worldly happiness which is called 'low, vulgar and ignoble', inasmuch as such happiness depends on the senses.[87] It is expressly stated that this latter form of

material happiness is to be shunned[88] and hence to classify Buddhism as any form of Hedonism, as Dr. Pratt had done,[89] is quite unjustifiable. Over and above this sensuous happiness which has an erotic basis (*kāma*) and the inner *jhānic* happiness which is non-erotic (*nekkhamma*) is placed *Nibbāna,* as this latter happiness too is not final (*analaṃ*),[90] for it is only in the final state of spiritual attainment (*saññāvedayitanirodha*)[91] that happiness assumes its most perfect form. This state which is the *summum bonum* of Buddhism can be styled Happiness only in an exceptional sense. Yet, Buddha persists in calling it happiness in the face of the criticism of heretics for, as he once explained to Ānanda, he did not regard a state as happy just because of pleasurable feeling insofar as he considered the conception of happiness to be relative to the stage of spiritual evolution.[92] Thus, if in the ideal state of *Nibbāna* the aspirant transcends the subtlest forms of happiness and is not tinged by them, it would not be quite apposite to identify the early Buddhist ideal in ethics with that of Eudaemonism. But this does not deny the fact that for Buddhism, just as for modern psychology and biology, man as well as other living beings, by nature seeks for pleasure and avoids pain (*sukhakāmo dukkhapaṭikkūlo*).[93]

It can now be seen that there is a sense in which we may assert that the ethical process of Buddhism is intended to release man from the miseries of *saṃsāric* existence (*dukkha*) and take him to the ultimate Happiness or the Good (*attha*) that is *Nibbāna.* In this, Buddhism does not go against the basic psychology of man's nature, but endeavours to bring about its refinement and sublimation until it totally transcends the level at which it is found in *saṃsāric* existence. Thus *Nibbānic* happiness must be considered as the ideal for every living being. Hence is derived the *criterion* of moral judgment according to the ethical philosophy of early Buddhism which we have attempted to outline above. The criterion of Buddhist ethics is emphasised in several places[94] and seeks to determine whether a particular act would obstruct or not, oneself or others, in the attempt to win this release (*nissaraṇa*) from *dukkha* or *saṃsāric* evil. In his admonition to Rāhula Buddha makes it perfectly clear that 'whatever act tends to the obstruction or harm (*vyābādha*) of oneself and others (on the Path) is to be considered bad (*akusalaṃ*) as its upshot is pain and its result Evil.'[95] It is significant that the word *vyābādha* means both harm to the individual concerned, and, obstruction to spiritual progress. Therefore, subjectively an act (*kamma*)

becomes good (*kusala*) or bad (*akusala*) according as it promotes or hinders spiritual progress, and objectively it is considered to be meritorious (*puñña*) or demeritorious (*apuñña*) according as it is beneficial (*hita*) or harmful (*ahita*) to the similar progress of others. Sir Edwin Arnold in his *Light of Asia* has beautifully summed up this idea:

> Kill not—for pity's sake—and lest ye slay
> The meanest thing upon its upward way.

To inflict pain, for instance, either on oneself or others is to cause distraction of mind by inciting evil and harmful emotions which cannot be but obstacles on the 'upward way'.

Thus the ethical content of an act is psychological and its source is emotional. Accordingly, early Buddhism considers as ethical only those acts which are volitional (*sañcetanika*). Thus the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* attributes to the Buddha the statement that the real act (*kamma*) is an act of volition (*cetana*).[96] This is natural inasmuch as the intensity of the act depends on the extent to which it is committed deliberately (*sañcicca*).[97] For instance, it is pointed out that an infant who is not conscious even of his own body cannot commit any sin.[98] In technical language this would mean that all acts are not ethically significant, but only those that are voluntary, that is to say, willed by the agent. This being the fundamental sense in which an act is conceived in Buddhist ethics what we *do* and *say* have only an *indirect* ethical significance, whereas what we *think* or *will* is *directly* ethical.

In a conversation with the Jain Dīghatapassi, Buddha emphasises the greater ethical importance of the mental or volitional act (*mano-kamma*) as compared with the verbal (*vacī-kamma*) or the physical act (*kāya-kamma*).[99] Hence the Buddha's emphasis on the elimination of the cardinal evils of attachment (*rāga, lobha*), ill-will (*dosa*) and infatuation (*moha*)[100] for they *directly* affect the nature of our volitions, while other evil acts such as meat-eating and drinking of liquor, etc.,[101] affect the mind only *indirectly*. Therefore while the distinction between absolute and relative moral values seems meaningless and unnecessary according to the Buddha, there appears to be some sense in which we can divide voluntary acts or ethically significant acts into *direct* and *indirect* according as they affect the main ethical problem of the release from *saṃsaric* existence. It thus

becomes clear that for the Buddha moral judgments are not to be based on some *a priori* conceptions of objectively real values like goodness, truth and beauty, as is usually held by idealistic philosophers, nor are they to be regarded as *subjective* or *relative* from all points of view as asserted by most scientific and materialistic thinkers. According to Bertrand Russell it would seem that ethics are a mere matter of taste. 'If two men differ about values', he says summing up his ethical doctrine, 'there is not a disagreement as to any kind of truth but a difference of taste'.[102] Similarly, Professor Edward Westermarck for whom all ethical judgments have an emotional basis[103] is the leading exponent of a theory of Ethical Relativity, which however adds that normal phenomena are not made meaningless just because they happen to fall within the subjective sphere of experience.[104] For him, nevertheless, ethics remain still *relative*, because moral judgments depend on economic, social and psychological (emotional) circumstances. According to the Buddha however, moral judgments assume a permanent value in so far as they are based on the point of view of the end which, as we have stressed above, is the release from *saṃsāric* evil. But we may add that there is a sense in which moral values are *relative* even for the Buddha, and this derives from the existence of levels of reality corresponding to the respective stages of the Path to which we have already referred.

The above discussion should make it clear that the ethics of the Buddha is prompted by one *motive*, viz., the desire for release and relies on no external *sanctions* such as God, Church or State, but is pre-eminently *autonomous* in character.[105] In fact, the desire for release and the psychological observation that attachment, hate and infatuation directly affect the nature of our volitions, sum up the *motives* and *sanctions* of Buddhist morality. In this discussion, however, we have taken for granted the most important fact of the freedom of the human will. We regarded man as intrinsically a morally free agent who had within him the power to choose between alternative courses of action. Is this justifiable according to the Buddha's doctrine? Certainly, yes. There is in fact no more important conviction in the whole of Buddha's philosophy than the idea that within this individuality (*nāmarūpa*) there is the *potentiality* of release if only man wills that way.[106] Therefore, in spite of the fact that there is in a sense *determinism* to the extent that empirical existence is admittedly conditioned[107] and thus is obviously subject to the vicissitudes of birth, decay and death, there is still in man the

power (*balaṃ, viriyaṃ*)[108] to overcome all this by the strength of will (*chando*).[109]

Human life is regarded by the Buddha as in every way the best suited for this effort and birth among the animals etc., is consequently deprecated, for it is only in man that the *power to will* exists in such a high degree with infinite capacity to develop higher by self-discipline and meditation. Early Buddhism does not deny the importance of environmental factors in the moulding of man's conduct but, on the other hand, it does not in the least subscribe to any theory that man's conduct is merely a set of reactions to external stimuli or unconscious tendencies, or that it is determined by social and economic factors alone for, it would be admitted even by the most adverse critics of Buddha, that no one raised Man and his noblest gift, the human Reason or Will, to such dignity as that greatest of ethical teachers born in the philosphically rife atmosphere of India did twenty-five centuries ago.

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2. *Indian Thought and its Development,* p. 117
3. *Buddhism,* p. 185, 186.
4. *Decline of the West,* Pt. I, p 356.
5. *Bṛhad. Up.,* 3.9.21.
6. *Chānd. Up.,* 2 23.1.
7. Ibid., 6.16.1, 2.
8. Cf. *Tait. Up.,* 1.1; 1.9; 1.11.
9. *RV,* I.2,8, 105, 12; IV. 23.8.
10. *Chānd. Up.,* 7.6.1
11. *Bṛhad. Up.,* 5.2.1-3.
12. *Chānḍ. Up.,* 5.11.5.
13. Ibid., 8.4.3.
14. Ibid., 8.5.1-4.
15. Ibid., 2.23.1; 8.4.1.
16. *Bṛhad. Up.,* 3.8.9.
17. *Tait. Up.,* 1.11.3,1.
18. *Tat tvam asi, Chānd. Up.,* 6.9.4; *aham brahmāsmi; Brhad. Up.,* 1.4.10.
19. *Kaus. Up.,* 3.2.
20. *History of Indian Philosophy,* vol. VI p. 399.
21. *DN,* Suttas 56,76.
22. *MN,* I. 515.
23. Ibid.
24. *DN.* I.54.
25. Ibid., p. 53.
26. Ibid., p 5

27. Ibid., p. 56.
28. *MN*, I.517.
29. Cf. Belvalkar and Ranade, *History of Indian Philosophy*, p. 453.
30. *DN*, I.58.
31. *'Evampi me no; tathā pi me no; aññathā ti pi me no; no ti pi me no; no no ti pi me no.'* Ibid.
32. *Samaṇabrāhmaṇā aññamaññassa ujuvipaccanikavādā, MN*, I.408.
33. See 'Upali Sutta', *MN*, I. 372, *et seq.*
34. *DN*, P. 264.
35. *Ibid., MN*, I, 287, 401.
36. *MN*, I.130 *DN*, II.316.
37. *MN*, I.403.
38. *DN*, II. 316, 317.
39. *MN*, I. 288, 294, 403.
40. This non-physical factor is known by the terms *'gandhabba'* (*MN*, I. 265) and *'viññāṇa'* (*DN*, II.63).
41. *Sn*, verse 728.
42. Cf. *SN*, II. 20.
43. *Aniccato dukkhato rogato gaṇḍato sallato aghato ābādhato parato palokato suññato anattato, MN*, I. 435.
44. Ibid., I.232.
45. *Sn*, verses 770, 1051.
46. *DN*, III.216.
47. *Sn*, Verse 742.
48. *MN*, I. 52, 53, 67, 261
49. Ibid., II.32, 181.
50. Ibid., I.403.
51. Ibid
52. *DN*, I.82.
53. Ibid., *MN*, II.21.
54. See *DN*, *suttas* 16, 18, 19
55. *Atthi idam atthi hinaṃ atthi paṇītam atthi imassa saññāgatassa uttariṃ nissaraṇaṃ, MN*, I.38; cf. 326.
56. Ibid., I. 270, 410.
57. *Sn*, verse 732.
58. *Sassato loko ti Mālunkyāputta diṭṭhiya sati asassato loko ti vā diṭṭhiyā sati atth'-eva jāti atthi jara atthi maraṇaṃ santi sokaparidevadukkhadomanassūpayasa yesāhaṃ diṭṭheva dhamme nighātam paññāpemi. . .* etc.
59. *MN*, I.431
60. Ibid., II.31,32.
61. *Vigatūpakkilese citte pubbenivāsānussatiñāṇāya cittaṃ abhiniharati, MN*, II.38.
62. Ibid., I.304.
63. See Joad, *God and Evil.*
64. See Westermarck, *Ethical Relativity.*
65. *DN*, III.216.
66. See *MN*, III.250 for a definition of the narrower sense of the early Buddhist concept of *dukkha* as distinct from its *saṃsāric* import.
67. See Ibid, I.521, 522, *' idha Sandaka Tathāgato. . . ñāyaṃ dhammaṃ kusalaṃ'*.
68. *Matter, Life and Value*, p. 369.
69. Ibid., p. 373.

70. *God and Evil,* p. 98.
71. *MN,* I.173.
72. Ibid ., II. 171.
73. The five are '*saddhā , sīla, suta, cāga,* and *paññā, MN,* II.180.
74. Ibid , II.94.
75. Ibid., II.170.
76. Ibid.
77. Ibid., I.401.
78. Ibid., I.123; cf. I.16 etc.
79. Ibid., I.434.
80. *DN,* I.172.
81. *MN,* I.301
82. Ibid.
83. *Sīlavā. . . no ca sīlamayo, Majjhima Nikāya,* II.27.
84. Ibid.
85. Ibid., III.8.
86. Ibid., III.230.
87. Ibid.
88. Ibid., III.233.
89. *The Pilgrimage of Buddhism.* p. 20.
90. *MN,* I.455.
91. Ibid., I.456
92. Ibid., I.400.
93. Ibid., I.315.
94. *MN,* I.415.
95. *MN,* III.207; I.377.
96. *AN,* III.415.
97. *MN,* I.523; II.103.
98. Ibid., II.24.
99. Ibid., I.373.
100. *DN,* I.79, 156; III. 214
101. *MN,* I.307.
102. *Religion and Science,* p 237
103. *The Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas,* p 4; *Ethical Relativity.* p 220.
104. Ibid., p. 18, 19; p. 220.
105. See my Introduction to Tachibana's *Ethics of Buddhism* (Colombo).
106. *SN,* I.62.
107. *Sn,* verse 505.
108. *MN,* I.407.
109. Ibid , I.313.

4

Contribution of Buddhism to Indian Life and Thought*

It would be an impossible task to attempt, within the confines of a single paper, to assess, nay, even to record, the contribution of Buddhism to Indian life and thought. Hence the ensuing discussion will be limited to just one aspect of this vast problem; viz., the relative value of the contribution made by early Pali Buddhism to the religious and philosophical culture of ancient India. That Buddhism arose out of the previous Vedic culture as found reflected in the *Saṃhitas, Brāhmaṇas* and *Upaniṣads* may be readily admitted, although to agree with the prima facie comparisons generally attempted between the two religions in their theoretical and practical aspects seems hardly feasible.

In my view the purely philosophical aspect of the two systems would come within the 'theoretical', and ethical conduct along with the higher culture of yoga and *samādhi* under the term 'practical'. Students of the Veda need not be reminded of the importance to it of the theoretical conceptions derived mainly from mythology, magic and tradition[1], and how far the real 'inward' culture of the Vedic religion is dependent upon such notions. In fact, spiritual progress as conceived by the *Upaniṣads* is necessarily limited by these inasmuch as they form its background, whereas in early Buddhism, at least as preserved in the Pali Canon, an advance in matters spiritual is clearly seen to the extent that such beliefs are either revised in the light of reason and experience or altogether abandoned. It is not intended here to deny that mythical facts are confronted with even in the Pali Canon, but these have no real bearing on the fundamental basis of the religion as in the case of the Vedas. It is only with this

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'historical' perspective that an attempt could be made to assess the real value of Buddhism's contribution to Indian life and thought.

To take the theoretical aspect first, there is much disagreement among recognized authorities as to the exact significance of Buddha's contribution to Indian *thought*. By the term 'thought' in the relevant historical context must be understood primarily metaphysical philosophy, for that undoubtedly is the most important aspect of Vedic thought which finds its culmination in the *Upaniṣads*. The concept of *Ātman* and *Brahman* which sum up the whole metaphysical thought of the *Upaniṣads* are nothing if not the highest fruits of the previous philosophical development.[2] It might be said, indeed, that the *Upaniṣads* present the whole theoretical basis of Indian life, particularly of religious life, and that even Buddhism must be studied and assessed in that light. Now, it cannot be gainsaid that the *Ātman* and the *Brahman* doctrines and their multitudinous ramifications are already found in the earliest Upaniṣadic texts which are definitely pre-Buddhistic. If that be granted—and there is no need to doubt it—how does the much discussed *anatta* theory of early Buddhism stand in relation to these two basic concepts? The only scholar to face this question squarely was Mrs C.A.F. Rhys Davids, but in the formulation of her hypothesis she went hopelessly astray in that she started with the presupposition that early Buddhism was completely free from any criticism of the *Ātman* concept as implied in the *anatta* theory. The result reached by her is, therefore, so startling that even hostile critics of the Theravāda tradition of the *anatta* dogmatism fail to find any possibility of agreement. Mrs Rhys Davids has thrown much light on the early Buddhist attitude to the important metaphysical problem of personality, but her general conclusion that early Buddhism had a mandate of 'Immanence', and pantheistic immanence at that', runs totally counter to every statement on the subject in the Pali Canon. It would thus seem important to discuss the theory of Immanence as taught in the *Upaniṣads* and see what a study of the early Buddhist position reveals in respect of it.

Both in the development of the concept of *Ātman* and in that of *Brahman*, the notion of pantheistic immanence is reached as an inevitable step early in the *Upaniṣadic* period. That the concept of Brahman which very early in its evolution gained the meaning of 'World-ground' came to signify in course of time the unitary principle underlying all phenomena, objective and subjective, implying their being (*sat*) and final essence (*rasa*) or substance need not cause

any wonder. But it is remarkable that even the parallel notion of *Ātman* whose origin in various animistic and mythical beliefs is clearly reflected in its relation to *Puruṣa*, etc., had by the time of the earliest *Upaniṣads* acquired a connotation of pantheistic immanence. Thus a very early passage of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (1.6.1-3) represents the entire, actual (*satya*) world as a threefold (*nāma-rūpa-karma*) appearance of the unitary, immortal *Ātman* He is found in all being (*Īśa*, 6-7). One should worship the World (*loka*) as the *Ātman* (*Bṛhad.* 1.4.15; cf. 16,17; 4.4.22), and recognize this World, the *Ātman*, as his own (*sva*). Thus this whole Universe (*idam sarvam*) is the *Ātman* (*Bṛhad.* 2.4.6; 4.5.7; *Chānd.* 7.25.2), the ontological *prius* of everything (*ātmata evedam sarvam; Chānd.* 7.26.1). *Atman* pervades the whole universe and is, therefore, the immanent Soul of the World (*sarvāntaraḥ, Bṛhad.* 3.4.1; *antaryāmi*, 3.7.3). In a section of the *Bṛhad.* Up. (2.5) the statement is made fourteen times that 'He, indeed, is just this Soul (*Ātman*), this Immortal, this Brahma, this All', being applied to such categories as the elements, the Sun, Moon, etc. Pantheism, in fact, could go no further, but, however high it soared the Highest Reality was still Soul or *Ātman*. The *Upaniṣadic* conception of the Absolute as expressed by the neuter 'Brahman' could never dissociate itself from this all-embracing notion of the *Ātman*. No doubt, the two principles are identified: *the Ātman is the Brahma* (*Bṛhad*, 2.5.19; 4.4.5). In fact, the same *Upaniṣad* asserts that 'Apart from the *Ātman*, there is no Brahma' (2.4.6 etc.), and the *Chāndogya* goes to the very limit of this identification when it declare 'That is Brahma, that is Immortality, that is *Ātman*' in a passage extolling *ākāśa* as the highest principle (8.14). Furthermore, the Universal Soul (*Vaiśvānara-ātman*) is said to have been identified by various philosophers with several categories like Heaven, Sun, Wind etc., (*Ibid.* 5.11-18), and it is pantheistically conceived as a thread (*sūtra*) running through the whole Cosmos (*Bṛhad.* 3.7.23; cf. 4.2). However idealistically the *Ātman* might have been conceived in these and other passages, yet the self-same pantheistic and absolutist Self is referred to in crudely mythical and theistic terms in the very same texts as '*Īśvara*' and *puruṣa* (e.g., *Ibid.* 4.4.22; 3.9.26).

That early Buddhism as found in the Pali Canon directly refutes not only all *theistic* notions such as *Issara* and *kattā* (*DN*, I.18; *MN*, I.327) but also every *pantheistic* idea of *Immanence* is clear from a perusal of these texts. It is plainly declared in the *Majjhima Nikāya*

(II.68) that the Cosmos or the World (*loka*) is totally lacking (*ūna*) in any metaphysical substance and that consequently the World cannot be held to be permanent (*dhuva*), thus making it impossible to regard it as one's own (*saka = sva*) or as a haven of security (*tāṇa*, cf. *Chānd.* '*sata ātmanas trāṇaṃ vindati*', 8.5.2). It must be remembered that the epithet *dhuva = dhruva* is clearly used in the *Upaniṣads* to characterize the *Ātman* (*Bṛhad.* 4.4.20), which as identical with the World is to be recognized as one's own (*sva, Ibid.* 1.4.15,16.17). Pantheism in the sense that everything (*sabbaṃ*), or 'all this' (*sarvam idam*), as the *Upaniṣads* put it, is identical with any essential Being such as *Ātman*, is clearly condemned in the *Majjhima Nikāya* (I.329). The famous *skandha*- analysis of early Buddhism (e.g. *DN*, II. 297) refutes the notion of an *Ātman* both in the external world (*bahiddhā-rūpa*) and in the individual (*ajjhatta*), asserting that there is no *attā* in the eye, ear, etc. (*DN*, I.29; *MN*, III. 282) in direct contradiction of the Upaniṣadic belief of the 'unseen Seer', 'unheard Hearer', etc., that is to say, the *Ātman* residing in the individual as ultimate agent of all actions, perceptions etc. (*Bṛhad.* 3.7.15-23). In both philosophies the concept of the empirical world is denoted by the term *idam* (cf. *sarvamidam*), but while the *Upaniṣads* declare its fullness (*pūrṇamidam, Bṛhad.* 5.1), it is highly significant that the early *Nikāyas* characterize it as *void* (*śūnya*). Thus the *Majjhima* says in more than one place: 'This (world) is void of a Soul or anything derived from a Soul (*suññam idam attena vā attaniyena vā, MN*, I. 297; II.263), refuting also the identification of the microcosm with the macrocosmic Soul or its derivatives (*na hi no etam attā vā attaniyam vā, MN*, I.141). It is indeed a fallacy to identify the World with any *Ātman* (*so loko so attā, MN*, I. 135,138; II.338; III. 265, 271) and to view the world of matter or personality in terms of the *Ātman* or to so characterize them (I. 300; III.18). The contemplation of this *void-ness* is recommended as one of the best meditations (*suññatāvihāra, MN*, III. 294) and the ethical superiority of this attitude to the worship (*upāsanā*) of the pantheistic *Ātman* (*Brahma*) as inculcated in the *Upaniṣads* (*Bṛhad. MN*, I.4.5-17 is clearly brought out in the famous philosophical text of the *Sutta Nipāta* when a brahmin youth is advised: 'O Mogharāja, always mindful and self-possessed, view this world as void, having eradicated the notion of an *Ātman* (underlying it)...' (*Suññato lokam avekkhassu Mogharāja sadā sato, attānudiṭṭhim ūhacca...*, 1117, 1119).

The above discussion clearly indicates that early Buddhism

refused to accept any reality as immanent in the outside world and in that sense a metaphysic of substance has no meaning for it. It also showed that early Buddhism considered that any concept of personality which attributed to it an unchanging and permanent metaphysical substratum fell short of the truth regarding individuality. But this does not mean that for early Buddhism an individual is a mere concatenation of mental and material factors without any deeper basis. A reference back to its historical context will clarify the issue. The previous thinkers had taken two fundamental positions on this important problem. The orthodox Upaniṣadic viewpoint regarded personality as being based on the ontological basis of an unchanging element of Being (*sat*). This is referred to in the Pali *nikāyas* as Sassatavāda or the 'eternalist theory'. In opposition to this idealistic school and as a reaction to it had arisen even in the Vedic period a powerful body of materialist thinkers (*Cārvākas, Lokāyatas, Pāṣaṇḍas*) who very much like the materialists of our own day called their system a 'science' (*śāstra*), doubtless in opposition to idealistic philosophies, and opposed the doctrine of 'immortality' as preached by the latter. In canonical Pali books they are generally grouped under the term 'heretics' (*titthiyas*) and their doctrine is styled '*Ucchedavāda*'. It becomes increasingly clear to any careful student of these texts that early Buddhism refused to accept either of these two extremist positions (*ubhayante*) and made use of the *skandha*-analysis to refute both.

It must be emphasized that the *skandha* theory does in no way propose to analyse human personality *ad nihilum,* as may be clearly inferred from some arguments of the *anatta* dogmatists. The concept of *anatta* in the early *nikāyas* merely refers to the absence of any ontological (*sat*) substratum in man, as pointed out above, stressing the constantly changing nature of 'personality'. This is the gist of the famous Buddhist concept of *Bhava* or 'becoming'—a concept directly applied to sentient life in any form of existence. It is this 'becoming' that is held to be permanently characterized by the three signs (*tilakkhaṇa*) of transience (*anicca*), unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*) and unsubstantiality (*anatta*). The proper sense of the last characteristic of *bhava,* viz., *anatta* can be easily grasped when it is pointed out that the very same formula appears in several other texts as *anicca-dukkha-vipariṇāmadhamma* (*AN,* I.258; II. 177), the last epithet *vipariṇāma-dhamma* (evolving) being in the context clearly synonymous with *anatta*. Now, it is evident that when early Buddhism

refuted the Upaniṣadic theory of 'being' (*sat*) as identical with *Ātman*, the main purpose was to emphasize the constantly *becoming* on the changing nature of every part of the 'personality' as given in the *skandha* theory, viz., *rūpa, vedanā, saññā, saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*. But it is to be remembered here that the last category of *viññāṇa* is at the same time held to be the surviving factor in rebirth. The *nāma-rūpa* or the physico-mental unit which arises with parturition can develop successfully only if the *viññāṇa* descends into the womb (*MN*, I.265; *AN*, I. 176) and this is no other than the *saṃvattanika-viññaṇa* or the consciousness that evolves during *saṃsāra* (*MN*, II. 262 et. seq.). Thus it becomes clear why the statement is made that the *nāma-rūpa* depends on *viññāṇa* and the *viññāṇa* depends on *nāma-rūpa* (*DN*, II. 63). It has been shown elsewhere that as rebirth-nexus this same consciousness is sometimes styled 'Gandhabba' and is no other than the *vijñanâtman* of the *Upaniṣads* in its eschatological context *sans*, however, its *ātmanic* substantiality.[4]

Thus, out of the conceptions of 'personality' as contained in previous thought, Buddhism appears to have accepted only its *aspect* of *vijñaṇa*, but even here eliminated every taint of pantheistic immanence (*sat-ātman*). The position given to it in the so-called *pañcakośa* theory clearly differentiates the Buddhist conception from it, whether one interprets the said theory as implying a concentric scheme or as an ascending series of planes of experience. In fact, the Upaniṣadic concept has no meaning apart from its 'horizontal' pantheistic context of 'immanence', whereas the Buddhist *saṃvattanika-viññāṇa* is, if anything, a 'vertical' concept implying solely and purely a series of rebirths as its basis and even then of such *dynamic* import as to dissociate itself from any notion of an abiding substance. For, to assert, as the Upaniṣadic theory does, that the solid (*ghana*) conscious self has a still more essential substance of bliss (*ānanda*)—a notion directly contradicted by the Buddhist characteristic of *dukkha* or ill—is to remove 'personality' from its legitimate empirical (*saṃsāric*) sphere to an altogether rigid domain of ontological being. It must be remembered that, according to early Buddhism, even this *saṃvattanika-viññāṇa* must cease (*nirujjhati*) on the threshold of *Nibbāna* (*DN*, I. 223). This dynamic concept of an ever-changing but still surviving *viññāṇa*, with its *raison d'être* in *saṃsāra* alone, is, then, a distinct contribution of Buddhism to Indian thought, constituting a clear advance on the corresponding Upaniṣadic notion of an unchanging, surviving conscious self

(*saṃsārī vijñānâtman*). It is this very changeable nature of *viññāṇa* that makes for the spiritual progress as envisaged in higher *samādhi* experience, and, this leads us to the next part of the discussion, namely, the contribution of Buddhism to the practical aspect of Indian religious and philosophical culture.

Every student of the Pali Canon is familiar with the famous Buddhist scheme of release (*vimutti*) as outlined in the *jhāna-samāpatti* series of states of religious experience (*DN*, I. 36, 73; *MN*, II.17 etc). This practical scheme is the inevitable end of the holy life (*brahmacarya*) which begins with the purification of conduct (*sīla*). Thus ethical purity appears in early Buddhism as a mere stepping stone to higher attainments.[5] The real training in the spiritual sphere begins with the four *jhānas*. Then come the four states of infinity (*ānantya*), to wit, of space (*ākāśa*), consciousness (*viññāṇa*), nothingness (*ākiñcañña*), and neither-perception-nor-non-perception (*nevasaññānâsāñā*). But, even with the last, perfect release is not obtained, for, even here consciousness is found and hence it belongs to the *saṃsārically* empirical sphere of 'contact' (*phassa*). Thus real release is gained only with the next and the highest state of *nirodha* or complete cessation of all that is empirical. It may be seen here that Buddhism does not deny the relatively higher value of the infinity states of *ākāśa* and *vijñāna*, states that are held to be the ideal in most Upaniṣadic passages. When *prāṇa* is regarded as *Brahma* it is the former that is identified with the Highest and when it is said to be the infinite consciousness (*anantam vijñānam*) it is the latter. But it may be pointed out that these states are not regarded as the real goal even in the *Upaniṣads* but only as relatively lower stages. It is, in fact, in the Yājñavalkya section of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* that Upaniṣadic thought appears, but even there only *appears* to have reached any higher state of spiritual evolution. For, there one finds the Highest characterized by Yājñavalkya as *neti neti* (4.4.22). Now, if this observation be correct, it is not difficult to place it in the corresponding Buddhist scheme. The 'sphere of nothingness' (*ākiñcañcāyatana*) or the third of the infinity states is clearly described in the Pali texts in the idiomatically same phraseology (*natthi kiñci iti*) showing an unmistakable parallelism. Doubtless, the same ideal is characterized in the *Upaniṣads* by the term *samprasāda* (*Bṛhad*, 4.3.19.21). It must be emphasized, however, that this state of 'serenity' is for the *Upaniṣads* identical with the state of deep, dreamless sleep (*Bṛhad*. 4.3; *Chānd*. 8.3.4; 12.2), although the

great Yājñavalkya himself regarded it as the highest conceivable spiritual state: 'This is the highest attainment, the highest world, the highest bliss' (*Bṛhad.* 4.3.32). It is, therefore, very significant that, according to Pali Buddhism, 'serenity' (*sampasāda*) is the characteristic of only the second *jhāna*, a state far below the goal. Similarly, the *Upaniṣads*, following the famous *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* dictum *śānto'yam ātmā* (3.2.17) describes the ideal state as *śānta*. Here, again, it is to be remarked that early Buddhism applies it only to the infinity-state of 'neither-perception-nor-non-perception' (*santaṃ etaṃ, DN,* I. 34; *MN,* II. 12 etc.), but not to the highest. Thus it may be conceded that spiritual progress as envisaged in the *Upaniṣads* never rose beyond the penultimate state of the Buddhist path to perfect purity (*pariśuddhi*) or complete release (*parimutti*).[6] This conclusion is further supported by the fact that, according to the earliest Pali documents (*MN,* I. 166-67), Prince Siddhārtha in his quest for the ideal (*ariya-pariyesanā*) acquired only the infinity state of 'nothingness' (= *neti neti*) under the great exponent of Hindu yoga, Ālāra Kālama, and improved it only by one more step (*nevasaññā-nasaññā*) under the next teacher, Uddaka Rāmaputta. Thus the attainment of 'Nirodha' as found in early Buddhist religious experience must be deemed to mark a definite advance over the highest reached in the Upaniṣadic period in the field of 'practical' religion.

Accordingly, the contribution of Buddhism to Indian thought and life—meaning thereby spiritual life—is certainly both vast and great. But this excellence was *not* the achievement of the later developed schools like Śūnyavāda or even Vijñānavāda, which, on the other hand, may be considered to represent various forms of 'extremism' in philosophical and religious matters, totally foreign to the original Buddhism. To characterize *nirvāṇa* as *śūnya* is obviously an illegitimate extension of that term's application to the external world and empirical life that was its sole context in the early Pali Buddhism as shown above. Similarly to posit a self-subsistent (*nirālamba*) *Vijñāna,* the substance of the Universe (*sarvam buddhimayam jagat*) and identify that with *nirvāṇa* as the 'frankly idealistic'[7] Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda school attempted to do, is to distort the extremely delicate sense of the early Buddhist concept of *viññāṇa* and identify the *saṃsārically* empirical conscious experience in 'becoming' with the supreme state which is beyond all *phassa* and *bhava.*[8] These doctrines must be considered as 'historical'

developments from an earlier Buddhism and assessed for what they are worth only in relation to the Vedānta dialecticism that was certainly their main source of inspiration.

The above discussion should have made it clear that early Buddhism not only discarded all the meaningless myth and ritualism of the previous Vedic culture and purified religious philosophy from its abominable excrescences, but actually led spiritual life as then understood and realized to its logical and real consummation, removing it totally from the crudely empirical and the merely conceptual (*pakappita*)— fallacies into which Buddhism itself later fell back, for Yogācāra idealism suffers from the former and the Śūnyavāda dialecticism from the latter. Historical students of the subject can easily find the respective antecedents of these two systems in the metaphysical and spiritual currents flowing from Vedic times Considered in this light early Buddhism as recorded in the canonical Pali books distinctly appears on the one hand, as a carrying out of the religious tendencies inherent in the best aspect of the Vedic religion indicating a definite advance in them so as to make it possible to regard Buddhism as the very acme of spiritual or 'inward' progress ever reached in India, while, on the other hand, it seems to present a restatement and even a refutation of most of the ruling conceptions, dogmas and assumptions that underlie the Vedic religion forming its 'theoretical' background.

Finally, a word about the contribution historical Buddhism made to the secular culture of India. It is generally agreed that even in this respect the part played by Buddhism is great and of permanent value. One may even go so far as to point out that even positive sciences like medicine and chemistry reached their highest development under its influence, for it is idle to deny that the analytical (*vibhajja*) method and the positivistic (*yonisomanasikāra*) standpoint recommended in early Pali Buddhism helped to promote a keener scientific spirit. Nevertheless, it is surprising to find that the name of Buddhism is yet connected with the so-called 'enervation of Hindu society'. Perhaps this palpable contradiction or fallacy lies in the theory that condemns Buddhism out of all religions as 'world-denying' or 'only other-worldly'. But it is forgotten that the very concept of religion loses its *raison d'être* if the 'other-world' prospect is ignored in spiritual life and it becomes only a 'world-affirming' as has woefully been the case with religion in the West.

The actual conflict between religion and life is indeed the result

of an eternal paradox in the very nature of things as the Naciketas legend in the *Kāṭhakopaniṣad* makes it amply clear, and is demonstrated by the history of all religious systems. It is idle to lay the blame for India's material decline at the door of Buddhism or, perhaps, even of any other single branch of Hindu culture. The direct causes for material progress or decline are more intimately related to worldly life than is either religion or philosophy and must be sought for in their proper spheres.

The truth is that religion becomes gradually weaker as a cultural determinant as society progresses towards material civilization, and as the history of the world during the last millennium shows, tends to get altogether eliminated in areas where the impulse towards material progress is keenest. Thus it would seem that it is as wrong to over emphasize the importance of Buddhism's contribution towards the reaching of the cultural climax in ancient India as to blame it for the decline that followed this climax as is inevitable in the course of the evolution of any culture-cycle.

REFERENCES

1. For sound arguments in favour of an evolutionary view of Indian philosophy from such elements, see Belvalkar and Ranade, *History of Indian Philosophy*, vol. II.
2. An evolution of metaphysics in this sense must be admitted.
3. Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Birth of Indian Psychology and its Development in Buddhism.*
4. See 'Vedic Gandharva and Pali Gandhabba', in this volume, pp. 175 ff.
5. For a fuller discussion of the subject see 'Buddhism & the Moral Problem', in this volume, pp. 25 ff.
6. See 'Vedic Yakṣa and Pali Yakkha' in this volume, pp. 131 ff.
7. Cf. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, vol. I. p. 627.
8. For the Original Connotation of the Pali term, refer to the 'Brahmajāla Suttanta' of the *DN*, (No. I).

5

Buddhism and Society*

It is my pleasant duty at the outset to express my sense of gratitude to the administrators of the Dona Alpina Ratnayake Lecture Trust for inviting me to deliver this tenth lecture in the series. I would also consider it an obligation to offer you a few words of explanation regarding the choice of my subject. You will observe that the previous lectures of this series, with the possible exception of the last which dealt with *śīla* or moral conduct, were devoted entirely to the more theoretical or philosophical aspects of Buddhism. It is my belief that the problems of social relationship and social morality are equally, if not more, important from a practical point of view, although we are apt to overlook that aspect of the *Dhamma* in our enthusiasm for its more distinctive philosophical features. But early Buddhism as preserved in the Pali Canon—to which I intend confining myself for the purpose of this lecture—is nothing if it is not a *practical* way (*magga*) for man's progress and emancipation. I need not, therefore, apologise to you for making this humble attempt to present to you as clearly and as faithfully as possible the early Buddhist view of society, its nature and ideals, and man's position in it as a social being.

In view of this, it becomes necessary that I should give you, to begin with, a description, however brief, of the Brahmanist conception of society as it prevailed at or just before the time Buddhism began to influence the life and thought of the people of North India. The period may be regarded as the age of the *Brāhmaṇopaniṣadic* literature,[1] that is to say, round about the eighth and seventh centuries B.C. The Vedic society even in its early stages had exhibited a tendency towards a gradation of Aryan society, obviously in process of mixing with the aborigines (*dāsas*), on the basis of the colour of the skin (*varṇa; RV,* 3.34.9). Among the Aryans themselves birth

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(*jāti*) in the families (*kulas*) of priests (brāhmaṇa) or warriors (kṣatriya; RV, 4.42.1) was beginning to give rise to gradations within themselves; those who were engaged in settled occupations (*viś*) and leading economically productive lives were collectively grouped under the designation vaiśyas. By the time of the latest stage in the evolution of *Ṛgvedic* society these three grades had come to be listed together with the *śūdras*—the name denoting the lowest stratum composed of the *dāsas* and others—as four separate classes. A stanza of the *Ṛgveda* (10.90.12) says that when the Cosmic Person was sacrificed his mouth became the *Brāhmaṇa*, his arms the *Rājanya* (i.e. *kṣatriya*), his thighs the *vaiśya*, and from his feet were produced the *śudras*.

The above gradation of society received greater priestly authority in the time of the *Brāhmaṇa* texts, and we may surmise that at this period the conception of fixed castes (*varṇas*) was already gaining currency. Now the generation of castes comes to be presented as a deliberate act of God (*Brahman*). An old passage in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*[2] details this generation of castes from the primary *Brahman* not only in human society but among the gods as well. *Brahman*, it is said, was alone and felt the need to create the *kṣatra* or the warrior race on earth corresponding to the heavenly rulers such as Indra and Varuṇa. Being yet unsatisfied *Brahman* then created the *vaiśya* class on earth corresponding to the deities such as the Vasus and the Maruts. Yet the process was not complete and so was created the śudra caste on earth corresponding to the god Pūṣan in the celestial world. Finally as kingship was not powerful enough in itself he created Law (*dharma*): 'It was on account of the supremacy of Law that even a weak man is able to govern a strong man. And this Law is identified with truth (*satya*)'. Here we have in a nutshell the Brāhmaṇistic theory of social organisation expressed in the phrascology of the priestly class.

From the above it could also be seen that according to Brāhmaṇistic ideas the structure of society was divinely ordered[3] and that social relationship as understood by them was one between man and the gods.[4] It is to such sources that we have to trace the Hindu socio-ethical concepts of a later day, such as the *varṇāśramadharma* theory and the *svadharma* theory. The former proposes to fix the position of the individual in an unalterable religious and social theme from birth to death; and the latter is based, as Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy admits, on the peculiar Hindu notion of 'heredity both of blood and culture',[5] the one traceable to the earlier mentioned classification

under *jāti* and the other probably to the culture of the clan. It is on this functional and hereditary basis that the Hindu aristocracy, consisting mainly of the *brāhmaṇas*, claimed every social privilege and supremacy at the time of the rise of Buddhism. The increasing power of the *kṣatriyas* as the rulers of society could not be denied however.[6] But the king was conceived to be powerful only in so far as he wielded the *dharma* or the Law, which was also a creation of *Brahman* or God. This was a theory of the 'divine right' of kings, and, as the cited passage clearly shows, that Right was indeed nothing but Might.

It is necessary to point out before taking up for actual discussion the Buddhist view of society that almost all the fundamental brahmaṇistic concepts relating to social organisation were radically transformed by the Buddha, and in that sense no one can justly deny[7] that the part played by the Buddha as a social reformer, both in ideology and in practice, in India in the sixth century B.C., was remarkable for such an age. Considered in this way the most radical change brought about by the Buddha was in the method of approach he adopted in dealing with the socio-moral problems of the day on which the brāhmaṇas, the kings and the commoners constantly sought his advice. He was the first thinker of India, not to say of the whole world, to give up the theological approach and adopt a rational attitude in such matters. As Prof. Radhakrishnan admits, Buddha objected to the identification of *dharma* with any being outside of nature.[8] If one believes that he revolutionised the theological and metaphysical standpoint of brāhmaṇist religion and philosophy it would be logically absurd to hold that the Buddha failed to condemn their sociological implications. This difference in approach characterises Buddha's statements on social subjects wherever they occur in the Pali Canon. This is what Prof. Rhys Davids intended to imply when he said that there was nothing 'metempirical' in Buddha's sociological views. Buddha was indeed an empiricist and was thoroughly practical and realistic (*yathābhūta*) in these matters. This is what he once told a brāhmaṇa: 'Now brahmin, there are some recluses and brahmins who say night is day and day is night. But I say this is just their delusion. Night is night and day is day.'[9]

The brāhmaṇa view of social organisation, as we have seen above, was based primarily on caste and they regarded the caste gradation as an absolute one[10] but the Buddha considered it as nothing but a relative division.[11] He once told King Kosala who discussed the problem of caste with him that in times of crises like war the king

would be compelled to enlist in his army not only those of the warrior caste but also any other young man if he be proficient and well trained in warfare, whether he comes from a *kṣatriya, vaiśya or śūdra* family. In the *Madhura Sutta*[12] the answer is given to the brāhmaṇa claim to exclusiveness and absolute superiority over all other castes by pointing out that a prosperous member of any one of the four classes, irrespective of his caste or social origin, would find members of each of the other three to wait upon him and serve him, by virtue of his wealth alone. Among the conditions that determine rebirth in the lower castes the result of previously done evil *kamma* is admitted as a possible one.[13] But the Buddha did not share the fatalistic view that mere birth (*jāti*) decided once and for all a man's station in life, because his conduct (*kamma*)[14] in this life itself was even a more important factor than the result of past *kamma*. Buddha clearly discounted the fatalistic philosophical notion that all the experience of a man in the present life are totally determined by his previous actions alone (*pubbekatahetu*), or that they were immutably fixed by some divine scheme (*issaranimmānahetu*), nor did he subscribe to the view that they were simply fortuitous and happened without any previous cause (*ahetu-appaccayā*),[15] that is to say, birth was not a mere accident. On the other hand, when the brāhmaṇas claimed special social privileges on the mere ground of their high birth (*uccakulīnatā, jātivāda*), their pride was straightway humbled by the Buddha, as the Shavian irony of the 'Ambaṭṭha Sutta' (*DN*, III) amply demonstrates. To the statement of Ambaṭṭha that the brāhmaṇas are the highest born, being produced from the mouth of Brahma,[16] the Buddha gives the gentle reply that it is common knowledge how children are conceived and given birth to by brāhmaṇa women in the world just as by mothers of other castes!

In the 'Aggañña Sutta' of the *Dīgha Nikāya* (XXVII) the Buddha, true to the basic position he held as a rationalist and empiricist, gives an *evolutionary* view of the world and society.[17] When the earth had been formed and vegetation of low, then higher grade, had evolved, till at length the earth brought forth an abundance of cereals, there developed agricultural life, and human families and households came into existence. As households came into existence, food began to be stored, land came to be divided among individual owners and boundaries had to be set up, thus giving rise to rights of property. Now someone of greedy disposition would encroach upon another's property. The rest would take him to task and charge him with

trespass. Thus strife and injustice entered into the life of humans, necessitating the institution of protective and punitive measures, till at length a ruler was chosen by the people's consent (*sammata*) to maintain justice, the rest giving their support to him, that is to say, like law abiding citizens. The king was to be regarded as the lord of the fields (*khetta*), and thus arose the *khattiyas,* the rulers who ruled in accordance with *dhamma* or righteousness. Certain other humans distressed at the growing crimes of society and evils of individuals retire into the woods, there to meditate, or dwell outside the towns composing 'books'. It is they that came to be regarded as the brāhmaṇas. Others again who continued to lead domestic lives becoming proficient in certain industries, by fulfilling a different standard or norm, came to be known as the *vaiśyas* (*vessā*). The remaining members of the society who could only do the minor or low crafts became known as the śūdras (*suddā*).[18] As Prof. Rhys Davids comments, in spite of its good-humoured irony and its fanciful etymologies, this discourse 'reveals a sound and healthy insight (into social evolution) and is much nearer to the actual facts than the brāhmaṇa legend it was intended to replace'.[19] The 'Suttanta' also makes it clear that much social and functional differences among human beings as referred to in it came about because each class followed what was proper to it in the collective interest of society. Thus the socio-moral ideas evolved, giving rise to a social ethic, which comes to be known as the *Dhamma,* in opposition to what is detrimental to the well-being of the community, that is to say, *adhamma.*

This evolutionary conception of the social ethic as developing under the determinant influence of economic and other factors, is set out in detail in the 'Cakkavattisīhanāda Suttanta' (*DN,* XXVI). It relates, in the form of a legend, how a king of the past provided all ward and protection to his subjects but failed to provide wealth (*dhana*), that is to say, economic security, to the needy for their subsistence and maintenance, and how on account of that poverty as a social phenomenon came to be prevalent. Poverty drove the individuals to theft and misappropriation, because they needed to have a living. The king thought that the remedy lay in providing each of the guilty poor with the means of subsistence and gave them wealth, but this proved to be no satisfactory solution of either social crime or poverty. Others too committed theft and were brought before the king and he did as before. The result of the king's generosity was that the people began to develop the idea that if they

only would commit an act of theft the king would give them wealth. Thus in the long run the king was forced to institute capital punishment for theft, but the only result of such drastic measures was to create banditry and looting associated with the destruction of life (*pāṇātipāta*) among his subjects, for capital punishment implies a callous disregard of the value of human life. The king is now compelled to tighten up his punitive measures, with the result that at the next commission of theft and murder, the accused are prompted by the fear of punishment to utter deliberate falsehood (*sampajāna-musā*) in their defence. Thus arises lying, and in determined sequence other social evils (of speech) such as slander (*pesuñña*). These wicked acts constantly practised lead to mental, moral and physical degeneration among mankind. Handsome people become ugly in appearance and are shunned by women with the result they become jealous of others who have beautiful wives. Hence arises adultery and other forms of sexual misbehaviour (*kāmesu micchācārā*). Thus the way is paved for the development of further social evils such as harsh speech (*pharusā vācā*), idle talk (*samphappalāpa*) and a wrong sense of moral values (*micchādiṭṭhi*). Thus, society being in this degenerate state, three evil things grow apace, viz., immoral lust (*adhammarāga*), inordinate craving (*visama-lobha*) and perversion of the moral sense (*micchādhamma*), till finally lack of filial and religious piety and the absence of regard for elders become prominent. When morality is at its lowest ebb, warfare comes upon the humans and civilized society is destroyed. People relapse into barbarism and savagery and live in caves. Then the few left with a moral sense become instrumental in starting a new period of socio-moral progress (§§ 10-18). They are the 'men of religious life who having renounced the madness and intoxication of sense-pleasures, live devoted to forbearance and meekness (*khanti-soracca*), mastering, calming and perfecting themselves'.[20] It is important to add that this Suttanta pictures the course of civilisation or social progress as a historic process, evolving according to the law of cause and effect.[21]

The 'Vaseṭṭha Sutta' of the *Sutta Nipāta* clearly states that the organisation of society on a functional basis, as in fact it was found to exist (*yathābhūtam kammaṃ*),[22] is a matter that proceeds according to the law of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*).[23] The brāhmaṇas, it will be remembered, not only stereotyped society on the basis of caste (*vaṇṇa*) but also fixed distinct stages in a man's life, viz., the four *āśramas*: stage of student, of householder, of forest-

hermit, and the all-renouncing ascetic. Buddha refused to accept this theory when he told Ambaṭṭha the brāhmaṇa that what makes a true religieux was not the mere plunging into the forest life (*vanam ajjhogāhati*) and devoting his life to the mystic worship of fire, but a life of wisdom (*vijjā*) and moral conduct (*caraṇa*).[24] On another occasion addressing the brāhmaṇa Vāsettha, Buddha points out that the functional theory of society as held by the brahmaṇas could not be considered absolute inasmuch as even a *kṣatriya* or a *vaiśya* or *śūdra* in renouncing home life and entering upon a religious life would have to abandon his caste function (*sakam dhammam*), that is to say, the *svadharma*.[25] Another important fact that emerges from a scrutiny of the above discussed *suttantas* is that Buddha viewed social progress not only as being dynamic, but also as a *cyclic* process, periods of degeneration being as a rule followed by periods of regeneration. This fact is symbolically expressed by the famous metaphor of the Wheel (*cakka*),[26] found in the conception of the four wheels (*catu-cakka*) of prosperity,[27] and the cyclic process of the eight vicissitudes of man's life (*aṭṭhalokadhammā*):[28] viz., gain and loss, esteem and disgrace, censure and praise, comfort and discomfort.

From the foregoing it is clear that Buddha accepted the moral traditions of the past in so far as they did not retard individual and social progress. This socio-morality is comprehended in the Pali term *Dhamma*, specified as *gihi-dhamma* in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, which was no other than the *Dhamma* of the good people (*sataṃ dhammam*).[29] Hence it comes to be called *Saddhamma*.[30] From the ethical point of view it is designated *kusala*.[31] This is the 'one Dhamma' praised in the *Dhammapada* (verse 176). The practice of this *dhamma* (*dhamma-cariya*) is indicated by the synonymous terms *sama-cariyā, kusala-kiriyā, puñña-kiriyā*.[32] The good aimed at by the practice of this *dhamma* is happiness and comfort in this life and happy rebirth (*sugati*) in the next. The happy state varies according to the level of moral development attained by the individual as a result of cultivating the social and moral virtues that constitute the *Dhamma*. This goal may range from a happier rebirth in the human world to an attainment of any one of the Brahma-worlds.[33] It is said that the ancient king Makhādeva by the observance of the traditional good life (*kalyāṇa-vatta*), extending to the practice of the Four Brahma-vihāras, reached the Brahma-world.[34] The goal of *dhammacariyā* or the practice of the socio-moral ethic is thus an improved existence in *saṃsāra* as distinct

from, and relatively lower than, the Goal of *Nibbāna* which is the consummation of the higher spiritual life (*brahmacariya*).[35] As Dr. E.J. Thomas says,[36] the Buddhist 'knows that while he is living an ordinary life and enjoying the pleasures of the world he is not going to win the final goal; but he believes that if he leads a good life his next existence will be a happy one.' Thus it is generally said that the *Dhamma* well practised conduces to happiness, and is the best of worldly goods for a man.[37]

It should be now clear that this norm of the Buddhist social ethic is not claimed to be the monopoly of Buddhism and altogether confined to the Buddhists, but it is the 'good old rule' handed down from the past (*porāṇīya pakati*).[38] One who lives up to this norm is called 'one living the Norm' (*dhamma-jīvī*) or 'one practising the norm' (*dhamma-cāri*).[39] *Dhamma* thus is an inferior path, compared to the higher spiritual path, which is the Noble Eightfold Path leading to *Nibbana*. Therefore in the popular parts of the Canon this *dhamma* is specifically called 'the path to heaven' (*sagga-patha*)[40] or 'the way to heaven' (*sagga-magga*).[41] The idea of the 'path' here implies the psychologically practical nature of the norm of social morality, as much as in the case of the Noble Eightfold Path. In fact, therein we discover the real difference between the traditional brāhmaṇist view of socio-morality, which was confined to mere ceremonialism and observance of ritual, and the corresponding Buddhist idea. Here the practical psychological aspect is the essential. As Prof. Radhakrishnan admits, Buddha had 'a severely practical outlook'.[42] Hence he emphasized the subjective aspect of the social ethic more than the mere externals of social behaviour. A socio-ethical act in Buddhism gains the greater part of its practical validity from the purity of its source which is definitely asserted to be no other than the psychology of the individual responsible for its conception and execution. This brings us at once to the Buddha's emphasis on the importance of the part played by the individual in matters of social value.

According to the Buddha, the conditions to which man as a social being is subject are to a large extent psychological, in any case they are not merely physical and environmental, although he himself regarded the presence of satisfactory conditions for physical life (*patirūpadesa vāsa*) as a great blessing.[43] He would not isolate from man's being an abstract conception of a mere physical or economic 'unit'. Even with regard to the problem of health the Buddha took

special care to differentiate between 'diseases of the body' (*kāyiko rogo*) and 'diseases of the mind' (*cetasiko rogo*).[44] Society, according to him, is by nature subject to three natural disabilities (*ābādhā*): that is to say, desire (*icchā*), hunger (*anasanam*) and decay (*jarā*).[45] These in actual life may generate impulses which have to be resisted in the interest of social well-being.[46] Hence the Buddha recommends self-examination and self-observation (*attanā va attānam paccavekkhati*). Mental poise and equilibrium, literally, absence of exasperation (*akkodhana*) and absence of despair and anxiety (*anupāyāsa*), are virtues even for the ideal monarch. So we find such psychological qualities as self-control (*dama*), mental calm (*sama*) and restraint (*niyama*)[47] are commended for their social value. The 'mastering of the heart's unrest' is, it may be inferred, necessary even for the lay individual, not only to the monk.[48] The greatness of the Buddha's contribution to sociology as a psychotherapist is admitted by Dr. Robert H. Thouless, the well-known psychologist of Cambridge. Commenting on the Buddha's 'application of the principle of causation' to problems of human ills and human psychology, he says: 'Across the gulf of twenty-five centuries we seem to hear in the voice of the Buddha the expression of an essentially modern mind.'[49] This attitude of the Buddha was only natural, and was the direct result of his conviction that 'society was in the ultimate sense a collection of individuals who were more than anything else "psychological units". The practical issue of the postulate is that social evils for the greater part are at bottom psychological evils and must be so treated.

The Buddhist conception of 'society' would, in the deepest ethical sense, include all living beings of this world (*loka*) at a given time, and not only those who are human but animals and other lower creatures as well. This particular context of the social ethic is unmistakably present in the case of such socio-moral virtues as the cultivation of benevolence as implied in the notions of *metta, karuṇā, muditā, anukampā, anuddaya, ahiṃsā*.[50] The chief social function of this virtue (*kusala*) is to ward off pain and suffering from other beings, whether human or non-human, and further to promote their well-being and happiness (*hita, sukha*). Sidgwick in his treatise on *The Methods of Ethics* seems to summarize the Buddhist view when he writes: 'we ought not to hurt mentally and physically our fellow-creatures as well as our fellow-men, but to love and protect them.' The ideal Buddhist ruler, according to the *Cakkavattisīhanāda Suttanta*, would provide righteous ward and protection (*rakkhāvaraṇaguttim*)

not only to his human subjects but to all other beings in his territory including the beasts of the forest and the birds of the air (*miga-pakkhīsu*).[51] This universality is pre-eminently characteristic of the Buddhist social ethic although other Indian religions like Jainism also emphasize this viewpoint. It is only of the Buddhist monk or saint that the typical description is applied: 'a sympathizer with the well-being of the whole world' (*sabbalokahitānukampī*).[52] This universal outlook is implied in the 'central place' given in Buddhism to benevolence or *ahiṃsā*, in a broad sense, as Prof. MacKenzie has pointed out.[53] On the other hand, Prof. E.W. Hopkins is surprised that animals receive the same kindness as human beings in the Buddhist scheme[54] and says that 'the crowning glory of Buddhism is not the doctrine of non-injury, which early Brāhmaṇism also teaches, but the inculcation of that devotion to man which leads to self-sacrifice'. But as Dr. Tachibana observes 'the love of all beings' in Buddhism has its own special meaning and moral value by itself, not just supplementary to the morality of mankind.[55] The same idea is shared by many philosophers of the West. Dr. Rashdall in his famous treatise on *The Theory of Good and Evil* states: 'The well-being of animals . . . seems to me quite distinctly to possess some value, and therefore to form part of that good which constitutes the ethical end.'[56]

Thus the words 'society' and 'social' may be rather misleading when applied to Buddhist social ethics, as 'we do not mean by the term any special organization such as a state, a clan, a church, a sect or any other community, and because when we say "others" (*pare*) we mean all other beings human and non-human'.[57] True, the human community of a particular time and place may connote to us, as to others, an idea of a 'society', but to consider that as the sole context of our socio-morality would be improper and unjustifiable. Thus the Buddhist social ethic is a 'universal ethic' and is opposed to national, not to say parochial, morality, as was the conception of brāhmaṇas. Prof. William McDougall, who clearly saw this distinction was, however, unconscious of the central place of benevolence in Buddhism, when he characterized the ethic of Buddhism, along with the Christian, as being inferior to the national ethics of Judaism, Brāhmaṇism and such other religions.[58] This last point brings me to a consideration of the manner in which, according to early Buddhism, this social ethic or *Dhamma* should be put into practical application in the political and the economic affairs of the state.

When Buddhism arose in the sixth century B.C., northern India was broken up into several monarchies, varying in size and power, and a few aristocratic republics. As pointed out by Prof. Rhys Davids,[59] there was no paramount sovereign. The kings ruled presumably on the basis of the legal and penological *dharma* as referred to in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, as has been discussed above. As for the republics, we may surmise that they were administered as in the case of the Vajjians by elected assemblies of elders who too followed certain traditional principles of legal and political procedure. The Pali literature refers to both types of political administration and what is important is that no statement of the Buddha is recorded as to the relative superiority of one over the other. To him the success of either depended on the extent to which the ruler or the administrators followed the good 'norm of polity' (*saddhamma*), as revealed by, or as implied in, the socio-ethical concepts outlined above.

The Buddhist texts recommend that the good king, as the acknowledged head and leader of men, should practise piety (*dhamma*), since, if he is given to vice (*adhamma*), the rest of men would follow suit.[60] The king should, therefore, restrain his passions and live the good life.[61] The *Dīgha Nikāya* gives a list of eight characteristics of a successful king, among which we find the following: 'He is a believer (in the *Dhamma*), generous benefactor (*dāyako dānapati*), who keeps open house to all, a welling spring whence *samaṇas* and brāhmaṇas (i.e., all religious people), the poor and the wayfarers, beggars and petitioners, might draw: he is a doer of good deeds (*puññāni*), is intelligent, learned, wise and capable of thinking out matters relating to the present, past and future.[62] In fact, the king (*rājā*) is defined as one who rules or delights (*rañjeti*) his subjects in accordance with the *dhamma* (*dhammena*),[63] that is to say, righteously, or judiciously, or in accordance with the Law of Piety. The force of *dhammena* is augmented and emphasized by the explanatory clause *dhammen'eva na adhammena*, 'righteously indeed, not unrighteously'.[64] The ethics of royal polity too, according to the Buddha, is based on the progressive cultivation of the *śīlas*, beginning with the usual five, viz., giving up of killing, stealing, wrong erotic behaviour, lying and drinking of intoxicating liquors, and going up to the *uposatha* precepts.[65] We are, therefore, correct in assuming that the typical description in the *nikāyas* of a good or ideal king like Seniya Bimbisāra of Magadha as 'righteous and ruling righteously, benign to both religious and lay people, town-folk and country-folk'

(*dhammiko dhammarājā hito brāhmaṇagahapatikānam negamānañc'eva janapadānañca*)[66] had a characteristically Buddhist significance.

It has to be understood in the specifically Buddhist sense of the social ethic. Thus the king has to regard his subjects with loving kindness as a father would love his children,[67]—this analogy from the parent-child relationship being typically Buddhistic.[68] The king who selfishly sits on the throne yielding indulgence to his sense pleasures and drunk with the intoxication of authority (*issariyamadamatta*) is openly condemned.[69] The use of relentless methods of punishment, as are sometimes recommended in the Hindu texts on polity,[70] are to be eschewed, and the kings must follow a *middle course*[71] between extreme severity and laxity in punitive measures, for punishment is regarded as a necessary evil of kingship.[72] As far as possible he should attempt to rule without the use of harsh punishment and weapons (*adaṇḍena asatthena*).[73] Moreover, he must not be an autocrat but must follow the advice of competent ministers and counsellors.[74] Benevolence or loving kindness should be the moral basis of royal polity as well. According to Buddhism, administration has to deal with individuals who are, as shown above, more than anything else psychological 'units', and therefore the law cannot act as an automation. Laws are made for man, not man for the laws. A *codaka*, a critic or judge, is required in Buddhism to be just and benevolent.[75] He must perform his function without hatred and with a kindly heart. Humanistic and benevolent considerations are greater than adherence to legal exactness. In the *Mahosadha Jātaka* we are told how on one occasion two women were disputing about the possession of a child. The Bodhisattva, called upon to judge the matter, drew a line and said that the one who could pull the child over that line could have it. As soon as the child began to cry the real mother let it go, and the Bodhisattva decided that she could possess it. We may also draw this conclusion from the permission Buddha granted before he passed away to his disciples to give up any of the lesser Vinaya rules after his demise if they decided by general consent that such rules were unsuitable. The king has to regard himself as the constitutional head of the state. He should consult the peoples' wishes in all important matters. the 'Kūṭadanta Suttanta' of the *Dīgha Nikāya* relates how the Bodhisattva as the counsellor of a great king-emperor of the past, advised the monarch to consult the wishes of all his subjects from princes and noblemen down to the lowliest[76] house-

holders and get their sanction before conducting a great festival which would cost much to the country.[77]

This respect for constitutional procedure as one of the original conceptions of the Buddha is seen to advantage in the working of the *Sangha* which is designed to be a self-governing institution. The Marquess of Zetland says:

> It may come as a surprise to many to learn that in the Assemblies of the Buddhists in India two thousand years and more ago are to be found the rudiments of our own parliamentary practice of the present day. The dignity of the Assembly was preserved by the appointment of a special officer — the embryo of 'Mr. Speaker' in our House of Commons. A second officer was appointed whose duty it was to see that when necessary a quorum was secured — the prototype of the Parliamentary Chief Whip in our own system. A member initiating business did so in the form of a motion which was then open to discussion.[78] In some cases this was done once only, on others three times, thus anticipating the practice of Parliament in requiring that a bill be read a third time before it becomes law. If discussion disclosed a difference of opinion the matter was decided by the vote of the majority, the voting being by the ballot.[79]

The Buddha admonished the representatives of the Vajjian republic to respect their constitution and hold regular meetings in amity and concord if they were jealous of their constitutional independence and national solidarity.[80]

In all the above discussed Buddhist conceptions of social, political and juristic ethics the basic or underlying principle is one and the same: *loving kindness to all.* This selfsame principle manifests itself also in the economic policy of the King or the state as conceived in Buddhism. Benevolence is not only the impelling motive for economic redress, it is as well the governing factor in deciding on the means of achieving the ideal. It has already been indicated that the Buddha emphasized the economic factor both in social and moral evolution as of primary importance. Obviously it cannot be ignored in devising ways and means of improving society. Concerning this part of the regal *Dhamma* the retiring monarch advises his son and heir to the throne: 'Dear son, and whosoever in thy kingdom are the "have-nots", to them let wealth be given'. (*Ye ca tāta vijite adhanā assu tesañca dhanam uppadajjeyyāsi*).[81] For, subsistence is essential for

social security.[82] If poverty is a 'crime', the responsibility for it, if at all, lies with the rulers. An individual may righteously (*dhammena*) earn wealth and use it righteously, sharing it with others,[83] but hoarding up food and wealth is condemned[84] as strongly as squandering money.[85] The moral evils arising from a greedy disposition towards wealth or property is specially mentioned: it leads to avarice and wickedness.[86] That the king's economic policy should be guided by considerations of 'equity' is inferable from the parallel qualification of the righteous king's rule by *dhammena* and *samena*[87] with equally significant emphasis. This latter word, going back to a base *sama,* meaning 'equality', is in its juristic aspect used to indicate impartiality[88] and fair-play. Thus in the matter of levying taxes the king should not only impose such taxes as are sufficient to run the state[89] but should also consider the economic plight of those who are taxed.[90] If the people are in difficult circumstances due to failure of crops and other calamities, the king should, on the other hand, provide out of the state coffers such economic assistance as would help the people to reorganize their business and agriculture.[91]

In fact, it is even mentioned of the righteous king Seri that in order to redress the economic poverty among the poorest in his kingdom he had fresh taxes levied and the wealth distributed among the needy.[92] Thus *dāna* or giving to the needy is considered to be part of the righteous administration of an ideal king, according to the Buddha. It is the first of the four bases of popular service (*saṅgaha-vatthu*).[93] Such organized distribution of wealth (*dana-saṃvibhaga*)[94] is typical of the financial aspect of the Buddhist king's policy, and amounts in practice to an equitable (*sama*) distribution of wealth (*dhanasaṃvibhāga*)[95] in his domain. This is often recommended in place of the *yajña* or sacrifice[96] enjoined by the earlier brahmanistic *dharma.* Buddhism, indeed, tolerates the *dhana-pati* or the lord of riches but only if he is at the same time *dāna-pati* or lord of liberality.[97]

All these virtues of state polity are found to the highest possible degree in the Buddhist conception of the 'ideal monarch', the *Cakkavatti.*[98] It has already been shown that the material and moral progress of mankind is conceived symbolically as the rolling onwards of a wheel (*cakka*). The *Cakkavatti* is pictured as he who sets rolling (*pavatteti*) this wheel of human prosperity, and he does so under the superior power of *dhamma* or righteousness,[99] just as the Buddha sets rolling the more exalted wheel of the moral and spiritual norm (*dhammacakka*). Students of Indian history cannot miss the

significance of these considerations for the wheel symbolism of Aśokan sculpture. In fact, recent studies of Professors B.M. Barua and Jules Bloch have confirmed without a trace of doubt that this greatest of emperors — whose name, in the words of H.G.Wells,[100] shines, and shines almost alone, a star, amidst the tens of thousands of monarchs that crowd the columns of history — was not only converted to Buddhism a few years after the Kalinga war but that his famous norm of piety (*Dhamma*) had its direct source of inspiration in the Buddhist *Saddhamma* or the good social ethic as I have so far attempted to describe.

It now remains for me to deal even briefly with the vital problem of social relationships. It is here that we find the special significance of the Buddhist lay ethics or the practice of righteousness (*dhamma*). It should be clear from what I have said above that the fundamental moral basis of man's relationship to his fellow beings is that admirable virtue denoted by the Buddhist concept of *benevolence* as broadly implied in loving-kindness (*mettā*), sympathy (*karuṇā*), compassion (*anuddaya*), *mit-freude* (*mudita*), non-injury (*ahiṃsa*), as well as in the more apparent social virtues such as liberality (*dana*) which is the basis of altruism for the Buddhist, gratitude (*kataññutā*), reverence (*garava*), courtesy (*peyyavajja*), humility (*samanattatā*), toleration (*khantisoracca*), and veracity or sincerity (*sacca*). These qualities should guide the conduct of the Buddhist both at home, that is to say, in the family, and in society outside. The greatness of the Buddhist social ethic lies in the fact that it does not differentiate between man's attitude to his own kith and kin and to his fellow-beings in the outside world. It is admitted, however, that in the fulfilment of his own duties as a social being those nearest to him and for whom he is responsible should receive special consideration. Buddhism exalts the virtue of 'charity' but it begins at home. The family being his immediate circle of fellow-beings the importance of loving and kindly relations between the members of the family is particularly emphasized. In the famous 'Sigalovada Suttanta', that charming little picture of lay ethics, as Keith expressed it,[101] the Buddha set out the details of the reciprocal duties as between husband and wife, parent and child, master and servant, pupil and teacher and so on. Suffice it to point out that Buddha's sympathy for mankind was not merely prompted by a cold rationalism or his general philosophical outlook but was produced by his warmth of feeling towards his fellow-beings which is unmistakably reflected in his dialogues. Once when

Nakula's father and mother visited the Buddha to ask him whether they, on account of their mutual love, could rightly wish to be reborn together as husband and wife again, Buddha's reply was: 'Herein, householders, if both husband and wife desire to behold each other both in this very life and in the life to come, they would certainly have this wish fulfilled, provided that they are matched not only in love, but also in faith (*sama-saddhā*), virtue (*sama-sīlā*), generosity (*sama-cagā*), and in wisdom (*sama-paññā*).[102]

It is the moral and social relations cultivated at home that form the basis of social ethics. One may, therefore, appreciate the significance of Prof. Rhys Davids' comment on the famous 'Sigālovāda Suttanta': 'Happy would have been the village or the clan on the banks of the Ganges, where the people were full of the kindly spirit of fellow-feeling, the noble spirit of justice which breathes through these naive and simple sayings,' and with the added observation of Mrs Rhys Davids: 'So sane and wide is the wisdom that envisages them that the utterances are as fresh and practically as binding today and here as they were then at Rajagaha.'[103]

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2. *Bṛhad Up.*, I.4.11-14.
3. Cf. E.J. Thomas, *University of Ceylon Review*, vol IX, No. 1, p. 216
4. Cf. S.Tachibana, *The Ethics of Buddhism*, p 26.
5. *The Dance of Shiva*, p. 83, and *Hinduism and Buddhism*, pp. 26 ff.
6. E.g , the *brahmana* sits below the *ksatriya* at the Rājasuya, *Bṛhad. Up.* 1.4.11.
7. A.B. Keith, *Buddhist Philosophy*, p.120; Coomaraswamy, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, p. 15.
8. *Gautama the Buddha*, p. 10
9. *MN*, 1.21.
10. Cf. Coomaraswamy, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, p 28
11. *SN*, I. 99.
12. See T.W. Rhys Davids, *Dial.*, I p. 105.
13. *SN*, I. 93 ff.
14. *SN*, 650.
15. *AN*, I. 173, *MN*, II. 214.
16. See reference to *Rgveda* X. 90 above.
17. Cf. B.M. Barua, *Asoka and His Inscriptions*, pp. 227-28.
18. See C.A.F. Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, pp. 236-38.
19. *Dialogues of the Buddha*, i. 107.
20. See *DN*, III. 61.
21. Cf. E.W. Hopkins, *Ethics of India*, p. 149.
22. Here *kamma* is used for social function, cf. *Suttanipāta*, 650-54.
23. Ibid., 653

24. *DN*, I. 101.
25. *DN*, III, 95.
26. Cf. *Rgveda*, X 117.5.
27. *DN*, III. 276; *AN*, II. 32.
28. *AN*, IV. 156, *DN*, III 260; cf. *AN*, II. 32.
29. *AN*, III. 41.
30. *AN*, II. 46; *DN*, II. 246.
31. *DN*, III. 71.
32. *SN*, I. 96.
33. *DN*, III. 146; *AN*, IV. 245; Itivuttaka, 107.
34. *MN*, I. 82; *SN*, IV. 321, where this path is described; cf. *AN*, I. 150, 226.
35. Cf. Tachibana, op.cit., p. 144 ff.
36. Loc. cit.
37. *SN*, I.42.
38. *Jātaka*, VI. 151; cf. Barua, op cit., p. 229.
39. Cf. Tachibana, op. cit., pp. 257, 260.
40. *J.I*, 256.
41. *Ibid.*, VI. 287.
42. *Gautama the Buddha*, p, 35.
43. See *Sn*, (Maṅgala Sutta), 260.
44. *AN*, II. 143.
45. *DN*, III. 75.
46. Cf. Tachibana, op. cit, p. 109.
47. *Dhammapada*, 142, cf. 103, 107.
48. *SN*, I. 46; cf. *MN*, I. 91.
49. *See Riddell Memorial Lectures*, 1940 (OUP), p. 47 ff. (cf. 14).
50. Cf. Tachibana, op. cit., pp. 184 ff.: See the four *brahma-vihāras* as the divine life in this very world, *Sn*, 149-51.
51. *DN*, III. 61.
52. *AN*, I. 61.
53. *Hindu Ethics*, p. 108.
54. *Ethics of India*, p. 137 and pp. 165-66.
55. Ibid., pp. 195-96.
56. Cited by Tachibana, Ibid.
57. Ibid., p. 272.
58. *Ethics and Some World Problems*, p. 4.
59. *Buddhist India*, (Indian Edn.), p.1.
60. *AN*, II. 74; *J*, III. 444.
61. *J.V.* 217.
62. *DN*, I. 137 (§ 13).
63. *DN*, III. 93, cf. 61.
64. Cf. Barua, op. cit., p. 230.
65. *DN*, II. 173.
66. *DN*, II. 202.
67. *DN*, II. 178; cf. Tachibana, op. cit., p. 235
68. Cf. *mata yathā niyam puttam*, *Suttanipata*, 149.
69. *SN*, I. 100
70. Cf. *nityam udyatadaṇḍas syāt*', (*Manusmṛti*, VII. 102)
71. See Barua, op. cit., p. 56.
72. *SN*, I. 116; *DN*, III. 92.

73. *DN*, DN. I. 89; *AN*, IV. 89, 105.
74. *DN*, III. 64 ff.; II. 220; *SN*, I. 100.
75. *AN*, V. 79-81; *Vin*, II. 248-51; cf. *DN*, III. 236-37, *AN*, III. 196-98.
76. On *necayika* cf. *AN*, V. 149; See *Mon. Will. Sanskrit-English Dict.*, s. *nicya* 2, to be a slave.
77. *DN*, I. 136 (§ 12).
78. See *MN*, 250.
79. G.T. Garratt, ed. *The Legacy of India*, p. xi.
80. See *DN*, II. 73-4; *AN*, IV. 16; cf. Barua, op. cit., pp. 159-60.
81. *DN*, III. 61.
82. *DN*, III. 65
83. *SN*, IV. 336; *AN*, II. 66, 68
84. *DN*, III. 90; *AN*, I. 87.
85. AN, I. 87.
86. *DN*, III. 289.
87. *DN*, III. 59.
88. Cf. Tachibana, op. cit., p. 265.
89. *DN*, II. 180.
90. *DN*, I. 135.
91. Ibid.
92. *SN*, I. 58.
93. *Dāna, peyyavajja, atthacariyā, samānattatā*, i.e. liberality, kindly speech, sagacious conduct and feeling of common good
94. *DN*, III. 145; *J.V.* 331; cf. *DN*, III. 61.
95. *DN*, III. 61, 65; *SN*, I.43.
96. See Kūṭadanta S. of *DN*, and others above cited
97. *AN*, III. 40.
98. The term *Cakravartin* does not occur in the Vedic literature, the earliest reference being in the *Maitri Up.* 1 4, which is late.
99. *Dhamma* is the 'king of kings', *AN*, III. 149; cf. Barua, op. cit., p. 228
100. *The Outline of History*, p. 247.
101. *Buddhist Philosophy*, p. 120.
102. *AN*, II 61.
103. *Dialogues of the Buddha*, III. p. 169.

6

The Three Signata*

The concept of the 'Three Signata' (*tilakkhaṇa*) forms the essential basis for the understanding of the Buddha's scheme of emancipation (*vimokkha*). The 'Three Signata', the three universal properties of all existing things of the phenomenal world, are *anicca*, impermanence, transcience or transitoriness, *dukkha*, unsatisfactoriness, ill, suffering or painfulness, and *anattā*, non-self, absence of a permanent ego or unsubstantiality. It is the contemplation of these three universal characteristics of all conditioned things and processes (*saṅkharā*), or of all phenomena (*dhamma*), that leads to true insight (*vipassanā*) and enlightenment (*bodhi, aññā, ñāna*). The realization of these three fundamental truths can thus be regarded as the key to the highest spiritual perfection afforded by the Buddha *Dhamma*.

Anicca

The first of the 'Three Signata', *anicca*, impermanence, transitoriness of all things in the universe, is a doctrine constantly and emphatically insisted upon in the Buddhist texts. According to the Buddha Dhamma there is nothing either divine or human, either animate or inanimate, either organic or inorganic, which is permanent or stable, unchanging or everlasting.

The Buddhist concept of the transitoriness of all things, in other words the Buddhist law of impermanence, finds classical expression in the famous formula, *sabbe saṅkhāra aniccā*, occurring in the 'Cūlasaccaka Sutta', 35th Dialogue of the *Majjhima Nikāya* (I.228) and in the more popular statement *aniccā vata saṅkhārā*. Both these formulas amount to saying that '*all conditioned things or processes are transient or impermanent*'. This is not given as the result of

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metaphysical inquiry or of any mystical intuition but as a straight forward judgment to be arrived at by investigation and analysis. It is founded on unbiased thought and has a purely empirical basis. In the 'Mahāvagga' of the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* (IV. 100 ff) the Master admonishes his disciples thus: 'Impermanent, Brethren, are (all) *Saṅkhāras*, unstable (not constant), Brethren, are (all) *Saṅkhāras*, (hence) not a cause for comfort and satisfaction are (all) *Saṅkhāras*, so much so that one must get tired of all these *Saṅkhāras*, be disgusted of them, and be completely free of them.'

There is no doubt here as to what is meant by the term *Saṅkhāra*, for the Master himself continues by way of illustration:

> There will come a time, Brethren, may be hundreds of thousands of years hence, when no more rains will fall and consequently all plants and trees, all vegetation will dry up and be destroyed: with the scorching due to the appearance of a second sun, streams and rivulets will go dry; and with the appearance of a third such large rivers as the Ganges and Jamna will dry up; similarly, the lakes and even the great ocean itself will dry up in course of time, and even such great mountains as the Sineru, nay even this wide earth, will begin to smoke and be burnt up in a great and universal holocaust. . . . Thus impermanent, Brethren, are all *Saṅkhāras*, unstable and hardly a cause for comfort, so much so that one (contemplating their impermanent nature) must necessarily get tired of them.

It is easy to understand from this dialogue in what an all-embracing sense the term *Saṅkhāra* is used: it includes all things, all phenomena that come into existence by natural development or evolution, being conditioned by prior causes and therefore containing within them the liability to come to an end, to be dissolved from the state in which they are found.

According to the Buddha, there is no *being*, but only a ceaseless *becoming* (*bhava*). Everything is the product of antecedent causes, and, therefore, of dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppanna*).[1] These causes themselves are not everlasting and static, but simply antecedent aspects of the same ceaseless becoming. Thus we may conceive everything as the result of a concatenation of dynamic processes (*saṅkhārā*) and, therefore, everything created or formed is only created or formed through these processes and not by any agency outside its own nature. In Buddhism everything is regarded

as 'conditioned' (*saṅkhata*). Thus *saṅkhata* in these contexts implies everything *arisen* or *become* (*bhūta*) depending on antecedent conditions (*sahetusappaccaya*). It is for this very reason, namely, that everything conceivable in this world has come to *be* or *become* depending on antecedent conditions or processes, that everything is to be regarded as liable to pass away. As it is declared in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* (II.49): 'Whatever has *become* is of the nature of passing away (*yaṃ bhūtaṃ taṃ nirodhadhammaṃ*).' This law, if one may call it so, holds, in the case of the mightiest of gods, such as Mahā-Brahmā, as much as of the tiniest creature. In the 11th Dialogue of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, it is regarded as ludicrous that even God or Brahmā should imagine himself to be eternal. As Prof. Rhys Davids remarked:

> The state of an individual, of a thing or person, distinct from its surrounding, bounded off from them is unstable, temporary, sure to pass away. It may last as, for instance, in the case of the gods for hundreds of thousands of years; or as in the case of some insects, for some hours only; or as in the case of some material things (as we should say some chemical compounds), for a few seconds only. But in every case as soon as there is a beginning, there begins also at that moment, to be an ending.[2]

The ethical significance of this law of impermanence is well brought out in the 'Maha-Sudassana Suttanta', the 17th Dialogue of the *Dīgha Nikaya*. There the Buddha tells Ananda, his favourite disciple, about the glories of the famous king of the past, Mahā Sudassana, about his cities, treasures, palaces, elephants, horses, carriages, women and so on, in the possession of which he led a wonderful life, about his great regal achievements and finally his death, only to draw the moral conclusion: 'Behold, Ananda, how all these things (*Saṅkharā*) are now dead and gone, have passed and vanished away. Thus, impermanent, Ananda, are the *Saṅkharas*: thus untrustworthy, Ananda are the *Saṅkhāras*. And this, Ananda, is enough to be weary of, to be disgusted of and be completely free of, such *Saṅkhārās*'.

When the Buddha characterized all conditioned things and conditioned processes as impermanent and unstable it must be understood that above all else stood out that particular 'heap of processes' (*saṅkhārapuñja*) that is called 'man', for at bottom it was with man chiefly that Buddha had to do, insofar as it was to man primarily that he showed the way to emancipation. Thus the chief

problem was to find out the real nature of man and it is precisely in this great dicovery that the uniqueness of the *Dhamma* is visible. The Buddha's conclusion regarding man's nature is in perfect agreement with his general concept of impermanence: Man himself is a complex of several factors and his supposedly persistent personality is in truth nothing more than a collection of ceaselessly changing processes — in fact, a continuous becoming or *bhava*. The Buddha analysed man into five aggregates: *rūpa, vedanā, saññā, saṅkhārā* and *viññāna,* that is to say, material form, sensations, perceptions, dynamic processes and consciousness. In *sutta* after *sutta,* the Master has emphatically asserted that each of these aggregates is impermanent and unstable. In the famous dialogue of the *Digha Nikāya* (II.301) entitled 'Establishement of Mindfulness' (Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta), the Master teaches the disciple to view all these categories as being of the nature of arising (*samudayadhammā*) and of passing away (*vayadhammā*): 'Such is material form, such is its genesis, such its passing away: and so on with the other three groups, perceptions, dynamic processes and consciousness.' In fact, the highest consummation of spiritual life is said to result from the true perception of the evanescent nature of the six spheres of sense contact. The 102nd dialogue of the *Majjhima Nikāya* ends with the words: 'This, indeed, Brethren, is the perfect way of utter Peace into which the Tathāgata has won full Enlightenment, that is to say, the understanding, as they really are, of the six spheres of sense-contact, of their arising and passing away, their comfort and misery, and the way of escape from them free of grasping' (*MN,* II.237). It is these six spheres of sense-contact that cause the continuity of *saṃsāra*, in other words, *bhava* or becoming, and thus they are to be understood as involving the most important *saṅkhāras.* Hence the oft-repeated stanza in the Pali Canon: 'All conditioned things, indeed, are subject to arising and passing away: what is born comes to an end; blessed is the end of *becoming,* it is Peace.'

Dukkha

The fact of *impermanence* as the leading characteristic of all conditioned and compounded things and processes of the phenomenal world has been dealt with above. The next, according to the concept of the 'Three Signata' (*tilakkhaṇa*), is the fact of *dukkha* which signifies the universal characteristic of all *saṃsāric* existence,

viz., its general *unsatisfactoriness.* It must be admitted that this Pali word *Dukkha* is one of the most difficult terms to translate. Writers in English very often use as its equivalent the English word '*sorrow*' or '*ill*' and some even translate it as *pain, suffering* and so on. But none of these cover the same ground as the Pali *Dukkha*; they are "too specialized, too limited, and usually too strong". The difficulty is increased by the fact that the Pali word itself is used in the Canon in several senses. There is what one may call the general philosophical sense, then a narrower psychological sense, and a still narrower physical sense. It is as indicating the general philosophical sense of *dukkha* that the word 'unsatisfactoriness' has been selected. This is perhaps, the best English term, at least in this particular context of the Three Signata.

Whatever some writers of Buddhism may have said, the recognition of the fact of *dukkha* stands out as the most essential concept of Buddhism. In the very first Discourse after attaining Enlightenment, the Master formulated this concept in the following terms: 'This, indeed, Brethren, is the Noble Truth of *Dukkha*, namely the fact that birth itself is *Dukkha*, disease is *Dukkha*, death is *Dukkha*, to be joined with what is unpleasant is *Dukkha*, to be separated from what is pleasant is *Dukkha*, in short the five groups of physical and mental qualities making up the individual due to grasping are themselves *Dukkha*' (*Vin*, I, p. 10; cf. *S.V*, 421). This observation of the universal fact of Unsatisfactoriness is, as any unbiased student of Buddhism will soon realize, the pivot of the whole system of spiritual and moral progress discovered and proclaimed by the Buddha.

According to the Buddha, the beginning, continuity and ending of all experience, i.e., the whole world (*loka*) for a sentient being, are centred in its own individuality (*nāma-rūpa*), that is to say, the five groups of grasping that constitute the individual—the *pañcupādānakkhandha*, viz., material form, sensations and feelings, perceptions, (physical and mental) dynamic processes, and consciousness (*rūpa, vedanā, saññā, saṅkhārā* and *viññāna*). Now, the physical form or the body of the individual is the visible basis of this individuality, and this body, as everyone knows, is a product of material components derived from the four great elements, viz., the water, the fire, the air and the earth (*āpo, tejo, vāyo, paṭhavi*). It is said to be built up of these four chief elements (*cātummahābhūtika*) and, therefore, it is conditioned by these. As was explained in the previous section, the universal characteristic of the four great elements is their impermanence

(*anicca*), and not much science is needed to understand this fact which is self-evident to the thoughtful person.

The Buddha says:

> A time will come, when the watery element will be agitated, carrying away villages, towns, districts and regions. Subsequently there will come a time when the water in the great ocean will go down a hundred *yojanas*. . . two hundred. . . three hundred. . . four hundred. . . five hundred. . . six hundred. . . seven hundred *yojanas*, when the water in the great ocean will go down to such an extent that it will not wet even a toe joint. On that day, this great watery element will unmistakably reveal itself as transient and subject to ruin, destruction and vicissitude. A time will come when the fiery element will rage furiously and devour the whole surface of the earth, ceasing only when there is nothing more to devour. On that day this great fiery element will unmistakably reveal itself as transient and subject to destruction. A time will come when the airy element will rage in fury and carry away village and town and everything upon the earth. . . till it exhausts itself completely. On that day this great airy element will unmistakably reveal itself as transient and itself subject to ruin, destruction and all vicissitude. (*MI*, 187).

Thus everything that is comprised within the great elements shows itself subject to the universal law of transitoriness and it is not a difficult inference to conclude that this fathom-long body which is a derivative of the four elements will itself go the way of its elemental source. Now, the Buddha goes on to show the impermanence or transitoriness of the remaining components of our individuality which are based upon the body and its organs. 'The corporeal form, Brethren, is transient, and what underlies the arising of corporeal form, that too is transient. As it is arisen from what is transient, how could corporeal form be permanent?

'Sensations and feelings are transient, what underlies the arising of these (viz., the sense organs, depending on the body) is also transient. Arisen from what is transient how could sensations and feelings be permanent?

'Similarly, perceptions, dynamic processes of the mind, and consciousness—all these, arising depending on the transient, cannot but be transient' (*S*, III.23). In all these are observed arising, vicissitude

and passing away. This unreal, impermanent nature of everything constituting the individual can only lead to one conclusion, viz., that as they are transitory and by nature unabiding they cannot be the basis for a satisfactory experience dependent on them. In short, whatever is transient, is (by that very fact) *unsatisfactory* (*yad aniccaṃ taṃ dukkhaṃ. S,* III.22). Hence is established the great Truth of Buddhism that the whole personality or individuality (wherever that may take shape whether in this world or in another, as possible in *saṃsāra*), and therefore, the whole world of experience which simply depends on this individuality, all this is unsatisfactory or *dukkha.* 'What think ye,—Brethren, is body permanent or is it transient?'—'It is transient, Sir.'—'Now, that which is transient, is it satisfactory or unsatisfactory?'—'It is unsatisfactory, Sir.'—'What think, ye, Brethren, sensation, perception, mental processes and consciousness, are they all permanent or transient?'—'They are transient, Sir.'—'Now, what is transient, is it satisfactory or unsatisfactory?'—'It is unsatisfactory, Sir.' Thus this general unsatisfactoriness is to be regarded as the universal characteristic of all *saṃsāric* experience, and this fact constitutes the Noble Truth of *dukkha.* To the intelligent person all this must sound axiomatic. But, then, why are the large majority of people unconvinced of, or unconcerned with, this great Truth which forms the bed-rock of the Buddha *Dhamma*? To answer this we have to probe into the working of man's own mind which alone can realize this conception of the universality of *dukkha.*

The Master has said that the sentient being is psychologically so constituted that he seeks what is pleasurable and shuns what is non-pleasurable (*sukha-kāmo dukkha-paṭikkūlo*); to use the above employed terminology, he hankers after what is satisfactory for himself and recoils from what is unsatisfactory. Critics of Buddhism may wonder whether it is justifiable to regard the whole psychology of the sentient being as being so strongly ruled by this principle of hankering for the pleasurable and shunning what is unpleasant. That a similar conclusion was arrived at by Freud, the founder of the modern school of psychoanalysis, should cause such critics or sceptics to pause and reflect upon the scientific validity of such an observation. Freud begins his famous dissertation on "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" with the following significant words:

> In the theory of psychoanalysis we have no hesitation in assuming that the course taken by mental events is automatically regulated by the pleasure principle. We believe, that is to say, that the course

> of those events is invariably set in motion by an unpleasurable tension, and that it takes a direction such that its final outcome coincides with a lowering of that tension — that is, with an avoidance of unpleasure or a production of pleasure.

Freud thus introduces what he calls an 'economic' principle into his study of mental processes, and is it not a noteworthy fact in the history of human ideas that the Buddha had nearly twenty-five centuries earlier formulated the same principle in practically the same terms? Now, if man by nature is driven by his own unconscious processes to seek for the pleasant and avoid what is unpleasant, it stands to reason that he would be unwilling to accept a philosophy whose basic idea is the characterization of all his experiences as impermanent and therefore liable to bring unhappiness or *dukkha*. That is why the Buddha soon after his Enlightenment considered that only a very few in the world had their vision sufficiently clear to grasp this great Truth of the universality of *dukkha*.

Before concluding this brief exposition of *dukkha* a doubt should be cleared which is often seen to cloud this conception and erroneously leads certain people to conclude that if the fact of *dukkha* is such a universal characteristic of experience, Buddhism must be regarded as a profession of pessimism. That such a view is totally wrong is seen clearly from certain passages of the Canon itself. According to Buddhism, there is a point of view from which experiences, that is to say, sensations and feelings (*vedanā*) can be considered to be threefold: they can be pleasant or happy (*sukha*), or they can be unpleasant or unhappy (*dukkha*), or they can be neutral, i.e., neither pleasant nor unpleasant (*adukkhamasukha*). From this lower or relative point of view which holds good for all individual experience, there is what may be called 'happiness' in the world just as much as 'unhappiness', the degree of predominance of the one over the other varying according to personal and environmental conditions prevailing at a given moment. But further contemplation of such happiness and unhappiness and neutral feelings shows unmistakably that there is a common denominator between all these three types of experiences, namely, the fact that all three are subject to the universal property of impermanence or transience. Thus the Venerable Sāriputta assures the Master that if questioned on the real nature of sensations and feelings he would thus make reply: 'Threefold, indeed, friend, are those feelings and sensations: pleasant,

unpleasant and neither-pleasant-nor-unpleasant: but, friend, (all) these three (experiences) are *transient*, and when one realizes that whatever is transient (and fleeting) must give rise to *Dukkha* (in other words, is unsatisfactory), no hankering after them arises.' It can easily be seen that in the last sentence, *Dukkha* is used in the wider philosophical sense, as referred to at the beginning of this chapter. Hence is the Master's joyful approval of Sariputta's words: 'Well said, well said, Sāriputta, this exactly is the manner in which one should summarily dispose of such a question: Whatever experience there is, such (being transitory) must fall within the category of *dukkha* (*yaṃkiñci vedayitaṃ taṃ dukkhasmiṃ; S*, II. p.53)'. All *saṃsāric* experience is in this sense *vedavita* and thus arises the incontrovertible proposition that all becoming in *saṃsāra* (bhava) is *dukkha* or unsatisfactory from the highest point of view (*paramattha*). Herein is also based that absolutely certain optimism of Buddhism, viz., that there is a way out of this *saṃsāric dukkha*, a heaven of utter Peace and Tranquillity, which is the absolute Happiness of *Nibbāna*: *Nibbanam paramaṃ sukhaṃ*.

Anatta

The above discussion of the two signata of impermanence and unsatisfactoriness naturally leads to the basic Buddhist concept of *anatta*, 'non-self' or unsubstantiality.[3] Every student of Buddhism knows that this concept is the most controversial of all the basic ideas of the Doctrine, and that a hundred and one interpretations have been suggested by the commentators, scholars and critics. To the Western student of Buddhism, the so-called *anatta* doctrine has been the hunting-ground, not always a happy one, for the display of personal ingenuity and dialectical jumbling, and it is significant that this idea has been the cause of the most glaring contradictions among themselves and even within the writings of the same authority. Even our own historical schools of Buddhist interpretation have found this concept the most difficult. The main difficulty confronting the interpreters has, in my opinion, been the lack of a clear definition of the term *atta*. It is curious how writers, particularly those of the West, have plunged into discussions of this doctrine equipped with no other definition of it than the idea of Soul or Ego borrowed from theistic and pantheistic systems of philosophy or religion as they were accustomed to before taking up the study of Buddhism. It is not

intended to pursue the criticism of such interpretations, but to emphasize the important fact that by the word *attā* or *atta*, books of the Pali Canon refer to a number of historical concepts that prevailed in India about the sixth century B.C., and, therefore, the term must be defined accordingly, in relation to the particular context under review. Here then we shall confine ourselves to those contexts where the adjective *anatta* is used as the universal characteristic of all *dhammas* (*sabbe dhammā anattā*)— which is the third of the Three Signata or *tilakkhaṇa*.[4]

Above we have dealt with the facts of the Impermanence of all conditioned things and processes, and, of the general Unsatisfactoriness of all states derived from these, namely, the five groups of physical and mental properties dependent on grasping (*pañca-upādāna-kkhandhā*); in particular, those feelings and sensations that go to make up individual experience (*vedanā*) which could be classified as pleasant, unpleasant, and neither-pleasant-nor-unpleasant. The relevant texts were cited to show that the latter characteristic of general Unsatisfactoriness is derived directly from the first characteristic of Impermanence. It is now opportune to show how as a necessary corollary of this general unsatisfactoriness of all experience arises the realization of the third and last verity included in the 'Three Signata', viz., the universal characteristic of all physical and mental states and phenomena as *anatta*. In the words of the Master himself: 'Physical form, Brethren, is transient (*anicca*), and whatever is transient is unsatisfactory (*dukkha*); whatever is unsatisfactory, that is *anatta*, non-self: and whatever is non-self, that is not of me, that I am not, that is not my Self.' This same rigorous logic is in turn applied to the four other groups constituting individuality, viz., the feelings and sensations (*vedanā*), perceptions and cognitions (*saññā*), mental processes and reflexes (*saṅkhārā*) and finally, the individual's consciousness itself (*viññāṇa*). This last application of the universal characteristic of non-Self to consciousness is in several ways the most significant fact in this statement, and when we remind ourselves that the Pali word *viññāṇa* includes even the innermost mental experiences of the sentient being, we can see clearly the exact force of the *anatta* characteristic as conceived by the Buddha. The most rarified concept of Self or Ego that any philosopher, before or after the Buddha, ever conceived was somehow or somewhere concerned with a state of self-consciousness, the consciousness that 'I am I'. To the Buddha, even his self-consciousness or 'I-ness' is subject to the

inexorable characteristic of impermanence and unsatisfactoriness, and since whatever is subject to these characteristics is non-self, this *I- consciousness* must be regarded as an illusion or an error. This is, in short, the significance of the adjective *anatta* as used in the above-mentioned doctrine. In the 'Cha-cakku-Sutta' (No.148) of the *Majjhima Nikāya* a detailed analysis of this concept occurs. 'If any one regards the eye (i.e., seeing) as the self, that does not hold,' says the Buddha, ' for the arising and the passing away of the eye is clear (from experience)'. With regard to that which arises and passes away, if anyone were to think, 'myself is arising and passing away' (such a thought) would be controverted by the person himself. Therefore, it does not hold to regard the eye as the self. Thus the eye (or seeing) is (proved to be) non-Self. Similarly, if anyone says that the forms (*rūpa* or visual objects) are the self, that too does not hold. So that both the eye and the visual objects (cognized by it) are non-Self. The same argument applies to visual perception or the eye-consciousness (*cakkhuviññāṇa*) if one were to consider this as self. Similarly, it applies to visual sense-contact (*cakkhu-samphassa*), so that the eye, its sense objects, visual consciousness and visual sense-contact are all four non-Self (*anattā*). It applies also to feelings [that arise due to the above four], so that the eye, its sense objects, visual consciousness, visual sense-contact, and the resultant feelings, are all five non-Self. It applies lastly to the (instinctual) craving (*taṇhā*) [that is associated with the above five], so that the eye, its sense-objects, visual consciousness, visual contact, the resultant feelings, and the craving behind them, all these six are non-Self. And, what thus applies to the eye or the sense of sight, applies equally to the other five senses [the last being the mind (*mano*) as an organ of sense]. Thus, if it be said that the mind is self (*mano attā'ti*), that too does not hold. Similarly, it is inadmissible to assert that the mind, or its sense-objects (*dhammā*), or mental-consciousness (*manoviññāṇa*), or mental contact (*manosamphassa*), or the feelings (*vedanā*) that result from all these, or the craving (*taṇhā*) that is associated with all these, are the self. They are non-Self, all of them. The way that leads to the origination of the (concept of) permanent individuality or personality (*sakkāya-samudaya*) is to regard as *mine*, or as *I am this*, or as *this is my self* either the sense of seeing, or the visual data, or visual consciousness, or visual contact, its feelings or its craving or similarly, to regard hearing and the four other senses (including mind) with their adjuncts. The way that leads to the cessation of the (view of)

permanent personality (*sakkāya-nirodha-gāminī paṭipadā*) is to cease regarding as *mine* and so forth, either (the functions of) seeing, or hearing, or smelling, or tasting, or touching, or thinking, or their adjuncts".

Now, the Buddha goes on to discuss the ethical implications of this view of Self (*attā*) or permanent personality (*sakkāya*):

> From sight and visual objects arises visual consciousness and the meeting of all three is contact, from which contact come feelings which may be pleasant, or unpleasant, or neither. When experiencing a pleasant feeling, a man rejoices in it, hails it and clings tight to it, and a trend to passion (attachment) ensues. When experiencing an unpleasant feeling a man sorrows, feels miserable, wails, beats his breast and goes distraught, and a trend of repugnance ensues. When experiencing a feeling that is neither pleasant nor unpleasant he has no true and causal comprehension of that feeling's origin, disappearance, agreeableness, perils and outcome, and a trend of ignorance ensues. It can never possibly result that, without first discarding the pleasant feeling's trend to passion, without first discarding the unpleasant feeling's trend to repugnance, and without getting rid of the neutral feeling's trend to ignorance, without discarding ignorance, and stopping it from arising, he will put an end, here and now, to *dukkha*. And what is true of *sight*, is equally true of the other five senses.

Thus the Buddha admonishes his disciples to analyse the whole conception of Self or abiding pesonality and thereby the whole of experience (*loka*) along with every single component of the process, whereby the fallacy of self or abiding personality arises, viewing this whole process of the arising of individuality (*nāmarūpa*) in a perfectly objective manner.

From all this it becomes clear that the three concepts of *anicca, dukkha, anatta,* the Three Signata or *tilakkhaṇa*, are the three corner- stones of the whole edifice of the Buddha Dhamma. To be convinced of their validity is to accept the *Dhamma* in its entirety and there can be no half-way house in this process of conviction therefore. It behoves each one of us, who call ourselves Buddhists to contemplate these three permanent characteristics of the world as we experience it both objectively and subjectively, and apply in our individual and social lives the ethical principles that, as the Master

pointed out, derive from such conviction and lead us to that state free from these 'Three Signata' viz., the Eternal Bliss of *Nibbāna.*

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2. American Lectures
3. See *Vedānta and Buddhism* by H. V. Glasenapp (*'The Wheel'*, No. 2) pp. 6ff,— B.P.S. *Anattā and Nibbāna* by Nyanaponika Thera (*'The Wheel'* No. 11). B.P.S.
4. See *Anatta-lakkhaṇa Sutta* in *Three Cardinal Discourses of the Buddha,* transl. by Ñāṇamoli Thera (*'The Wheel'* No. 17). B.P.S.

7

The Buddhist Concept of Mind*

It is in no wise an exaggeration to claim that of all the religions it is Buddhism that gives the greatest importance to Mind in its scheme of deliverance. That is to say, Buddhism is the most psychological of religions. Even ethics and logic in Buddhism are studied from the psychological standpoint. This remains a fundamental characteristic of Buddhism throughout all its stages of historical development. There are some who believe that this trait is confined to the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* and the subsequent literature; but no serious student of the subject can agree with such an opinion, for the principal doctrines regarding the nature of man's mind are to be found already in the early dialogues ascribed to the Master Himself as preserved in the major books of the Sutta Piṭaka such as the *Dīgha* and *Majjhima Nikāyas*. In fact, it may be asserted without the slightest fear of contradiction that the later Buddhist books show no idea that is fundamental to the religion which is not found in the early *nikāyas*. They are the very mainspring of all that Buddhism is, whether in the psychological, or ethical or generally philosophical aspect.

This importance of psychology in Buddhism is well brought out by Mrs. Rhys Davids in one of her earlier works. All serious departures in religion and ethics, she points out, have striven to cope with the tendency to let life be swallowed up in the quest of sensuous gratification. And among the remedies sought have been pure askesis, or the suppression to the utmost limit consistent with life, of the channels of sense-impression, and again the cultivation of the object-world apart from sense-pleasure, namely, in relation to ethical and intellectual interests. A third course is to study and regulate the subject-world, or mind, that we can regard it as one object among other objects. Now the extent to which the Buddhist initiated and

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developed this third course is a notable and practically unique feature in the Buddhist religious culture.

Early Buddhism and Asceticism

In early Buddhism asceticism as such is clearly rejected. In the very first Sermon ascribed to the Buddha, he declared his method to be a middle way (*majjhima paṭipadā*) between asceticism and self-indulgence. In another Dialogue he is reported to have asked a young man called Uttara, a pupil of a Brāhmaṇa teacher, whether and how Parāsariya, his master, taught a method of disciplining the senses. 'Yes', was the student's reply, 'one does not see sights with the eyes nor hear sounds with the ear. This is his method.' 'On that basis', rejoined the Buddha, 'the blind and the deaf would have their senses the best under control.' Then he proceeds to show this Brāhmaṇa student how his own method of spiritual training differed. According to him, the sense impressions are to be consciously discriminated psychologically, as agreeable or disagreeable or neither, and then the resultant attitudes of loathsomeness or unloathsomeness towards them are to be discarded and finally replaced by equanimity accompanied by mindfulness. Man must study his own mind, cognize and analyse his mental components and learn to dictate to his own feelings. By this method the trainee would acquire two results: control over sense and impulse, on the one hand, and on the other, insight into the compound and conditioned nature of the Mind itself which appears to the ignorant to be a unitary Ego, unchanging and abiding in experience.

Psychological Ethics

Thus we see that the main task of the Buddhist as he commences his spiritual training is to study and analyse his own mind, to observe its inner nature and how it works; and how good and bad ethical states arise therefrom. That is why in Buddhism so much emphasis is laid on the psychological aspect of ethics. In fact, it is perfectly correct to describe the Buddhism of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka as 'psychological ethics'. The motive of Buddhist psychology is not just a scientific curiosity having no bearing on living but the ultimate desire to cultivate the good mind, avoiding all evil psychological states. The mind has to be made wholesome by a particular method which is sevenfold according to the 'Sabbāsava Sutta' of the *Majjhima Nikāya*. Both in its method and in its purpose of bringing about peace

and harmony of mind Buddhism agrees far more with modern psycho-analysis than with any system of theoretical psychology. While, however, Buddhism is the most psychological of religions, it is not a mere system of psychology, but a perfect scheme of deliverance. Now it should be clear that the concept of mind that is found in early Buddhism forms a most important factor in the whole religion. But exactly what does one mean by using the English word *mind* with reference to Buddhism? It does not need much reflection to realise that the word is used in several senses in English. The best way to get even a rough idea of the Buddhist use is first of all to see what the Pali terms are for the English word *mind.*

Students of Buddhism will know that there are several terms in Pali that have been translated in some context or other by the English word *mind*, the three common ones being *mano, citta* and *viññāṇa.* Each of these terms may sometimes indicate in Pali what may be called the 'non-physical factor' in man and other living beings, as is implied in the *Dīgha Nikāya* when it condemns the erroneous opinion of some metaphysicians that: 'Whatever there is to be called *citta* or *mano* or *viññāna,* that is the Soul, permanent, constant, eternal, unchanging, etc.' This shows that in the common usage of the times these three terms were applied more or less synonymously for the 'mind'. But the more technical applications of these in the psychological parts of the Canon reveal significant differences in their use in certain contexts. *Mano* is employed generally in the sense of the instrument of thinking, that which cogitates, and, sometimes, in the sense of that which purposes and intends. *Citta* has more or less the sense of 'heart' (*hadaya*), the seat of feeling, and refers to the affective aspect of mind as experiencing. The term *viññāṇa,* usually taken as cognitive consciousness, has also a deeper connotation than the other two, and in certain contexts indicates the *psychic factor* which is the cause for the rebirth of an individual after death.One may say that these particular shades of meaning are typical of these three terms in the early Dialogues. There is no doubt that they all indicate some aspect of the inner, immaterial or subjective nature of man and as such they are all included in the Buddhist concept of Mind, using that English word in a general sense.

Analysis of Man

Buddhism analyses the whole of man into five aggregates, the *pañcupādāna-khandha*, namely the aggregate of material form

(*rūpa*), the aggregate of feelings and sensations (*vedanā*), the aggregate of perception (*saññā*), the aggregate of disposition (*saṅkhāra*), and consciousness (*viññāṇa*). It will be seen that in this scheme the last four are non-physical factors in man which are generally implied by the word *mind*. In Pali these five aggregates are said to be the *nāma-rūpa* (body and mind) comprising an individuality, which shows that the last four, viz., *vedanā, saññā, saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa* are collectively regarded as *nāma* which is generally rendered 'Mind'. Of these four *nāma* components, it is to be pointed out that the first two, *vedanā* and *saññā*, are phenomena that arise depending on *rūpa* or the material basis of individuality, which alone determines the duration of their continuous rise and passing away. That is to say, feeling and perception (or cognition) can take place only where there are senses (*indriyas*) and these exist only in the physical body. But the other two, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*, are rooted deeper in the flux of *bhava* or *saṃsāric* continuity, and they are in some sense the cause for that continuity. This is seen in the two famous postulates of the *paṭiccasamuppāda* formulas, namely, *'Saṅkhārapaccayā viññāṇam, viññāṇa-paccayā nāmarūpam'*. Thus we must understand the two terms *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa* as occurring in the *pañcupādānakkhandha* analysis in the narrow sense of those dispositions and acts of consciousness which manifest themselves only so long as the body and mind are together. But they have a deeper significance in the formula of dependent origination. It is their *saṃsāric* aspects that receive emphasis in that context. That is why the formula says: *'Viññāṇa-paccayā nāmarūpam'*, that *nāmarūpa* arises depending on *viññāṇa*, and hence in a passage in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* both *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa* seem to be grouped under the term *bhava* which means 'becoming' or continuity of the flux of *saṃsāric* life. In view of these considerations it will not be difficult to understand now the significance of the important idea that occurs in the *Dīgha Nikāya* that 'the *nāma-rūpa* depends on *viññāṇa* and *viññāṇa* depends on the *nāma-rūpa*'. In modern terms this would mean that the individual as a compound of body and mind is dependent on the presence of the (individual) psychic-factor for his continued existence and the psychic-factor in turn has to depend on a body-mind compound to have any empirical existence.

Students of modern philosophy will not fail to see how close this analysis of the individual approaches the 'Compound Theory' of Prof. Broad, the Cambridge philosopher, as put forward in his

famous treatise *The Mind and its Place in Nature*. 'Might not what we know as "mind"', he writes, 'be a compound of two factors, neither of which separately has the characteristic properties of a mind.... Let us call one of these constituencies the 'psychic factor' and the other the 'bodily factor'. The psychic factor would be like some chemical element which has never been isolated, and the characteristics of a mind would depend jointly on those of the material organism with which it is united.' It must be remembered that Prof. Broad uses the term 'psychic factor' exactly as a Buddhist would use the word for *viññāṇa* when referring to the factor in man which causes *saṃsāric* continuity, that is to say, becomes the cause for a new birth after death.

A Complex Concept

Now it would be clear that the Buddhist concept of mind is a far more complex one than the notion of Western psychologists who understand by it what are generally called the affective, cognitive and conative functions in man. Like the modern schools of psychoanalysis, Buddhism regards mind as both conscious and unconscious in its working. Such concepts as *saṅkhāra* and *bhavaṅga* occurring in the early Pali literature show that the Buddhists knew of the existence of unconscious states of the mind long before the West. An analysis of the term *saṅkhāra* will clearly establish this point The Buddhism of the Pali Canon is largely devoted to the examination and analysis of the mind both in its conscious and unconscious aspects and this examination which is in this case self-examination and introspection is held to be fundamentally important in the practice of the religion. The importance of self-examination, the correct observation of how the mind works and the good and evil mental states arise are necessary if we are to practise the Noble Eightfold Path. Right effort consists in suppressing the rising of evil mental states, in eradicating those which have arisen, in stimulating good states and perfecting those which have been brought into being. Thus, as Prof. Radhakrishnan has pointed out, the Buddhist has to consider that 'the habit of self-observation is an effective way to deal with the underworld of the human mind, to root out evil desires and craving, to maintain an equilibrium between the conscious mind and the other part of our equipment, the complicated psychic and physical apparatus.' In fact, the whole of Buddhist psychology is meant for this purpose. This is the sole motive of the Abhidhamma analysis.

Man: Slave to Mind

Man is by nature more a slave of his own mind than its master. As Mahā Moggallāna once explained to Sāriputta, one must have the mind under control (*cittaṃ vasaṃ vatteti*) and not allow the mind to get the better of one (*cittassa vasena vattati*). The great optimism of Buddhist psychology, unlike for instance the Freudian system, is that man can restrain, curb and subdue his mind by his own mind (*cetasā cittaṃ abhiniggaṇhāti*), and thus check and eliminate evil propensities by himself, without necessarily going to an analyst. It has to be remembered that the will in Buddhism, though an aspect of the mind, can yet act as the controller of the mind, both in the conscious and the unconscious spheres. This is possible because, as the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* says, the mind, if cultivated, is the most pliable (*kammaniya*) thing to handle. By cultivated (*bhāvita*) is here meant the process of mental culture which is called *bhāvanā* in Buddhism. This is possible because Buddhism holds that causation is as true of the mind as of external things.

Hence the fundamental ethical teaching of the Buddha is that the mind must be trained and cleansed of evil propensities. 'To purify one's mind' (*sa cittapariyodapanam*) is said to be the sum-total of the Buddha's ethical teaching. The Abhidhamma takes up and enlarges upon this teaching of psychological ethics. For instance, there the immoral mental states are said to be fourteen, viz., dullness, impudence, recklessness of consequences, distraction, greed, error of judgement, conceit, hate, envy, selfishness, worry, sloth, torpor and perplexity. These have to be suppressed and eliminated. Among the nineteen psychological properties said to be good and therefore to be cultivated are the following: confidence, mindfulness, prudence, discretion, disinterestedness, amity, balance of mind, calming of the bodily impulses, buoyancy of these, etc.

Mind: No Permanent Entity

But the greatest good that comes to the practising Buddhist by this self-examination and analysis of his own mind is the uprooting of that heresy (*micchādiṭṭhi*) which regards the Mind or any of its derivative states as a Self or Soul, that is to say, as an abiding and permanent subject or entity. Buddha does not deny a subject-object relationship in experience but this subject (whose innermost being is simply the flux of *viññāṇa*) is not in any sense a permanent and unchanging

Soul. Buddhism even asserts the activity or agency of the subject (*attakāra, purisakāra*) but it is not simply 'the Mind as man' which Mrs. Rhys Davids held to be the same as Upaniṣadic Soul or *ātman,* in her later writings. Buddhism does not say that ideas and feelings are just scattered about the world as loose and separate existences, to use a phrase of the psychologist McDougall. But for Buddhism just as for McDougall they cohere in systems each of which constitutes a mind. The difference between the Buddhist and most other psychologists pertains to the real nature of the Mind or the individual psychological unit. As has been attempted to show in this essay, the individual mind does not consist of such solid metaphysical stuff as the Self or Soul of certain religions and philosophies is made of. It is whether conceived as *citta* or *mano* or *viññāṇa* just an aspect of those dynamic vital impulses (*saṅkhāra*) which are categorically stated in Buddhism to be *anicca,* impermanent, *dukkha,* subject to ill and pain and *anatta,* void of any abiding substances. To the Buddhist, mind is only a flux, a derivative ripple on the surface of the stream of Becoming (*bhavasota*). The Buddhist can, therefore, in no way entertain the belief that the mind in any sense can be an unchanging entity, a permanent Ego. And this indeed is the most important lesson taught by the Buddhist analysis of the concept of Mind.

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The Concept of Peace as the Central Notion of Buddhist Social Philosophy*

It has been characteristic of Buddhist studies in the past that the socio-moral aspect of its philosophy has received but scant attention at the hands of writers both of the East and the West. This deficiency can be regarded as being due to several reasons, but one fact stands out clear. In the East students of the subject have regarded Buddhism purely as personal religion and dealt with it only from the point of view of individual ethics and practice, while the scholars of the West appear to have engaged themselves chiefly in the historical and metaphysical treatment of Buddhist ideas. Thus the socio-ethical aspect of Buddhist philosophy has hardly received the attention it deserves. Nevertheless, a careful student of Buddhism in any of its forms, whether Hīnayāna or Mahāyāna, will not fail to be impressed by the wealth of data afforded by these texts regarding the socio-moral problems current at the time of their composition. In a previous study[1] the present writer has emphasized the socio-ethical aspect of Buddhism as recorded in the Pali Canon and attempted there a brief treatment of the social, political and juristic principles contained in some of the earliest books. It may be mentioned in this connection that in regard to socio-philosophical doctrines very little difference is found between the Pali and other sources such as the Buddhist Sanskrit literature. The social ethics of Buddhism are common to all schools and the minor differences that may be found are often due to variations of emphasis.

It is necessary to point out at the very outset that the Buddha did not concern himself directly with socio-philosophical matters but

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referred to them only as adjuncts to the major thesis of the concept of *dukkha* or the general 'unsatisfactoriness' of empirical existence and the 'release' (*nissaraṇa*) therefrom. The Buddha was averse to philosophizing or theorizing for its own sake and consequently a social philosophy can be found in Buddhism only as inferable from its practical socio-moral postulates. Hence in Buddhism the more important aspect of its social philosophy relates mainly to the sphere of ethics, particularly of psychological ethics. Reason and belief (faith) are inadequate in themselves to bring man to the *summum bonum*, for it was the conviction of the Buddha that one had to establish oneself in moral conduct (*śīla*) before embarking upon any kind of spiritual progress or even of progress in worldly affairs. In this attempt, although man's primary concern is with his own inner purification, the ethical nature of the struggle involves him in the problem of his relationship to others, that is to say, his fellow-beings both human and non-human, the latter aspect of the relationship of man to the dumb creation receiving considerable emphasis in Buddhism. In the actual practice of social morality, however, it is primarily the individual's contact with the human community or society that becomes ethically important, and, therefore, it is such human relationships that constitute the main problem for the Buddhist just as for every other system of social philosophy.

A study of early Buddhist literature reveals the fact that the concept of Peace appears as the pivotal point in the Buddhist system of social ethics. As generally understood in the West, the notion of peace refers to *absence of strife among groups,* whether they are regarded as classes, communities, races or nations. It is not customary in the idiom of the West to speak of peace as between individuals within the same group. In Buddhism and other Indian religions, however, the primary emphasis is on the *individual* aspect of peace and its social consequences are held to follow only from the centre of the individual's own psychology. The most prominent word for peace, *santi* (Skr. śānti), denotes essentially the absence of conflict in the individual psychology, and in the fundamental sense refers to the absolute state of mental quietude expressed by the term *nirvāṇa* (Pali *Nibbāna*). In the Pali Canon it is characterized as the 'Haven of Peace' (*santipadam*).[2] One of the oldest texts, the *Sutta Nipāta,* refers to 'internal peace' (*ajjhatta-santi*) as resulting from the elimination of ideological and other conflicts of the mind (verse 837).

From the point of view of the Buddha's teaching it is clear that the

peace of the community depends on the peace-mindedness or goodwill of the individual members of the community and the same holds good even if we enlarge the community to include the whole world. For Buddhism regards peace as a subjective quality having an individual centre and manifestation. It is because of this fact that the Buddha emphasized the subjective aspect of his social ethic more than the mere externals of social behaviour. A socio-moral act, according to Buddhism, gains the greater part of its practical validity from the purity of its source which is no other than the psychology of the individual responsible for its conception and execution. In the *Sutta Nipāta* (verse 260) it is admitted that satisfactory external, i.e., environmental, conditions are necessary for healthy and peaceful social life, but the Buddha always insisted that the factors conditioning man's social life are in a deeper sense *psychological*. Consequently, according to Buddhism, the social sense or *sensus communis* along with its ethic is in origin personal and individual and it is only in its application that it assumes a reciprocal character. In the ultimate analysis, therefore, peace is a psychological condition or attitude, a function of individual thought and feeling. Thus peace, in the general social sense, is only the end-result of the cultivation of peace-mindedness by the individual who is the ultimate unit of the social community.

This psychological attitude tending to peace in society is further analysed in Buddhism into four cardinal states of thought and feeling called the *Four Sublime Moods* (*Brahma-Vihāra*). These four appear identically the same in all schools of Buddhism. In Pali they are listed as *mettā, karuṇā, muditā* and *upekkhā,* while the Buddhist Sanskrit sources give the equivalent forms as *maitri, karuṇā, muditā* and *upekṣā*. Etymologically and conceptually they are the same and mean *friendly feeling, sympathy, congratulatory benevolence* and *equanimity* respectively. All social relationships, according to the Buddha, have to be based on these four moods or attitudes and thus they are regarded as representing the highest (*brahma*) conditions for social well-being. In fact, it may be rightly asserted that the concept of *Brahma-vihāras* sums up the whole of the Buddhist social philosophy and gives it in a nutshell. Psychologically considered these four 'sublime moods' or moral attitudes of the individual towards his fellow-creatures are only partial aspects of a single basic orientation of the individual mind with respect to humanity and the dumb creation, and can correctly be subsumed under the generic

term *benevolence*.[3] This spirit of *benevolence* is the origin and source of all peace and goodwill among men, according to Buddhist social philosophy.

The first of these 'sublime attitudes' is given as *mettā* (Skr. *maitri*) which indicates the exercise of *friendliness* towards one's fellow-beings in all situations. It is a positive state of mind, being defined as 'the desire to bring about the happiness and well-being of others in society'. In fact, such friendliness or universal love is regarded in Buddhism as the basis of all social ethics, the corner-stone of the edifice of Buddhist benevolence or goodwill among men which is the *sine qua non* of peace. The importance of this altruistic virtue for Buddhist ethics can be seen from the fact that according to the Theravāda tradition the next Buddha to appear in the world will be known as *Metteyya* or 'Buddha of Universal Love', while the Mahāyāna literature has *Maitreya* as one of the future Bodhisattvas. Peace and goodwill among men cannot be achieved, according to Buddhism, without this basic attitude of friendly feeling which must be exercised irrespectively of race or colour, religion or political creed, or even in spite of the fact that the other is one's enemy. Once the Buddha admonished his disciples thus:

> If villainous bandits were to carve you limb from limb with a two-handled saw, even then the one that should give way to anger would not be obeying my teaching. Even then be it your task to preserve your hearts unmoved, never to allow an ill word to pass your lips, but always to abide in friendliness and goodwill, with no hate in your hearts, enfolding in radiant thoughts of love the bandit (who tortures you), and, making that the basis, to envelop the entire world in your radiant thoughts of love, noble, vast and beyond measure, in which there will be no hatred or thought of harm.[4]

There are other places too in the Pali Canon where the exercise of this attitude of love and friendliness is recommended even when one is placed under the most trying circumstances.[5] Modern writers generally translate the word *mettā* as 'love' but it has been pointed out that 'love' has specific Christian associations and may not be suitable for the Buddhist concept which emphasizes more the universal rather than its personal aspect. Buddhism uses the word as the antidote to such evil and anti-social tendencies as malevolence (*vyāpāda*) and violence (*himsā*) which endanger peace.

The next *Brahma-vihāra* is *karuṇā*, that attitude which is conveyed by terms like sympathy, compassion, kindness, pity, mercy. It is explained in the Pali tradition as 'the desire to remove bane and sorrow from one's fellow-beings'. Here the basic psychological attitude is one of *sympathy for all that suffer*. Perhaps, the German term *das Mitleid* expresses this idea better than any other European word. Both in Pali and Buddhist Sanskrit literature words like *anukampā*, compassion, and *dayā*, sharing of others sorrows, are used as synonyms of *karuṇā*. This virtue helps to eliminate callousness and indifference to the pain and suffering of others. It is because of this specific character of *karuṇā* as the chief weapon in eliminating sorrow (*dukkha*) that the Mahāyānists give it the pre-eminent place among the *Brahma-vihāras*, whereas in Theravāda Buddhism *mettā* occupies the central position. A Buddha's *karuṇā* is discussed in Mahāyāna literature under thirty two aspects.[6] He pities all beings because they are enmeshed in various sins and calamities. It can easily be seen that this ideal is more in keeping with the Bodhisattva doctrine of the Mahāyānists. It is *karuṇā* that produces the Thought of Enlightenment in the Bodhisattva and prompts his self-sacrifice in forsaking his own *nirvāṇa* for the good of other beings. The relative positions of *maitri* and *karuṇā* in the two systems, however, indicate merely a difference in emphasis, for even in Theravāda Buddhism *karuṇā* plays a very important role although *mettā* is given more prominence.

The third 'sublime attitude' is *muditā* or congratulatory benevolence which is described in the Pali tradition as 'the desire to see others rejoicing in their happiness and to feel happy with them'. It can be seen that this attitude merely complements the above *karuṇā* or 'sorrowing in others' sorrow'. This complementary nature of the two attitudes cannot be better implied than by rendering *muditā* by the German word *die Mitfreude*, just as translating *karuṇā* by the German expression *das Mitleid* as was suggested above. Etymologically the term *muditā*, 'congratulatory joy', is not to be confused with the word *mudutā* ('softness' Skr *mṛdutā*) sometimes given as its equivalent, for it is quite clear that it is derived from an earlier Vedic noun *mud*, joy. This basic attitude is meant to counteract all feelings of jealousy and rivalry in social dealings. Hence it is as significant for social concord and peace as the other two *Brahma vihāras*.

With regard to the fourth 'sublime attitude' called *upekkhā* in Pali and *upekṣā* in Buddhist Sanskrit, it must be admitted that the

concept appears to be 'subjective' and lacking in that character of reciprocity which the other three implied. But a closer scrutiny of its application is bound to dispel such an impression. It is true that the term etymologically signifies 'indifference' or rather 'disinterestedness'. Such an interpretation would naturally divest the term of its social significance. But the incidence of the word in early Buddhist literature clearly shows that it is of as great social value as the other *Brahma-vihāras*. According to Buddhism, the cultivation of social virtues must be free from all personal bias or self-hood (*atta-diṭṭhi*). The practice of the *Brahma-vihāras*, in other words, should be based on a fundamental *indifference to their consequences* on the part of the subject. Love and sympathy become 'sublime' only when they are applied *universally* but not selfishly limited to any one particular object of interest. Hence the *Brahma-vihāras* are designated as the 'unlimited' (*appamañña*).[7] It is for this reason that Buddhist writers employ the word 'equanimity' in rendering the term *upekkhā*. As a mental attitude with social application or altruistic value, *upekkhā* in the context of the *Brahma-vihāras* must be regarded as parallel to *samānattatā*,[8] (Skr. *samānātmatā*) or 'evenness of mind' given in Buddhism as the fourth and last of the *Four Bases of Service* (*catu-saṅgaha-vatthu*), significantly paraphrased in the older Buddhist Sanskrit works as *samāna-sukha-duḥkhatā*,[9] or 'equanimity in the face of joy and sorrow'.

The constant, methodical and deliberate cultivation of these (*Brahma-vihāras*) constitutes a form of meditation (*bhāvana*) that is of the highest social significance. The oft-repeated formula in the Canon runs as follows: 'Here, O monks, a disciple dwells pervading one direction with his heart filled with Friendliness (or love), likewise the second, the third and the fourth direction; so above, below and around; he dwells pervading the entire world, everywhere and equally, with his heart filled with Friendliness, abundant, grown great, measureless, free from enmity and free from malevolence.'[10] The same is repeated with the necessary changes for the other *Brahma-vihāras* as well. In the Mahāyāna texts too a similar formula occurs as a process of meditation exercised by the Bodhisattva: 'He abides pervading the whole Universe (with its chief element, the Truth, and its remotest element, Space) with his mind accompanied by *maitri*, with vast, great, undivided, unlimited and universal freedom from hatred, rivalry, narrow-mindedness and harmfulness.'[11] This, too, is repeated substituting *karuṇā*, *muditā* and *upekṣā* for *maitri*.

The repeated contemplation of these 'sublime states' is constantly recommended in the Buddhist books as providing the best antidote to all forms of conflicts and tensions. In the words of a European Buddhist monk:

> These four attitudes of mind provide in fact the answer to all situations arising from social contact. They are the great removers of tension, the great peace-makers in social conflict, the great healers of wounds suffered in the struggle for existence; levellers of social barriers, builders of harmonious communities . . . promoters of human brotherhood against the forces of egotism.[12]

As has been pointed above these four 'sublime attitudes' or *Brahma-vihāras* can be comprehended within the single ethical concept of *benevolence*. It is the matrix from which issue all the postulates of Buddhist social ethics, the foundation upon which is built the whole edifice of Buddhist social philosophy. For, *benevolence* is the antidote to all forms of conflict (*paṭigha*) and hatred (*dosa*, Skr. *dveṣa*) which in the ultimate analysis are found to lie at the bottom of every type of tension. Hence the concept of *benevolence* emerges in Buddhist social philosophy as the essential foundation for peace. The Buddha held that 'hatred at no time does cease through hatred; hatred ceases only through the negation of hatred (i.e., benevolence)'.[13] The famous 'Discourse on Universal Love' goes even further and gives the admonition to those who would preserve peace to love all beings at all times as a mother protects her only child.

> Whatever living beings there are in existence, whether feeble or strong, without any exception, whether tall, big, medium-sized, short, small or great; whether seen or unseen, living near or far, those already born or those seeking birth, may all such beings be happy at heart. Let not anyone deceive another; let no one disdain another under any circumstances; let no one wish ill to any other through enmity or resentment. As a mother guards her only son at the risk of her own life, so may one develop a boundless heart (of Love) towards all creatures . . .[14]

From such a lofty ethical point of view, the maintenance of Peace even in the most critical social situation becomes a categorical imperative.

Thus in Buddhism war on any account comes to be condemned,

for even the so-called 'wars of defence' are violations of the basic attitude of *benevolence*. Even the enemy has to be 'loved' like every other being in existence. The futility of war was emphasized by the Buddha when he appeared before his own relatives, the Sakyans and the Koliyans, who were about to plunge into a war of mutual destruction over an insignificant dispute regarding the waters of a river (the Rohini) that flowed through their states. The Buddha ironically reminded them that the human blood they were going to shed was much more precious than the waters for which they were prepared to sacrifice their lives. It is this typically Buddhist idea of Peace that runs through the *Edicts of Aśoka* and gives the final touch of grace to the humanism of his character. It is now beyond dispute that it was primarily due to the influence of Buddhism that the great Emperor renounced all conquest by war and violence and resorted to *dhamma-vijaya* or 'winning by righteousness'. One of the principal components of the social ethic of Aśoka as expressed in his famous concept of *dhamma* (Skr. *dharma*) is termed *daya*[15] or 'compassion' (lit. sharing of others sorrows) which, as shown above, is only the synonym for *karuṇā*, the second *Brahma-vihāra* of Buddhism. Thus, quite in keeping with the ethics of *benevolence* as expounded by the Buddha, Aśoka denounces such sinful qualities of heart as fierceness, anger and envy,[16] which as mentioned previously constitute the very opposite of Buddhist *benevolence*. One can point out several other similarities between Aśoka's *dhamma* and the socio-morality inculcated in the *Brahma-vihāras*. In his great emphasis on compassion and humanity this great Indian ruler certainly stands out as the most renowned exponent of the Buddhist concept of *benevolence*, of goodwill and Peace among men, that the world has ever seen.

From what has been said above it should be clear that the concept of Peace, according to Buddhism, arises from the basic socio-moral attitude of *benevolence* expressed in the fourfold formula of *mettā-karuṇā-muditā-upekkhā*. Thus Peace in the ultimate analysis, is of psychological origin. It is only a mind free from anger and hatred, callousness and hard-heartedness, jealousy and envy, egoistic bias and selfishness, that can radiate Peace which is the end-result of benevolent feelings exercised by individuals in their social actions. The attempt to secure Peace through such external instruments of diplomacy as pacts and alliances between nations and other groups, is, from the Buddhist point of view, utterly futile. It ignores the real psychological foundation of Peace which is the attitude of *benevolence*

radiating from *individual* centres. Thus the perennial lesson of Buddhist social philosophy is that Peace can only be achieved by the practice of benevolent qualities, chiefly of *mettā* or 'universal love', which, as the great Indian poet and humanist, Rabindranath Tagore, realized, in his *Sadhana* (p. 106), could only result from the cultivation of the *Brahma-vihāras* as taught twenty-four centuries earlier by that greatest of humanists, the Buddha.

REFERENCES

1. See Buddhism and Society, in this volume, pp. 53 ff.
2. *AN*, II. p. 18 (PTS edn.).
3. See S. Tachibana, *Ethics of Buddhism*, chapter 13, London, 1926.
4. *MN*, *Sutta* 21.
5. See the conversation between Puñña and the Buddha, Ibid., *Sutta* 145.
6. Har Dayal, *The Bodhisattva Doctrine*, pp. 24, 61, 173, London, 1932.
7. *DN*, III, p. 223 (PTS edn.).
8. Ibid., III. p. 152.
9. Mahāvastu, I. 3.
10. *DN*, I, pp. 250, etc.
11. *Dasabhūmika sūtra*, p. 34, Paris, 1926.
12. Ven. Nyanaponika Thera, *The Four Sublime States*, p. i, (published by the Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, Sri Lanka, 1958).
13. *Dhammapada*, v. 5.
14. *Sn*, vv. 146-50.
15. Pillar Edict II.
16. Pillar Edict III.

9

The Concept of Viññāṇa in Theravāda Buddhism*

The basic position of the concept of *viññāṇa* in the entire scheme of early Buddhist thought as recorded in the Pali Canon has not received adequate recognition either by traditional exegetists or by modern interpreters. The common attitude has been to regard it merely as a psychological phenomenon interpreted as 'cognition' or 'perception' or 'cognitive consciousness' or simply as 'consciousness'. The purpose of the present paper is to indicate, however briefly, that it is a much more pregnant concept, with a philosophically 'deeper' significance than may be implied by these terms. Reference must be made however, to a few previous scholars, notably Oldenberg,[1] Mrs. Rhys Davids[2] and Berriedale Keith,[3] who have not failed to notice some of the broader issues involved in this concept.

It is true that in the well-known analysis of perception recurring in identical form in several early canonical passages, the term stands for 'perceptive-' or 'cognitive-consciousness'. In that often repeated formula (e.g., *M.I.* 259, etc.) it is asserted that: 'depending on the organ of sight (*cakkhu*) and on visible form (*rūpa*) arises the sight-consciousness (*cakkhū-viññaṇam uppajjati*)'. Similarly with respect to the organ of hearing, etc., and also of *mind* which too is here regarded as an organ of sense with the mental phenomena (*dhammā*) as its objects. If in this formula the verb *uppajjati* is to be taken literally, then 'cognitive consciousness' must be regarded as arising *de novo* from the concourse (*saṃgati*) of the organ of sense and its object, and, the Pali exegetical tradition appears to support such an idea. But a careful study of the early texts will show (eg. *DN*, II. 62) that what the formula probably meant was that the cognitive or

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perceptive process of *viññāṇa begins to function* when there is contact between the organ and the object of sense. It is obvious that the *viññāṇa* or consciousness that is said to 'arise' in each case of sense contact could not be something *created afresh* by the latter, for in that event, the Buddhist theory of perception would be identical with that of the materialistic schools which believed that consciousness is a mere by-product of matter. But with such a theory the Buddha is reported as having radically differed. Therefore in the phrase '*uppajjati cakkhu-viññāṇam*' it would be far more reasonable from the view of early Buddhism to see the idea of *viññāṇa* coming to function in relation to the organ of sight' etc. Or, if all animistic implications are eschewed from the idea of 'manifesting', in the words of Dr. E.J.Thomas, *viññāṇa* may be said to *'manifest itself* through the six sense organs'.[4] Moreover, there are several contexts in the Pali Canon which go to prove conclusively that *viññāṇa* is much more 'profound' a concept than to be regarded as a mere by-product of the interaction of the sense-organs and their objects. In other words, there is much more in the concept of *viññāṇa* than one may gather from its translation as 'consciousness' in the above formula of perception.

Elsewhere[5] I have discussed the concept of *viññāṇa* in relation to the problem of rebirth. There are several contexts in the early parts of the Canon which represent the *viññāṇa* as the *sine qua non* for embryonic development. One passage of the *Dīgha Nikāya* clearly asserts that 'if *viññāṇa* were not to descend (*okkamissatha*) into the mother's womb (*mātu kucchiṃ*)' or if 'having descended into the mother's womb were to leave (*okkamitvā vokkamissatha*), then the development of the embryo will not be successful' (*D*, II. 63). In this context what is most significant is the use of the verb '*ava(o) + kram* to denote the *entering*, and '*vi + ut + kram*' to mean the *leaving* of *viññāṇa*. There is no doubt that it is used in the actual sense of *descending* or *entering into* — the original (literal) sense of this verb as found in other places in the *nikāyas* in analogous contexts with the *accusative* of that which is entered (*D*, II. 12, 108; *M*, III. 119, etc.), as well as in the early *Upaniṣads* as will be shown below. Similarly, in the phrase '*gabbhassa avakkanti*' the original sense seems to have been 'descent of the embryonic being' for even in the earlier language *garbha* meant both the embryo as *receptacle* as well as the *being* inside it. Hence it is that *gabbha* is said to derive from the six elements of which *viññāṇa* is the last and to be the cause of *nāma-rūpa* at least

in one version of the *paticcasamuppāda* formula (*A*, I. 176). What is significant here is that for the usual phrase '*viññāṇa-paccayā nāma-rūpaṃ*' we have '(*gabbhassa*) *okkantiyā sati nāma-rūpaṃ*,' a fact which assumes greater importance when we find *viññāṇa* regarded as the sixth of the six *dhātus* or elements (*M*, III. 239; *A*, I. 176). These references should help to convince one that in embryonic conception *viññāṇa* is not just some incidental phenomenon of the process but a more 'original' factor, apart from the mere physical elements. In fact, as the *Dīgha Nikāya* passage makes it quite clear, it is the most essential factor without which there cannot be the development of an embryo.

That the above *viññāṇa* is no other than the *viññāṇa* which is regarded as the cause for the individual's survival after death is made clear by a number of references in the early Pali Canon. In the *Majjhima Nikāya* (II. 262 ff.) it is technically called *saṃvattanika-viññāṇa* or 'the *viññāṇa* that evolves (into the next life)'. It is for this that in the later scholastic period the term '*paṭisandhi-viññāṇa*' was substituted (see *PTS*, Dict.*s.v.*) This '*saṃvattanika-viññāṇa*' is said to continue up to the spiritual stage of *Nevasaññānāsaññāyatana* usually rendered 'Sphere of neither perception nor non-perception' (*Ibid.*, 264). It is thus the *saṃsaric viññāṇa* to which Sāti is reported as having referred with the words '*viññāṇa* that fares on and continues (*sandhāvati saṃsarati*)' but erred in saying that it did so 'without change of identity (*tadeva . . . anaññaṃ*)' and also in regarding it as the 'speaker and experiencer (*vado vedeyyo*)', in other words, as the *agent* behind all mental activities (*M*, I. 256). Now, this *saṃsäric viññāṇa* cannot be different from the *stream of viññāṇa* (*viññāṇa-sota*) referred to as extending into both the worlds in the *Dīgha Nikāya* (III. 105; cf. *Sn*, 1055, etc.), called also the 'stream of becoming' (*bhava-sota*) in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* (IV. 291). It may be remarked in passing that in the present writer's opinion the term *bhavaṅga* occurring at *Tika-Paṭṭhāna*, I. 159 and the probable use of the same compound at *Aṅguttara Nikāya* II. 79 indicate no other than this selfsame 'stream of becoming'. It is extremely significant that in the 'Pāyāsi Suttanta' of the *Dīgha Nikāya* (II. 325) which clearly refers to the *saṃsāric viññāṇa*, this *viññāṇa* is made *analogous* to *purisa*, a term whose Upaniṣadic antecedence cannot be missed. It may be added that it is this same *saṃsāric viññāṇa* that is called an *āhāra* (*S*, II. 13; *M*, I. 48,261), and sometimes regarded as the cause (*bīja*) of rebirth (*A*, I. 223; *S*, III. 54, etc.). It should now be clear why the other

categories constituting the individual are said to be the *home* (*oka*) of *viññāṇa* (*S*, III. 9 ff.). In view of such evidence the conclusion is difficult to avoid that the term *viññāṇa* in early Buddhism indicated the *surviving factor* of an individual which by re-entering womb after womb (*gabbhā gabbhaṃ*: *Sn*, 278, cf. *D*, III. 147) produced repeated births resulting in what is generally known as *saṃsāra*.

The idea that, as explained above, *viññāṇa* is the factor in the individual that survives death is also supported by other evidence in the Pali Canon. In the contribution above referred to, I showed how the term *gandhabba* denoted another aspect of the very same concept. In such an anchistological sense the term *gandhabba* occurs twice in the *Majjhima Nikāya* signifying the last of three conditions necessary for successful development of the embryo. In the 'Mahātaṇhāsaṅkhaya Sutta' it is said that, for 'conception' (*gabbhassa avakkanti*) to take place, there should be the conjunction of three things: 'There should be coitus of parents, the mother should have her period, and the *gandhabba* must be present' (*M*, I. 265). Buddhaghoṣa's com–ment is unusually clear on the point: '*Gandhabba* (here denotes) the being about to enter the womb; (*paccupaṭṭhito hoti:* it is not that (he) remains in the proximity observing the union of the parents, (on the other hand) what is implied is that a certain being (*satto*) is about to be born in that situation, being driven on by the meçhanism of Kamma'. It is idle to seek to explain away the phrase 'a certain being about to enter the womb' (*tat*ūpaka-satto*) as an unconscious lapse into popular terminology on the part of Buddhaghoṣa, for, the significance of the text itself is weighty enough to have compelled Buddhaghoṣa to resort to the particular terminology he uses. Chalmers translated the last phrase as 'if there is the presiding deity of generation (*gandhabba*) present', and is followed by the PTS Dictionary which says, citing only this single instance, that the *gandhabba* 'is said to preside over child-conception'. Doubtless, these explanations are influenced by the notion that the Vedic term *gandharva* meant an auspicious deity presiding over conception, an idea not very sound in itself as I have shown in my earlier discussion cited above. To infer any idea of 'presiding' from the Pali verb '*paccupaṭṭhito hoti*' is also unwarranted, for it can only mean 'to be present at'. The other occur–rence is found in the 'Assalāyana Sutta' where Buddha relates to Assalāyana a discussion said to have taken place between Asita Devala and seven sages who were too proud of their brāhmaṇa birth. Devala lays down three conditions necessary for conception (*M*, II. 156), in

exactly the same terms as above, and, in order to ridicule the over-bearing brāhmāṇas, argues that in such a case it would be impossible to know whether the particular *gandhabba* involved was by caste kṣatriya, brāhmaṇa, vaiśya or śūdra. Here the text is unequivocal and leaves no doubt that what is meant is the *surviving element* of a previously dead person. As I have shown in the cited publication, from the time of the *Atharvaveda* the word *gandharva* is found meaning 'discarnate spirit'. Since, however, in this particular context, the *identity* of the 'spirit' with a previous person in point of caste goes against the Buddhist principle that the reborn individual is neither identical nor non-identical with the previous person (*na ca so na ca añño*), Buddhaghoṣa maintains a discreet silence. This latter reference to *gandhabba* is missed by most writers who have dealt with the term including the PTS Dictionary although it is obviously as important as the former. But, from the early Buddhist point of view, the special meaning of the term *gandhabba* as used in the above context is not difficult to determine. It must refer to the *saṃsāric viññāṇa* in the intermediate state between death and the succeeding birth. This conclusion is supported by the *Amarakośa* where the term *gandharva* is explained as *antarābhava-sattva*. Amara, who was himself a Buddhist, seems here to have followed a genuine Buddhist tradition on the meaning of the term. One can easily see that this sense is quite compatible with Buddhaghoṣa's explanation of the term as referred to above.

Even more important than the above discussed functions of the term *viññāṇa* in Pali Buddhism, is the part it plays in the scheme of spiritual training or meditation generally known as *jhāna* or *samāpatti*. An analysis of its occurrence in the various description of these spiritual or psychical states shows unmistakably that *viññāṇa* is the 'medium' in which the course of meditational progress takes place. Now, it is important that these stages or states of spiritual attainment (*samāpatti*) are definitely called 'the abiding places (or footholds) of *viññāṇa*' (*viññāṇa-ṭhiti; D*, II. 68 ff., *A*, IV. 39 f.) A careful study of each of the canonical statements regarding the successive *jhānic* stages will show how this idea of *ṭhiti* is applicable. There is no other explanation of this usage of the expression *viññāṇa-ṭhiti* except the straightforward one that throughout these states the 'stream' of *viññāṇa* (*viññāṇa-sota*) to which I have already referred, appears to abide in a certain plane of existence for some duration. It may be stated that in the first *jhānic* state the *viññāṇa* manifests itself as

reasoning and investigation (*vitakka-vicāra*), but in the second this intelligential function of the mind is said to be pacified (*vūpasama*),but yet the second *jhāna*, according to what was said above, is also considered as a 'state of consciousness' (*viññāṇa-ṭhiti*). Similarly, the second of the four Higher *jhānas*, i.e., the sixth of the attainments, is said to be the 'infinity of *viññāṇa*, (*viññāṇânañcâyatana*). Beyond the stage of the infinity of *viññāṇa* is the 'state of nothingness' (*ākiñcaññâyatana*). It needs to be emphasized again that both these states are also called '*viññāṇaṭṭhitis*'. Further, the next or the final 'abiding place of *viññāna*' is asserted to be 'the sphere of neither-*saññā*-nor-*asaññā* ', which, I believe, implies that while the previous states are 'conceptual', that is to say, in the final analysis reducible to a particular 'noetic' experience of the subject, the last indicates a state which, while being non-noetic, is still some form of 'experience'. Since, however, there can be no experience of any kind without some sort of *viññāṇa* acting as the medium for it, and, therefore, must be characterizable as *impermanent* (*anicca*), Buddha declared that even this 'state of neither-conception-nor-nonconception' does not imply final emancipation or *nibbāna*. The *viññāṇa* ceases to manifest itself altogether (*nirujjhati*) only in the final state of 'the cessation of all conceptual and empirical experience (*saññā-vedayita-nirodha*)'. *Nirujjhati* literally means 'checked' and this can best be taken as referring to the *checking of the flow* (*sota*) of *viññāṇa*, that is to say, the stopping of the continuity of *viññāṇa*. In the previous state the *viññāṇa* could find some abiding place (*ṭhiti*) but in the state of *nirodha* it obtains no such foothold.

That the above-described states of *viññāṇa* represent so many states of a progressive purification of the individual in empirical (*saṃsāric*) existence is made clear from several passages in the Pali Canon. Of these, two passages dealing with the numinous concept of the *yakkha* (Vedic *yakṣa*) deserve special mention. The term occurs with a philosophical meaning in the *Suttanipāta* (478,875-76), once in the 'Aṭṭhakavagga' and once in the 'Mahāvagga'. It occurs in the quasi-technical phrase *yakkhassa suddhi* which I have discussed fully in an earlier paper.[6] In the "Kalahavivāda Sutta" of the 'Aṭṭhakavagga' the Buddha after explaining the process of eliminating the conditioning factors of the manifold experience of empirical existence (*papañca*) is made to reply to the interlocutor that 'form, happiness and sorrow' cease for him 'who is of neither normal nor abnormal consciousness, neither unconscious nor with consciousness

ceased to become' (*na saññasaññī, na visaññasaññī, no pi asaññi, na vibūtasaññī*). Then the inquiry is made whether that state is what some metaphysicians would call 'the purity of the *yakkha*' or whether there is a purity different from that. To this the Buddha replies that there are some who hold that the permanent state of the conscious entity is the highest purity (*sassata*) while others hold that the annihilation of that conscious entity is the goal (*uccheda*), but that the true sage (*muni*) knowing that both these are inclined to extremes does not enter into disputes and does not go into renewed existence (in *saṃsāra*). Now, an analysis of this context leads one to the conclusion that the term *yakkha* is used here with reference to that state of *viññāṇa* which is neither normal (*saññasaññī*) nor yet attained to that higher state which is the *ceasing to become* of such normal consciousness, that is to say, not yet reached the *nirodha* state which we discussed earlier. Hence the term *yakkha* here must refer to the formless (*arūpa*), infinite (*ananta*) state of *viññāṇa* as characteristic of the last three states of the *jhānic* series as well as in the subtler state of 'Neither *saññā* nor non-*saññā*' (*nevasaññānāsaññā-yatana*), but not reached the highest state of emancipation (*parimutti*) which is also called the highest state of purity (*parisuddhi*).

That the above is the correct interpretation is seen when we cast a retrospective glance at the meaning of *yakṣa* reached in the philosophy of the *Upaniṣads*. Take for instance the reference to this sense of *yakṣa* as found at *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, v.4, where it is said: 'This verily is That. This indeed was That, even the Actual. He who knows that great *yakṣa*, the first born, as the actual Brahman, conquers the worlds.' There can be no doubt that the term here refers to the actualized (*satya*) Brahman, the great (i.e., infinite) and first-born. Such a macrocosmic sense of the term *yakṣa* occurs in the *Kena Upaniṣad* too (III.2.12) where in the allegory of the Vedic gods' ignorance of Brahman it is narrated that when "It appeared to them they did not understand It. 'What wonderful Being (*yakṣa*) is this!' they said". Śaṅkara identifies *yakṣa* here with *mahad bhūtam* which appears in a similar sense in the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* (III.11.1.1). Now, it is well known that in the *Upaniṣads* the individual soul in its highest purity is identified with infinite being, infinite consciousness and infinite bliss. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (V.6.1) refers to the human consciousness in its *pure* state as identifiable with the *Brahman* or *Ātman* which is infinite (i.e., macrocosmic) and is the 'mind-made person' (*manomaya-puruṣa*) said to be of the nature of

light. i.e., radiant (*bhāḥ, bhāsatyaḥ*), and the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (I.6.1) regards it as immortal and resplendent (*hiraṇmaya*). It is significant that the idea is found in early Buddhism that *citta*, identical with *mano* or (*mano-*)*viññāṇa* (*D.* I.21) is radiant (*pabhassara*) when it is undefiled (*A,* I. 10) and loses its radiance when defiled (*S,*V. 92). It is this *mano-viññāṇa* that, after passing the fourth *jhāna* when it divests itself of the sense-functions, is regarded as pure (*parisuddha*) in the *Majjhima Nikāya* (I.293), and such infinite *viññāṇa* is definitely asserted to be 'devoid of characteristics and radiant all-round' (*anidassanam anantam sabbatopabham*) in the *Dīgha Nikāya* (I.223). It is therefore the *purity* of *viññāṇa* with the consequent *radiance* that is especially signified by the term *yakkha*. This, however, does not mean for Buddhism the ultimate stage of spiritual evolution, for, as I pointed out earlier, in order to reach that final state *viññāṇa* must *cease to function* in any form. That is why in the above passage the phrase *yakkhassa suddhi* is deliberately employed implying, as it does, that this *yakkha* has to be purified further if final emancipation or *vimutti* is to be attained.

These considerations also should prove sufficient to help one to distinguish between the Upaniṣadic use of the word *vijñāna* and the Buddhist term *viññāṇa*. Even with regard to the above-discussed idea of *viññāṇa* as the surviving factor in rebirth, it has to be emphasized that it is not exactly identical with the parallel idea of *vijñānātman* as found in the *Upaniṣads*. The Upaniṣadic theories of survival fall into different categories. According to some texts when a man dies and is cremated, from the oblation, '*puruṣa* arises having the colour of light' (e.g., *Taittirīya Up.* I.6.1) and that is the 'survivor'. Here a compromise between the eschatological and the biological theories of survival is seen, as I have shown in the publication already referred to. Another more developed theory, inclining rather to the anchistological doctrine of transmigration refers to 'the *puruṣa* among the senses, made of knowledge, who being born (again) obtains a (fresh) body' (e.g., *Bṛhad. Up.* IV. 3.8). But it is at *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, IV.4.2 that the *survivor* is clearly asserted to be no other than the *ātman* in the individual: '(As he is dying). . . verily, the extremity of the heart of this aforesaid (person) becomes luminous; by that become luminous, this soul (*ātman*) goes out (*niṣkrāmati*), through the eye or the head or any other point of the body; in the wake of him as he leaves (*ut-krāmantam*) life leaves, (and) in the wake

of life all the vital functions leave; (he) becomes (one-) with-consciousness (*savijñānaḥ*); as that very (*eva*) consciousness with which (he is identified), (he) descends (*ava-krāmati*) (into a womb) over again (*anu*) . . .'. The terminological parallelism with the Pali is quite obvious. Here Śaṅkara interprets the term *ātman* as *vijñānātman* as clearly implied by the text. This *vijñānātman* has its parrallel in the Upaniṣadic concept of the *vijñānamayapuruṣa* as referred to at *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* (II.1.15). There is no doubt that the Upaniṣadic tradition took the *vijñāna* as the surviving factor at death in the metaphysical sense of an *ātman* that leaves the body at death (*niṣ-krāmati*) and in transmigration enters into some relationship or other with *vijñāna*. Thus it is easy to see how the Buddhist theory of *viññāṇa* as the surviving factor shows a distinct difference from the parallel Upaniṣadic concept of an *atman* that *transmigrates* carrying the *vijñāna* along with it, or, becoming one with it as it proceeds on to the next life. In short, neither in the microcosmic nor in the macrocosmic sense can the Upaniṣadic concept of the *Ātman* be regarded as being identical with the Buddhist idea of *viññāṇa*. In the canonical texts (e.g., *M*, I. 300) it is emphatically asserted that *viññāṇa* or any other of the *khandhas* cannot be viewed as soul (*attā*) in any sense; nor can the soul be considered as having the *viññāṇa*; nor can it be said that *viññāṇa* is part of the soul, or that the soul is part of the *viññāṇa*. The same text makes it clear that *viññāṇa* is *impermanent* (*anicca*) like any other empirical phenomenon (I.138).

From what has been said above regarding the nature of the Buddhist concept of *viñ ṇa* it will not be difficult to understand why most writers have come to the conclusion that the term *viññāṇa* in Buddhist literature has *several senses*. Such a conclusion obviously carries with it the suspicion that the authors of the Pali Canon had no clear conception as to the exact connotation of this important term. It is true that the word is used for several philosophical and psychological phenomena. As I have attempted to show in this paper, it has the sense of cognitive or perceptive consciousness in most of the passages. In addition, however, *viññaṇa* also means the surviving factor in the individual, denoted by the special term *saṃvattanika viññāṇa* in Pali. Then, again, the term is applied to the 'medium' in which *jhānic* or spiritual progress takes place, as implied by the expression *viññāṇaṭṭhiti*. Perhaps the foregoing discussion has made it clear that the so-called 'separate meanings' of *viññāṇa* do not refer to so many different entities but to *aspects* of the same phenomenon.

A study of all the relevant passages shows that behind all these aspects is a much deeper *viññāṇa*. It may be difficult to define its exact nature in modern philosophical terms, but the early Buddhists appear to have entertained no doubts as to its fundamental significance for their view of individualized existence and spiritual deliverance. From this 'basic' point of view the apparent 'contradictions' of the texts could be satisfactorily resolved. Thus the conclusion forces itself upon one that in the early Buddhist view as reflected in the Pali Canon *viññaṇa* was the basis for all conscious and unconscious psychological manifestations pertaining to individuality as it continued in *saṃsāra* or empirical existence. In itself, however, it was nothing permanent (*nicca*) or constant (*dhuva*), being no aspect or part of any metaphysical Being or *Ātman* but only an aspect of *bhava* or Becoming which was emphatically declared as being subject to constant change (*vipariṇāmadhamma*) and finally to cessation at the attainment of Nibbāna.

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10

Theravāda Buddhism Under Modern Cultures*

The purpose of this discussion is to consider some of the changes brought about in Theravāda Buddhist religion under the influence of modern cultures as seen in the South-East Asian countries, in particular, Sri Lanka.The phenomenon of religious change has received considerable attention in recent times from specialists in several fields of study. As a complex product of several processes religion may be grouped under three main headings: the psychological, the intellectual and the socio-cultural.[1] What is especially noteworthy in regard to the religious complex is the extraordinarily creative interplay among these several trends in the development of any religious tradition existing at a given time and the manner in which such tradition becomes for each member of the community adhering to it a life-embracing system of habits of feelings, thought and behaviour.

The traditional trend of religion, as characterized by its socio-cultural manifestations resulting from certain historical tendencies peculiar to itself, will receive closer attention in this discussion. Dr. Thouless, the Cambridge psychologist, in his *Riddell Memorial Lectures* (1940), pointed out that 'any new current of religious thought which may sweep men into a new way of reacting for a time is acted on by the drive of the old religious habits'; and this he calls 'conventionalisation'. The other factor causing changes in a religious tradition which the same authority has emphasized is that of 'assimilation', whereby he means the assimilating of novel religious ideas. But it would be more advantageous in the present context to understand 'assimilation' in a somewhat wider sense so as to include

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not only alien *religious* ideas, customs and beliefs, but also the modifications brought about in the orthodox tradition in its historical development by contacts with social, political and economic circumstances. Accordingly, it must appear that no religion remains the same in two successive epochs, and Theravāda Buddhism is no exception.

These considerations may sound a warning to those who would attempt to judge 'the tree by its fruits' in the matter of valuing historical religions. As Fielding Hall pointed out over half a century ago: 'It has never been possible for any religion to make the acts and deeds of its followers the test of their beliefs'.[2] The same idea is stressed by Appleton when he says: 'To point out the failure of Buddhists to live to this high level is no valid criticism of the standards of the Buddha, any more than the confusion and failure of the West can be used as an argument against the teaching of Christ.' Apparently, such a warning is not totally unwarranted in the case of some social anthropologists who have turned their attention to the study of Theravāda Budhism in its present-day manifestations. The danger here lies in the possible misrepresentation and consequent false valuation of the Founder's original message. If change is a chracteristic of religious traditions, as emphasized above, it would not be an easy task to indulge in value judgements on the initial phase of a religion basing them merely on the observation of adventitious traits and the behaviour of the present-day adherents.

The term 'Theravāda Buddhism' is generally applied to the Buddhist doctrines and practices that have characterized the religion of the majority communities in Sri Lanka, Burma, Siam, Cambodia, etc., from an early period in their histories. Of these countries Sri Lanka, as the earliest to adopt Theravāda Buddhism, provides the best illustration of its continuous development during successive centuries. Buddhism was introduced to Sri Lanka in the third century BC, and if one goes by archaeological evidence there appears to have been some form of Buddhism in Siam from about the first or second century AD, if not earlier. On the other hand, it is only just prior to the fifth century AD, that there is any evidence of the spread of Buddhism to Burma.[3] Archaeological finds and the Chinese Chronicles show that from the end of the fifth century AD., Theravāda Buddhism was practised in Cambodia although it did not occupy a dominant position owing to the greater popularity of some forms of Brāhmaṇical religion such as Śaivism.[4] Besides these there are

strong elements of Thervāda in the religious cultures of Laos and Vietnam. Yet it is not within the present plan to deal with such peripheral manifestations of the religion. In Sri Lanka, Burma and Siam the social system is closely bound up with Theravāda Buddhist religion.[5] In these lands the Theravāda traditions show identical developments in the earlier periods although due to differences in political structure, the nature of the struggle for independence from foreign rule, the influx of foreign cultural movements and other socio-economic factors, the present-day religion in those countries may reveal appreciable differences to the careful observer.

From the socio-cultural angle the religion that spread to countries like Burma and Siam was not very different from the Theravāda that existed at that time in Sri Lanka. The divergences brought about by new influences in religious beliefs and practices increasingly became more marked as these societies gradually gained greater complexity in political, economic and social structure. Thus distinctive national traits began to appear depending on the local context. It was Max Weber who emphasized the influence of religion on men's outlook on society. This is certainly true for the ancient cultures but as Tawney has observed with reference to the more developed societies such influence is clearly two-sided.[6] The effect of social changes on religion tends to become more marked as a religious tradition develops farther from its original form. In Sri Lanka, for instance, with the commencement of Western political influence from the beginning of the sixteenth century, the economic criteria appear to have become an independent 'standard of social expediency', thereby affecting the religion, particularly in its institutional aspects. As the ensuing discussion will show contemporary Buddhism in these South-East Asian countries is faced with most acute problems ultimately due to their under-developed economics.

Before we can take up the mutual influence of Theravāda and modern cultures it is necessary to give an account, however brief, of the ideas of early Buddhism relevant to social, political and economic matters. Although it is true that as a 'soteriological' doctrine early Buddhism paid greater attention to the spiritual progress of those who had renounced lay life, there is sufficient textual evidence to prove that the Buddha and his immediate disciples took adequate interest in both the temporal and spiritual progress of the lay adherents. It is unfortunate that Western writers, such as Oldenberg[7] and Max Weber[8] who dealt with the subject, have failed to do justice to the

socio-ethical doctrines emanating from the Buddha himself or his early disciples, mainly due to the lack of familiarity with the social and ethical data found in the original Pali Canon. Students of ancient Indian culture which prevailed at the time of the Buddha, i.e., just prior to the sixth century BC., will know that the most powerful factor in social organization in that period was the privileged status of the brāhmaṇas and the binding social influence of their exclusive ideology. They imposed on the people the belief that the structure of society was divinely ordained. The Buddha in his discourses definitely objected to the Brāhmaṇa prejudice that caste or *varṇa*, i.e., the heredity of blood (*jāti*), should determine the position of the individual in the social fabric. He did not share the fatalistic Brāhmaṇa view that mere birth decided once and for all man's station in life. A dialogue of the Buddha makes it clear that social organization proceeds on an activity (*kamma*) basis[9] and in reality is the result of the distribution of social tasks among vocational groups, and that it evolves in process of time under the influence of certain causally determinant socio-economic conditions(*paṭiccasamuppanna*). On another occasion, addressing the Brahmin Vāseṭṭha, Buddha points out that the Brāhmaṇa theory of society based on caste duty (*sakam dhammaṃ* Skt. *Svadharma*) cannot be held to be absolute because with the abandonment of the lay vocations, as when caste-men take to religious orders, caste function loses all significance.

The twenty-sixth dialogue of the *Dīgha Nikāya* sets out in detail a conception of the social ethic as developing under the dominant influence of economic and other forces. It relates how a king of the past provided all ward and protection to his subjects but failed to provide wealth (*dhana*), that is to say, economic security to the indigent for their subsistence and maintenance, and how on account of that poverty as a social phenomenon came to be prevalent. Poverty drove individuals to theft and misappropriation because they needed to have a living. Thus the ruler was forced to apply punitive measures and the fear of these gradually led men to falsehood and slander which consequently resulted in the perversion of the moral sense(*micchādhamma*). It is difficult to avoid the hint given in this dialogue that the moral nature of society initially depends on the economic factor and that the course of civilization or social progress is a historic process developing according to causal laws.[10] It is in view of this importance attached to the economic needs of man that

Buddhism resgards liberality (*dāna, cāga*) as the basic virtue in its social ethics. Early Buddhism emphasizes the fact that social progress is impossible without an equitable distribution of wealth in society. A king retiring from his throne advises his son and heir : 'Dear son, whosoever in the kingdom may suffer from privation among them let wealth be distributed.'[11] An individual should earn wealth strenuously but should use it righteously (*dhammena*) sharing it with others.[12] Yet the hoarding up of wealth is condemned [13] as strongly as the squandering of wealth.[14] Providing of economic assistance to his people is considered to be part of the righteous administration of an ideal ruler. Thus it is of great significance that *dāna*, economic assistance to the needy by the State, is given as the first of the four bases of service to the people (*saṅgahavatthu*) expected from a ruler. Such organized distribution of wealth to alleviate the hardships of the under-privileged (*dāna saṃvibhāga*)[15] is typical of the financial policy of the righteous ruler and amounts in practice to an equitable (*sama*) distribution of wealth (*dhana saṃvibhāga*).[16] Hence among the eight characteristics of a good king we find it specifically stated that he should be a generous benefactor (*dāyako dānapati*) who provides economic assistance to all who need it.[17] Beneficence as understood by the term *dāna* is the active social aspect of the mental attitude of benevolence (*mettā*) which forms the spiritual foundation of the Buddhist social ethic.[18] The ideal ruler (*cakkavatti*) provides not only security to his subjects but also public utilities and services of various types.[19] These virtually amount to services that would be provided by the 'Welfare State'.

It is unfortunate that we have little historical evidence of the extent to which the rulers of the period subscribed to the social ethics of the Buddha, and applied them in their administrative and economic policies. The only documents that provide an illustration of their practical application are the inscriptions of Aśoka which are preserved to us from the third century BC. It is now established that Aśoka embraced Buddhism in the latter part of his long reign, and there is evidence that he probably entered the Buddhist Order in his later years, but it is not so well appreciated that even prior to these events this great ruler had accepted into his celebrated concept of *piety* (*dhamma*) several elements from Buddha's ethics. It was indicated above that the basic principle underlying the Buddhist social ethic is *liberality* which in the case of a king's financial policy assumes the form of an equitable distribution of wealth among the under-

privileged (*dāna saṃvibhāga*). This is the very principle guiding Aśoka's financial policy, as is proved by his Fourth Pillar Edict which refers to it in the very same terms (*dāna-saṃvibhāge*). Regarding the general identity of Aśoka's *dharma* with the socio-moral principles preached by the Buddha modern researches leave no doubt.[20]

These considerations would go to prove that Max Weber was not quite fair by ancient Buddhism when he said '. . . to change the social order in this world neither early nor later Buddhism has attempted to do'.[21] Nor was it correct for him to characterize ancient Buddhism as 'a specifically unpolitical and anti-political status religion, more precisely, a religious 'technology' of wandering and of intellectually-schooled mendicant monks'.[22] The latter part of this statement clearly shows the reason why Max Weber erred in his judgement. It is admitted on all sides that the Buddha accorded a higher value to the life in the monastic order in his scheme of spiritual training, as compared with the life of the lay disciple who had 'inescapable commitments of family and occupation' (*sambādho gharāvāso*).[23] Most Western writers have gone wrong in the assessment of the relative position of lay life and monastic training in the Buddhist religious scheme. The impression has been created that the Buddha neglected the spiritual progress of his lay adherents. Max Weber himself is guilty of the remark that 'while for the monks there are quite unambiguous moral rules, the Founder limits himself as regards the pious adorers to a few advisory recommendations. . .'[24] But to a student conversant with the original Pali canonical literature it seems absurd to suggest that all the views held by the Buddha and his circle of immediate disciples on mundane affairs and human progress are practically limited to the 'Sigāla Homily' and one or two other dialogues. The socio-morality meant for the layman is specifically known as 'the householders' ethic' (*gihidhamma*).[25] The ideal aimed at by the practice of this ethic is happiness in this life and a satisfactory rebirth in the next, ranging from a happier birth in the human world to the attainment of a more blissful existence hereafter in one of the higher Brahma worlds which is the goal of the practice of the social ethic (*dhamma-cariyā*). The term *Brahma* as used in early Buddhism characterizes higher and nobler states of spiritual existence being merely lower planes of experience on the selfsame path to the highest state, *Nibbāna*.

It is not at all justifiable to ignore the fact that in several dialogues of early Buddhism the lay religion and the higher monastic life are

shown to be two stages of the same spiritual evolution of the individual. In this connection it should suffice to refer to the 90th dialogue of the *Majjhima Nikāya* which sets forth five characteristics of spiritual endeavour (*padhāniya-angas*), viz., faith (in goodness), good health, integrity of character, energetic pursuit of ends and intellectual improvement, as qualities to be cultivated by monks as well as laymen. It is also worthy of note that in the famous Eightfold Path preached by the Buddha, the third, fourth and fifth factors—truthfulness, uprightness in action and vocational rectitude—have pointedly a lay significance. The same is true of the popular list of the ten virtues practised by a Bodhisattva (*dasa pārami*) which include such principles of social ethics as charity, moral conduct, self-abnegation, wisdom, fortitude, tolerance, truthfulness, determination, loving-kindness and equanimity.[26] The ennobling of the layman's character, both individually and socially, is part of the same universal ethic, implied in the use of the term *ariya* referring to both the lay[27] and the monastic spiritual *elite*. A glance at the canonical texts will easily prove that the four classes of believers, monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen, were all taken as constituting the Buddhist religious society.[28] Therefore to say, as Max Weber has done, that Buddhism 'was lacking what Jainism had produced—a parish organization of the laity'[29] is not quite justified. This Buddhist universal ethic is specifically called the *ariyadhamma* or the 'norm of the faithful', without any distinction between the monk and the layman. Hence, it is clear that there is no 'ethical dualism' in Buddhism as one modern writer tries to make out.[30] Nor can one agree with the sociologist Ames when he says 'in traditional Buddhism the ethical universalism was restricted to the monastic order'.[31] The truth of the matter has been expressed with discernment by the Sri Lankan historian, Dr. G.C. Mendis, when he characterizes the life of the lay Buddhist as only a 'preparatory stage'[32] in the spiritual progress taught by the Buddha. This writer clearly reveals a better understanding of the universal nature of the Buddhist ethic than Max Weber who said 'one can see from the prescriptions created for the laity that they represent external accommodations without an internally consistent point of view.'[33]

These remarks will show to what extent the Theravāda tradition regarded its social ethic as part of its religious scheme. But this did not mean that there were no restrictions in social behaviour imposed on the monk as regards engaging in mundane activities like politics

and remunerative pursuits, although the Buddha had recommended to them service to fellow-men in the form of attending upon the sick, etc. The confusion of spiritual ideals with worldly purposes has bred a mundane attitude among present-day Buddhist monks. For instance, in Sri Lanka a section of the monks was instrumental in helping certain extremist politicians to form the so-called "Language Front" (*Bhāṣā Peramuna*). A study of the political forces at work just before the 1956 general elections would show that the exaggerated demand for the hasty substitution of Sinhalese for English as the official language by certain interested parties antagonistic to the government led to the formation of the 'Language Front'. As Wriggins says: 'These language reforms had profound status and opportunity implications and were seen as both the symbol and guarantee of future wealth and standing'.[34] One cannot say that the monks themselves were not prompted by the prospects of material gain. This was clearly evidenced in the subsequent demand made by the monks for the establishment of degree-granting universities in place of the traditional institutions of monastic learning (*pirivenas*). At this time politically the atmosphere was charged with what Farmer has characterized as 'the second wave of nationalism', of which the language (*svabhāṣā*) movement was perhaps the most vociferous expression. In fact, as he pointed out, the monks played an active part in leading the new nationalism.[35] As a result of their agitation two universities on the Western model were provided by the new M.E.P. Government in 1959, enabling the monks to acquire even secular forms of knowledge like economics and political theory. No wonder then that in countries like Sri Lanka, Burma and Vietnam they have openly identified themselves with alien economic and political ideologies like Marxism. These political interests can be said to have drawn some Sinhalese monks from the cloister to the hustings. In the 1956 general elections a section of the Sangha forming themselves into a 'United Monks Front' (*Eksat Bhikshu Peramuna*), took part in active propaganda for the so-called 'socialist' parties. As Wriggins has pointed out the leaders of the E.B.P. tended to identify themselves with 'the people' and any action which displeased the E.B.P. was regarded as action against 'the people'.[36] They even attempted to direct the new government in its administrative policies by laying down ten rules (*dasa panata*) to which the members of the alliance were expected to subscribe. That the tragic circumstance of the assassination of the Prime Minister in 1959 was the result of a monk's

political ambition has been legally recognised; this seems a bitter demonstration of Hayek's idea that 'even a spiritual *elite* is dangerous if democracy solely depends on them or is to be guided by them.'[37]

Recently, at the general elections held early this year* the extremist wing of the Sangha openly espoused the Marxist cause, both Trotskyite and Communist, even claiming that the philosophy of Buddhism was the same as the Marxist ideology. This would constitute in the judgement of an impartial observer a distinct threat to the doctrinal tradition, for, apart from the evident philosophical confusion, these novel interpretations effaced the difference between spiritual and material goals. Such Marxist influence on Buddhism had started several years earlier in Burma. As Farmer has remarked, the place of the Buddhist monks in the Sri Lankan politics suggests a comparison with that of the Sangha in Burma.[38] The nationalist upsurge which at first drew the monks into politics started as a reaction to the alleged enslavement of the traditional way of life by westernization during the colonial era. This anti-colonialism was from the start one aspect of the new Buddhist activism and the monks, ever anxious for cultural revival, naturally led this revivalist movement, not only in the villages but also in some urban areas. It was only to be expected that this anti-colonial attitude should gradually approximate to the 'anti-neo-imperialism' that was being so much peddled by the Marxists in countries like Sri Lanka and Burma. Thus both lay Buddhists and monks found new allies in Marxist political parties and some even identified themselves with that alien ideology. This became so dangerous in Burma that the then Prime Minister, U. Nu, once made a scathing attack in Parliament on Marxism. Speaking in support of an Act to promote Buddhism by setting up an organization, he said, 'Some even go to the extent of declaring that Lord Buddha was a lesser man than Karl Marx. It will be one of the functions of this organization to combat such challenges in the intellectual field'.[39] In Sri Lanka, such outspoken attacks on Marxist tendencies were made only on the eve of the 1965 general elections most prominent of such being the anti-Marxist movement started by some leading monks and a few distinguished lay Buddhists like the former Chief Justice of Sri Lanka.

During the last two decades or so several attempts have been made by Western educated Sinhalese Buddhist writers to interpret the

* This refers to the general elections held in 1965. (Editor)

Theravāda Buddhist ideas in relation to 'progressive' or Leftist political concepts. The best illustration of such a trend in the political thinking of Sinhalese Buddhists is provided by the seven-hundred page volume by D.C. Vijayavardhana, entitled *The Revolt in the Temple* and published to commemorate the Buddha Jayanti (2500th anniversary) celebrations held in 1956. In this work which continuously betrays Marxist inspiration, the writer declares that 'Buddhism and Communism in their essence and nature are spiritual.'[40] 'Communism in its orthodox theoretical form', he says, 'is thus not at all inconsistent with Communism of the original Sangha',[41] and further 'the *thesis* of traditional Buddhism and the *anti-thesis* of Marxian Communism are incomplete . . . we have reached a stage when a *synthesis* is necessary.'[42] It is no cause for surprise that such misconceived notions of this neo-Buddhist writer have encouraged Dr. Bouquet to conclude: 'It appears, then, that Vijayavardhana actually rejects the Theravāda Buddhism of Ceylon . . .'[43] Vijayavardhana falls into such error because, under the influence of secular ideologies like Marxism, he totally rejects the spiritual value of monastic life. Significant is his statement, 'If you choose to be a recluse, you cannot be a lover of life.'[44] In accordance with this mundane outlook he rejects off hand the basic concept of Theravāda Buddhism, namely the unsatisfactoriness of empirical life (*dukkha*), and the need for release (*vimutti*), in other words, *Nibbāna*. 'This emphasis on *dukkha*', according to Vijayavardhana, 'is a disastrous way of teaching the Buddha's way of life'. Thus logically the writer is compelled to discard *Nibbāna* as the spiritual goal of Buddhism; for him *Nibbāna* is 'attained here and now by a life of self-forgetful activity', an idea clearly borrowed from Jennings.[45]

It is natural that such materialistic neo-Buddhist interpretations of the Theravāda doctrines should have had repercussions on the life and thought of the Buddhist community, especially the monks whose temple education was inadequate to grapple with the problems of modern economic and political thought, a deficiency which left their minds receptive to any novel alien ideology. This contact with Marxism definitely led to divisive tendencies among the members of the Buddhist Order. It is also revealing that it was from circles close to the author of that book that the new reformist and revolutionary activities emanated to the detriment of the liberal philosophy that prevailed till then. The liberalism of the patriotic leaders who were responsible for gaining independence for Sri Lanka in 1948 never

confused religion with politics, but accepted the principle so well expressed by Hayek that 'the spiritual and temporal are different spheres which must not be confused'.[46] Thus was the sentiment that prevailed during the first decade following independence. As Wriggins has stated with regard to the grievances[47] that had worried the Buddhist for some time 'the Buddhist Congress appealed to the Government to establish a Commission of Inquiry into the state of Buddhism in the Island. The government of D.S. Senanayake and his successors refused the request, foreseeing that such an investigation could cause religious disharmony'.[48] However, such counsels of moderation were ignored when anti-colonial demands came to be revived with the support of anti-Western nationalist monks just before the elections of 1956.

The above remarks will show, to some extent at least, how far political ideologies were instrumental in changing Theravāda Buddhism in the recent past; and such changes are the result of 'assimilation' as defined earlier. But it must be admitted that the direct influence on the Buddhist way of life had been exerted by Western contacts in the educational and the institutional spheres for over four and a half-centuries, that is from the time of the advent of the Portuguese in 1501. The Portuguese period which ended in 1658 was marked, in the words of Sir Emerson Tennet, by 'rapacity, bigotry and cruelty', and definitely caused great damage to Theravāda Buddhist tradition. Buddhist religious opinions were not only insulted but even persecuted with the most wanton cruelty, subjecting the Buddhists to forced conversions on a large scale. They started schools with the sole intention of propagating the Catholic faith, employing Franciscan and Jesuit missionarises for this purpose. It is probable that the anti-Buddhist propaganda emanating from such institutions formed the earliest incitement to anti-Catholic feeling which moved the Sinhalese Buddhists to resentment against any foreign faith—a phenomenon which ultimately has had such a profound effect on inter-religious attitudes, and in the course of time generated what has come to be known as 'militant Buddhism'. But, under the Dutch, who ruled parts of the maritime areas for the next century and a half, the national religion did not suffer to the same extent by such direct persecution as under the Portuguese.

They introduced a more developed system of Western secular education, although such schools came to be known as 'Bible schools'. However, it is undeniable that the alien culture introduced by them

greatly harmed the temple-oriented educational system and thereby the social life of the Sinhalese Buddhists which was centred in the village unit under the leadership of the incumbent monk of the temple. The last 150 years of foreign domination was under the rule of the British whose attitude to Buddhism was generally one of unhelpful indifference, although in some instances it was considered to be directly antagonistic to Buddhist interests. The influence of the economic factor on monastic institutions became gradually greater under the British. Till 1840 temple lands enjoyed a privileged position; they had been exempted from the payment of taxes by a proclamation in 1818. But by an ordinance passed by the British Government, not only were temple lands alienated, but such temples and the tenants of temple lands were placed 'on the same footing as other landholders in regard to the payment of tax.'[49]

Nevertheless, the spread of English and Christian cultures in the island brought about more and more contacts between the national religion and foreign faiths. In 1873, the famous Panadura controversy between the Buddhists and the Protestants took place. An English account of this doctrinal encounter came into the hands of a retired Colonel of the American army, Henry Steele Olcott, who had fought for Negro rights in the Civil War; and he became interested in Buddhism. The advent of this enlightened American to the island led to his own conversion to Buddhism and the founding, in the 1880s, of several institutions for the promotion of modern Western education among the Sinhalese Buddhists. Although it can be argued that there was Christian influence on Buddhism through the institution of Sunday schools, and the YMBA's on the model of YMCA's, the introduction by Olcott himself of the catechistic method in religious instruction, and so on, a careful analysis shows that Christianity has not been instrumental in bringing about any serious modifications in the Buddhist religion. From the psychological or intellectual points of view, its influence has been merely superficial. However, in the last decade suspicion of anti-Buddhist activities of the 'Catholic Actionists'[50] has led to a strong reaction-movement among some Western educated Sinhalese Buddhists. It is out of such elements of the Buddhist society which regarded themselves as an intellectual *elite* that for the first time in the history of Sri Lankan Buddhism a politically motivated anti-Catholic power ideology, calling itself 'The Buddhist National Force' (*Bauddha Jātika Balavegaya*) came into being. It had no liberal-democratic outlook as in the case

of the patriotic Buddhist leaders of the previous generation, being definitely extremist, almost fanatical, when looked at from the point of view of the *via media* attitude of traditional Buddhism. It is in keeping with such total neglect of a progressive outlook that an exaggerated emphasis came to be placed on the ceremonialism of popular Buddhism that had gradually been abandoned during the previous decades when the Sri Lankans as a whole came under the influence of modern science. No wonder then that an academic person of considerable influence among this *elite* thought of recommending to the modern Buddhists the retrograde step of reviving 'the traditonal rituals associated with (the) religion'.[51] It would be a travesty of scientific statement to confuse this with real 'conventionalization' as defined by Thouless, since the deliberate political motivation of the above encouragement to ritualism is patent. Of course, this attempt to revive ceremonial religion naturally drew large support from the rural Buddhist masses, and the so-called B.J.B. movement gained considerable popularity amongst them whose only religion was confined to a few ceremonies and rituals in the villages. But this kind of external revivalism was undermined by the Marxist ideology which was surreptitiously creeping into the minds of the poorest classes of Buddhists.

In concluding this survey of modern trends in present-day Theravāda Buddhism it may be emphasized that no single factor has been more potent than the political in transforming the traditional political attitudes. A good illustration of this fact is seen in the way the neo-Buddhist interpreters, in Sri Lanka and Burma in particular, have attempted to identify the Marxist conception of the 'Welfare State' with the views of early Buddhism recommending social and economic *welfare* measures for good government. It must be clear from the description of the Theravāda social ethic given above that there is no encouragement at all, according to the Buddhist view, for attempting to bring about economic justice by forceful and violent means. The providing of economic assistance to the needy in order to eliminate social indigence as implied in the Buddhist concept of Beneficence which is simply the result of charitable feelings exercised by either the State or the individual, has little to do with the violently enforced 'distributive' economic policy as practised by the so-called socialists inspired by Marxism. If at all, it is the economic theory underlying the *Bhoodan* movement of Sri Vinobha Bhave that provides the closest analogy of modern times to the Buddha's view of social justice.

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PART TWO

VEDISM

11

The Philosophical Import of Vedic Yakṣa and Pali Yakkha*

The curious term *yakṣa* which makes its appearance for the first time in the *Ṛgveda* and there seems to denote primarily 'the mysterious' (Wunderding) has in the later *Saṃhitās, Brāhmaṇas* and *Upaniṣads* developed several shades of meaning, the most important of which for the early Indian thought is undoubtedly its *philosophical significance*. Its commonest sense, however, seems to be the *mythological* as denoting a species of certain non-human beings, demons, ogres or spirits—a sense found for the first time in the *Gṛhya Sūtras* and become popular in Pali literature. Several aspects of its Vedic use have been discussed by Hertel,[1] Boyer,[2] Geldner[3] and others, but its philosophical use as found particularly in the *Upaniṣads* and early Pali literature has heretofore received no adequate presentation. An attempt is made here for the first time to trace the evolution of the *philosophical import* of this term throughout its long history as seen starting most probably in the tenth *maṇḍala* of the *Ṛgveda* in a cosmogonic context and developing in the later *Saṃhitās, Brāhmaṇas* and *Upaniṣads*, till it finally assumed its important role as occurring in the early Buddhist work, the *Sutta Nipāta*, and, to appraise its significance for ancient Hindu thought and for early Buddhism.

In the *Ṛgveda* the word occurs several times[4] as a neuter substantive, but in none of these instances can the sense be established with any degree of precision and translators differ widely. Sāyana in his commentary sees in it the fundamental sense of 'the adorable' as being derived from a root *yakṣ* connected with *yaj* (sacrifice or worship). He explains *yakṣa* by *yajña*,[5] *yajanīya*,[6] *pūja*,[7] *pūjita*[8] and *pūjya*,[9] following an earlier tradition already found in Śaṅkara.[10] Even the word *vakṣuḥ* which occurs as a racial name in (*RV*, 7.18.6,

*University of Ceylon Review, Vol. 1, No. 2, Colombo, 1943.

19) he regards as derivable from the same root and glosses by *yajñaśīlaḥ*. While it is not impossible phonetically to analyse the word as *yaj-s-a*, the meaning assigned to it by Sāyana is found to be far-fetched in practically every instance cited, and Sāyana himself gives it quite a different interpretation at least in one instance, *viz.*, for *yakṣa*(*-dṛś*) in *RV*, 7.56.16, when he comments on it as *utsava*, spectacle. On philological grounds it seems more plausible to regard *yakṣ* as a distinctly separate primitive root as seen in several verbal forms in the *Ṛgveda*.[11] It is not improbable that here we have an obsolete root *yakṣ* originally meaning to *rush after, hunt, injure*, probably related to OHG. *jagôn* as has been suggested by Grassmann and supported by Max-Müller.[12] This may have developed in the *Ṛgveda* the sense of *stirring* or *moving* (as a living being) that some have seen in it.[13] Hertel saw an original sense of *fire* or *brilliance* in *yakṣ* just as in the word *brahma*, but this again is conjectural.[14] Whatever the original sense may have been, what appears likely is that the word meant something like 'mysterious or flashing thing' later developing into 'mysterious power (magic)' in the *Ṛgveda*, and in this latter sense bearing a striking resemblance semantically to the word *māyā*[15] and to *vapus*[16] and *kratu*[17] of the *Ṛgveda*. Just as the word *māyā* signifying 'occult power' is applicable in the *Ṛgveda* in a good sense generally to gods like Mitra and Varuṇa, or in a bad sense to demons and *asuras*,[18] so does the word *yakṣin* (*RV*, 7.88.6) seem to refer to Varuṇa as 'master of magic'[19] in a laudatory sense, while in *RV*, 7.61.5 the term is most probably used for 'mystery' in the sense of 'deceit' or 'wile'.[20] Perhaps it is this same significance of 'magic power' in the bad sense that is found for *yakṣam* (*RV*, 4.3.13; 5.70.4) though Oldenberg and the *Petersburger Wörterbuch* suggest with equal plausibility 'the spirit or ghost of a dead person'.[21] The compound forms *yakṣa-dṛś* (*RV*, 7.56.16) and *yakṣa-bhṛt* (*RV*, 1.190.4) are found in verses of too obscure a meaning to yield any clear connotation. The only occurrence in the *Ṛgveda* of *yakṣa* with any kind of philosophical sense is found in the comparatively late tenth *maṇḍala* where is found the expression *yakṣasyâdhyakṣam*.[22] This is undoubtedly to be taken as referring to *Vaiśvānaram* (Sāy. *sūryâtmakam agnim*), as Griffith[23] has construed the verse, and *yakṣa* must in that case refer to *Hiraṇyagarbha* of which the visible manifestation (*adhyakṣam*)[24] is cosmogonically conceived as the Sun.[25] This application of *yakṣa* to denote *Hiraṇyagarbha* (Golden Embryo) is clearly found in the *Atharvaveda* as may be seen below.

In the *Atharvaveda* the word is used with a marked philosophical sense. That it generally refers to the *Hiraṇyagarbha* of the *Ṛgveda* is seen from its description. Reference is made[26] to 'the great *yakṣa* in the midst of existence,[27] striding in penance[28] on the surface of the water'.[29] It is identified with Skambha, the Frame of Creation (*AV*, 10.7.39), and Prajāpati (*AV*, 10.8.13; 10.7.17). It is called the eldest Brahma (*jyeṣṭha brahma*, *AV*, 10.7.36).[30] It is said to become active (*ejati*, stirs) in the 'course (and) impulse' of Virāj in the highest heaven (*AV*, 8.9.8). It is interesting to note that the preceding verse (8.9.7) calls Virāj 'the father of *Brahman*', which suggests that *yakṣa* is *Brahman*. With the same spirit of inquiry as seen in the poet's search for the highest principle (*RV*, 10.29.1) it is asked, 'Who is he, the *yakṣa* on earth, single existent (*ekavṛt*), single in time (*ekartuḥ*)?' (*AV*, 8.9.25). The last two epithets implying its monistic (*eka*) aspect reminds one of *ekam* (*RV*, 10.129.2) born of the power of *tapas* (*RV*, 10.129.3). This is of course the *Puruṣa* of *RV*, 10.90 from whom Virāj arose and who in turn was born from Virāj, 'the begetter as well as the begotten'.[31] This *yakṣa* is said to abide in the 'golden vessel'.[32] In *RV*, (10.121.1) *Hiraṇyagarbha* itself was the name applied to the primeval 'lord of created beings'.[33] It is the *garbha* (primeval Being) itself that is called golden (*hiraṇya*) in the *Ṛgveda*. The *Atharvaveda* pictures the primeval Being (*yakṣa*) as being encased *within* a vessel that is golden (*hiraṇmaye kośe*), an idea seemingly developed out of the fact that *garbha* by now had begun to assume the sense of 'womb', the place of the embryo. This distinction is maintained in all later texts. Chāndogya Upaniṣad (3.19) clearly distinguishes the shell (*aṇḍa-kapāla*) from the germinal egg (*aṇḍam*).[34] The *hiraṇmaya kośa* of *AV*, 10.2.32 is microcosmically regarded as the 'city of Brahma' (*brahma-pura*) after which man is said to be named (*ibid.*, 10.2.29, 30), an identification which is clearly carried out in the Upaniṣads.[35]

Along with the tendency to separate the golden *kośa* from the *garbha* we find in these passages the important conception that the *yakṣa* in the midst of existence, that is to say, the Cosmic Being comes to be 'individualized' within the human body, 'the city of Brahma' just referred to. In real Upaniṣadic fashion it is said that the 'knowers of Brahma (*Brahma-vidaḥ*) know what selfed[36] *yakṣa* there is in that golden vessel, three spoked, having three supports' (*AV*, 10.2.32). Even more advanced is the conception at *AV*, 10.8.43 where in similar terms the mystic poet says 'the knowers of Brahma know what

selfed *yakṣa* there is in the lotus flower[37] of nine doors[38] covered with three strands'.[39] It is important to observe that *yakṣa* in these instances refers to the macrocosmic Soul (*Ātman*) described in the preceding verse[40] as 'the young'.[41] This undoubtedly is the (empirical) *brahman* said elsewhere to be in man.[42] Thus it is seen that in the *Atharvaveda* the word *yakṣa* is used generally for the macrocosmic Soul or Person (Brahma in its materialized aspect) and not directly as a term for the microcosmic person, though an incipient pantheism is seen in the last two instances cited.

The only other reference to the term *yakṣa* with philosophical significance in the Saṃhitā literature is found in the Vājasaneyī Saṃhitā of the White Yajurveda in an important hymn to Manas in six verses.[43] The significance of this hymn lies in the fact that here for the first time in the whole of the *mantra* portion of Vedic literature the cognitive, affective and volitive[44] aspects of Consciousness (*Manas*) are conceived indicating a power of psychological analysis surprisingly advanced for this period.[45] What is important for our discussion is the description of Mind as 'that which is an unprecedented *mysterious thing* inside of beings'.[46] The word 'unprecedented' (*apūrva*) implies that there is nothing higher than *Manas*, an idea that makes it parallel to Brahma which is described similarly as '*apūrvam aparavat*' (*Ś. Br.* 10.3.5, 11).[47] It is therefore to be noted that Manas here is the macrocosmic Psyche and not merely mind as the instrument of thinking in the individual.[48] *Manas* generally denotes Consciousness in the early Vedic literature and 'can be used as a synonym for Prajāpati when it is sought to reduce that figure to something more abstract and less mythological.'[49]

In the *Brāhmaṇas* the term is found to have developed a further extension of application. The *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* of the *Black Yajurveda* definitely confirms the macrocosmic nature of *yakṣa* which we have indicated as its original character in the *Atharvaveda*. It is now referred to as the 'Universal, wondrous Being, the Universal Spirit, well-become (i.e. excellent)'.[50] The word *viśva*, universal, clearly refers to *mahat* of *AV*, 10.7.39 used as a qualification of *yakṣa*. It is further identified with *tapas*,[51] though in the *Ṛgveda* it was *through the power of tapas* that the *ekam*, the first principle, was produced[52] and it was in *tapas* that the primeval *yakṣa* was said to stride.[53] In the late[54] *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa yakṣa* is the cosmic tortoise of boundless dimension, *Akūpāra Kaśyapa*, revealed by Indra to the *ṛṣis*[55] who seek to behold something of the kind, and this cosmic

tortoise is no other than a form assumed by Prajāpati.[56] In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* the term is clearly used for a manifestation or form of *Brahman* where *nāma* and *rūpa* are said to be the two great *yakṣas* of *Brāhmaṇa*[57] and in its late *Upaniṣadic* portion[58] it is used for the actualized (*satya*) Brahma which as we shall see in the following paragraph is its application in the *Upaniṣads*.

Of the two references to *yakṣa* in the *Upaniṣads* the earlier is undoubtedly in the *Kena Upaniṣad*, 3.2.12, where in the allegory of the Vedic gods' ignorance of Brahma it is narrated that when 'It appeared to them they did not understand It. 'What wonderful Being (*yakṣa*) is this!' they said.'[59] It is needless to point out that the legend is strongly reminiscent of the *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* episode about the *ṛṣis* and *akūpāra*. Just as there the *ṛṣis*[60] seeking to behold the *wonderful Being* has It revealed to them by Indra so here in the *Kena* allegory it is ultimately to Indra that the *yakṣa* is disclosed as Brahma by the 'exceedingly beautiful Umā'.[61] It is also significant that Śaṅkara[62] identifies this *yakṣa* with '*mahad bhutam*', which as we have already seen appears synonymous with *yakṣam* in the *Taittirīya Brahmaṇa*.[63] The other reference to *yakṣa* is found in a passage in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (which is identical with *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, 14.8.51), mentioned in the preceding paragraph, where it is asserted: 'This verily is That. This indeed was That, even the Actual. He who knows that great *yakṣa* the first-born, as the actual Brahman, conquers the worlds'.[64] There is no doubt that *yakṣa* here refers to the actualized (*satya*)[65] Brahma, the great (i.e. infinite)[66] and first-born.[67]

The identity between *mahad yakṣa* and *mahad bhūta* that we have seen above in the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* and recognized by Śaṅkara is of particular significance inasmuch as the *Upaniṣads* describe *mahad bhūta* as the 'infinite, limitless, just a mass of knowledge'.[68] That this *bhūta* is the Cosmic Soul (*Ātman*) or actualized Brahma is demonstrated by passages like *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 4.5.13,[69] and 2.5.19.[70] It is the cosmic Spirit[71] from which is breathed forth (*niśvasita*) all creation.[72] According to Śaṅkara it is the Highest Self,[73] identical with the One without a second.[74] These considerations make it clear that *yakṣa* is used in the *Upaniṣads* as synonymous with the macrocosmic Person, the universal Spirit or *Ātman* which is the actualized Brahma or vitalized Being.[75] It is macrocosmic in the original philosophical use and is applied to the individual self if at all only as a result of the *bandhutā* correlation, the tendency which

ultimately leads to the identification of the Cosmic Soul with the individual.

In the foregoing paragraphs we have endeavoured to present the philosophical sense of *yakṣa* in something like its historical sequence. We have seen that starting from the idea of 'sudden flash of light', 'mystery', 'magic', 'magic power' in the earlier books of the *Ṛgveda* it developed in the late tenth *maṇḍala* and the *Atharvaveda* into the sense of the great,[76] *wondrous Being* and was applied to *Hiraṇyagarbha*, the (Cosmic) Golden Embryo, the Primeval *Puruṣa*, 'the living force enveloped in a shell'.[77] The *Atharvaveda* shows the further development of the term in its application to Skambha, (*AV*, 10.7) or Prajāpati (10.8) which is manifest Brahma. These two hymns are regarded as leading up to the conception of *Ātman*, the macrocosmic personal aspect of Brahman, the fundamental doctrine of the *Upaniṣads*.[78] More important is the use of the term in the *Yajurveda* (VS) where it is applied to *Manas* or Universal Consciousness as macrocosmic Psyche, also said to be 'inside of men' from the microcosmic viewpoint. It is this last application to Consciousness that seems to lie at the basis of the Upaniṣadic use where *yakṣa* connotes *bhūta* or *Ātman* described as a 'mass of intelligence' (*prajñānaghana*) or 'mass of knowledge' (*vijñāṇaghana*). It is this idea of the original, pure[79] consciousness that seems to be antecedental to the application of Pali *yakkha* (=Skt. *yakṣa*) in early Buddhism, to an examination of which we may now turn.

The only occurrence of *yakkha* with a philosophical meaning[80] in Pali is found in the *Sutta Nipāta* in a quasi-technical phrase '*yakkhassa suddhiṁ*'.[81] It is to be noted, however, that apart from the popular mythological sense (mentioned at the beginning) as denoting the species of demons known by that name,[82] the word is also used for 'wonderful being' recalling its Vedic mythical application,[83] or 'adorable, holy person'.[84] It is in the 'Aṭṭhakavagga'[85] of the *Sutta Nipāta* (*sutta* II) that the Pali word *yakkha* (in the above quoted phrase) is used in a purely philosophical context, the other instance which occurs in the obviously later Sundarikabhāradvāja Sutta[86] of the Maha Vagga appearing to be only an echo of the former. In the Kalahavivāda Sutta the Buddha after explaining the process of eliminating the conditioning factors of the manifold experience of empirical existence (*papañca* = Skt. *prapañca*) is made to reply to the interlocutor (curiously enough a self-created form of the Buddha himself!) that 'form, happiness and sorrow cease'[87] for him who is 'of

neither normal nor abnormal consciousness, neither unconscious nor with consciousness ceased' (874). Then the inquiry is made whether that state is what some metaphysicians call 'the purity of the *yakkha*' or whether there is 'a purity different from that',[88] to which the Buddha replies that there are some who hold that that state of the conscious entity is the highest purity (*sassata*), while others hold that the annihilation of that conscious entity is the goal (*uccheda*), but that the true sage (*muni*) knowing that both are inclined to extremes (*upanissitā*)[89] does not enter into dispute and does not go into renewed existence (i.e. *saṃsāra*). Now, an analysis of this context leads one to the conclusion that *yakkha* is used here with reference to that state of consciousness (*viññāṇa-ṭhiti*)[90] which is neither normal (*saññasaññā*) nor yet attained to that higher state which is the cessation (*vibhūta*) of consciousness, that is to say, the *nirodha* state of both *saññā* and *vedanā*,[91] the threshold, so to say, of *Nibbāna*. *Nibbāna* implies the absolute purity[92] of that final *samāpatti* consciousness, which is the state of the *tathāgata*[93] (i.e. the *arahant*), and is therefore described as the *state in which the yakkha has reached purity*.[94] Hence the word *yakkha* refers to the formless (*arūpa*) infinite (*ananta*) state of consciousness as characteristic of the last three states of consciousness[95] (infinitudes) and also in the subtler state[96] of *nevasaññānāsaññāyatana*, but not yet reached *parimutti* or complete emancipation which is also *parisuddhi* or perfect purity. That this is the correct interpretation is seen when we cast a retrospective glance at the last meaning of *yakṣa* reached in the early *Upaniṣads* which we have discussed above. It is well known that in the *Upaniṣads* the individual Soul in its highest purity is identified with Infinite Being, Infinite Consciousness and Infinite Bliss. This human consciousness when pure is identifiable with Brahma or *Ātman* which is infinite (macrocosmic) and is the 'mind-made person' (*manomaya-puruṣa*) said to be of the nature of light, i.e. radiant (*bhāḥ, bhāsatyaḥ*).[97] It is also immortal and resplendent (*hiraṇmaya*).[98] The idea is found in early Buddhism that *citta*, identical with *mano* or (*mano-*)*viññāṇa*,[99] is radiant (*pabhassara*) when it is undefiled[100] and loses its radiance when defiled.[101] The *mano-viññāṇa* after passing the fourth *jhāna* when it divests itself of sense-functions is regarded as *pure* (*pariśuddha*)[102] and this infinite *viññāṇa* is definitely asserted to be *completely* radiant (*viññāṇaṃ anidassanam anantam sabbato pabham*).[103] It is therefore the *purity* of *viññāṇa* with the consequent *radiance* that is mainly implied in the

application of the term *yakṣa*. This, however, does not mean for Buddhism the ultimate stage of spiritual evolution, for, to reach that final state cessation (*nirodha*) of *viññāṇa* has to take place.[104] That is why the phrase *yakkhassa suddhi* is deliberately employed to imply that the *yakkha* is also to be purified further if final deliverance (*vimutti*) is to be attained.

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4. *Yakṣam RV*, 4.3.13; 5.70.4; 7.61.5; *yakṣasya* 10.88.13; *yakṣin* 7.88.6; *yaksabhṛt* 1.190.4; *yakṣadṛś* 7.56.16.
5. *RV*, 4.3.13.
6. *RV*, 7.88.6.
7. *RV*, 7.61.5.
8. *RV*, 1.190 4; 5.70.4.
9. *RV*, 2.5.1; 10.88.13.
10. *Kena. Up.* 3.2; *Bṛhad. Up.* 5.4. '*pūjyam*'.
11. *Prayakṣam* (pada text: *pra'yaksam*), *RV*, 2.5.1; *prayakṣe*, *RV*, 3.7.1; 3.31.3; cf. Sāy. '*Yakṣatiḥ pūjārthaḥ, prayakṣamityādau darśanāt' bhāṣya* on *RV*, 10.88.13; cf. also *prayajya*, *RV*, 5.55.1 which may stand according to Max-Müller for an old vedic form *prayakṣyu* (*SBE*, Vol. XXXII, p.335).
12. *Vedic Hymns*, *SBE*, Vol. XXXII, p. 335.
13. See *Petersburger Wörterbuch*, *s.v.*, and Monier-Williams, *Skt-Eng. Dict.*, *s.v.*
14. See Keith, *Jhā Commemoration Volume*, p. 201.
15. Cf. *māyā* as the magical power of the *asuras*, mysterious beings, such as Varuṇa or Mitra-Varuṇa, See Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, pp. 24, 156.
16. See *RV*, 6.66.1 (= marvel); 1.64.4; 6.63.6 (= marvellous show); this latter meaning of *vapus* makes it parallel to *yakṣa* at *RV*, 7.56.16 where *yakṣadṛś* is glossed by Sāy. with '*utsavasya draṣṭāraḥ*' a sense accepted by Griffith and Wilson in their translations, as well as by Keith in his translation of *Taittirīya Samhitā* 4.3.13.x. This aesthetic sense is also found in the parallel term *citra* in the *RV*. (*brilliant*, 4.51.2, *marvel*, 7.61.5).
17. Mitra and Varuṇa, both *māyins* (*Vedic Mythology*, p. 24) are addressed as '*adbhutakratu*' (*RV*, 5.70.4). Indra possessed of magic powers (*māyābhiḥ*, *RV*, 6.47.18) is also called *sata-kratu* (*Vedic Mythology*, p. 58).
18. See Macdonell, op. cit., pp. 24, 156.
19. *RV*, 6.48.14; 7.28.4; 10.99.10; 147.5. Cf. Keith, *Jhā Commemoration* Vol. p. 201.
20. '*Na yāsu citram dadṛśe na yaksam*'; see Macdonell, *Vedic Reader*, p. 122; cf. Avestan *cithra*.
21. *Pet. Wörterbuch*: 'Gespenst eines Verstorbenen', cf. *Vedic Hymns*, Pt. II, *SBE* vol. XLVI, p. 326.
22. '*Vaiśvānaraṃ kavayo yajñiyāso' gniṃ devā ajanayannajuryam—Nakṣatram pratnamaminaccariṣṇu yakṣasyâdhyakṣam taviṣam bṛhantam*', *RV*, 10.88.13.
23. *The Hymns of the Ṛgveda*, Vol. IV, p. 284.
24. Sāy. '*yaksasya pūjyasya devasyâdhyakṣam pratyakṣam svāminam vā . . .*'

25. *RV*, 10.121.3; *Vedic Mythology*, p. 13; cf. *RV*, 10.121.7 and *Chānd.Up.*, 3.19.1-3, where the Cosmic Egg (*aṇḍam*) is said to have become *āditya*.
26. *Mahadyakṣam bhuvanasya madhye tapasi krāntaṃ salilasya pṛṣṭhe . . . AV*, 10.7.38, (*AV* = Atharvaveda). Coomaraswamy thinks that *yakṣa* refers to Varuṇa, *uttānapad* of *RV*, 10.72.3, *New Approach to the Veda*, p. 61.
27. Cf. '*mahad yakṣam bhuvanasya madhye*', *AV*, 10.8.15.
28. Cf. *tapas* at *RV*, 10.129.3 where *Ekam* was born.
29. Cf. '*Yo vetasaṃ hiraṇmayam tiṣṭhantaṃ sàlile veda sa vai guhyaḥ Prajāpatiḥ*', *AV*, 10.7.41. Similarly at *AV*, 11.2.24 the *yakṣa* (of Rudra) is said to be inside the waters. The *Ṛgveda* regards Rudra as 'the lord (*īśāna*) of this vast world', (2.33.9) and as 'the father of the world', (6.49.10); cf. also '*apraketaṃ salilam*' at *RV*, 10.129.3 whence arose the One (*Ekam*).
30. '*Ko dadarśa prathamaṃ jāyamānam*', *RV*, 1.164.4.
31. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, vol. I, p. 105. This idea of reciprocal generation is not uncommon in the *RV*, cf. *Vedic Mythology*, pp. 12, 122.
32. '*Tasmin hiraṇmaye kośe tryare tripratiṣthite tasmin yad yakṣamātmanvat tad vai brahmavido viduḥ*', *AV*, 10.2.32. cf. *AV*, 10.7.41, '*vetasaṃ hiraṇmayam*'.
33. In the *RV*, *garbha* always means germ or offspring. Cf. *RV*, 5.83.1, 7; 6.5.2-16; 10.45.6, 121.7, 168.4.
34. Cf. '*hiraṇya pātra*' covering the face of *satya*, *Bṛhad. Up.* 5.15.
35. Cf. *Bṛhad.* 25.18, *Svet.* 3.18, *Kaṭha.* 5.1, *Muṇḍ.* 3.2.1.4; '*brahmapura*' in *Chānd.* 8.1.1 is equated by Śaṅkara with 'the body'. The statement in *Chānd.* 8.1.5, that the *real* '*brahmapura*' is the *ātman* looks like a late 'correction'.
36. *Ātmanvat* is undoubtedly the same as *ātmanvi*. Cf. Death (as primeval cosmic Being) desires, 'would that I be selfed (*ātmanvī*)'. *Ś. Br.* 10.6.5.1, 7 = *Bṛhad.* 1.2.1.7; Brahma is called *ātmanvī* or 'embodied one' at *Ś. Br.* 14.5.1.13 = *Bṛhad.* 2.1.13. Coomaraswamy sees the same idea of the *embodiment* of the the macrocosmic Soul in *asthanvat* at *RV*, 1.164.4, *New Approach to the Veda*, p. 58, implying that '*ātman*' here is 'body'. But *ātman* may even mean *jīvātman* which invests the body, cf. *AV*, 11.2.10, '*tavedam sarvamātmanvat yat prāṇat prithivīm anu*' where '*ātmanvat*' means 'having life'. (*Ś. Br.* = *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*).
37. Cf. *Chānd. Up.* 8.1.1, 'a small lotus flower within the City of Brahma', and *Maitri Up.* 6.1, 'person within the lotus of the heart', (identical with 'the golden Person in the Sun').
38. Cf. *navadvāram*, (*AV*, 10.2.31) applied to the same ('city of gods') indicating that the human body with its nine orifices is meant. (see Whitney, *Atharvaveda Trans.*, *HOS* VIII, p. 601.
39. Probably the prototype of the 3 *guṇas*. (see Whitney, op. cit., p. 601 and Lanman's note, ibid., p. 1045).
40. '*Ātmānaṃ dhīram ajaraṃ yuvānam*', *AV*, 10.8.44.
41. Cf. '*prathamaṃ jāyamānam*', *RV*, 1.164.4; *yuvānam* may also refer to the child (*garbha*) as implied in '*Hiraṇyagarbha*'.
42. '*Puruṣe brahma*', *AV*, 10.7.17.
43. *Vājasaneyī Saṃhitā*, 34.1.6 (= V.S.).
44. '*yat prajñānam uta ceto dhṛtiś ca*', (*ibid.*, verse 3).
45. The significance of this hymn is discussed in detail by Jwala Prasad, *Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, pp. 152-53.
46. '*yad apūrvaṃ yakṣam antaḥ prajānām*', *VS*, 34.2.
47. Cf. '*jyeṣṭhaṃ brahma*', *AV*, 10.7.36.
48. The phrase '*antaḥ prajānām*' indicates the incipient pantheistic tendency to

which we have referred to above in connection with the *AV.* The use is metaphysical here (cf. Jwala Prasad, *op. cit.*, p. 154) and corresponds to *manas* as Brahma as at *Rv,* 10.129.4; *Bṛhad.* 7.3.1; *Tait.* 3.1.

49. Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda*, p. 554.
50. '*viśvaṃ yakṣaṃ viśvaṃ bhūtam subhūtam.*' *Tait. Br.* 3.11.1.1, cited in the *Pet. Wörterbuch* wrongly as '*Tait. Samhitā*' (*s. yakṣa*).
51. '*tapo ha yakṣaṃ prathamaṃ sa babhūva.*' *Tait. Br.* 3.12.3.1. *Tapas* appears as the personification of Fervour, *RV,* 10.83, 84.
52. '*tapasas tan mahinājāyataikam*', *RV,* 10.120.3.
53. '*tapasi krāntam*', *AV,* 10.7.38.
54. Ranade and Belvalkar regard the *Jaim. Br.* as late as *Ś. Br.* 10.14 (*History of Indian Philosophy,* Vol. II, p., 36), but Winternitz believes it to be one of the oldest (*Indian Literature*, vol. I, p. 191).
55. *Jaim. Br.* 3.203., 272. (see Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda*, p. 242).
56. *Ś. Br.* 7.5.1.5.
57. *Ś. Br.* 11.2.3.5 (11.2.3.4 has parallel to '*yakṣa*' the word '*abhva*', cf. *abhva RV,* 2.33.10, 'mighty force', 4.51.9, 'monster' *lit.* 'non-existent').
58. *Ś. Br.* 14.8.5.1. (= *Bṛhad.* 5.4).
59. '*tan na vyajānata kimidaṃ yakṣamiti*', *Kena,* 3.2. (= 15).
60. '*Ṛśi*' in vedic may sometimes mean '*deva*', cf. Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, p. 144.
61. *Kena,* 3.12-14 (= 25-26).
62. See *Bhāṣya* on *Kena* 3.2 (= 15), '*kim idam yakṣam pūjyam mahad bhūtamiti*'.
63. '*viśvaṃ yakṣam viśvaṃ bhūtam subhūtam*', *Tait. Br.* 3.11.1.1.
64. '*tad vai tad asa satyameva sa yo haitam mahad yakṣam prathamajaṃ veda satyam brahmeti jāyatūmāllokān*'. *Bṛhad.* 5.4 = *Ś. Br.* 14.8.5.1.
65. Śaṅkara: '*pañcabhutātmakam*', cf. *Bṛhad.* 1.6.3.; 2.3.
66. '*mahat*' corresponds to '*ananta*', cf. '*mahad yakṣam*', *AV,* 10.8.15.
67. '*prathamajam*', cf. '*prathamaṃ jāyamanam*', *RV,* 1.104.4; '*yuvānam*', *AV,* 10.8.44; '*prathamam*', *Tait. Br.* 3.12.3.1.
68. '*mahad bhūtam anantam aparaṃ vijñanaghana eva*', *Brhad.* 2.4.12.
69. '*ayam ātmā' nantaro' bāhyaḥ kṛtsnaḥ prajñānaghana eva*'.
70. '*tad etad brahmāpūrvam anaparam anantaram abāhyam ayam ātmā brahmasarvānubhūr.*'
71. The common rendering of '*bhūta*' by 'Being' is dubious. '*Bhūta*' is here 'Spirit' just as the simple *bhūtāḥ* (pl.) are the 'spirits'. The upanisadic word for Being (metaphysical) is '*sat*' as at *Chānd.* 6.2.
72. '*asya mahato bhūtasya niḥśvasitam . . .*' *Bṛhad.* 2.4.10; 4.5.
73. '*paramātmākhyam mahadbhūtam*', *Bṛhad.* 2.4.12.
74. '*idam ekam advaitam mahadbhūtam*', ibid.
75. Cf. *Chānd.* 6.3.2, '*Sat*' or 'Being' entered the three divinities (heat, water and food) and separated out name and form (with the living self, '*jīvātman*').
76. This transition of meaning from 'magic' to 'magic power' and then to 'the great' finds an exact parallel in the evolution of 'brahmnan'. 'Brahman' first meaning 'prayer' develops later into the sense of 'mysterious force latent in the prayer' and then 'the great'; cf. Das Gupta, *History of Indian Philosophy,* vol. I. pp. 36-37.
77. Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda*, p. 436.
78. See Whitney, *AV Trans.*, p. 589; citing Geldner, op . cit., pp. 126 ff.

79. Cf. Śaṅkara '*paramātmanyajare' mare* '*bhaye śuddhe*', *Bṛhad* 2.4.12, '*prāgutpatteḥ prajñānaghana eva*', on Bṛhad, 2.4.10.
80. Credit is due to the *PTS Dict.*, (*s.v.*) for the discovery of the relationship between Pali '*yakkha*' and '*yakṣa*' of the *AV*, where it is said to be used for the 'individual soul' (das lebendige Ding'). *The Pali Proper Names Dict.* merely repeats the idea.
81. *Sn*, 478, 875-76. Fausböll leaves the term untranslated, while Chalmers has 'perfect man'.
82. This mythological sense develops out of the plural use of original '*yakṣam*' probably meaning 'ghost' or 'spirit' of a dead man as the *Pet. Wörterbuch* has for '*yakṣam*', *RV*, 4.3.13 and 5.74 Cf. '*yakṣāṇi dṛśyante . . .* ' *Kauṣitakī Sūtra* 95. The masc. pl. '*yakṣāḥ*' occurs for the first time in *Āśvalāyana Gṛhya Sūtra* and *Śānkhāyana Gṛhya Sūtra*, 4.9.3.
83. '*atha ko nāma so yakkho yaṃ annaṃ nâbhinandati*', *SN*, 1.57.
84. It is used as an epithet of the Buddha (*MN*, I.386); or applied to '*devatās*' (*SN*, I.122, 205).
85. The *Aṭṭhakavagga* (Skt. *arthaka-varga*) belongs to the earliest portion of the *Sn*. See Winternitz, *A History of Indian Literature*, vol. II, p. 92.
86. *Pūralāsa Sutta*, according to the Paramatthajotikā.
87. '*Katham sametassa vibhoti rūpaṃ sukhaṃ dukham vā pi katham vibhoti*', (873, a-b).
88. '. . . *ettāvat'aggam no vadanti h'eke yakkhassa suddhim idha paṇḍitāse udāhu aññam pi vadanti etto*', (875, c-c).
89. '*sassatucchedadiṭṭhiyo nissitā ti ñatvā*', *Paramatthajotikā* II. 2.554.
90. *See Dīgha* II. 68; III. 253, 282; *Anguttara*, IV.39.
91. *Saññāvedayitanirodha, Saṃyutta* IV, 293, 294.
92. Cf. '*suddhin ti suddhiṃ visuddhiṃ parisuddhiṃ muttiṃ vimuttiṃ parimuttiṃ*', *Niddesa* I.2.282.
93. '*sarīrañ ca antiman dhāreti patto sambodhim anuttaram sivam, ettāvatāyakkhassa suddhi tathāgato arahati pūraḷāsam*' *Sn*, 478, c-f.
94. i.e. a state beyond 'formless'; cf. '*etto arūpasamāpattito adhikam*', *Paramatthajotikā*, II.2.558.
95. *ākāsānañcāyatana, viññaṇañcāyatana* and *ākiñcaññāyatana*.
96. '*accantasukhumabhāvappattaṃ saṅkhāraṃ catuttharuppasamāpattim*', *Visuddhimagga*, vol. I, p. 337.
97. *Bṛhad.* 5.6.1. (Śaṅkara: '*bhāsvara*'); *Chānd.* 3.14.2. (Śaṅkara: '*bhā diptiḥ*').
98. *Tait. Up.* 1.6.1.
99. See *Dīgha*, I. 21; Buddhaghoṣa takes '*viññāṇa*' as '*citta*', *Papañcasūdanī* II, 2.51.
100. *Anguttara*, I.10; Buddhaghoṣa says that '*citta*' is '*bhavangācitta*'
101. *Saṃyutta*, V. 92.
102. *Majjhima*, I.293; cf. Śaṅkara on *Chand.* 3.14.2, '*bhā dīptiś caitanyalakṣaṇam*'.
103. *Dīgha* I.223; '*sabbato-pabham*' is the correct reading. See *Sumangalavilāsini*, p. 393, f.n. 9 (PTS edn.).
104. See *Dīgha* I, 223,'*viññāṇassa nirodhena . . .*'

12

Vitalism and Becoming: A Comparative Study*

This essay is generally intended as a prolegomenon to a fuller study of Indian Vitalism in relation to the corresponding vitalistic theories of the West. An important aspect of this subject has already been alluded to by students of Indian thought and exponents of Buddhism such as Prof. S. Radhakrishnan[1] and Mrs C.A.F. Rhys Davids,[2] and has even been discussed at some length by a Western philosophical writer, C.E.M. Joad.[3] The problem involved relates to a vitalistic theory of a Life Force as a *metaphysical* ultimate with its important corollary of the conception of Becoming as developed mainly by Bergson, and, the early Buddhist attitude to the phenomenon of life, particularly in relation to its conception of *bhava* (lit. becoming). The identification of Buddhist *bhava* with the Bergsonian notion of Becoming, as found in the authorities referred to, raises several important issues on which the ensuing discussion, it is hoped, will throw some light.

It is necessary to remark at the very outset that in common with the Western vitalistic theories early Buddhism holds that life as consciousness is *not* a mere epiphenomenon of matter.[4] In this, early Buddhist thought is at one with the vitalists and would definitely condemn any form of materialistic or purely mechanistic interpretation of life. This is, indeed, if we accept Driesch's definition of Vitalism, the chief difference between vitalists and their opponents. 'The main question of Vitalism is not whether the processes of life can properly be called purposive: it is rather the question if the

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purposiveness in those processes is the result of a special *constellation of factors known already* to the sciences of the inorganic, or if it is the result of an *autonomy* peculiar to the processes themselves.'[5] As we shall attempt to show later, early Buddhism too, posits a vital factor at least in man and animals, which by the very nature of its derivation cannot be considered a mere offshoot of matter. The mode of derivation, however, differs radically from the one ascribed to their own vital force by Driesch, Bergson and other vitalists, particularly of the monistic school. As typical of the advanced philosophical view of Vitalism we shall take up the Bergsonian concept of the *élan vital*, especially in its dynamic aspect,[6] and try to discover its nature both in relation to his own metaphysic and psychology—which for him should be one and the same thing—and also in relation to the vitalistic theory of the *Upaniṣads*.

For Bergson the flux of the *élan vital* is the sole reality, and matter is an illusion just as for Schopenhauer the Will only could claim full title to be called real.[7] This Vital Force is not something to be confined to particular individuals but 'a psychical force at the heart of the universe.'[8] This underlying *élan*, akin to the will in us, is God. 'He is unceasing life, action, freedom.'[9] The individual self is only the spatial and social representation of the real and concrete self or the fundamental self.[10] This position in metaphysics we may justifiably call *spiritual monism* after J.M. Stewart.[11] In the biological sphere, it is the *original impetus* of evolution and the primary cause of variations.[12] The important fact is that Bergson identifies the universal life force with consciousness in the individual.[13] 'If our analysis is correct', says Bergson, 'it is consciousness, or rather supra-consciousness, that is at the origin of life. Consciousness, or supra-consciousness, is the name for the rocket whose extinguished fragments fall back as matter; consciousness, again, is the name for that which subsists of the rocket itself, passing through the fragments and lighting them up into organisms'.[14] It is not difficult to discover behind the veil of this picturesque metaphor strong idealistic bias assimilating Bergson's philosophy to Western pantheism such as that implied in the Voluntarism of Schopenhauer and von Hartmann,[15] and what we have preferred to call the 'dynamic pantheism' as found in some of the *Upaniṣads* to which we shall refer below. According to Bergson the ultimate ideal of life or the goal of evolution is to be reabsorbed in the Vital Force, or, to use his own words, to 'place ourselves ... by an effort of intuition in the concrete flow of duration'.[16]

To this view of Vitalism, broadly speaking, most vitalistic philosophies of the monistic type would unhesitatingly subscribe, though there may not be so much agreement as to the conception of the goal of the vital process and the method of its achievement. Joad, however, in the book already referred to, while agreeing with Bergson that there is such a Vital Force in the universe, which implies ceaseless change and activity, refuses to subscribe to a purely monistic view of the universe, but goes on to postulate a pluralistic view in which life continues as a process, with matter as that which it becomes aware of in consciousness, and, further posits a world of values as another reality. In the opening paragraph of the work cited he says, 'I believe that the universe contains a number of factors of entities separated by irreducible differences in kind. Of these three may, I think, be clearly distinguished, namely, life, matter and value which is neither vital nor material.' His thesis, however, has this much in common with Bergson, that life is a dynamic principle or force whose chief expression consists in the activity of knowledge. It may be seen that while Bergson has recourse to the metaphysical possibility of the inward *durée* in order to save his 'monism of order',[17] Joad has insisted on the empirical distinction of life and matter—a distinction which from the metaphysical standpoint seems hardly reconcilable with the monistic implication in his third postulate, the ethical 'world of value'.[18] The recent change in Joad's attitude in favour of monism only confirms the view that all philosophies admitting a vital force at work *in the universe* and not merely in individuals must swing in the final resort to some form of monism, in accordance with the demands of the 'practical reason', and in order to be thorough-going systems of vitalism as opposed to purely mechanistic interpretations of life. For, as Driesch confesses, 'Our problem is the problem of pantheism or theism in a special form; at least, if we call *pantheism* the one doctrine that reality is a something which is making itself ('dieu se fait', in the words of Bergson), whilst *theism* would be any theory according to which the manifoldness of material reality is predetermined in an immaterial way.'[19]

The foregoing discussion, however brief, of modern Vitalism in the West, we hope, has made clear one important point, viz., that vitalists affirm the existence of a unique vital factor in the universe, which animates all living things from the lowest to the highest expressions of life and that it is a consciousness that informs the living in whatever state of evolution they may occur. It is important

to observe that for almost all vitalists the same force is found in the vegetative life. 'Everything bears out the belief,' says Bergson, 'that vegetable and animal are descended from a common ancestor which united the tendencies of both in a rudimentary state.'[20] The vegetative, instinctive (animal) and rational (human) life are not, for Bergson, however, three successive stages along the same unilinear evolutionary development, but three divergent directions of an activity that has split up as it grew.[21] It may be added that in his view inert matter is a reversal of the vital flow (or consciousness). It is, to use his own expression, not 'time flowing', but 'time flown',[22] *becoming* that has *ceased to become*, or, as Joad characterizes it, *spent becoming*. This conception is similar to Schopenhauer's idea of matter as one form of the objectivation of the Will just as men and animals are other objectivations. (The number of vitalists who object to this absorption of matter in the universal Life Force seems to be decreasing). The psychology behind this Bergsonian notion has a curious parallel in the conception of elemental matter in ancient Indian thought where the primary verb denoting dynamism or change, viz., *bhū* which means 'to become', provides in its preterite passive participial form the technical term for elemental *matter*, viz., *bhūta*, which literally means '*that which has become*', that is to say, ceased to become. The term *bhūta* occurs in the *Upaniṣads* in this sense as distinct from the 'conscious' factor in the universe.[23] Furthermore, one may find an interesting parallel between the very movements of thought that leads Bergson's Vitalism to some form of pantheism, using the last term in the sense given to it by Driesch, and the course of the evolution of early Indian Vitalism which, starting in a crude and rather naive form of biological evolutionism came to an end in the final merging of Life in the all-embracing pantheistic Brahman of the middle *Upaniṣads*.[24]

The above indicated parallelism brings us to the vitalistic theory that prevailed in the philosophy of ancient India prior to Buddhism. The supposition that there is an ultimate vital element in man and animal is already found in the *Ṛgveda* (*c.* 2000-1500 B.C.).[25] It is referred to as *prāṇa* (vital breath), *āyus* (vitality) or *āsu* (vital spirit).[26] In the *Atharvaveda* (XI.11.4.12) this *prāṇa*[27] is defined and identified with Prajāpati. In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (X.3.3) *prāṇa* is identified with Agni, and in the *Jaiminī Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa* (IV.11-13) the precedence of *prāṇa* over such elemental powers as fire, wind and sun is definitely asserted. *Prāṇa* is said to be the all-in-all of the

whole creation. When we come to the *Upaniṣads, prāṇa* or the Vital Breath assumes the role of the source and inspiration of all activity, and it is said in the *Mahā Aitareya Upaniṣad* that *prāṇa* externalises himself in the universe, and the same text identifies *prāṇa* with Indra. 'I am *prāṇa*', says Indra, 'so art thou also *prāṇa*; *prāṇa*, all the beings; and *prāṇa* likewise this *sun here who shines*'.[28] This implication that the vital element in the universe has one of its aspects in solar energy further developed in later Upaniṣadic texts, such as *Chāndogya* (III.I.2) where *indriyam* or the vital strength in the perceptive faculties and the bio-motor functions[29] in man is said to be produced *from the sun*. The philosopher Kaushitakī whose doctrines are preserved in the *Kauṣītakī Upaniṣad* which seems to be the standard text of Upaniṣadic Vitalism was wont to worship the Sun as the source of energy (II.7). This crude and partly mythological conception of the sun as a source of vital energy seems to be an early anticipation of the connection between the solar energy and vital 'impulsion' both in animals and plants as discussed by Bergson:

> The evolution of life really continues. . . an initial impulsion: this impulsion, which has determined the development of the chlorophyllian function in the plant and of the sensori-motor system in the animal, brings life to more and more efficient acts by the fabrication and use of more and more powerful explosives. Now, what do these explosives represent if not a storing-up of the solar energy . . . .'[30]

This solar energy is absorbed by animals through the ingested food which in the last analysis is derived from vegetable.[31] It is interesting to observe that the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (VI.11.12) asserts the existence of a vital self, *jīvātman*, in plants, which is the same as the supreme life principle in the universe.[32] 'The branches may die and yet the tree may live if the vital self has not left the whole.' This vital essence in the plant is that which creates vitality in man by way of food. Thus the same *Upaniṣad* in its doctrine of the 'Way of the Manes' describing the return to the world of the departed ones says: 'They are born here as rice and barley, herbs and trees, sesame plants and beans. Thence verily, indeed, it is difficult to emerge; for only if someone or other eats him as food and emits him as semen does he develop further.'[33] It is needless to point out that the Bergsonian idea that vegetable food is the chief vehicle of the transference of solar energy to man and that vegetative life, there-

fore, is also an aspect of the Universal Life Force is dimly anticipated in these passages.[34] In contrast with Bergson's 'divergent' evolutionism, already referred to, the *Upaniṣads*, however, seem to favour the notion of a unilinear development inasmuch as the 'rebirth' of man as plant is indicated.

We have already referred to the monistic tendency of Upaniṣadic Vitalism clearly seen in its identification of *prāṇa* with Brahman, the Absolute. Thus it is said: 'But this incorporeal, immortal life is Brahman indeed, is energy (*tejas*) indeed'.[35] 'Brahma is Life, Brahma is joy ...'[36] 'Which is the one God', asks Śākalya. *Prāṇa*, said Yājñavalkya, 'they call Him Brahma, the Yon'.[37] This final metaphysical position of Upaniṣadic vitalism is indeed an early adumbration of what we have termed with Stewart the Spiritual Monism of Bergson: but with this difference, that whereas for Bergson the ultimate reality is a strictly *dynamic* principle, 'a moving reality,'[38] in the Upaniṣadic description of *prāṇa* as Brahman there is little emphasis on its dynamic aspect. We may hasten to add, however, that such a dynamic concept is not altogether absent in the *Upaniṣads*, although their absolutist interpreters have only dwelt on the ontological aspect of Brahman as Being (*sat*). Though the term *bhava* rarely occurs as an epithet of Brahman in the early *Upaniṣads* and occurs only twice in a late *Upaniṣad* perhaps contemporary with the rise of Buddhism,[39] there are unmistakable references even in the early stage of development to Brahman (= *prāṇa*) as the 'moving', that is to say, dynamic reality.[40] 'There are verily, two forms of Brahman, the congealed and the uncongealed, mortal and the immortal, the stationary (*sthitam*) and the *moving* (*yat*) . . .'[41] The last epithet (*yat*) from the root *yā* 'to move' leaves no room for doubt as to its meaning.

Furthermore, just as Bergson identified the *élan originel* as 'the moving reality' with Universal Consciousness as distinct from 'the narrowed consciousness which functions in each of us',[42] so do the *Upaniṣads* constantly identify the original Vital Spirit (*Prāṇātman*) with the Universal Conscious Spirit (*Prajñātman*). The idea is early, for the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (VII.5.26) identifies *prāṇa* with *manas* or mind. As pointed above the *Bṛhad. Upaniṣad* (IV.4.7) characterizes *prāṇa* or the Vital Spirit as 'immortal' (*amṛta*). This conception we may compare with the implication in Bergson's statement that with the restoration of the individual consciousness to its original nature as the universal *élan* which is the goal of evolution. Life would

be 'able to beat down every resistance and clear the most formidable obstacles, perhaps even death.'[43] This conception of 'Immortality' is undoubtedly a result of the belief that the vital seed propagates itself. Hence an interesting concurrence between the Upaniṣadic doctrine and neo-vitalistic reasoning is found in the conception of biological survival. The *Upaniṣads* say that the father is reborn in the son,[44] and that therefore, the son is the *self* (*ātmā*) of the father.[45] In the West writers, such as Samuel Butler[46] and Prof. Rignano,[47] have dealt with the possibility of biological survival. The substance of this theory is that the parents continue to exist in their progeny since 'the boy of six is the same as the embryo, the embryo as the impregnated ovum, and the impregnated ovum as certain constituents of the parents' bodies'.[48] The idea seems to be a necessary conclusion of vitalistic reasoning.

The foregoing discussion of the metaphysical aspect of vitalistic Monism both in Western philosophy, as typical of which we have briefly outlined the Bergsonian position, and also in India as it makes its appearance in the Upaniṣadic literature, would help us considerably when we now turn to an examination of the Buddhist concept of *bhava* in relation to Vitalism, which we indicated at the outset as the main purpose of this essay. It is necessary to point out in this connection that even the neo-vitalist concept of *becoming* differs considerably in the case of its various exponents. For Driesch it is in nature or natural reality that the theory of *becoming* is seen to hold, while for the conscious ego *endurance* may be postulated. What endures in nature may be called *substance*.[49] This conception is similar to Herbarts' notion of *substances* that persist amid universal *change*.[50] For Bergson the world outside or nature is what has ceased to *become* or 'spent *becoming*'. But this is only an illusion for if by an 'act of sympathy' in intuition we can enter into the external object its true nature as *becoming* is disclosed to us. 'Becoming', says Bergson, 'is what our intellect and senses would show us of matter, if they could obtain a direct and disinterested view of it.'[51] It is because the intellect does not function without a practical interest but is always dominated by a utilitarian motive that in speculating on the nature of the real 'we become unable to perceive the true evolution, *the radical becoming*'.[52] These statements would show that Bergson's notion of 'becoming' is a novel conception inasmuch as for him this *radical becoming* is what intuition would show to be the real nature of the ego also, while for Driesch 'the conscious ego'

is, metaphysically, *endurance*. Indeed, for Bergson, the highest reality is the *radical becoming* both in nature and mind.

As for the Buddhist theory of *becoming* denoted by the Pali *bhava* it may be affirmed at the very outset that the term implies some kind of *dynamism*. The question, however, is whether this dynamism in early Buddhism has the same content as it has in the Vitalism of such writers as Bergson, and also what relation the Buddhist concept bears to the Indian vitalistic doctrines that we have been describing. In order to do so we shall have to answer the preliminary question: How does the concept of a life-force make its appearance in Buddhism? It may be seen that the word *prāṇa* does not occur in the early Buddhist literature with the pantheistic significance it has in the *Upaniṣads*, but exists only in the popular sense of 'a living being' or 'life' in the nominal sense.[53] It is the same significance that is found in the terms *jīvita* and *jīvitendriya*.[54] The word *jīva* occurs, however, in the Upaniṣadic sense of the 'living soul'[55] but only as referring to the doctrine of others that the body is the same as the living-soul (materialist), and their opponents who asserted that the body is *not* the same as the living-soul (vitalist). Early Buddhism refuses to commit itself to either position. But on the question of a vital principle in the *saṃsāric*[56] individual the position of early Buddhism is made clear in a passage which has never so far been discussed in this connection. In the *Majjhima Nikāya* in a dialogue between Sāriputta and Mahā-Koṭṭhita, two famous disciples of the Buddha, the former is questioned as to that on which the five sense organs (*indriyāni*) depend, he replies that they depend on *āyu* (vitality).[57] To a further question Sāriputta answers that *āyu* depends on *uṣmā*, and that the latter in turn depends on the former.[58] It is clear that *āyu* here is used in the sense of *vitality* restricted to the life-span of an individual.[59] This explanation is definitely supported by the commentator's gloss on *āyu* as 'the life-function' (*jīvitendriya*). An examination of the meaning of *uṣmā* and a reference to the Upaniṣadic use of *tejas* as 'vital energy', of which the physical manifestation is termed *uṣṇiman*[60] (heat in the body), would seem to establish for this curious term a sense deeper than the mere fact of 'vitality' referred to by the other term *āyu* in Buddhism. This contention is further supported by the commentarial gloss on *uṣmā* as 'the element of energy' (*tejas*) derived from past action (*kammaja-tejo-dhātu*).

Another important fact we discover from the same dialogue is that

in the state of death the body is devoid of *āyu*, *uṣmā* and *viññāṇa* (consciousness), whereas in the (*samāpatti*) state of *saññā-vedayitanirodha* in which the individual's mental activity, such as perception and feeling, has ceased, the three processes of *āyu*, *uṣmā* and *viññāṇa* continue to function.[61] This would clearly indicate that consciousness (*viññāṇa*) is a process other than mere mental activity and that *uṣmā* is only the vital (energizing) aspect of *viññāṇa*, the conscious factor. That is to say, *āyu* or the vitality in the individual depends on the *uṣma*-or-*viññāṇa* factor and the *uṣmā*-or-*viññāṇa* factor in turn depends on *āyu*. That this explanation is correct is seen from the statement elsewhere that the consciousness (*viññāṇa*) depends on the physico-mental unit (*nāma-rūpa*) as its basis (*patiṭṭhā*) and the physico-mental unit depends for its growth (*vuddhi*) on consciousness.[62] Hence the word *āyu* clearly seems to refer to just the *vitality* in the *nāma-rūpa* or the physico-mental unit which with consciousness (*viññāṇa*) goes to make up the empirical individual.[63] This *viññaṇa* is said to 'descend' into the mother's womb after conception as the third factor for successful parturition, the other two being (the physical elements derived from) father and mother.

The above discussion brings us to the main point of our problem: that whereas for vitalists, both Eastern and Western, the Life Force is a metaphysical ultimate of which all phenomena including man are derivatives, for Buddhism a vital force, if any, is only found in relation to the *saṃsāric* individual (man or animal). This vital force or *āyu* as manifested during the life-time of an individual is a factor that depends on *uṣmā*, and therefore *viññāṇa*, implying *saṃsāric* continuity by the force of Action. Thus the Buddhist conception of *becoming* has its rationale in *saṃsāric* evolution, which is nothing else but 'the becoming (*bhava*), due to *kamma*'. If we follow the later analysis this *bhava* has two aspects. *kammabhava* implying all action leading to becoming,[65] which is given as the causal aspect, and, *uppattibhava* implying various 'states' of rebirth, which is the fruitional aspect.[66] These 'states' (*bhavā*) are characterized as impermanent, sorrowful and 'evolving' (*vipariṇamadhammā*).[67] It will be seen, therefore, that *bhava* has no meaning apart from its context in *saṃsāra*, and that it will not do simply to regard it as implying *becoming* in the vitalistic sense. For Bergson the Absolute[68] or ultimate reality is pure *becoming*, but, as Das Gupta remarks, 'this pure duration is only an element of the intellectual, though he positively declares it to be such'.[69] But the Goal of Buddhism or

Nibbāna is neither *becoming* nor *non-becoming*,[70] neither is it Being, as Joad has assumed, nor is it non-Being, for the Upaniṣadic categories of *sat* and *asat*[71] are never applied to it. It may be added that the doctrine of biological survival as held by Butler, Rignano and others in the West and found also in the Vitalism of the Upaniṣads has clearly no significance for early Buddhism, inasmuch as rebirth implies not *biological evolution* but only *saṃsāric evolution* which we may conclude is the main difference between Buddhism and Vitalism.

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4. *DN*, II, p. 63.
5. *The History and Theory of Vitalism*, p. 1.
6. 'Life of consciousness' for Bergson is 'an existence of constant change', Lindsay, *The Philosophy of Bergson*, p. 93.
7. Cf. Joad, op. cit., p. 30.
8. J. M. Stewart, *Critical Exposition of Bergson's Philosophy*, p. 15.
9. *Creative Evolution*, p. 262.
10. *Time and Free-Will*, p. 231.
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12. *Creative Evolution*, p. 102.
13. Ibid., pp. 186-96.
14. Ibid., p. 275.
15. Thilly, *A History of Philosophy*, p. 490.
16. *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 53.
17. Driesch, op. cit., p. 231.
18. Ibid., p. 265.
19. *History and Theory of Vitalism*, p. 238.
20. *Creative Evolution*, p. 119.
21. Ibid., p. 142.
22. *Time and Free-Will*, p. 221.
23. Cf. *bhūta-mātrā* and *prajñā-mātrā* at *Kaus. Up.* III.8.
24. Cf. *Prāṇa = Brahma, Chānd. Up.* IV.10.4; *Kaush. Up.* II.1; *Bṛhad. Up.* IV.4.7.
25. *Vide* Winternitz, *Calcutta Review*, November, 1923.
26. Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda*, pp. 209, 403, 404.
27. The word *prāṇa* originally meaning 'the chief vital breath' (*mukhya prāṇa*) is hypostatized into the 'Cosmic Vital Spirit'.
28. Ranade and Belvalkar, *History of Indian Philosophy*, vol. II, p. 157.
29. The *Upaniṣads* refer to these as '*prāṇaḥ*' and '*devāḥ*' (*Chānd. Up.* II.7.1; *Kaus. Up.* III.3) cf. '*devatā*' (*Bṛhad.* I.3.10).
30. *Creative Evolution*, p. 259.
31. Ibid., p. 267.

32. This idea is already adumbrated in the *Ṛgveda* where Parjanya or the 'god of rain' is supposed to impregnate the plants with vital essence or seed (*RV*, V.83.1, *reto dadhāti oṣadhīṣu garbham*).
33. *Chānd. Up.* V.10.6; cf. *Bṛhad Up.* V.12; *Kaus.* I.2.
34. Cf. the vital self (*prānātman*) based on the self consisting of the essence of food (*annarasamayātman*) *Tait. Up.* II.
35. *Bṛhad. Up.* IV.4.7.
36. *Chānd. Up.* IV.10.4.
37. *Bṛhad. Up.* III.9.9.
38. *Creative Evolution*, p. 324.
39. *Maitri. Up.* VI.8; VII.7.
40. Even the vedic word *āyus*, life, is derived from a dynamic root *I* 'to go'.
41. *Bṛhad. Up.* II.5.1; cf. II.3.5; V.7.
42. *Creative Evolution*, p. 250.
43. Ibid., p. 286.
44. *Ait. Up.* IV.3.
45. *Kaus. Up.* II.11.
46. *Unconscious Memory.*
47. *Biological Memory.*
48. Joad, op. cit., p. 174.
49. Ibid., p. 191, 192.
50. Thilly, op. cit., p. 481.
51. *Creative Evolution*, p. 287.
52. Ibid., p. 288.
53. *Vide* PTS Dict., *s.v.*; significantly, on *pāṇupetaṃ* occurring at *Digha*, I.85, the commentary has *pāṇehi upetaṃ*, i.e. endowed with sense-organs and life-functions.
54. *Ibid.*, s.v. 55 Ibid. (Gk. bios, life), cf. *Chānd. Up.* II.12.
55. *Ibid., s. jīva* (= Gk. *bios*, life); cf. *Chānd. Up.* VI.11.12; *Mait. Up.* VI.17.
56. *Saṃsara* literally means 'coursing', i.e. from birth to birth.
57. This doctrine reminds one of the upaniṣadic idea that the perceptive and bio-motor functions (*prāṇāḥ*) derive from the universal *prāṇa*, (e.g. *Bṛhad. Up.* I.5.22; *Tait. Up.* II.3; *Kaus. Up* III.2; *Brhad. Up.* II.1.10).
58. '*Āyu usmaṃ paticca tiṭṭhati . . . usmā ayuṃ paṭicca uṭṭhati*', *Majjhima*, I.295.
59. This sense is the same as found for *āyus* in the *upaniṣads* (e.g. *Brhad Up.* II.1.10, which, however, is later identified with *prāṇa* or Universal Life (*Tait. Up.* II 3).
60. *Chānd. Up.* III.13.8.
61. *Majjhima*, I. p. 296.
62. *Dīgha*, II. p. 63.
63. The term *āyu-saṅkhāra* (*Majjhima*, I. p. 296 etc.) implies that *āyu* is one of the *saṅkhāras* which are part of *nāma*.
64. *Majjhima*, I. p. 265: *Aṅguttara*, I. p. 176.
65. '*Sabbampi bhavagāmikammam kammabhavo*', *Vibhaṅga*, p. 137
66. '*Kāmabhavo . . . pañcavokārabhavo, . . . ayaṃ vuccati uppattibhavo*', ibid.
67. *Aṅguttara*, I. p. 258; II, p. 177.
68. *Creative Evolution*, p. 315.
69. *Philosophical Essays*, p. 7.
70. *Sn*, 514, 1060, 1068 etc.
71. Being and non-Being

13

Upaniṣadic Terms for Sense-Functions*

A characteristic feature of Upaniṣadic ideology is its peculiar theory of cognitive and conative functions in the individual which is enunciated in close affinity with the theory of vital breaths (*prāṇāḥ*). The *Upaniṣads* present various classifications and enumerations of these and therefore a careful study of all relevant data is necessary before a general theory of Upaniṣadic sense-functions is formulated.[1] What is attempted in this paper is an examination of the import of the terms *devāḥ, devatāḥ, praṇaḥ* and *indriyāṇi* as applied to such functions in the principal Upaniṣads. The determination of the exact meanings of these terms will, it is intended, help to resolve the confusion that at present exists among the translators and students of the Upaniṣads and throw some light on the nature of sense-functions as referred to in these treatises.

Although the problem of Upaniṣadic chronology cannot be said to have been finally settled as yet, it is nevertheless possible to set forth the historical evolution of any given concept with a fair degree of accuracy. The best attempt so far made to fix a chronological stratification of Upaniṣadic thought is set out by Belvalkar and Ranade in their *History of Indian Philosophy* (Vol. II) and it is on this basis of the suggestions offered by them that we shall essay in the following paragraphs to trace the evolution of the four terms indicated above.[2]

Of these four terms the one with the widest application in the *Ṛgveda* is *deva* occurring there mostly in its mythological and cosmological sense. The only approximation to a psychological

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application is found in a somewhat late hymn in the first *maṇḍala*[3] where the human soul or mind hypostatised is called *devaṃ manas*—a usage echoed in the *Atharvaveda*[4] and *Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā*.[5] This application is continued in the early *upaniṣads*; for instance, *Bṛhadaraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, I.5.19 says that 'out of the sky and out of the sun the *divine mind* enters him, i.e. the father about to depart from this world when he has made over to his son his mortal faculties (*prāṇaḥ*) along with the other two divine immortal faculties (*daivāḥ prāṇa amṛtāḥ*) namely speech (*vac*) and breath (*prāṇa*)'. It is important to observe here that the distinction is made between the divine-immortal and the human-mortal.[6] In the light of these contexts it is not difficult to see why at *Bṛhad-Up.* 4.3.14 the mind or soul in the dream state is called *deva*, a usage recurring at *Praśna Up.* 4.1 where it is asked 'which is the god (*deva*) that sees dreams?' and answered in 4.2.5. that it is *manas*, the highest god. This is almost the sense adumbrated in the *Yajurveda* (*Vājasaneyī Saṃhitā*) passage already referred to where the mind in both the states of waking and sleeping is called *daiva*.[7] The conception that emerges from these passages is that the mind possesses a super-human or macrocosmic aspect indicated by the epithets *deva* and *daiva*. With the growing tendency in the *Upaniṣads* to regard *manas* as one of the sense-functions,[8] in fact as the sense-function *par excellence*, the term *deva* is extended by analogy to apply to other cognitive and conative senses in the human body. This usage is attested to in passages belonging to the earlier strata of Upaniṣadic texts; for instance at *Brhad.Up.* I.3.12-18 the functions smelling, seeing, hearing and thinking (*manas*) are called *devas* and Śaṅkara justifies the application by stating that these are *devas* by virtue of their capacity to illumine their respective objects.[9] The plural *devāḥ* occurring at *Īśa.Up.* 4 which too is very early though not so early as *Bṛhad. Up.* I.3.12-18 clearly implies sense powers as Hume too renders it, Śaṅkara's explanation being the same.[10] In the light of such evidence there need not be any confusion about the term *devānām* at *Ait.Up.* 4.5 where it occurs in a verse quoted from the *Ṛgveda*—the first verse of the Vāmadeva hymn.[11] The translators of the *Ṛgveda* have generally followed Sāyana[12] and have rendered the term as 'gods' or 'divinities'. Röer[13] gives the same meaning for *devānām* for the parallel *Ait. Up.* quotation, and so does Hume.[14] The latter authority adds a footnote to his translation to the effect that the term *gods* is 'here applied to the successive births of the individual soul, *ātman*, from father to son', which makes the

matter more confused. A careful study of the Vedic verse referred to and the implications of its Upaniṣadic citation makes one convinced that when Vāmadeva is reported to have said 'Being yet in embryo, I observed (*anu-avedam*) all the births of the *devas*. . .'[15] what he meant was that while he was yet in the mother's womb he possessed the unusual ability to observe the growth and the development of the foetus along with its organic functions. That the *ṛṣi* Vāmadeva possessed this unusual power of embryonic observation[16] as one who had attained the perfection of a Brahma-knower is suggested in an Upaniṣadic passage of the same period.[17] The idea that a developed consciousness can exercise its powers of discrimination etc., even in the embryonic stage is met with even in the early Buddhist texts where four types of the entry of consciousness into the embryo (*gabbhāvakkhantiyo*) are enumerated.[18]

In a later Upaniṣadic passage[19] *ātman* as the actual (*sat*) is distinguished from the sense-powers and the vital functions. Here Hume renders *devebhyaḥ* as 'other than the sense organs', but this is doubtful inasmuch as the term 'organ' may refer both to the physical organ and to its function whereas what is meant here is only the function: however doubtful Hume's rendering may be, it is clearly an advance on Cowell's[20] 'gods presiding over the senses' and Vidyārṇava and Sandall's[21] just 'gods'. The same remark applies to Hume's rendering of *devāḥ* at *Muṇḍaka Up.* 3.2.7, a text as late as the previous one, which declares that all the sense-functions are absorbed in their corresponding divinities (*devatāḥ*) at the moment of union with the Imperishable. In a very late Upaniṣadic passage[22] the term *deva* is applied to refer not only to the functions of speech, sight, mind (thinking) and hearing but to the five cosmic elements space, wind, fire, water and earth appearing in the same list.[23] This extended application of the term *deva* to imply non-personal elements clearly indicates the lateness of the passage[24] and is a confusion of the earlier application of *deva* in the *Ṛgveda* to mean cosmic or natural phenomena such as Agni etc.

It is clear from the above that in the *Upaniṣads* the term *devāḥ* is applied to the *powers* behind the sense-organs ultimately held to be superhuman. These sense-powers or hypostatised cognitive and conative functions in the individual or the microcosm are distinguished from their macrocosmic correlates called *devatās* in the *Upaniṣads*. From the time of the 'Puruṣa Sūkta'[25] the tendency is found to distinguish and compare the microcosm and the macro-

cosm: what relates to the macrocosmic phenomena is brought together within the category of the divine—celestial (*adhidaivatam*), what relates to material existences falls within the category of the physical (*adhibhūtam*), what relates to the individual or the microcosm is included in the category of the self (*adhyātman*).[26] It is clear from this very division that these early thinkers did appreciate the difference between the physical and the functional (psychological) aspects of the sense-organs but were labouring under the difficulty of a lack of proper terminology as well as a certain confusion of thought resulting from the mythical conceptions of the age. Even as early as the *Ait. Up.*[27] from which the following table is extracted a clear distinction is made between the physical sense-organs and their functions which latter are correlated respectively with their macrocosmic counterparts.

Physical organ	Function (*deva*)	Cosmic divinity (*devatā*)
mukham	*vāc*	*Agni*
nāsike	*prāṇaḥ*	*Vāyu*
akṣiṇī	*cakṣuḥ*	*Ādityaḥ*
karṇau	*śrotram*	*diśaḥ*
tvac	*(lomāni)*	*oṣadhayaḥ*
hṛdayam	*manas*	*Candramās*

The confusion evidenced in *lomāni* as the function of *tvac* is got over in the same chapter (1.3.7)where *sparśana* (*spṛṣṭvā*) is implied as the activity of *tvac*. It is obvious from these occurrences that the early *Upaniṣads* distinguished the physical organ from its function. There is, therefore, no justification to maintain, as does Prof. Keith[28], that 'in the Vedic view[29] between the organ and the activity there was no very clear distinction: the ear is what hears and hearing, the eye what sees and the sight and so on'. The microcosmic sense-powers (*vāc* etc.) are not only differentiated from their cosmic counterparts (*Agni* etc.) but are clearly held to vivify and impel the sense-organs to activity.

An examination of the contexts in which the term *devatā* occurs in the *Upaniṣads* confirms the above idea that it is primarily used there to denote the 'cosmic divinities'[30] (*Agni, Vāyu, Āditya, Diśaḥ* etc.) which are by *bandhutā* correlation regarded as the macrocosmic aspects or the bases of the 'psychic divinities' (*vāc, prāṇa, cakṣuḥ, śrotra* etc.). In the *Ṛgveda* the term *devatā* occurs only in two

places[31], cited by Grassmann in his *Wörterbuck zum Ṛgveda* (*s. devatā*), where the meaning does not seem to have developed beyond the idea of 'divine being (existence, nature)' or 'divine strength' or 'derivative from the gods'. In the *Brāhmaṇas* we have definitive evidence for the technical use of *devatā* to signify the macrocosmic correlated spoken of above. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* says that 'he who knows (the supremacy of Vāyu) departing from this world enters Fire with his speech, Sun with his sight, Moon with his mind, quarters with his hearing and Wind (Vāyu) with his breath, and becomes whatever divinity he desires out of those several divinities (*devatānām*).'[32] It is significant that this list does not mention *tvac* or its function (*lomāni*) with the divinity (*oṣadhayaḥ*), showing that there was yet no clear conception of the organ of touch in the *Brāhmaṇa* period. In a 'Brāhmaṇic'[33] passage occurring at *Tait.* I.5.1 the limbs (*aṅgāni*) of the Universal Brahman or *Ātman* are called *devatā* and it is clear from I.5.3 that *devatā* refers to *Agni, Vāyu* etc. In the *'Brāhmaṇo-Upaniṣadic'*[34] passages of the *Ait. Up.* the term *devatā* is used for the *Lokapālas* (world-guardians)[35] viz. Agni, Vāyu, Aditya etc. Similarly at *Bṛhad. Up.* I.5.22 *Vāyu* etc. are called *devatā*. It may be seen that *Vāyu* is only the cosmic correlate of *prāṇa* or the Life-Breath and it is no wonder that the term *devatā* is applied to the latter in a passage belonging to the same stratum.[36] At *Chānd. Up.* 4.17.1[37] fire, wind and sun are called the three *devatās*. In a comparatively late passage[38] the microcosmic sense-powers (*devas*) are said to enter into their respective divinities (devatās)[39], when the individual unites with the world-soul. In passages still later the term *devatā* is used for newer conceptions as when *Ch. Up.* 6.3.1-2[40] calls the three sources *bījāni* (viz. oviparous, viviparous and sprouting) of all living objects (*devatās*). At *Ch. Up.* 6.3.3 (cf. *Ch. Up.* 4.17.1) which belongs to the same stratum the three elements heat, water, earth (food) are called *devatās* and it is said that the three when consumed become speech, breath and mind respectively.[41] In the same *Upaniṣad*[42] in a passage giving the order of the cessation of functions at death it is stated that the ultimate divinity (*parā devata*) is *Sat* or Being—a metaphysical abstraction which implies a marked development of the sense of *devatā* from the earlier macrocosmic application.

From the above-quoted passages it becomes clear that although in the earlier strata of vedic thought the term *devatā* is applied only to the cosmic phenomena like *Agni, Vāyu, Āditya* etc. yet owing to confusion resulting from correlation with their microcosmic aspects

the word *devatā* begins gradually to be applied even to individual processes like *prāṇa* or the vital breath. Thus from a very early period we find the term applied to psychic divinities such as speech, *prāṇa* (in-breath), seeking, hearing, mind and *prāṇa* (in the mouth).[43] This leads in the latest period[44] to the application of *devatā* to the individual sense-powers *manas, cakṣuḥ, śrotram* and *vāc*, where it is used just like *deva*. At *Kauś. Up.* 2.3 these along with intelligence (*prajñā*) are called *devatā*, a fact which clearly indicates that the confusion of the earlier sense of cosmic phenomena with that of purely psychic powers has by now proceeded so far as to remove altogether the distinction between the two terms *devāḥ* and *devatāḥ*—the distinction that is clearly maintaind at *Muṇḍ. Up.* 3.2.7 where it is said that at liberation all the sense-powers (*devās*) go into their corresponding divinities (*devatas*). Thus the term *devatā* may also be regarded as a term for sense-functions in the *Upaniṣads*.

Next we may take up the term *prāṇāḥ* (pl.) which too can be shown to have developed the meaning of sense-functions in the *Upaniṣadic* period, though originally it meant any and every kind of vital (*prāṇaic*) activity as at *Bṛhad. Up.* 6.1.1-6. The restricted use[45] of the term in the *Upaniṣads* to mean the vital breaths, (*prāṇa, apāna* etc.) seems the more natural as its derivation from *prāṇa* or life (*lit.* breath)[46] clearly indicates.[47] This latter sense is distinctly maintained even in the middle Upaniṣadic period as at *Kau. Up.* 1.6 (cf. 3.3; 4.20) where it is stated: 'Whatever is other than the sense-functions (*devāḥ*) and the vital airs (*prāṇāḥ*)—that is the actual (*sat*)'. The plural *prāṇāḥ* never occurs in the *Ṛgveda* though there are clear references to the Life-principle, *prāṇa*[48] (sg.), which is equated *to āyus*. It is in the *Atharvaveda* that we may see the growth of the plural use to denote vital functions.[49] We may surmise with Keith[50] that the origin of the various notions regarding *prāṇa* may be traced in part at least to *AV*, 10.8.9 where the head is compared to a drinking bowl with seven seers in the apertures. The seven here appear to refer to the two eyes, two ears, two nostrils and the mouth. As is seen from the explanation proffered at *Bṛhad. Up.* 2.2.3-4 where the *Atharvaveda* verse is quoted in full, and also supported by *Muṇḍ. Up.* 2.1.8 where commenting on the 'seven *prāṇas*' Śaṅkara says that they are 'called seven because there are seven orifices in the head which lead to them', an explanation tallying with the *Atharvaveda* statement.

In several *Brāhmaṇa* texts[51] *prāṇāḥ* occurs probably with the same connotation, viz., vital functions. Nevertheless in the earliest stratum

of Upaniṣadic texts designated 'Brāhmaṇic' by Belvalkar and Ranade we have at least one clear reference to the occurrence of the word *prāṇāḥ* to mean sense-functions, namely, at *Chānd. Up.* 2.7.1 (cf. 2.11.1) where *prāṇa, vāc, cakṣuḥ, śrotram, manas,* the five *prāṇas,* are given as the most excellent (*parovariyāṃsi*). In a somewhat later passage[52] Prajāpati is said to have created the active functions (*karmāṇi*) of speech, seeing, hearing etc. where it is added that these are called *prāṇaḥ* because when death (*mṛtyu*) took possession of them they became so many forms of the central life-principle (*madhyamaḥ prāṇaḥ*). In the legend of the rivalry of the bodily functions at *Ch. Up.* 5.1.1-15 *vāc, cakṣuḥ, śrotram* and *manas* are ultimately made to recognize breath (*prāṇa*) as their most excellent superior and it is added "Verily they do not call them 'Speeches', nor 'Eyes', nor 'Ears', nor 'Minds'. They call them the 'Breaths' (*prāṇāḥ*) for the vital breath is all these". In what may be considered to be a later version of the same dispute occurring at *Bṛhad. Up.* 6.1.1-16 (cf. 6.3.2; *Kauś. Up.* 3.3) the term *Prāṇāḥ* applies to the above functions plus a sixth, namely, procreation. On the term *prāṇāḥ* occurring at *Ch. Up.* 5.1.6 Hume[53] makes the significant observation that 'the word might almost be translated 'Senses' but 'Functions' would perhaps more accurately represent the quaint old idea in the modern scientific terminology'. It will be remembered that the term *devāḥ* was also used in the same sense at this period. The earliest[54] enumeration of *prāṇas* as sense-functions gives the usual five, viz., *prāṇa*(smell)[55], *vāc, cakṣuḥ, śrotram, manas;* the same list of *prāṇas* occurs in later texts[56] too but in these contexts the first *prāṇa* is used in the sense of the 'breath'—the general function of which 'smelling' is considered as an aspect. The *prāṇas* are also given as six[57], namely, the above five plus *retas;* seven, as previously indicated; eight, the latter seven plus *vāc*[58]; or even ten.[59] This last enumeration of *prāṇas* as ten (which are called the ten *Rudras*) is important for the Sāṁkhya theory of sense-functions inasmuch as they probably refer to the five motor functions (*karmendriya*) and the five cognitive functions (*buddhīndriya*) as Śaṅkara himself explains.[60] The general senses of sense-functions is found for *prāṇāḥ* in several other Upaniṣadic passages belonging to the middle period.[61] In a late passage at *Kauś. Up.* 2.15[62] the word *prāṇaḥ* is applied to a multitude of categories which include the sense-functions as well, showing a marked development of its earlier sense.

None of the above-discussed terms denoting sense-functions have survived in the post-upaniṣadic period, and the usual term for the

sense organ or function in all later systems of Indian philosophy is *indriya*. Although the origin of the term can be traced to the *Ṛgveda* and it occurs also in the *Atharvaveda*, yet it is curious that the term is never found in the plural referring to sense-functions in Upaniṣadic texts such as are included within the first two groups by Belvalkar and Ranade in their stratification. In *Ṛgveda* I.165.8 Indra says that he slew Vṛtra with *indriya*. On this term Max-Müller observes that 'we must . . . translate it here not only by might but by Indra's peculiar might. Indriya as derived from Indra means originally Indra-hood, then power in general, just as verethraghna in Zend means victory in general though originally it meant the slaying of Vṛtra.'[63] In *Ṛgveda* I.85.2 where the Maruts as Rudras[64] are said to generate the might of Indra[65] it is clear that the term has the same significance.[66] The plural *indriyāni* occurs in connection with Indra in the *Ṛgveda* in more than one place,[67] but it is difficult to agree with Sāyana that they refer to sense-faculties[68]. In the *Atharvaveda indriyam* occurs in several places[69] without any particular reference to Indra, referring to 'human strength' and in one instance,[70] perhaps, bordering on the notion of sense-power, as Whitney has taken it.[71] This surmise is strengthened by the fact that '*pañcendriyaṇi manaḥ ṣaṣṭāṇi*' in *Atharvaveda* (19.9.5) must refer to some kind of sense-organ or function. The singular *indriyam* occurs three times[72] in the *Upaniṣads* and in the sense, probably, of the power of the sense-organs taken collectively, as Śaṅkara has understood it[73]. It is, however, only in late *Upaniṣads*, *Kaṭha*. etc., that the plural *indriyāṇi* occurs in the sense of faculties.[74] A curious occurrence of the plural use is found in *Kauṣ. Up.* (2.15) where in the dying father's bequest of his various powers to his son it is said that 'the son having come lies down on top touching organs with organs (*indriyairasyendriyāṇi saṃspṛśya*)' where the sense of the term possibly is 'limb'. This is exactly the sense in which Śaṅkarânanda's Commentary understands it (*indriyāṇi*) and therefore to regard the term in this context as referring to the functions of smelling, seeing, hearing, tasting etc. as Keith has done,[75] seems to depend on a wrong reading of the passage.

Apart from the sporadic use of two or three other terms signifying different aspects of sense-functions, the four terms we have discussed above must be considered as the usual designations of sense-functions in the *Upaniṣads*. The isolated use of the term *karmāṇi* for active functions[76] in *Bṛhad. Up.* (1.5.21) occurs in a passage already referred to above, which says that 'Prajāpati created the active

functions (*karmāṇi, lit.* activities) and when created they strove with one another: 'I am going to speak' the voice began. 'I am going to see' said the eye. 'I am going to hear' said the ear. So spake the other functions, each according to his activity (*karma*)'. It is not difficult to see the importance of this term for the later Sāṅkhyan conceptions of *karmendriya* which, however, has been restricted to apply only to the motor functions. A different aspect of the sense functions appear in *Bṛhad. Up.* (3.2.1-9) where the organs of smell, speech, tongue, eye, ear, mind, hands and skin are enumerated as the eight *grahas* and their corresponding objects odour, name, taste, form, sound, desire, action and touch are set over against them as the *atigrahas*. Keith, perhaps following Śaṅkara, sees here 'possibly an indication since Graha may mean seizer, that the soul was fettered by the organs and their activities, an idea carried out in the phrase bands of the heart' which is first found in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*.'[77] But a comparison of this passage with *Ait. Up.* (1.3.3-10) where the inability of the sense-functions to grasp (*grahītam*) food without the vivifying power of *Ātman* is mentioned, and, with *Kauś. Up.* 3.4 where the functions are said to obtain (*āpnoti*) their objects, confirms the view that the term *graha* here refers, as Keith himself is compelled to admit later,[78] to the power of the senses in seeking out their objects and enjoying them, as is implied in Hume's rendering of *graha* as 'apprehender'.[79] That such a conception is not unusual in the *Upaniṣads* is proved by the fact that at *Kauś. Up.* 2.3 the divinities (*devatāḥ*) speech, breath, eye, ear, mind and intelligence are called *avarodhāraḥ*, rendered by Hume as 'procurers'.[80]

In conclusion it may be pointed out that a study of the above terms shows the importance of the Upaniṣadic view of sense-functions and vital activities for later Indian speculation. The ascripton of 'divinity', i.e., macrocosmic or super-human power, to the cognitive and conative senses in the individual has clearly left its mark on the later conception that the *yogin* by practice of meditation can acquire the super-normal faculties of the 'divine eye' and the 'divine ear'. It is perhaps in the Buddhist books[81] that this conception is for the first time clearly enunciated. An intermediary stage in the development of the Buddhist conception may be seen in *Ch. Up.* (8.12.5)[82] where *manas* is called the divine eye (*daivaṃ cakṣuḥ*) of the *Ātman* by means of which one sees the desires in the Brahman-region and rejoices. According to Śaṅkara this means that the mind (of the *yogin*) apprehends all things, subtle as well as hidden and remote.

In view of the above it is unnecessary to connect *dibba-cakkhu* and *dibba-sota* of early Buddhism, as does Mrs Rhys Davids, with the mythological *deva* or *devatā* 'worthy men of the other worlds' with whom in *jhāna* one converses in order to 'profit by their wider knowledge of life'. According to her the prefix *dibba* (*divya*) means 'belonging to devas' and refers to 'deva-conditions'.[83] The foregoing discussion should have made it amply clear that in the early Indian view the *mind* as the sense-power *par-excellence* is potentially superhuman as is indicated by the epithets *daiva, deva, devatā* etc. and is the most important psychological aspect of the individualised *prāṇa*[84] or universal Vital Force identified as *prajñātman* with the empirical Brahman.[85]

REFERENCES

1. As we propose to do in a forthcoming publication on *Ancient Indian Vitalism*. (This expectation did not materialize. Ed.)
2. GI, GII etc. coming after the textual references, indicate the four groups into which the Upaniṣadic texts are divided by Belvalkar and Ranade at page 135.
3. '*devam manaḥ kuto'dhi prajātam*' *RV*, I.164.18.
4. '*punarchi vācaspate devena manasā saha*' *AV*, I.1.2.
5. *VS*, 34.1
6. Cf. *Tait. Up.* 3.10.2 *et seq.*, *daivī* opposed to *mānuṣī*, the latter qualifying speech, in-and out-breath, hands, feet, anus.
7. Cf Jwala Prasad, *Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, p. 152.
8. See *Bṛhad Up.* 1.3.18; 2.4.11; 4.5.12; *Praśna Up.* 2.3; *Kauś. Up.* 1.7; Cf. *Sānkhya Kārikā* 27.
9. '*te vāgādayo devāḥ svaviṣayadyotanād devāḥ*' Ā.Ā. Series edition, p. 76.
10. '*devā dyotanād devāś cakṣurādīṇīndriyāṇi*' ibid. p. 8.
11. *RV*, 4.27.
12. '*indrādinām devānām*'.
13. *The Twelve Principal Upaniṣads* (Translated), Bombay, 1906 p. 8.
14. Hume, *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, p. 298.
15. *RV*, 4.27.1.
16. Cf. *Ait. Āraṇyaka* 2.3; Keith, *Aitareya Āraṇyaka*, p. 234, n. 9.
17. *Bṛhad. Up.* 1.4.10—Keith contends the idea that Vāmadeva here refers to his former births, op. cit. p. 571 and p. 609, fn. 2, but it is doubtful if this is Saṅkara's interpretation. *Bṛhad. Up. Bhāṣya*, p. 165 (Ā.Ā. ed.). Belvalkar and Ranade take this in accordance with *RV*, 4.18; 4.27 to mean that Vāmadeva observed 'the innumerable births of the gods', op. cit., pp. 165, 185.
18. *DN*, III. p. 103; see also *Sumaṅgala-vilāsinī*, III, pp. 885-86.
19. *Kaus. Up.* 1.6. (G III, early).
20. *The Twelve Principal Upaniṣads* (Translated). Bombay 1906, p. 21.
21. *SBH*, Vol.XXXI, part I, p. 14.
22. *Praśna Up.* 2.2.
23. Cf. Hume, op. cit., p. 381, fn. 1.

24. Group III, middle (?).
25. See Keith, op. cit., p. 486.
26. *Bṛhad. Up.* 3.7.3-23; cf. Keith op. cit , p. 486; cf. *Bṛhad. Up.* 1.5.21; *Chand. Up.* 1.3.1; *Kauś. Up.* 2.13.
27. *Ait. Up.* 1.1.4. (G. II early).
28. Keith, op. cit., p. 453.
29. Prof. Keith includes the *Upaniṣads* in the term 'Vedic' throughout his work.
30. Cf., on the use of these terms, Keith, op. cit., p. 518
31. *RV*, 10.19.13-14.
32. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 10.3.3.8; 2.5.2.2 (*devatāḥ* referring to the psychic functions leaving the body); cf. *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, 8.28.
33. Group I, late; Śaṅkara: '*devatāgrahaṇam upalakṣanārtham lokādīnām*'.
34. Thus designated by Belvalkar and Ranade, loc. cit.
35. *Ait. Up*, 1.1.3, 4; 1 3.1; cf. Śaṅkara on *Ait. Up.* 1.1.3. '*Agnyādayo devatā okapālatvena samkalpya*'.
36. *Brhad. Up.* 1.5.14 (G. II early).
37. Group II, early.
38. *Muṇḍ. Up.* 1.2.7 (G. III early).
39. Śaṅkara: '*deväśca dehäśrayäścaksuradikaranasthaḥ sarve prati devatasvädityädiṣu gatä bhavanti*'.
40. Group III, middle
41. Cf. *Chand. Up.* 6.5.1-4; also *Bṛhad. Up.* 5.12 (G. IV early) where *anna* and *prāṇa* are called *devatās.*
42. *Chand. Up.* 6.8.6. (G. III middle).
43. *Bṛhad. Up.* 1.3.2-7, 10; cf. *Chand. Up.* 1.2.2-7 (G. I, early); cf. *Bṛhad. Up.* 3.1.9 (G. III, middle) where *manas* is called *devatā.*
44. *Kauś. Up.* 2.1-2; (G. III, late), cf. 2.13, 14, 3.3; *Bṛhad, Up.* 6.1.1-14; *Chand. Up.* 5.1.
45. See *Brhad. Up.* 1.5.3; 3.1.10; 3.4.1; 4 2.24; 5 14.3; 6.4.12; *Chand. Up.* 1.13.1-6; 5.19-23, *Tait Up.* 1.5.3.
46. See 'Vitalism and Becoming' in this volume, pp. 143ff.
47. The *prāṇas* are said to be the cause of the continuation of all living beings *Chand. Up.* 3.16.1.
48. *RV*, 1.66.1; 10.59.6.
49. *AV*, 6.135.2, 3.
50. Keith, op. cit. p. 553.
51. *Kauśītaki Brāhmaṇa* 4.4.20; *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, 10.3.7 1; *Taittirīya Brāhmana*, 3.7.6.8; *Aitareya Brāhmana*, 8.22.8.
52. *Bṛhad. Up.* 1.5.21 (G. II early).
53. Hume, op. cit. p. 227. fn. 1.
54. *Chand. Up.* 2.7.1; 2.11.1 (G. I. early).
55. Cf. Śaṇkara: '*prāṇo ghrānam,. . .* ' on *Chand. Up.* 2.7.1; cf. *Brhad. Up.* 2.1 17; *Chand. Up.* 5.1.1-15; 5.19-23.
56. *Chand. Up.* 5.1.1-15 (G. II middle); *Brhad. Up.* 2.1.17 (G. III middle).
57. *Bṛhad. Up.* 6.1.1-6; cf. 6.3.2.
58. *Bṛhad. Up.* 2.2.3 (G. III late); cf. *Ait. Up.* 1.1.4. where for taste and speech are substituted skin and heart.
59. *Bṛhad. Up.* 3.9.4. (G. III middle); cf *Chand. Up.* 3.16.1.
60. '*karmabuddhindriyāṇi prānāḥ . . .* ' on *Bṛhad, Up.* 3.9.4.
61. *Bṛhad. Up* 1.17; 2.1.20; 4.3.38; *Chand. Up.* 6.5.3 (G. III middle) *Kaus. Up.*

3.2 (G. III late).
62 Group III late.
63. *SBE*, Vol. XXXII, p. 198.
64. Cf. the ten *Rudras* at *Bṛhad. Up.* 3.9.4.
65. Cf. Macdonell, *Vedic Reader*, p. 23.
66. Cf. *RV*, 4.30.23.
67. Plural. *RV*, 1.107.2; 3.37.9; 5.31.3; *AV*, 3.22.9.
68. See Sāyana on *RV*, 3.37.9; '*yānīndriyāṇi rūpagrahanādisāmarthyāṇi sthitāni te tvadiyāni tānīndriyāṇi . . .*'
69. *AV*, 3.22.5; 20.20.2.
70. *AV*, 5.9.8.
71. Whitney, *Atharva Veda Translation*, p. 235; cf. *Pet. Wörterbuch, s.* indriya (c).
72. *Chand. Up.* 3.1.3 (G. II, early) *Bṛhad. Up.* 6.4.7 (G. IV. late); *Praśna Up.* 6.4; (G. III ?)
73. In *Chand. Up.* 3.1.3 '*sāmarthyopetair indriyairavaikalyam*' in *Praśna Up.*, 6.4; '*dviprakārambuddyartham karmārtham ca daśasankhyam*'.
74. *Kaṭha Up.* 3.4; 6.7; *Muṇḍ. Up.* 2.1.3; *Praśna Up.* 3.9.
75. Keith, op. cit., p. 554.
76. Cf. Śaṅkara: '*karmāṇi karaṇāni vāgādini karmārthāni hi tānīti karmā-nityucyante*'. cf. Hume, op. cit., p. 90; 'active functions'.
77. Keith, op. cit., p. 554.
78. Ibid., p. 557.
79. Ibid., p. 109; cf. Keith, 'graspers or apprehenders', op. cit., p. 556
80. Ibid , p. 309, in accordance with Saṅkarānanda's Commentary
81. *DN*, I 76 *et seq. MN*, 2 17 *et seq.* '*dibbacakkhu*', '*dibbasota*' as '*abhiññā*'; cf *Bhagavadgitā*, 11.8, *divyacakṣus*; *Bhagavata Purana*. 1.1 18; *Brhat. Saṃhitā* 5.13, *divya-dṛś*.
82. Group III late.
83. 'More about Dhyāna' *Indian Historical Quarterly*, vol. XVI (1940) pp. 299 305
84. *Maitri Up.* 6.13.
85. *Kaus. Up.* 2.14, 3.3.8; *Muṇḍ. Up.* 2.2.2.

14

Pali 'Vado Vedeyyo' and Upaniṣadic 'Avāki-Anādarah'*

In the famous 'Sāṇḍilya-vidyā' Section of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (3.14.1-4), also found in a somewhat different version in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (10.6.3)[1], occurs the following: ' . . Now, verily, a person (*puruṣa*) consists of volition (*kratu*). According as his volition is in this world, so does he become on departing hence (*itaḥ pretya*). So let him exercise for himself volition. Consisting of mind (*manomaya*), having a body of life (*prāṇa-śarīraḥ*), of the colour of light (*bhārūpaḥ*), of true conception, of the nature of *ākāśa*, possessing all actions, all desires, all smells, all tastes, pervading all this, *speechless* and *indifferent* (*avakyanādaraḥ*) . . . this self (*ātma*) of mine within the heart—this is Brahma[2]—into him shall I evolve[3] on departing from here.' The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* version, while generally agreeing with the above, has the latter part as follows: 'Let him meditate on the Self (*Ātmānam*), consisting of mind . . . etc. . . changing its shape at will, swift as thought, of true conception, and resolve, possessing all smells, and tastes, which holds sway over all the regions and pervades all this, which is *speechless* and *indifferent* (*avākkam-anādaram*). . . . that self of life (*prāṇa*) is my self (*ātmā*); hence departing, into (this) self (*Ātmānam*) shall I evolve.' A study of these passages shows that the attributes 'speechless' and 'indifferent' refer to the pantheistic *Ātman* which is immanent in the transmigrating individual self in all its vicissitudes.

In his commentary on the *Chandogya Upaniṣad*, Śaṅkara interprets the term '*manomaya puruṣa*' as 'the self that resides in the *prāṇaic* or subtle body, i.e., the *liṅga*, consisting of the two energies

* *University of Ceylon Review*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1945.

of consciousness (*vijñāna*) and activity (*kriyā*).[4] That the self-transmigrates in the form of the *liṅga* is attested to at *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 4.4.6, which says 'where one's mind is attached, the *liṅga* goes thereto with action . . . '. Hence the passage may be taken generally to refer to the mental or intelligential self of the person departing from this life; it is to be observed that *pretya* and other forms of *pra* √*i* in most Upaniṣadic contexts[5] imply the departure of the individual self at death. But the epithets beginning with *manomaya* can apply in the ultimate analysis, only to the macrocosmic *Ātman*, as the *Brāhmaṇa* text clearly shows and is interpreted by Sāyana in his *Bhāṣya* on the Mādhyandina recension.[6] Similarly, Śaṅkara regards these attributes as belonging to *Īśvara* or God, although he interprets '*kratumayaḥ puruṣaḥ*' as the individual self *(jīva)*[7] who is said to become what he wills to be, having departed from this world.[8] In fact, the pantheistic nature of the *Ātman* described is patent from the epithet '*sārvamidamabhivyāpta*', and the whole passage has to be taken in this double sense, as most similar passages in the *Upaniṣads* which maintain the identity of the microcosm and the macrocosm.

A comparison with other early Upaniṣadic texts clearly demonstrates that the particular self described by the terms '*manomayaḥ prāṇaśarīro bhārupaḥ*' is what may be called the *anchistological* aspect of the Upaniṣadic *Ātman*, often also called the *vijñānātman*. That the individual self has several aspects is proved not only by the famous 'pañcakośa' theory of the *Taittirīya Up.* (2.3.1, 4.1) but also by many other contexts (e.g. *Bṛhad.*, 1.5.3; 4.4.5 etc.). According to the *Taittirīya* doctrine, just as the *manomaya* self is encased within the *prāṇamaya*, so is the *vijñānamaya* self posited within the *manomaya*. But, since *manas* is also one of the sense-functions in a way, and is therefore a *prāṇa*,[9] it is not surprising to find the *vijñānamaya* self itself being referred to as 'the person among the functions (*prāṇeṣu*), inside the heart, an (effulgent) light etc.' (*Bṛhad.*, 4.3.7), 'who being born attains a body and is joined by evils, and departing, on dying (*utkrāmanmriyamānaḥ*), leaves the body and discards (those) evils' (*ibid.*8). It is unnecessary to point out that this is the same self as the one that is cryptically called 'Indra' in *Tait.Up.* (1.6.1). with regard to the dying person, and in *Aitareya*, (1.3.12,14) with regard to the pantheistic *Ātman* as it enters the human body after the latter's first creation in order to enliven it. It is significant that this self is also regarded in the former context as the '*manomaya* person, immortal, resplendent (*hiraṇmaya*), within

the space inside the heart...' Thus the two terms *manomaya* and *vijñānamaya* are promiscuously employed to denote the self as *survivor* at death (cf. *Bṛhad.*, 4.4.4; *Tait.*, 2.8.1; 3.10.5). The progress of this anchistological self in its several stages from the moment of departure from one body till it is reborn in a fresh one is fully described at *Bṛhad. Up.*, 4.4.1-2, thus: 'When this self[10] becomes weak, as it were, is reduced to senselessness, then the functions (*prāṇāḥ*) get concentrated within him; he collects into himself all these particles of energy and descends into the heart . . . [thus he becomes unified (*ekībhūta*) with his functions (cf. *Bṛhad.*, 2.4.14)] . . . Of him (thus unified) the heart-tip becomes luminous; by that become luminous, the self (*ātman*) leaves. In the wake of him leaving, life leaves; in the wake of life leaving all the vital functions leave; he becomes (just) consciousness (*sa* [?] *viññaṇo bhavati*), (and) as that very (*eva*) consciousness, he descends (into a womb) over again (*anvavakṛāmati*).'[11] I have shown (*loc. cit.*) that this theory of rebirth has at least this much in common with the Buddhist explanation of the phenomenon, that the departing and surviving factor is some form of consciousness (*vijñāṇa*, Pali—*viññāṇa*). Furthermore, from the foregoing contexts it becomes clear that this Upaniṣadic self in transmigration is held to be radiant or effulgent (*bhārupa, jyotir, hiraṇmaya*)—an idea forcefully expressed in *Bṛhad. Up.* (4.3.9) where the *vijñānamaya-puruṣa* (the same as the self in the dream state) is identified with the self that arises from the crematory-oblation in the form of 'the person of the colour of light (*bhāsvaravarṇaḥ*)'. This attribution of *radiance* to the anchistological *vijñānātman* in the *Upaniṣads* appears to be the result of the notion that at death the person discards the evils of the body, as mentioned above, but it is necessary to remember that from the Buddhist point of view[12] it appears to be a fallacy arising from the confusion of the *vijñānātman* as survivor with the *vijñāna* of the perfected individual.[13]

Now, the characteristic of the *ātman* as found in the passages under discussion, that are more important for the Pāli terminological parallelism than those dealt with in the preceding paragraph, are the two contained in the *Chāndogya* phrase '*avaki-anādaraḥ*' and the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇas* '*avākkam-anādaram*'. Both '*avāki*' and '*avākkam*' can be grammatically regarded as *possessive* adjectival formations, and mean literally 'speech-less', i.e. 'non-speaking', as most translators take them.[14] But, as Śaṅkara correctly remarks,[15] 'the denial of speech (*vāk*) here is purely illustrative (*upa-*

lakṣaṇārthaḥ), for it stands for the denial of all the sense-functions (*karaṇāni*) . . .', an interpretation justifed by the special importance given to *vāc* as compared with the other functions in the *Upaniṣads*[16]. It is often seen that *speech* heads the list of *prāṇas* or cognitive and motor functions (e.g. *Chānd. Up.*, 5.1.1-15; *Kaush. Up.*, 3.4-8 etc).[17] Thus the meaning of the epithet 'un-speaking' here must be taken in the broader sense of 'non-agent'; that is to say, the *Ātman* is devoid of *agency*. But in view of such passages as *Bṛhad. Up.*, 4.3.26 where the *Ātman* is held to be the 'speaker' (i.e., agent) *par excellence*, the above interpretation would appear to present a contradiction. So Śaṅkara in order to meet this difficulty interprets the term '*avāki*' as 'possessed of no organs such as speech (*sci.* but nevertheless, the speaker etc.).' (*loc. cit.*) The difficulty, however, results from the confusion of the sense of '*ātman*' in the passage, which seems to waver between the microcosmic and the macrocosmic applications.

The same doubt seems to assail the investigator in attempting to decide the exact connotation of the word *anādaraḥ*. The form, like *avāki*, occurs only in these contexts and is to be taken similarly as a *possessive* adjectival formation, literally meaning 'unconcerned' or 'indifferent', that is to say, 'not moved by external events'[18]. That in the Upaniṣadic period the verb *ā+ √dṛ* meant 'to regard' or 'be concerned with' is seen in *Bṛhad. Up.*, 6.2.3, where *anādṛiya* is used in the sense of 'disregarding'. The Upaniṣadic application of these epithets to the *Ātman* may be compared with the similar attribution to the *Puruṣa* (spirit) of 'percipience, (yet) non-agency and neutrality' (*mādhyasthyaṃ draṣṭṛtvam akartṛbhāvaśca*) in the *Sāṅkhya-Kārikā* (19). The very next *Kārikā* (20), in fact, asserts that 'it is only by the association with the *liṅga* (or the transmigrating subtle body) that the '*indifferent one*' (*udāsīna*) (i.e. the *Puruṣa*) becomes *agent* as it were (*iva*).' Thus it is seen that in these philosophies the denial of *agency* and *concern* applies in reality only to the macrocosmic Self or Spirit but not to the macrocosmic correlates of these in the two systems, particularly not to the transmigrating self. Yet it is significant for the ensuing discussion that even the macrocosmic Self is regarded in the Sāṅkhya and the late *Upaniṣads* as 'enjoyer' (*bhoktṛ*), i.e. 'the experiencer'.[19]

Now, it is of great significance for the evolution of early Indian religious and philosophical thought to find an apparently similar denial in early Buddhism of the self (*attā*) or consciousness (*viññāṇa*) as the 'speaker and feeler (experiencer) (*vado vedeyyo*)'. This

expression occurs only twice in the Pāli *nikāyas* and both instances are found in the *Majjhima Nikāya*. In the Second or 'Sabbāsava Sutta' of that collection it is said that the uninstructed, common person owing to irrational thinking may come to hold one of the following six false views (*diṭṭhi*): 'I have a self (*attā*); I have not a self; by self I perceive self; by self I perceive non-self (*anattānam*); by non-self I perceive self; or (finally) his erroneous view is to hold that 'this self (*attā*) of mine, the *speaker* and feeler (*vado vedeyyo*) (that) experiences the fruit of good and bad acts (*kammānam*), that for me is (identical with) the *Ātman* (Cosmic Self), permanent, constant, eternal, unchanging, that will stand fast for all eternity' (*MN*, I.8)[20] As the commentator Buddhaghoṣa explains it, the term '*vado*' in this context literally means 'speaker' or 'the agent of the act of speaking',[21] which like the Upaniṣadic parallel '*avāki*' must be taken in the broader sense of 'agent' in general. Similarly, '*vedeyyo*' means the 'feeler' or 'the agent of experience'[22]. The more important occurrence (*MN*, I.258) of this expression, however, is in the famous Mahātaṇhāsaṅkhaya Sutta' (58). A monk, Sāti by name, comes to entertain the pernicious view that, as he understood the Lord's teaching of the Doctrine, 'the same (*tadeva*)[23] consciousness (*viññāṇam*) runs on and continues (*sic.* after death) without break of identity (*anaññaṃ*).[24] In his commentary Buddhaghoṣa completely ignores the force of '*tadeva*' and '*anaññaṃ*' and takes the statement as a flat denial of any surviving factor such as *viññāṇa*,[25] but as Oldenberg, Keith and Mrs Rhys Davids have shown,[26] what is denied here is only the belief that the surviving consciousness that runs on and continues in *saṁsāra* is identically the same as the living consciousness. Sāti is sternly rebuked by the Buddha for holding this pernicious view, and is consequently asked to *define* his conception of *viññāṇa* (*katamaṃ taṃ Sāti viññāṇaṃ*?)—be it noted that this request to define it would not have been necessary at all if the Buddha had started with a flat denial of a surviving *viññāṇa* of any and every kind of description—and Sāti replies; 'Sir, it is that *speaker* and *feeler* (*vado vedeyyo*), who experiences (*paṭisaṃvedeti*) the results of good and bad acts, in this or that existence (*tatra tatra*)'. Sāti is again rebuked and told that such a *viññāṇa* must be purely empirical, arising only by way of causation (*paṭiccasamuppannaṃ*) and not coming about without assignable conditions (*aññatra paccayā natthi viññāṇassa sambhavo*). Then follows a long analysis of such empirical consciousness. It is highly significant that this very

analysis is immediately succeeded by an unmistakably emphatic assertion of an extra-empirical element or factor at conception, which must be present along with the physical elements if the latter is to be successful, and, which is called the *gandhabba* (p. 265-66). Elsewhere,[27] I have shown that this *gandhabba* is no other than the '*saṃvattanika-viññāṇa*' (*MN*, II.262), that is, the consciousness that evolves (in *saṃsāra*), said to descend into the mother's womb for successful conception and parturition, clearly from *outside* as E.J. Thomas has argued,[28] in more than one place in the early *nikāyas* (*DN*, II.63; *MN*, II.501 etc.). The history of the evolution of this concept of the anchistological *gandhabba* shows that even some of the later Buddhist schools, interpreting the surviving factor as some being (*satta*) or personality (*puggala*) endowed with a full sense-apparatus and even, in the opinion of some, a subtle, transporting (*ativāhika*) body of some sort comparable to the *liṅga-sarīra*, had forgotten the exact import of the concept and ignored the term *gandhabba* completely.[29] But in my discussion of the subject already referred to, I pointed out with adequate justification that the term, at least for early Buddhism, meant the *saṃsaric* consciousness' although having no empirical relationship with sense functions, etc., as implied by the upaniṣadic notion of the *prāṇaic* body or *liṅga* and therefore impossible to be regarded as either *agent* or *experiencer*.

The above considerations would suffice to demonstrate that, by the denial of the attributes of 'speaking' and 'feeling' to the surviving factor as implied in the refutation of Sāti's view that the consciousness that fares on and continues in *saṃsāra* is *vado vedeyyo*, and also by the refusal to identify it with any *permanent* and *unchanging* self (*attā*), Early Buddhism took a stand radically different from the one taken by the *Upaniṣads* with regard to the important phenomenon of rebirth. As the above discussion of the *Chāndogya* passage suggested the epithets *avaki-anādaraḥ* were in the ultimate analysis applied only to the macrocosmic *Ātman* or, as Śaṅkara interpreted it, to God (*Īśvara*), but the foregoing discussion of the Buddhist phrase should have made it amply clear that early Buddhism not only denied the existence of any such pantheistic Soul but directly applied the denial of the said attributes to the surviving factor itself. Herein lies the important distinction between the two apparently parallel usages—a distinction that is of the highest importance in a comparative study of the *Ātman* doctrine of the *Upaniṣads* in relation to the Buddhist view of *anatta*.[30]

REFERENCES

1. The *Chāndogya* passage is very early and belongs to what Belvalkar and Ranade have called the 'Brāhmaṇo-Upaniṣadic Period'. *History of Indian Philosophy*, vol. II. p. 135. Perhaps both versions go back to one original source.
2. This parenthetical phrase is probably a later interpolation, for it does not occur in the *Brāhmaṇa* version.
3. The verb '*abhi + sam +* $\sqrt{bh\bar{u}}$' is usually employed in the *Upaniṣads* in the sense of 'evolve into' with the accusative of the noun denoting the new state, as seen from Jacob's *Concordance*.
4. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad Bhāṣya* (Ā.Ā. Series ed.), p. 170.
5. See Jacob's *Concordance*, *s.* 'pre'.
6. See Eggeling, *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa Translation*, *SBE*, vol. XLIII, p. 400.
7. Loc. cit., p.169.
8. Here Śaṅkara takes '*pretya*' as '*mṛtvā*' (ibid.).
9. See 'Upaniṣadic Terms for Sense-Functions' in this volume, pp. 155 ff.
10. Clearly called '*sārīra ātmā*' in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* version (14.7 2).
11. See full discussion of this passage, with a new reading suggested, in this volume, pp. 175 ff.
12. Ibid. p. 137.
13. The promiscuous application of *manas* and *vijñāna* in Indian philosophy is well known. Thus Buddhism makes *mano, viññāṇa* and *citta* all synonymous (*DN*, I. p. 33.).
14. See Hume, *The Thirteen Principal Upaniṣads*, (trans.), p. 200. R. Mitra, *The Twelve Principal Upanisads*, (Eng. Trans. published by Tatya), p. 537. Max-Müller, *The Upanisads*, *SBE*, Vol. I, p. 48 Cf. *AV*, 5.20 11 *vāgvin*, speaker. Just as the suffix *-vin*, so the suffix *-in* or *-ka* may develop the *agent* sense; See Whitney, *Sanskrit Grammar*, § 1145.
15. Loc. cit. p. 172.
16. See *Bṛhad. Up.*, 1.2.5, 5.4; 4.1.2; *Chānd. Up.*, 1.2.11, 13.2; 3.18.3; 7.2.1 etc.
17. See also other references given in this volume, pp. 155 ff.
18. Cf. *Petersburger Wörterbuch*, *s. anādara*; Eggeling, *loc cit*; Hume, Max-Müller etc., *loc. cit.*
19. *Sāṅkya-Kārikā*, 17 (*bhoktṛbhāvāt*); *Kaṭha Up.*, 3.4, (*bhoktṛ*), (*madhvad*); *Śvet. Up.*, 1.9, 12; 6.16 (*kṣetra-jña*); *Muṇ.I. Up.* 3.1 etc.
20. '. . . *Atha vā pan'assa evaṃ diṭṭhi hoti: Yo me ayaṃ attā vado vedeyyo tatra tatra kalyaṇapāpakānaṃ kammānaṃ vipākaṃ paṭisaṃvedeti, so kho pana me ayaṃ attā nicco dhuvo sassato aviparināmadhammo sassatisamaṃ tath 'eva ṭhassati ti*'.
21. '*Tattha vadatī ti vado. Vacīkammassa kārako ti vuttaṃ hoti*' (Pt. I. p. 71). The form is made from root *vad*, to speak, with the agent suffix *-as*.
22. '*Vediyatī ti vedeyyo. Jānāti, anubhavati cāti vuttaṃ hoti*' (*ibid*.). The form again is agent suffix *-as* added to a base *vede* or *vedaya*, from the root *vid*, to feel.
23. That is the same as of the person when he was living.
24. The translation is in agreement with that of Chalmers (*SBB* Vol. V, p. 183).
25. Cg., Pt. II, p. 305.
26. In *Buddha*, p. 228 (cf. 253), *Buddhist Philosophy*, p. 79 and *Sākya*, p. 322, respectively
27. This volume, pp. 175 ff.

28. *History of Buddhist Thought*, p. 105.
29. See discussion in this volume, pp. 175 ff.
30. As I intend to present in forthcoming publication on *Ātman* and *Anatta*. (The reference is probably to the author's article entitled 'An aspect of Upaniṣadic *ātman* and Buddhist *anatta*, which is reproduced in this volume. See Article pp. 257 ff. Editor)

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Vedic Gandharva and Pali Gandhabba*

A scientific analysis of the ancient literature of India in the light of the modern conclusions of anthropology and allied sciences, as has been accomplished in the case of the parallel literature of ancient Greece,[1] remains yet a desideratum. This need can only be satisfied if Indological studies are advanced much farther than the state to which they have so far been brought by the combined efforts of international scholars amongst whom the most notable are Western savants. Moreover, the comparative study of the mythological, religious and philosophical ideas of the Veda in relation to Jainism, Buddhism and subsequent systems has not received sufficient attention. Critical students cannot fail to observe the historical connections between the ideologies and concepts of the Veda and those of early Pali Buddhism. Elsewhere[2] it has been endeavoured to establish the relationship that subsists between vedic *yakṣa* and Pali *yakkha*, particularly in their non-mythological or philosophical import. In this paper it is proposed to deal with the equally important concept of *gandharva* as found in the vedic literature including the *Upaniṣads*, and seek to determine its bearing on the Buddhist term *gandhabba* whose eschatological, or, better perhaps, anchistological,[3] implication is of considerable significance for the theories of *anatta* and survival.

§ 1. The origin of the mythological notion of *gandharva*, as found several times in the *Ṛgveda*, goes back at least to the Indo-Iranian period, if not to the Indo-European epoch,[4] and, as will be indicated in the course of this discussion, very probably harks back to a still remoter past. The identity of Vedic *gandharva* and Iranian

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gandarewa—a concept always found in the singular in the Avesta—is certainly beyond dispute.[5] Macdonell has demonstrated that in the *Ṛgveda* too the earlier usage is singular and that the plural notion (of *gandharvas*) develops only in course of time.[6] In the Avesta there is a being *gandarewa* who dwells in the sea Vourukaṣa and is defeated by the heroic Keresāspa.[7] He is described as 'golden-hoofed' (*zairipāṣna*)[8] and is represented as a dragon-like monster of the abyss dwelling in the water.[9] Thus it is natural to find in the eighth book of the *Ṛgveda*, regarded by some as the earliest portion, Indra fighting for Kutsa against the *gandharva* (8.1.11), and, in the only other place he is mentioned in that book, it is related how 'Indra in groundless realms of space pierced the Gandharva through, that he might make the Brahman's strength increase' (8.66.5; cf. *AV*, 4.37.8). These passages no doubt reflect the Indo-Iranian character of the *gandharva* as a monster guarding the abysmal waters,[10] for Indra's function of releasing the pent up waters is a prominent feature of most of his heroic exploits in the *Ṛgveda*.[11] Thus even in the *Ṛgveda* the *gandharva* is called 'the *gandharva* of the waters' (*apāṃ gandharvaḥ*, 9.86.36) or 'the *gandharva* in the waters' (*gandharvo'psu*, 10.10.4), and the waters (*āpaḥ*) are said to subserve to him (10.139.4). His female counterpart (*gandharvī*) is similarly connected with the water (10.11.2), and his consort is elsewhere referred to as 'the aqueous nymph' (*apyā yoṣā*, 10.10.4) or 'the woman . . . moving in the waters' (*apsarā . . . yoṣā*, 10.123.5). The latter usage no doubt shows the origin of the general term *apsaras* which later becomes the common designation of the wives of the *gandharvas* as a class. These references to the *gandharva's* connection with the waters or the flood are most probably 'survivals'[12] from a very primitive stratum of belief than the earliest preserved by Indo-European documents, and would take us back, in very remote antiquity, to a primitive myth concerning a monster of the abyss, as has been inferred from other sources by anthropologists.[13] It must be observed, however, that, in the *Ṛgveda*, the 'waters' referred to as the abode of the *gandharva* have come to be identified with the celestial waters (*rajāṃsi*) in the firmament (4.53.5)[14] and, consequently, the *gandharva* is called the 'celestial *gandharva*' (*divyo gandharvaḥ*, 10.123.7; cf. 8.66.5) and is described as 'measuring *rajas*' or 'the mid-realm' (10.139.4-6). When he is said to guard the abode of Soma, the connection with celestial waters can again be inferred inasmuch as it is asserted in other places that *rajāṃsi* is the

abode of Soma.[15] Considering such evidence it is not unreasonable to conclude that *gandharva's* connection with water is one of the earliest traits of his character surviving from a very remote antiquity as indicated also by the Avesta, and, it is unnecessary to seek to explain it as a secondary development during the *Ṛgvedic* period as Keith has done.[16]

In the plural the *gandharvas* in the *Ṛgveda* appear in a diversity of functions—a very confusing fact but one that clearly points to the complex nature of the original *gandharva*-myth—and belong to what has been called by Winternitz 'the lower mythology of the *Ṛgveda*,' being 'demigods of the same region as the *apsarases*'.[17] It must be remarked, however, that the *Ṛgveda* does not show a definite *class* of *gandharvas* as such enumerated regularly with other groups of mythical beings as frequently found in the later Vedic and post-Vedic literature.[18]

§ 2. Concerning the original significance of the *gandharva*-concept there is marked disagreement among the authorities: to Kuhn he is a cloud spirit; to Wallis, the rising sun; to Bergaigne, Soma; to Hopkins, the genius of the moon; to Roth, the rainbow; to Mannhardt, E.H. Meyer and von Schroeder, 'a wind-spirit, developed out of the conception of the spirits of the dead . . .'. According to Hillebrandt the word means 'giant', a name applied to different potencies. The late Prof. Keith while referring to these diverse opinions refrains from passing any definite judgement himself.[19] It will be seen from the ensuing discussion that these suggestions without exception suffer from the serious defect of over-emphasising a single aspect of the character of *Ṛgvedic gandharva* while ignoring others, and curiously enough, pay no attention to the undeniable historical fact of his identity with the Avestan *gandarewa*, which must point clearly to the conception of an aqueous monster of the abyss, whose lower part was probably similar to that of a horse,[20] connected with the primitive myth of the Sun and the pool.[21] If as much be conceded as proved, it would not be so absurd, as may *prima facie* appear, to connect the term with Greek *kentauros* in spite of so-called phonetical difficulties,[22] for there certainly exist several resemblances between the two conceptions that cannot be so easily brushed aside.

§ 3. In Greek too the original meaning of the term *kentauros* is held to be very doubtful,[23] a fact which may reasonably be taken as referring to a savage[24] origin of the myth comparable to the one

indicated by the similar obscurity regarding the etymology of both the Avestan and the Vedic words. In Greek mythology the mother of the first centaur or of the race of centaurs (properly *kentauroi*) is said to be Nephele who was formed by Zeus out of a *cloud* (as the name imports).[25] This no doubt is reminiscent of the aqueous origin of the Indo-Iranian concept, as shown above, and, perhaps, as Kuhn surmised, its relation with the *cloud*; in fact, Sāyana in several contexts identifies the *gandharva* with the *rain-cloud*.[26] The father of the centaurs, Ixion, whose parentage is variously given, is related to have been 'bound to a burning wheel, which revolves for ever, in the air or (later) in the under-world'.[27] Now, if this refers to the Sun, as it probably does, then we may plausibly connect the fact with the solar aspect of the Vedic *gandharva*.[28] Furthermore, Greek mythology generally represents the centaurs as monsters with *horses* tails, being in shape part man and part horse.[29] Here, apart from the already alluded to conception of the *gandarewa* as a monster with 'golden-*hoofs*', it may be pointed out that the *Ṛgveda* often connects the *gandharva* with the *horse*[30] and later mythology refers to a breed of *horses* called the Gandharvas,[31] whose mother is said to be the Gandharvī mentioned in *RV* (10.11.2).[32] Another very important parallel is furnished by the fact that a centaur is said to have tried to violate the daughter of King Dexamenos[33] and curiously in the *Atharvaveda* the *gandharvas* are pictured as libertines with a predilection for human females (§ 11). The Satyrs of Dionysos' train, who bear a striking resemblance to the centaurs by virtue of themselves possessing horses' tails, with quasi-human and grotesque build, are described as 'spirits of the wild life of woods and hills, particularly of their unrestrained and unguided fertility' and also as being 'always sexually excited'.[34] These traits of the Satyrs, assimilated to the centaurs, may be related to the fact that in the *Atharvaveda* the *gandharvas* are represented as 'spirits of the woods' and are notorious for their redundant sexual strength for which they are dreaded by human beings.[35] Greek mythology also refers to a 'wine-jar' that was 'the common property of the Centaurs',[36] and this too may go back to a common source whence is derived the *gandharva's* connection with the exhilarating drink Soma in the *Ṛgveda* found also in the Avesta in the *gandarewa's* guardianship of Haoma.[37] In view of such evidence the identity of Vedic *gandharva* and Avestan *gandarewa* with Greek *kentauros* may be regarded as more than probable in spite of the so-called phonetical difficulties; the objection to their

identification purely on phonetical grounds may not be so valid considering the acknowledged obscurity of the etymology of all the three terms, particularly as it is a well-known linguistic fact that proper names, like numerals etc., are less amenable to normal phonetical processes and more liable to *analogy* and other 'abnormal' influences.[38]

§ 4. The traditional derivation of the term *gandharva* from *gandha* (odour) is first suggested by a passage in the *Atharvaveda* (12.1.23) where the two words are clearly used in alliteration[39] and another which says that the *gandharvas* and *apsarās* subsist on sweet odour (8.10.27). The idea no doubt goes back to the Ṛgvedic context where the *gandharva* is said to wear a beautiful scented (*surabhi*) garment (10.123.7). Perhaps, as Wallis conjectured, even here the word *surabhi* might have been intended as a play on the word *gandha* in *gandharva*.[40] Although this popular derivation or *volketymologie*[41] cannot be seriously taken to throw any light on the real origin of the term, yet, as will be seen below, the Atharvavedic statement that the *gandharvas* and the *apsarās*, 'share the odour which the herbs, which the waters bear' (12.1.23) is of particular significance for the post-Ṛgvedic evolution of the term, even during the period of early Buddhism. The tradition is seen to continue through the *Brāhmaṇas*. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* says that the *gandharvas* and *apsarās* 'affect sweet scents' (9.4.1, 4) and refers to 'the fragrance that arises upon the earth, which the plants and the waters hold, which the *gandharvas* and the *apsaras* partake of . . .' (12.1.2, 3).

§ 5. Apart from the original connection of the *gandharva* with the (celestial) waters, mainly as their guardian, which can be deduced from certain 'survivals' in the *Ṛgveda*, it is to be noted that the *Ṛgveda* itself gives greater prominence to certain derivative characteristics of the *gandharva* or the *gandharvas* which deserve special attention. It will be seen that most of these traits recall the original aqueous implications of the concept and develop into strange and novel features only in the later Vedic literature, especially in the *Atharvaveda*. It is thus as a side-development of the original aqueous notion that we find in the ninth book of the *Ṛgveda* a distinct connection of the *gandharva* with Soma. He is there said to protect the dwelling place of Soma Pavamāna (9.83.4), as later he becomes the guardian of [illegible]oat of water (1.22.24).[42] This parallel guardianship of Soma and the celestial waters is as early as the Indo-Iranian period

as referred to above (§ 3). In the *Ṛgveda* Soma is the immortality-bestowing, nectar-like drink of the gods called *amṛta* (5.2.3)[43] and, the *gandharva* is said to have 'found the immortal waters (*amṛtāni nāma*)', where Sāyana etymologizes on '*gandharva*' as '*gavām udakānām dhartā*)' (10.123.4). This connection of the *gandharva* with Soma Pavamāna (i.e. the purifying juice of the Soma plant) leads to his further connection with the plant itself: 'The *gandharvas* have seized hold of him (i.e. the Soma plant) and in the Soma laid the juice (*some rasam ādadhuḥ*)'.[44] This passage not only establishes the *gandharva's* power to impart the vital essence to plants, for this *rasa* is no other than *retas* in man (and animals),[45] but also explains their peculiar connection with remedial herbs as later found in the *Atharvaveda*.[46] It is of extreme significance, then, that the *gandharva* as the guardian of Soma Pavamāna is, in one context at least, *identified* in the *Ṛgveda* with Soma himself: '*Gandharva* of the floods, divine, beholding men, Soma, may he reign as King of all the world' (9.86.36). The secret of such identification of objects that are analogous or similar in some point, or related by some such loose connection as that of the possessor and the possessed, is to be found in what R.R. Schmidt has called the 'law of similarity' or 'the similarity-conception' which is the outcome of magic, and is thus 'proto-logical' or 'prelogical',[47] that very same tendency which is at the root of the Brāhmaṇical principle of *bandhutā*.[48] In the last quotation from the *Ṛgveda* is also found a very important trait in the development of the *gandharva*-myth adumbrated, viz., its vitalistic import. For, the same hymn calls Soma 'all-life',[49] giving 'when quaffed the power that bestows offspring (*prajāvat*)', in a prayer to Soma for 'the strength to live among the things that be' (verses 38, 41). In fact the *Ṛgveda* leaves no room for doubt as regards the *vitalizing power* of the Soma juice and even Indra is said to derive his *śuṣmam* or vital strength from Soma (9.76.2)[50].

§ 6. The later Brāhmaṇa literature not only makes the *gandharvas* wardens of Soma[51] and represent them as having once stolen it[52] but also says that Soma was 'bought from the *gandharvas*, as they were fond of females, at the price of the goddess Vāc'.[53] This curious reference to Vāc as the price paid to the *gandharvas*, is no doubt reminiscent of the Ṛgvedic idea that 'the Gandharva as the bird bears Vāc in spirit' (10.177.2)—a statement which, as will be seen below, refers to a different aspect of the myth altogether.[54] It is noteworthy that in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* Soma appears as 'the King among the

gandharvas' (1.27), while in the late portion of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* the *gandharvas* are said to have Varuṇa (Āditya) as their ruler and Soma becomes the ruling deity over the *apsarās*.[55] This is not surprising as Varuṇa is given the overlordship of the waters in the *Ṛgveda* itself,[56] and, as the *Atharvaveda* clearly shows,[57] the *gandharvas* and the *apsarās* are only the male and female aspects of a single concept. It is unnecessary to emphasize the importance of these considerations for the analysis of the *gandharva*-myth, particularly the significance of the peculiar relationship between the *gandharva* and Soma, which already in the *Ṛgveda* led to a downright identity between the two. In view of such connection it is not surprising to find that the *Upaniṣads*, while also continuing the ascription of kingship to Soma,[58] cryptically introduce the further identification of Soma with conscious self or the intelligential aspect of the vital self in man. In *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* 2.1.15 the *vijñānamaya-puruṣa* of one asleep is addressed as 'The great white-robed King Soma'[59] and at *Kauṣītakī Upaniṣad* 4.4. 'King Soma' is referred to as the '*ātman* of food'.[60] This relationship between 'King Soma' already identified with the *gandharva* in the *Ṛgveda* and the vital self, or collectively the moon as the repository of the vital spirits of the dead, in the *Upaniṣads*,[61] refers to a trend of vitalistic philosophy which is of undeniable importance for the development of the anchistological sense of *gandhabba* in early Buddhism.

§ 7. It is remarkable that the analogy between the power of rain to quicken vegetative life on earth and the husband's function of impregnating his wife is already found in an early hymn of the *Ṛgveda*. Of the Maruts it is said: 'At their approach, even the earth opened wide, and they placed (sowed) their own strength (the rain), as a husband the germ (*garbham*)'.[62] That the seed of vegetative life (*retas*) is placed in the plants as a germ by the waters from heaven (rain)[63] is a Vedic belief, held in common with other early cultures,[64] which, as will be seen later, gained the recognition of an important philosophical doctrine in the vitalism of the *Upaniṣads*, and, it is significant that in the *Atharvaveda* the fragrance on which the *gandharvas* and the *apsarās* subsist is said to be borne by *the herbs and the waters* in common (12.1.23). No wonder then that the same Veda brings out the further connection of the *gandharvas* with *virility* (fertility) and the *embryo*. Thus, in the *Atharvaveda*, the *gandharva* is said to have dug up for Varuṇa an aphrodisiac plant causing sexual strength[65] when his virility had decayed. This connec-

tion of the *gandharvas* with virility leads also to the cruder conception of their excessive *sexual power*, thus making them appear in the *Atharvaveda* in the role of mischievous libertines, and, therefore, it is said: 'Of the hither-dancing crested *gandharva, apsaras*-lord, I split the testicles (*muṣkas*),[66] I cut off the member (*śepas*)'.[67] It can easily be imagined, then, how the *gandharvas* thus credited with an unrestrained abundance of virility and sexual strength, come to exercise a diabolical influence over the embryo (*garbha*), for, the embryo, according to the incipient vitalism of the Veda, is only the seminal seed (*retas*) deposited in the womb of a woman. The *Atharvaveda* itself describes the *gandharvas* as 'those who handle the embryo, or make it born dead', and 'who suddenly make die those that are born' (8.6.18-19). It is also certain that the *gandharvas* are meant in the same hymn by the 'hairy ones that devour embryos' (23).

§ 8. This connection of the *gandharva* with the human embryo is seen to be the microcosmic aspect of a macrocosmic relation of the *gandharva* as *Hiraṇyagarbha* with cosmogony or the phenomenon of world-generation. Elsewhere[68] is dealt with the *Hiraṇyagarbha* concept in its evolution during the early Vedic period. There it is shown, with adequate evidence supported by Indian tradition, that *Hiraṇyagarbha* or the Cosmic Golden Embryo was only the Sun, in its visible aspect,[69] floating on the primeval waters—no doubt a 'survival' of a very primitive myth concerning the Sun and the flood.[70] It is therefore of great importance that Ṛgvedic mythology emphasizes the solar aspect of the *gandharva* and brings it into close relation with *Hiraṇyagarbha*. We have mentioned above that the *gandharva* was conceived as a bird and it is seen that the Sun is several times regarded as a bird[71] flying through the vault of heaven, and as Savitar too is styled 'strong of wing' (*suparṇa*).[72] Thus it is not surprising to find the *gandharva* himself compared to a *suparṇa*, bird of golden colour (*hiraṇyayaṃ śakunam*), a youngling (*śiśum*)[73] worthy of laudation (*RV*, 9.85.11-12), the last epithet being also applied to *yakṣa*.[74] Very similar is the description in *RV*, (10.123.6-7) where the *gandharva* is referred to as 'the golden-winged (*hiraṇyapakṣam*) eagle flying in the vault of heaven', the context clearly showing that *gandharva* refers to the rising Sun or Vena (§ 11). In the same *maṇḍala* (10.177.1) the *gandharva* is called 'the Bird adorned with an asura's magic' (*māyā*)[75] and the next verse (2) refers to him as 'being in the womb' (*garbhe*). The *Gandharva* in

the waters' of *RV*, (10.10.4) appearing as the primeval progenitor is no other than the Sun (Vivasvān),[76] 'the vivifier and fashioner in the womb' (*Ibid.* 5), who as Savitar is elsewhere called *apāṃ napāt* or 'the child of the waters' (10.149.2). That in these instances the term *gandharva* is applied to mean the Cosmic Germ or Life Force in the primeval waters, of which the Sun flying like a bird through the vault of heaven is the visible aspect, admits of no doubt, and is supported by other references such as 'The Bird celestial . . . the lovely germ of plants, the germ of waters' (1.164.52) where Griffith[77] correctly takes the epithet *Sarasvān* as the Sun 'rich in water'.[78] Hence in a very late hymn, already alluded to, the word 'flying (bird)' or *patariga* is directly applied to the *gandharva*: 'The Bird bears Speech with (-in) his mind; that the *gandharva* in the womb uttered'.[79] Sāyaṇa's comment on this is extremely important. He says that:

> *patariga* (here referring to) the Sun bears Vāc, that is, the threefold (Veda) . . . ,[80] the gandharva posited in the 'womb' i.e. the middle of the body, is the *life-breath* (*prāṇavāyuḥ*) . . . that instigates or utters that Speech. Alternatively (*yadvā*), *patariga* is the Highest Self void of all limiting adjuncts, (all-) pervading, who bears at the beginning of creation the Veda in his mind . . . ; (he as) Gandharva is the *Golden Germ* existing inside of the golden cosmic egg (*brahmâṇḍa*) who utters that Speech.[81]

It is clear that according to Sāyaṇa the term *gandharva* here is to be taken, macrocosmically, as the primeval, universal *Life Force* enveloped in the cosmic shell,[82] or, microcosmically, as the derived *vital (prāṇa)-self* in man. The comparison of the embryonic being to a hawk (*śyena*) is also found in the early portion of the *Ṛgveda* (4.27.1) and forms the topic of a vitalistic discussion in the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* (4.5).[83] Moreover, it is clearly the cosmic movement of the Sun that is referred to in the allusion in the *Ṛgveda* to 'the Gandharva-path of Order and Fire' (10.80.6)[84]—an idea to which should be traced the *Jaiminīya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa* notion of the 'gandharva' as one stage in the soul's course after death.[85] The above assimilation of the *gandharva* to the Sun and subsequently to *Hiraṇyagarbha*, the first germ of creation,[86] could naturally arise from the *gandharva's* origimal overlordship of the abysmal waters, and seems to go back to a very primitive myth that connected the creation-legend with a primeval monster of the flood,[87] which seems to survive also in the famous 'Puruṣa Sūkta'.[88] When we come to the

Atharvaveda, the assimilation of the *gandharva* to the Sun, and thus to *Hiraṇyagarbha*, seems to be firmly established, if not stereotyped. There, the *gandharva* as Vena (2.1.2)[89] is called 'the father's father' (*ibid.* 2) and is described as 'He of us the father, the generator, and he the connection (*bandhu*),[90] (that) knoweth the abodes, the beings all . . .' (*ibid.* 3). It is significant, for this all-generating function of the *gandharva*, that the last citation is an echo of a corresponding attribution to Viśvakarman, the All-Creator, in the *Ṛgveda*: 'Father who generated us, he who as Disposer, knoweth all races and all beings . . .' (10.82.3). Another hymn of the *Atharvaveda* says that the gods lick the sacrificial drink from the Asvin's bowl 'by the *gandharva*'s mouth' (7.73.3), where Whitney correctly observes that the '*gandharva* is either the Sun or the Fire', and Griffith remarks, less plausibly, that the *gandharva*'s mouth is Agni.[91] Whatever be the real interpretation, the solar connection of the *gandharva* cannot be denied, for Agni is but the terrestrial aspect of the same element of fire of which the Sun is the celestial correlate.[92] The *Taittirīya Saṃhitā*, in fact, identifies the *gandharva* both with the sun and Prajāpati as well as with Agni (1.5.10.3) and a careful study of the hymn reveals the fact that 'Agni' here is no other than the vital energy (*tejas*) for in the previous verse (2) he is prayed to bestow *life*. The notion recurs in the same text later (3.4.7.1) where the list of deities assimilated to the *gandharva* includes the Sun, Prajāpati,[93] Vāyu, Death and Kāma—deities, it may be observed, who are all of vitalistic significance. Further it is said (4.6.2.8) that from the Germ (i.e. *Hiraṇyagarbha*) first Viśvakarman was born, second the *gandharva* and third 'the father and begetter of plants', this last being no other than Parjanya who is equated to Vena, like the *gandharva*, in the *Atharvaveda* (2.1.1). The notion underlying these identifications is no doubt that of *generation* and now it becomes clear why the *gandharva* is besought in the *Pañcaviṃsa Brāhmaṇa* (19.3.2) to bestow progeny,[94] an idea microcosmically related to the *gandharvas*' connection with the human embryo that was seen in the *Atharvaveda*. It is, of course, the biotic potentiality of water,[95] identified with Soma and Parjanya, which in the *Ṛgveda* the *gandharva* was said to guard or represent, that is at the bottom of this vitalistic import of the *gandharva* concept.

§ 9. The *Upaniṣads* too show distinct traces of the *gandharva*'s connection with the waters (of heaven) and consequently with generation. An early passage in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* places

the 'worlds of the *gandharvas*' between the atmospheric worlds and that of the Sun (3.6), and, the *Kaṭha* pratically identifies the world of the *gandharvas* with water; 'as if in water, so in the world of the *gandharvas*' (6.5). In the *Ṛgveda* Soma was compared to rain or the celestial waters[96] and was called the drop (*bindu*) which grew in the waters (9.85.10, 89.2). Hence it came to be called the embryo (*garbha*) of the waters (9.97.41), an idea echoed also in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (IV.4.5.21); he is also regarded as the fertiliser of the waters (10.36.8; cf. 9.19.5) and their impregnator (9.86.39).[97] This Ṛgvedic analogy between rain-water as Soma and the seminal fluid, the waters actually being implored to give procreant strength (10.9.3), leads in the Upaniṣadic period to the idea that 'semen is the basis of water', as the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* has it (3.9.22), and its ultimate essence (*ibid.* 6.4.1). Similarly the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* states that the element of water is derived from semen (1.4). Furthermore, this assimilation implied between Soma and semen is naturally the source of the comparison made in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* of the female organ to the 'stone' used in extracting the Soma juice (6.4.2), its skin being viewed as the soma-press, and thus the whole sexual act being considered as the Vājapeya rite or the 'strength-libation' (6.4.3). In this erotic philosophy, then, semen assumes a sacred function, for, as the same *Upaniṣad* says, 'one procreates with semen' (6.1.8,12), and, as the *Kauṣītakī* has it, 'the *ātmā* is produced from *retas*' (1.6); hence the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* glorifies semen and admonishes its worship prescribing an expiatory rite if it is spilt even in a dream (6.4.1-6). Thus the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* identifies semen (*retas*) with the vital energy (*tejas*) in man, and says 'In a person, indeed, this one (i.e. *ātmā*) becomes at first an embryo (*garbha*),[98] that is to say, the semen (*retas*); that (then) is the vigour (*tejas*) come together from all the limbs (4.1).[99] The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (1.1.2), in a passage paralleled at *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* (6.4.1), regards semen as the essence (*rasa*) of man (*puruṣa*), that is, the individual self, and similarly, the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (2.1) says that the *puruṣa* arises from semen. In the course of the 'way of the Fathers' described in *Chāndogya* (5.10.6), when the departed spirit returns to this world from the Moon (Soma)[100] *via* space, wind, smoke, mist, cloud and rain, and is then 'born here as rice and barley . . . ', it is said, 'thence, verily, it is difficult to emerge; for only if some one or other eats him as food and emits him as semen, does he develop further'.[101] This passage leaves no room for doubt that the *ātmā* or *puruṣa* is the vital self

(*prāṇa*) that is reborn, and it is significant that in the '*trivṛtkaraṇa*' section of the same *Upaniṣad* it is expressly stated that 'the finest portion of *āp* (water) is *prāṇa*' (6.5.2), 'for the *prāṇa* consists of water' (*āpomayaḥ prāṇaḥ*, 6.5.4; 6.7.1). Earlier is the doctrine of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* which says that the constitution (*śarīra*) of *prāṇa* or macrocosmic life is water which extends as far as the Moon (1.5.13). The whole trend of this peculiar vitalistic theory of the course of the individual monad in its incarnations is set out at *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (6.2.8-13), a parallel version of which occurs in *Chāndogya* (5.4-8). According to the former account, in the fire of the yonder world the gods offer *śraddhā*, interpreted by Śaṅkara as the 'waters', and from this oblation arises 'King Soma'. The latter in turn is offered in the fire of the rain-cloud and thence arises rain.[102] Rain is then offered in the fire of 'this world', whereby is produced food which being offered in the fire of the male person, semen arises. Finally, in the oblation of 'the woman' the gods offer semen and from this last oblation the *person* (*puruṣa*) arises. It is highly significant that the *Chandogya* version, while agreeing in the main points with the above, ends with the statement that from the final oblation of semen arises the *foetus* (*garbha*). There is no doubt here at all that by the progressive series of oblations the transformation of the *vital self* through a number of intermediary states of vitality finally into the *embryonic individual* (*garbha* = *puruṣa*) is meant to be explained. Of course, this *embryonic individual* macrocosmically considered is the '*gandharva* inside the womb' of *Ṛgveda* (10.177.2), for in both cases the reference is to the '*being* in the womb'. It is also noteworthy that Soma, already identified with the *gandharva* in the *Ṛgveda*, is the first product of the series which thus appears to be an attempt to deduce the microcosmic individual from the macrocosmic Being. The importance of this idea for the development of the anchistological sense of Pali *gandhabba* is thus made patent, for, as will be seen later on in this discussion, the Pali term also clearly refers to 'a being that enters the womb at conception', although a fundamental difference emerges between the two notions when critically examined as regards the nature of that 'being'.

§ 10. From what has been said in the preceding paragraphs regarding the *gandharva*'s relationship with the human embryo it will have been observed that the origin of the connection can be traced to the Ṛgvedic belief in *the biotic power of water* which seems to be recognized even in the *Upaniṣads*. It is, therefore, impossible

to hold with Keith that it is the connection of the *gandharva* with marriage that 'leads to the doubtless secondary connection of the *gandharva* with the embryo'.[103] On the other hand, it will be seen that the *gandharva*'s connection with marriage is a secondary issue from the primitive solar implication of the *gandharva*-myth, and arises only in the late tenth *maṇḍala* of the *Ṛgveda*, whereas his aqueous character and the belief in the life-giving power of water are both 'survivals' from a very remote antiquity. Thus, in the tenth book, Yama and Yamī call themselves children of the *gandharva* and the aqueous nymph (10.10.4).[104] The statement obviously attempts to explain the generation of the twin pair of the first progenitors of the human race, Yama and Yamī.[105] That the *gandharva* here represents the Sun is clearly established by the statement in the same book which regards Vivasvat as the father of Yama Vaivasvata (10.17.1). Thus the identity of the *gandharva* and Vivasvat is established as well as the fact that the union of the Sun and the waters represents the prototype of human marriage. The *Atharvaveda* confirms this opinion when it regards 'the *gandharva* in the waters and the watery woman (*apyā yoṣā*)' as the prototype of the human couple (18.1.4). To this solar conception must also be traced the connection of the *gandharva* with the marriage rite. In the famous hymn of Sūryā's Bridal in the *Ṛgveda*, Suryā (Dawn) as the typical bride is given over first to Soma, second to *gandharva*, thirdly to Agni and lastly to the human husband (10.85.40-41).[106] In the same hymn earlier Gandharva Viśvāvasu is asked to leave the bride to her husband (21.22),[107] implying for Grassmann,[108] Macdonell[109] and others who have taken it in that sense that Gandharva Viśvāvasu is *the protector of virgins*. Keith sees a connection between this function and the fact that in the later Vedic period Gandharva Viśvāvasu comes to be addressed on the fourth night after marriage to be first appeased and then formally banished.[110] The inference, however, is somewhat doubtful, for, even on the evidence adduced, the Gandharva Viśvāvasu's connection with young women seems to be regarded more as evil than in any sense auspicious. This contention gains support from the negative fact that he is never, like Sinīvālī (*RV*, 10.184.2)[111] and other deities[112] invoked to aid or to facilitate conception or to bless marital union. On the other hand, as in the *Ṛgveda* so in the *Upaniṣads*, Viśvāvasu—doubtless the Upaniṣadic version of the Ṛgvedic (gandharva) Viśvāvasu — appears as a 'lecherous demon'[113] who is asked to quit the woman before the marital rites. The interpretation

has also the merit of tallying with the *Atharvaveda* picture of the *gandharvas* as generally *hostile* to females such as pregnant women,[114] a relationship that doubtless arises from the *gandharva's* connection with the embryo as has been pointed out above.

§ 11. On the other hand there is another trait in the *gandharva*'s character which in time develops into his particular predilection for women. We have earlier referred to the idea expressed in the later *Saṃhitās* and the *Brāhmaṇas* that the *gandharvas* were made to barter their guardianship of Soma for the possession of the goddess of speech *as they were fond of females.*[115] The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* clearly says that the *gandharvas* are fond of women (3.2.4.3).[116] This peculiar trait of the *gandharva* no doubt develops out of his primitive solar connection. In the Ṛgvedic hymn (10.123) to Vena[117] which identifies him directly with the *gandharva* (7), it is clearly asserted: 'The *apsarās*, the Lady sweetly smiling, supports her lover (*jāram*) in the sublimest heaven . . . They gaze on thee with longing in their heart (*hṛdā venantaḥ*)'.[118] This conception of the *gandharva* as lover or the loved one is earlier than the tenth book of the *Ṛgveda* for already in the ninth book in a hymn to Soma Pavamāna (identified with the *gandharva*, as was indicated earlier) it is said: 'The loving ones[119] besought with many voices the Eagle who had flown to heaven . . . (9.85.11)' and there is no doubt that the Eagle is the Sun called also 'the *gandharva*' in the very next verse (12): 'High to heaven's vault hath the *gandharva* risen beholding all his varied forms and figures; his ray hath shone abroad with gleaming splendour: pure, he hath lighted both the worlds, the Parents'. Griffith, whose rendering has been partly followed, takes *gandharva* here to be the Moon as Soma after Hillebrandt,[120] but the description of him as 'the youngling' (9.85.11) which is no other than 'the infant' of the next hymn (9.86.36) clearly relates him to the *Hiraṇyagarbha* aspect of the sun-myth, as we have shown above, and eliminates any lunar suggestion in the context. On the other hand, it is extremely probable that the conception of Vena (i.e. the rising sun) as lover is a 'survival' from a very primitive myth concerning the rising sun as lover pursuing the Moon and stars—who in that case would be the *apsarās*, moving in the same region (*rajāṃsi*) as the Sun—as found in several other mythologies.[121] *Ṛgveda* (1.83.5) clearly refers to Sūrya as 'Vena'. That Vena is only the rising Sun visible just over the eastern horizon is proved by the phrase '*Ayaṃ Venaḥ . . . apāṃ saṅgame*' (10.123.1) where the 'union of the waters' must mean the

meeting-place of the heavenly waters (*rajāṃsi*) and the waters of the 'ocean' (*samudra*) mentioned in the next verse (2). The brilliantly shining solar orb at dawn is no doubt also the 'Golden Germ' (*Hiraṇyagarbha*) as well as the 'young bird'. In the *Atharvaveda* too Vena is identified with the *gandharva* (2.1.1-2; cf. 2.2.3) and the *apsarās* are brought into connection with 'love' (6.130.1), a connection which is doubtless at the basis of the *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* identification of the *gandharva* with *kāma* or love, and, the personification of the *adhis* 'yearnings' as the *apsarās* or the wives of Kāma (3.4.7.3).[122] Here we have also the origin of the later conception of the legalized form of 'love-marriage' known as *gandharva-vivāha*.[123]

§ 12. Another very important aspect of the *gandharva* myth developing from Ṛgvedic times relates the *gandharvas* to *manas*, mind or spirit (soul). It is possible, nay probable, that this connection too develops out of the *gandharva*'s assimilation to the Sun as *Hiraṇyagarbha* which is regarded in the *Ṛgveda* as the 'Soul' (*ātmā*) of the Universe.[124] Thus in the third book of the *Ṛgveda* it is said: '. . . there saw I, going thither in spirit (*manasā jaganvān*), *gandharvas* in their course, with wind-blown tresses' (3.38.6).[125] Here Sāyana merely says that the *gandharvas* are the guardians of Soma, but Griffith remarks: 'Here, probably, they are merely sun-beams'[126] and, this latter explanation seems to tally with the above surmise as to the origin of the connection. In the tenth *maṇḍala* itself we find the *gandharva* significantly called 'the eagle flying in the vault of heaven . . . golden-winged messenger of Varuṇa that hasteneth *to the home of Yama*'.[127] The phrase *Yamasya yonau* not only describes the 'setting' of the sun[128] but also clearly refers to the passage of the *spirits* of the dead, for Yama according to the *Ṛgveda* is also the chief of the dead.[129] This eschatological implication naturally brings the *gandharva* into close association with the *souls* of dead persons, and it is significant that *manas* implied both the 'mind of the living' as well as the 'spirit or soul of the dead'. Many passages, especially in the *Atharvaveda*, show that life and death were held to depend on the continuation of *asu* or *manas*.[130] Allied to this conception is the tendency which makes the poet of the *Ṛgveda* to implore the *gandharva* to 'inspire our thoughts (*dhiyaḥ*) and help our praises so that we may know aright both truth and falsehood' (10.139.5),[131] for the *gandharva*'s *power over thought* is an easy deduction from his earlier relation to the psyche or *manas*. Similarly, the *Atharvaveda* represents the *gandharvī* and 'the watery woman' as protecting

mind (8.1.19), doubtless echoing the Ṛgvedic passage where the *gandharvī* and the 'woman of the waters' perform a similar service (10.11.2). The *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* too says: 'May the divine *gandharva* who purifies thoughts purify our thought' (1.7.7.1), an imploration recurring at *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (5.1.1.16).[132] It is this notion that develops into the *gandharvas' power over human consciousness.* Thus the *gandharvas* and the *apsarās* come to be regarded as powerful to cause *madness* in human beings who are thus said to be 'possessed' by them. The *Atharvaveda* consequently designates the *Apsarās* as the 'mind-bewildering wives of the *gandharvas*' (2.2.5), and in one place the *apsarās*, Indra and Bhaga are implored to *restore* a patient that he may 'be freed from madness' (6.3.4). As Bloomfield remarks the expression *punar-dā* is used in the sense of 'give back, give up possession' rather than in the derived sense 'make well, restore'. All this seems to be well-founded in the early Hindu view . . .'[133] Similarly, in the *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* the *gandharvas* and the *apsarās* are said to 'render mad him that is mad' (3.4.8.4). So when the *Atharvaveda* says: 'One as it were a dog, one as it were an ape, a boy all hairy . . . having become as it were dear to see, the *gandharva* fastens upon (*sac*) women' (4.17.11), it is clear that the reference is to the *gandharva*'s power of 'possessing' human beings and causing madness rather than to their general connection with women; as Keith seems to find in this passage.[134] In fact, in the later literature there are several references to this power of the *gandharvas* to cause madness not only in women but even in men. The *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* refers to a *gandharva* in conjunction with an *apsarā* bringing about the madness and death of a brāhmaṇa Yavakrī (2.269-72), and in such cases the human being is said to be 'possessed' (*gṛhīta*) by the *gandharva*.[135] The *Upaniṣads* reveal a novel feature about this 'spirit-possession' by the *gandharva*: females so 'possessed' are made to solve abstruse metaphysical problems and also disclose the *gandharva*'s identity in the previous incarnation. So Bhujyu Lāhyāni tells Yājñavalkya in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* (3.3.1) that in his wanderings he came to the house of one Patañcala Kāpya whose daughter was 'possessed' (*gṛhīta*) by a *gandharva* who disclosed that he was 'Sudhanvan, a descendent of Aṅgiras'. Similarly Uddālaka Āruṇi met a householder whose wife was possessed by a *gandharva* who revealed his identity as 'Kabandha Ātharvaṇa' (ibid. 1.7.1). It is important to observe here that in either case the *gandharva* is no other than the spirit of a previously departed human

being. Such disclosures of the identity of spirits by themselves are not an uncommon feature even in early Buddhism.[136] What is important here is that such spirits of the dead are called *gandharvas* in the *Upaniṣads*. It is to this conception of the *gandharvas* as discarnate spirits, moreover, that we must look for the explanation of the notion of 'human *gandharvas*' (*manuṣya-gandharvāḥ*) mentioned at *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (2.8), as distinct from 'divine *gandharvas*' (*deva-gandharvāḥ*)[137] who are no other than the celestial or *divya gandharvas* of the earlier Vedic mythology.[138] It is consequently difficult to accept Śaṅkara's interpretation of *manuṣya-gandharvāḥ* as 'those who while being human beings (*manuṣyāḥ santaḥ*) due to their extraordinary attainments in action and knowledge have reached the state of Gandharva with the attendant capacity to become invisible at will and assume subtle bodies and organs.'[139] This application of the term *gandharva* to mean *discarnate spirit* is doubtless connected with the assimilation of the *gandharvas* to *piśācas* in the *Atharvaveda* (4.37.8-10; 12.1.50) and their association with 'spectres' (11.19.16), and helps to explain why they are frequently enumerated in juxtaposition with the manes (*pitṛs*) and other (departed) spirits from the time of the *Atharvaveda*.[140] It may be pointed out that these implications of the development of the *gandharva* concept also have considerable importance for the anchistological sense of the term in early Buddhism.

§ 13. Coming to early Buddhism as recorded in the Pali *nikāyas*, it is seen that most of the above discussed mythological associations of the Vedic notion of *gandharva* are found there preserved but in a more developed form indicating an evolution of ideas and beliefs which is of great importance for the historical study of Buddhist conceptions. As may be expected only the plural of the notion occurs in Pali denoting as it does a stereotyped class of supernatural beings. The Pali feminine corresponding to *gandharvī* does not occur, although it is found in Buddhist Sanskrit in adjectival use.[141] The celestial (*divya*) nature of the Vedic *gandharva* is reflected in the fact that early Buddhism enumerates them along with the dwellers of the six heavens (*D*, II.212).[142] Their ruler is called Dhataraṭṭha (*D*, II.257), a name which undoubtedly echoes Varuṇa's accredited rulership over the *gandharvas* in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (§ 6), for Dhṛta-vrata occurring in the *Ṛgveda* half a dozen times as an epithet of Varuṇa[143] can easily be the antecedent of Pali Dhataraṭṭha (i.e. Dhṛtarāṣṭra),[144] Varuṇa being in the *Ṛgveda* described as 'universal

monarch' (*samrāj*) with the attribute of sovereignty (*kṣatra*) pre-eminently bestowed on him.[145] It is also remarkable that the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* refers to a group of deities called the *Gandhabba-kāyikā devā*[146] described as living in (or on) the fragrance of roots, sap, flowers etc. (*S*, III.250 *sq.*), for the idea clearly goes back to the Atharvavedic association of *gandha* and *gandharva*, which is traceable to the Ṛgvedic notion of the 'sweet-scented garment' of the *gandharva* (§ 4); the *Saṃyutta* idea is directly connected with the *Atharvaveda* conception already alluded to (§ 4) that the *gandharvas* and the *apsarās* partake of fragrance which the plants and the waters hold.[147] It is well-known that early Buddhism, like the epics,[148] represent the *gandharvas* as the celestial musicians. This special trait can be traced to the fact that already in the *Ṛgveda* gandharva Viśvāvasu is implored to 'sing (*abhi gṛṇātu*) this song for us' (10.139.5). Although in the *Atharvaveda* singing and instrumental playing are not directly given as functions of the *gandharvas*, yet it is significant that even there they appear as 'dancing and crested' (*śikhinaḥ*, 4.37.7) and together with the *apsarās* are represented as dancing (4.38.3) and being 'revellers and merry-makers' (7.109.3, 5). The first citation (*śikhinaḥ*) doubtless throws much light on the origin of the famous character of gandharva Pañcaśikha, the celestial musician of the Śakka-pañha-Sutta (*D*, II.264). It is again of historical significance that the '*gandhaḅba*' moving in the sky'[149] mentioned in an old verse in the *Aṅguttāra Nikāya* (II.39) reflects the epithet 'flying in the vault of heaven'[150] applied to the *gandharva* conceived as 'bird' (*pataṅga* or *suparṇa*) in the *Ṛgveda*, as discussed earlier (§ 8), and also the Ṛgvedic reference to '*gandharvas* in their course, with wind-blown tresses' (3.38.6). In view of such Vedic origins for most of the aspects of the *gandhabbas*' character in early Buddhism, it would not be far from probability to trace through the Veda to the Indo-Iranian, if not even more primitive, *aqueous* implication of the *gandharva*-myth (§§ 1, 5), the enumeration in the same *Nikāya* of the *gandhabbas* as sea-dwellers[151] among other sea-monsters and serpents. This latter association of *gandharvas* with serpents (*nāga*) is at least as old as the *Atharvaveda* which in several places mentions them together[152] and it is significant that in the later mythology the abode of the *nāgas* is sometimes said to be under the ocean. Keith has already drawn attention to the 'different and lower view of the *gandharvas*' found in the *Atharvaveda*[153] in contrast to the higher (celestial) position they occupy generally in the *Ṛgveda*, observing

that 'their assimilation to *piśācas* is seen in IV.37.8-10, and we find in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* (I.33) *piśācas* beside *apsarās* as infesting a wood".[154] In fact in another context (12.1.50), not noticed by Keith, the *Atharvaveda* practically equates *gandharvas* to *piśācas*, and elsewhere (11.9.16) associates them with 'spectres'[155] as has been referred to. While it is correct to imply that the 'lower view' of the *Atharvaveda* is continued in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* idea, which also may be related to the *Dīgha Nikāya* notion that it is a disgrace for monks to be reborn as *gandhabbas* (*D*, II.221, 251, 273), it has to be observed that such lowering of their celestial status is not so difficult to explain as Keith has found.[156] For, at least the idea of the *gandharvas* frequenting sylvan haunts is already suggested by the Ṛgvedic passage which refers to 'the long-haired ascetic treading the path of sylvan beasts, *gandharvas* and *apsarās* . . . '[157]; a suggestion which is obviously the source for the *Atharvaveda* representing them as 'inhabiting forest trees',[158] and the *Dīgha Nikāya* condemning them as a nuisance to the monks who meditate in the forests (*D*, III. 203-04). This assimilation of the *gandharvas* to lower spirits such as *piśācas* is certainly also the origin for the Brāhmaṇic and Upaniṣadic references to *gandharvas* as 'spirits' who 'possess' human beings (§ 12) and for their being listed in juxtaposition with other similar 'spirits'[159] such as *bhūtas* and *pitṛs*, as found also in Buddhist literature.[160] Another interesting development of the character of *gandhabba* in Pali Buddhism is indicated by the fact that the charioteer of Sakka — now established as the Buddhist correlate of Vedic Indra beyond any doubt[161]—is a *gandhabba* called Mātalī (*D*, II.258), a fact which doubtless recalls the Ṛgvedic allusion to 'the *gandharva* (who) grasps the bridle of the horse (*Agni*) whom Indra mounts first of all' (1.163.1-2). Considering such historical connection between the Vedic concept of *gandharva*(s) and the Buddhist mythological notions regarding the *gandhabbas*, it would not seem unreasonable to seek to discover the historical background to the eschatological or anchistological usage of the term *gandhabba* in early Buddhism which has so far baffled most students and led to contradictory interpretations.

§ 14. In the anchistological sense the term *gandhabba* occurs twice in the *Majjhima Nikāya* signifying the last of three conditions necessary for successful parturition. In the 'Mahātaṇhāsaṅkhaya Sutta 'it is said that for 'conception' (*gabbhassa avakkanti*)[162] to take place there should be the conjunction of three things: 'There should

be coitus of parents, the mother should have her period, and the *gandhabba* should be present'.[163] Buddhaghoṣa's comment is unusually clear on the point: '*Gandhabba*: (here denotes) the being about to enter the womb; *paccuppaṭṭhito hoti*: it is not that (he) remains in the proximity observing the union of the parents, (on the other hand) what is implied is that a certain being (*satto*) is about to be born in that situation, being driven on by the mechanism of Kamma.'[164] It would be idle to seek to explain away 'the being about to enter the womb' (*tatrūpakasatto*)[165] as an unconscious lapse into popular terminology, for the significance of the text is weighty enough, even without the force of some extant tradition, to compel Buddhaghoṣa to resort to the particular terminology he uses. Lord Chalmers translates the last phrase as 'if there is the presiding deity of generation (*gandhabba*) present',[166] and is followed by the PTS, Dictionary which says, citing only this single context, that the *gandhabba* is 'said to preside over child-conception' (*s.v.*), doubtless influenced by the notion that the Vedic term *gandharva* also might mean an auspicious deity presiding over conception, an idea, however, not very sound in itself (§ 10). To infer any idea of 'presiding' from the Pali verb '*paccuppaṭṭhito hoti*' is again unwarrented for literally it must be taken to mean[167] something like 'attending on in particular', a sense very much contrary to 'presiding'. The other occurrence is in the 'Assalāyana Sutta' where Buddha relates to Assalāyana a discussion said to have taken place between Asita Devala and seven sages who were too proud of their brāhmaṇa birth. Devala lays down the three conditions necessary for conception (*M*, II.156), in exactly the same terms as above, and, in order to ridicule the overbearing brāhmaṇas, argues that in such a case it would be impossible to know whether the particular *gandhabba* involved is by caste kṣatriya, brāhmaṇa, vaiśya or śūdra (*ibid.* 157).[168] Here the text is unequivocal and leaves no doubt as to the real nature of *gandhabba* which clearly must refer in the context to the 'spirit' of a previously dead kṣatriya, brāhmaṇa, vaiśya or śūdra, a sense which the term had already assumed in the pre-Buddhistic period (§ 12). It is not surprising, therefore, to find Buddhaghoṣa maintaining discreet silence on this context, for[169] the implied *identity* of the *gandhabba* with any previous person cannot be a doctrine palatable to him.[170] Lord Chalmers' translation is at least consistent with his previous rendering of the phrase,[171] even if he refuses to see its glaring absurdity in view of what follows in the text. This latter

reference to *gandhabba* (in the 'Assalāyana Sutta') is missed by most writers who have dealt with the term, including the PTS Dictionary, although it is obviously even more important than the former. Even Prof. Keith whose remarks on this significant term are at present the only help to the student does not discuss it though perhaps he refers to it.[172]

§ 15. That the meaning of the term in the above-discussed contexts is 'a (*saṃsāric*) being in the intermediate state (between death and rebirth)' is supported by the *Amarakośa* whose gloss on *gandharva* as '*antarābhava-sattva*'[173] seems to be the source for modern Sanskrit dictionaries[174] that record the sense of the term. This interpretation of *gandharva* as 'a being (*sattva*) in the intermediate state between death and birth' seems to preserve a genuine tradition, and may be considered much earlier than Amara himself (*c*A.D. 450) who being a Buddhist[175] must have naturally been conversant with the traditional exegesis of the term, at least in the early Buddhist schools, if it had not gained currency among others by that time. The *Ṭīkā* of Bhaṭṭa Kṣīrasvāmin explains *antarābhavasattvam* as 'the being between death and birth' and refers to a dispute between some others and Vindhyāvāsin (Kumārilabhaṭṭa?) on the issue whether the intermediate being has a body (*dcha*) or not.[176] This *antarābhavasattva* is doubtless the *antarābhava* referred to in the *Kathāvatthu* (VIII.2; XIV.2) as being held by the Sammitīyas (=Vātsiputriyas) to be the carrier of certain qualities from one existence to another and to be a *puggala*.[177] Keith observes that the Sammitīyas in common with the Pubbaseliyas held that after death there was an intermediate state before rebirth, a view with which he connects the opinion of both the Pubba and Apara-seliyas, referred to in the *Kathāvatthu*, that the embryo was (at birth) immediately provided with a full sense apparatus. He further states that the Sarvāstivādins adhered to the view suggesting 'that the intermediate being must be treated as quasi-material, with a transporting (*ātivāhika*) body, analogous to the subtle body of the Sāṅkhya'. The Vaibhāṣikas too, he adds, seem to have accepted the belief in the intermediate being, which was, however, opposed by the Mahāsaṅghikas, Ekavyavahārikas, Lokottaravādins and the Kukkuṭikas. According to Keith, the *Milindapañha* (p.83) too is opposed to the view which Śaṅkara also combats (*Brahmasūtras*, III.1.1).[178] It may seem curious, however, that although the 'doctrine' is discussed by so many schools, the use of the term *gandhabba* is conspicuous by its absence. But there can be

nothing surprising in this, for, as is the case with most of the genuine conceptions of 'Primitive Buddhism', the later developed schools show a notorious lack of understanding and evince only a contentious spirit in their interminable disputations on unnecessary points and dogmas. On the other hand, when the *Visuddhimagga* makes no reference at all to *gandhabba*, even though it discusses the problem of conception as an important topic, its motive for silence is patent, for, to its 'nihilistic' analysis of the phenomenon of *bhava*, or becoming in *saṃsāra*, nothing could be more abominable than a terminology which imputed not merely a 'being' connecting two actualized individualities (*attabhāva*) and bridging the gulf between death in one life and the birth in the next but one that was despicably mixed up with the 'animistic' associations of the soul theories of earlier brāhmaṇism. The *Milindapañha*, however, is bold enough to face the problem, in its section dealing with the phenomenon of 'conception',[179] and engages in a long discussion regarding it, mentioning the term *gandhabba* in several places, but appears to be hopelessly confused about the exact import of the term which it simplifies to connote some *devaputta* awaiting conception in a human womb, doubtless influenced by such legends as that of the Bodhisatta descending into Māyā's womb from Tusita. Milinda asks Nāgasena quoting *Majjhima Nikāya* (I.265) whether there is no contradiction between the explanation of 'gabbhâvakkanti', as needing *three* factors, and other instances, such as of Prince Sāma and the youth Maṇḍavya, where *two* factors are held to be sufficient. Nāgasena replies that both explanations are virtually the same for the latter is included in the former, and goes on to illustrate with a particular case or two where the *gandhabba* was no other than a 'godhead' who comes and stands by at the invitation of Sakka ready to enter the womb at a given time. In fact the whole discussion is vitiated by the fact that in the 'two-factor' explanation coitus of parents does not take place at all but the conception occurs when the male person (a *tāpasa* in the relevant illustration) has 'touched the navel' of the female.[180] However absurd all this may be, it is nevertheless highly significant that Nāgasena makes no secret of the real nature of the *gandhabba* as a being 'who comes from some sphere or other and gets reborn',[181] and the statement is also notable for the literal, or even perhaps physical, sense in which the 'entry into the womb' is described,[182] the accusative (*kucchiṃ*) leaving no doubt as to the significance of the verb (*okkanto*).

§ 16. If the tradition preserved by Amara in his lexicon be considered genuine — and there is no reason to doubt it—the conception of an extra-physical factor in embryonic development must have been a common topic of interest among the philosophical schools. In fact, both the leading medical authorities refer to some such factor though not mentioning the term *gandharva* itself. Caraka refers to an *upapāduka-sattva* which 'connected the soul with body and by the absence of which the character is changed, the senses become afflicted and life ceases';[183] Suśruta says: 'that (being) which urged by Karma,[184] comes (there) for rebirth, comes to possess those same qualities[185] as has been developed in the previous body',[186] a statement comparable to the Sammitīya notion of their *puggala* as 'the carrier of certain qualities' (§ 15). It has already been pointed out above that Keith has seen a similarity between the Sarvāstivādin view of an *ātivāhika* or transporting body and the subtle body postulated for rebirth by the Sāṅkhya. Mrs Rhys Davids goes still further and identifies this subtle body with the *gandhabba*: 'In this tradition [i.e. of *gandhabba*] I see the advent of the soul, self or man, encased in the invisible 'subtle body' of Indian belief, into the mother in the fifth month of foetal life'.[187] It is admitted that verse 39 of the *Sāṅkhya-Kārikā*[188] implies a 'lasting' (*niyata*) or *saṃsāric*[189] factor called also 'subtle' (*sūkṣma*) as necessary for conception along with the elements springing from father and mother and the gross elementary particles (needed as food for the embryo). This 'subtle' and 'lasting' factor is no other than the *liṅga* of *kārikā* 40, similarly described as *niyata* and said to 'course on (*saṃsarati*) without (sense) experience but invested with the dispositions.'[190] The doctrine of a *liṅga* (*-śarīra*), however, is as old as *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (4.4.6) which says: 'Where one's mind is attached—the inner self (*liṅgam*) goes thereto with action, being attached to it alone'.[191] To trace the origin of the idea of a *liṅga-śarīra* to *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* (1.5), as Belvakar and Ranade have done[192] is to confuse the earlier doctrine of 'biological survival'[193] with the more developed metaphysical doctrine of rebirth. The problem of survival *post mortem* is one that seriously engaged the minds of the Upaniṣadic thinkers[194] and the solutions proferred fall into different categories. According to some when a man dies, from the oblation (i.e. cremation) '*puruṣa* arises having the colour of light'[195] and that is the surviving factor; here a compromise between the eschatological and the biological theories of survival is seen. Another more devel-

oped theory inclining more to the eschatological doctrine of rebirth refers to 'the *puruṣa* (i.e. the person among the senses, made of knowledge) who being born (again) obtains a body . . .' (*Bṛhad*, 4.3.8). But it is in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* (4.4.2) that the surviving factor is clearly asserted to be no other than the *ātman* in man: '[As he is dying . . .] verily, the extremity of the heart of this aforesaid [person] becomes luminous; by that become luminous, this (i.e. the individual) soul (*ātman*) goes out (*niṣkrāmati*); through the eye or the head or from any other point(s) of the body; in the wake of (*anu*) him leaving (*ut-krāmantam*) life leaves, (and) in the wake of life leaving all the vital functions[196] leave, (he, i.e. *ātman*) becomes [one-] with-consciousness (*savijñānaḥ*)[197]; as that very (*eva*)[198] consciousness with which [he is identified] (he) descends (*ava-krāmati*) [into a womb] over again (*anu*) . . .'[199] Here Śaṅkara interprets *ātman* as '*vijñānātman*'[200] as clearly implied in the text. Dvivedagaṅga in his commentary on the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* calls the doctrine *Saṃsāropavarṇana* and relates the *ātman* to *liṅgâtman*.[201] There is no doubt that they take the surviving factor to be *vijñāna* or *liṅga* as reflecting an ontological entity or *ātman*,[202] while the text, admittedly obscure in the latter part (*savijñāno bhavati, savijñānameva anvavakrāmati*), is at least clear about the fact that it is the *ātman* that leaves *niṣ-krāmati* the body at death and in the process of survival enters into some relationship or other with *vijñāna*. It is this latter association of the *survivor*, essentially *ātman* according to the Upaniṣad, with *consciousness* or *vijñāna* (Pali: *viññāṇa*) that makes this description of survival so very important for the understanding of the corresponding Buddhist theory.

§ 17. Elsewhere[203] it has been shown that the early *nikāyas* represent *viññāṇa* as the *sine qua non* for embryonic development. The *Dīgha Nikāya* clearly asserts that 'if *viññāṇa* were not to descend (*okkamissatha*) into the mother's womb (*mātu kucchiṃ*)' or if 'having descended into the mother's womb were to leave (*okkamitvā vokkamissatha*)', then parturition will not be successful.[204] In this context what is most significant is the use of the verb *ava(>o)+kram* to denote the 'entering' and *vi+ut+kram*[205] to mean the 'leaving' of *viññāṇa* or consciousness. There is no doubt that it is used in the actual sense of 'descending, entering into'—the original (literal) sense as found several times in the early *nikāyas* in analogous contexts with the *accusative* of that which is entered (*kucchiṃ*).[206] The use of it as a mere synonym for *jāti* to mean just 'birth' or

'conception' must be regarded a secondary[207] tendency probably developed out of its poetical or metaphorical sense of 'come upon', as found in the *Dīgha Nikāya* itself,[208] which may semantically fall in with the idiom 'arise in'[209] and thus lead to the sense of 'arise, be born in' for *ava* (> *o*) + *kram* with the *locative*. Similarly in the phrase '*gabbhassa avakkanti*'[210] the original sense seems to have been 'descent of the embryonic being',[211] for it is found that in Vedic *garbha* meant both 'the embryo (as receptacle)' as well as 'the being (inside it)'.[212] Hence it is that *gabbha* is said to derive from the six elements of which *viññāṇa* is the last and to be the cause of *nāma-rūpa* at least in one version of the *Paṭicca-samuppāda* formula.[213] The term *viññāṇa* occurs several times in the early *nikāyas* in this sense of 'survivor' as 'a special meaning' as Mrs Rhys Davids has already pointed out,[214] and in the *Majjhima Nikāya* (II. 262 *sq.*) is called technically *saṃvattanikaviññāṇa* or 'the consciousness that evolves (into the next life)' for which in the scholastic period the term *paṭisandhi-viññāṇa* was substituted (PTS Dict., *s.v.*). This *saṃvattanika* consciousness is ragarded as continuing up to *Nevasaññānâ-saññâyatana* (*Ibid.* 264) and is thus clearly the *saṃsāric viññāṇa* to which Sāti referred as 'the consciousness that fares on and continues' but erred in saying that it did so 'without change of identity (*tad eva . . . anaññaṃ*)' and also in taking it as an 'agent (*lit.* speaker) and experiencer (*vado-vedeyyo*)'.[215] It is significant that similarly in the *Sāṅkhya-Kārikā* (40) the survivor or *Liṅga* is said to be incapable of sense-experience (*nirupabhoga*), as indicated above. This *saṃsāric viññāṇa* is no other than the 'stream of consciousness' (*vijñāṇasota*) extending into both worlds,[216] called also *bhava-sota*[217] or 'stream of becoming' implying constant change. It is extremely significant that in the 'Pāyāsi Suttanta' of *Dīgha* (II.325), which clearly refers to this *saṃsāric* consciousness,[218] in the conch-shell illustration, *viññāṇa* is made analogous to *purisa*.[219] It is the same *viññāṇa* that is called *āhāra* (*M,I.* 48, 261)—explained elsewhere[220] as the cause of re-birth—or *bīja* (*A,I.* 223; *S,* III.54); and the other categories constituting individuality are said to be the 'home' (*oka*) of *viññāṇa* (*S,* III.9, 10). In view of such evidence the conclusion is irresistible that *viññāṇa* in early Buddhism was regarded as the surviving factor at death which by entering 'womb after womb' (*gabbhā gabbhaṃ*)[221] for repeated conceptions resulted in what is generally known as *saṃsāra*. The difference between this *saṃsāric viññāṇa* and the Upaniṣadic *vijñānâtman* that was held to be the 'survivor' according

to the doctrine of reincarnation is only too clear, for, in the *Upaniṣads* the term *ātman* expressly denotes a metaphysical substrate that is permanent and unchanging,[222] whereas in early Buddhism the surviving *viññāṇa* is identical with *bhava* implying the very opposite nature of impermanence (*anicca*) and evolution (*viparināma*),[223] being, as remarked above, pictured as a continuously changing 'stream (*sota*); it is, in fact, clearly asserted that it is wrong to view this *viññāṇa* as an *ātman* (*attato, S,* III.4) in the metaphysical sense accepted in the *upaniṣads* and rejected in early Buddhism.[224] It should now be clear what connotation the term *gandhabba* has in early Buddhist anchistology, for the above discussion will have shown the doctrinal correspondence between its application and that of *viññāṇa* whose philosophical import is of extreme significance for the theory of survival.[225] Consequently, it is incorrect to regard this use of *gandhabba* as due merely to popular notions, as Keith has done.[226] On the other hand popular usage may perhaps be reflected in the occurrence of such terms as *bhārahāra*[227] . . . *puggala* (*S,* III.25), *satta* (*S,* I.37) and *nara* (*S,* I.206) to denote practically the same 'surviving factor' as indicated above, but in a way appealing more to the popular mind. The word *sambhavesi,* however, occurring in several places[228] cannot be regarded as merely popular, approximating as it does to the above discussed *viññāṇa* and hence to *gandhabba,* and should rather be called a quasi-technical term. It may further be pointed out that whether the application of these terms be held to be popular or otherwise, they all refer to a concept that undoubtedly forms an integral aspect of the early Buddhist philosophy of rebirth.

§ 18. It will have been seen from the foregoing discussion that the Buddhist anchistological concept of *gandhabba* may be related to any or all of three trends of the development of the sense of Vedic *Gandharva,* namely:

(i) Its macrocosmic application in the *Ṛgveda* to refer to the primeval Being inside of the Golden (Cosmic) Shell (*hiraṇmayakośa, brahmāṇḍa*), or Hiraṇyagarbha, mythically or cryptically styled 'the Gandharva' in *Ṛgveda* (10.177.2) (§ 8), traceable to a prehistoric solar-aquatic myth.

(ii) The microcosmic correlate of sense (*i*) which acquires a vitalistic (*prāṇaic*) import implying some form of connection of the *gandharva* with the *vital self* in man (§§ 5-7),

which by a progressive series of stages (§ 9) becomes the foetus (*garbha* = *puruṣa*) in the womb in course of reincarnation.

(iii) The eschatological implication of *gandharva* as found in the *Jaiminīya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa* (§ 8) related to the demonological application of the term as seen in the Atharvavedic assimilation of *gandharvas* to *piśācas* and spectres, originating very probably in the Ṛgvedic suggestion that *gandharva* as 'the messenger of Varuṇa hastening to the home of Yama' is the soul of the dead person (§12); in the Brāhmaṇa-Upaniṣadic period this leads to the sense of 'discarnate spirit', conceived as a unit of consciousness (*vijñāna*) detached from the physical body and capable of ousting the consciousness of any human being and thus 'possessing' the latter (*Ibid.*).

While the conception of 'spirit-possession' is not foreign to early Buddhism, it is significant that such spirits are *not* designated *gandhabbas* but are usually regarded as *amanussas* (*Vin*, I.202, 203) and in one particular instance said to be a *yakkha* (*S*, I.208). Thus the Buddhist anchistological sense appears to develop rather from sense (ii), doubtless derived from sense (i). Sense (iii) is certainly 'popular', particularly as occurring in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (§12), but still related to the problem of *vijñāna* or consciousness, for consciousness detached at death may be viewed by popular imagination as a spirit or ghost, which in the strict philosophical sense, however, has no sense-apparatus and thus is not an 'experiencer' (§16). This latter distinction seems to be unconsciously admitted even in the popular notion of 'spirit-possession' by the *gandharvas* recorded in the *Upaniṣad*, for, to engage in any activity such as conversing etc., they are compelled to oust the consciousness of a human with unimpaired sense-apparatus and temporarily make use of his bodily mechanism. This is important, since Indian eschatological myths are not unfamiliar with hosts of spirits 'bodiless' yet 'experiencing' and active. Consequently, it is difficult to pin down the Buddhist anchistological usage to just one historical context suggested by the pre-Buddhistic evolution of the term as proposed by previous writers. Keith held that the application was due to the earlier connection of Gandharva (Viśvāvasu) with marriage and objected to Windisch's view that the name is due to 'the transmigration into a gandharva'.[229] He argued with Oldenberg[230] as

against Hillebrandt[231] that the term must mean 'in the Buddhist texts the being which by the law of transmigration enters the womb at the time of conception.'[232] As for the exact connotation of the Buddhist term, the above discussion should have made it amply clear that it refers to *a state of the saṃsāric viññāṇa*, generally, or rather loosely, conceived as a 'being' (*sattva*) after death awaiting rebirth — an *antarābhavasatva*, whose existence is incorporeal. This conclusion derives support from the Jaina notion of *gandharva*[233] as one of the eight classes of *vyantaras* or 'ghost gods'[234] who, as the name implies, occupy 'an intermediate position' and include *piśācas, bhūtas, yakṣas, rākṣasas, kiṃnaras, kiṃpuruṣas, mahôragas* and *gandharvas*.[235] Thus it is seen that the anchistological import of the term in early Buddhism indicates very probably a general tendency of the religious tradition of eastern India *circa* sixth century B.C. But it is dangerous to call this Buddhist *gandhabba* a 'soul, self or man' as Mrs Rhys Davids has done,[236] or 'an entity—representing in some vague way the soul which was to be born' as characterized by Keith.[237] For, it would now appear that the term was deliberately employed by early Buddhism, perhaps for the first time in the religious history of India, to denote the 'surviving factor' in man in contradistinction to the terms *ātman, vijñānâtman* or *puruṣa* that, as seen above (§§6-9, 16) were used to designate the 'survivor' in the *Upaniṣads*. The anchistological import of *viññāṇa*, however, must be admitted to be earlier than Buddhism (§16) and it is precisely here that the importance of this use of *gandhabba* (to denote a particular state of *saṃsāric* consciousness)[238] is found, especially in its bearing on the much disputed theory of *anatta*. Finally, it may be added that the use of such mythical terms with 'mysterious' connotation as *yakkha*,[239] *gandhabba* (§ 8), *nāga*,[240] etc. to denote particular states of *viññāṇa* in early Buddhism, parallel to similar application of *indra* in the *Upaniṣads*,[241] reveals a point of extraordinary interest to the student of the origin(s) of religion, viz., the *numinous*[242] basis of the Vedic religious tradition that constituted the background of even such a 'rationalized' doctrine as that of early Buddhism.

REFERENCES

1. Works such as L.R. Farnell's *Greek Hero-Cults and Ideas of Immortality* (1921), M.P. Nilsson's *The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion and its Survival in Greek Religion* (1927), Gilbert A. Murray's *Anthropology and the Classics* and H.J. Rose's *Primitive Cultures in Greece*.(1925) may be consulted.

2. See 'The Philosophical Import of Vedic Yakṣa and Pali Yakkha 'in this volume, pp. 131 ff.
3. Mrs Rhys Davids suggests 'anchistology' is a better term than the usual 'eschatology' in referring to problems of survival and rebirth; see her *Indian Religion and Survival*, pp. 9, 17.
4. Cf. Greek *Kentauros* (§3).
5. See Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, p. 8; Keith *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda*, p. 34.
6. Of the 20 occurrences of the word in the *Ṛgveda* only 3 are in the plural, while of the 32 instances in the *Athervaveda* 16 are in the plural, op. cit., p. 136.
7. Cf. Sanskrit *kṛśāśva*, although it is not found for Indra; see Monier-Williams, *Skt.-Eng. Dict., s.v.*, and Keith, op. cit., p. 180.
8. *Petersburger Wörterbuch*, vol. 1, p. 659, citing *Yasht.* 5.37, 38; 19.41.
9. Macdonell, op. cit., p. 137.
10. Cf. similar conceptions of *Vṛtra* and *Vala* against whom Indra fights to release the Waters; Monier-Williams and Macdonell, op. cit., s.v.
11. Macdonell, op. cit., pp. 58 ff.
12. For the anthropological notion of 'survivals' see Tylor, *Anthropology*, vol. I, p. 11 (TL ed.); cf. Macdonell, op. cit., p. 153, where the totemistic and such other ideas of the *Ṛgveda* are called 'survivals of prehistoric notions'.
13. Lewis Spence, *The Outlines of Mythology*, p. 48 (TL).
14. Cf. *RV*, 5.69.1; see Macdonell, op. cit., p. 10.
15. Keith, op. cit., p. 168; Macdonell, loc. cit.
16. 'The connection with water can be traced to various sources; either the waters of the sky are the basis on which his activity has been transferred to the waters of the earth, or his association with the *apsarās* has led to his connection with the waters, or as is quite possible the obscuration of his original nature has rendered it possible to associate him with elements not originally his own', op. cit., pp. 180-81.
17. *A History of Indian Literature*, vol. I, pp. 78, 104.
18. E.g. *AV*, 8.7.23, 8.15; 10.9.9; 11.7.27; 9.24; cf. *Pet. Wört., s.v.*
19. Op. cit., p. 181.
20. Cf. Avestan *Zairipāṣna* (having golden hoofs); see § 3., fn. 32 below.
21. See § 8.; fn. 70 below
22. Keith, op. cit., p. 104, fn. 4, and Macdonell, op. cit., p. 137, reject the suggestion on purely phonetical grounds; but see Kuhn, *Kentauren und Gandharven*, cited by *Pet. Wört. s. gandharva.*
23. See H.J. Rose, *A Handbook of Greek Mythology*, p. 256.
24. 'The origins of Greek and other myths go back to barbarism or savagery' ibid., p. 5.
25. Ibid., pp. 196, 256.
26. On *RV*, 8.6.55; 10.123.4 '*gavāṃ udakānāṃ dhartā*' for *gandharva.*
27. Rose, op. cit., p. 256.
28. See above § 8; on the Ṛgvedic (8.52.8) comparison of the Sun to a wheel, see Griffith, *The Hymns of the Ṛgveda*, (Second Edn., 1896) vol. II, p. 205
29. Rose, op. cit., pp. 4, 156, 256, 257.
30. See *RV*, 1.163.2; 9.113.3; cf *Pet. Wört., s.v.*
31. See *Amarakośa* (ed. Dr. Har Dutt Sharma and N.C. Sardesai, Poona, 1941), p. 301, vers 132: '*antarābhavasattve'śve Gandharvo* . . . 'where the Tīkā says '*paśubhede 'pi*'; cf. Monier Williams, loc. cit.

32. Cf. Griffith, *The Hymns of the Rgveda*, vol. II, p. 394, fn. (2); cf. also *AV*, 13.1.23, the Kasyapas (solar spirits) and the *gandharvas* lead the Speckled Mare; *Taittirīya Saṃhitā*, 4.6.7.2; *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, 5. 1.4.8, *gandharvas* as the first to yoke the horse; 10.6.4.1 carried by the horse Vājin.
33. Rose, op. cit., p. 217.
34. Ibid., p. 156.
35. *AV*, 4.4.1, 37.7; cf. Griffith, *The Hymns of the Atharvaveda*, vol. I, p. 182. At *AV*, 3.24.6 the *gandharvas* are said to 'claim three sheaves of corn' in a prayer to ensure fertilizing waters for crops; cf. *Kauś. Br.* 2.2; §7 above.
36. Rose, op. cit., p. 216.
37. See above § 5, fn. 42.
38. I owe this information to the lectures of Prof. R.L. Turner, my teacher in Comparative Philology at the University of London.
39. Cf. Bloomfield, *Hymns of the Atharvaveda* (*SBE*, XLII), pp. 202, 642; Whitney, *Atharvaveda Translation* (*HOS*, VIII), p. 665.
40. See Griffith, *The Hymns of the Rgveda*, vol. II, p. 569, fn. (7).
41. Cf. Macdonell, op. cit., p. 137; Keith, op. cit., p. 180; but contrast Grassmann's ludicrous attempt to treat this as serious etymology, *Wörterbuch zum Rigveda*, *s.v.*
42. Cf. Macdonell, op. cit., pp. 136-37; Griffith, *The Hymns of the Rgveda*, vol. II, p. 225. fn. (5). This connection of the *gandharva* with Soma led Bergaigne to believe that his original significance was 'Soma', cited by Macdonell, ibid., pp. 137-38.
43. Cf. *RV*, 6.37.3; Soma when pressed is *amṛta*, *Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā*, 19 72; and in the *Rgveda* is generally known as *rasa*, fluid. Macdonell, ibid., p 105.
44. *RV*, 9.113.3; cf. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, 3.2.4.2, 6.2.9, 9.3.18.
45. Soma is once called *śukra* (brilliant)—later the term for *retas*, *RV*, 8.2.10.
46. *AV*, 4.4.1; 8.7.23; 12.1.23.
47. *The Dawn of the Human Mind*, pp. 103, 139, 147; cf. Lewis Spence, op. cit., p. 38.
48. Cf. Belvalkar and Ranade, *History of Indian Philosophy*, pp. 62-63; 'The grounds of 'bandhutā' magical not logical ... things have a relation of *bandhutā* between them subsequently leading to an assertion of their downright identity' (62) '... possibly having its roots in the distant prehistoric past, with its confused reminiscences of animism, magic and mysticism ... the relation in all these cases cannot, it is clear, be called natural or even logical: it is at best magical' (63).
49. *Viśva-āyuḥ*; cf. the Rgvedic designation of the Gandharva Viśvāvasu (Keith, op. cit., pp. 375-76), where-*vasu* is itself derived from √vas, to live; this radical sense of *vasu* is clearly preserved by the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (3.16.1); 'Verily the vital breaths (*prāṇā*) are the Vasus, for they cause everything here to live (√vas)', cf. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up.* 3.9.3.
50. '*Indrasya śuṣman īrayan*', where Sāyaṇa has 'balam' for *śuṣmam* which, analogously with *prāṇa* (√an), is derived from a root (*śvas*) meaning to *breathe* (loud, i.e. blow).
51. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, 3.6.2.9; *Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa*, 12.3.
52. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, 3.2.4.2; cf. Winternitz, op. cit., vol. I, p. 217.
53. *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, 1.27; *Taittirīya Saṃhitā*, 6.1.6.5; *Maitr. Saṃhitā*, 3.7.3.
54. Cf. Macdonell, op. cit., p. 124.
55. *Śatap. Br.*, 13.4.3.7; cf. *Aśvalāyana Śrauta Sūtra*, 10.7.

56. Macdonell, op. cit., pp. 25-26.
57. *AV*, 11.7.27, 9.16; 14.2.9 etc.
58. Soma is generally styled 'rājā' in the ninth book, see *RV*. 9.82.1; 9.86.36. etc.
59. Cf. *Kauś. Up.* 4.19. On 'white-robed' see *Ṛgveda*, 9.14.5 where the Soma-admixture is called 'shining-robe'.
60. Cf. Macdonell, op. cit., p. 112.
61. See *Bṛhad. Up.*, 6.2.16; *Kauś. Up.*, 2.9; *Muṇḍaka Up.* 2.1.15.
62. *RV*, 5.58.7 in the translation of Max-Müller, *Vedic Hymns* (*SBE*) Pt I; Griffith has 'they as husbands have with power impregnated her . . .' *The Hymns of the Ṛgveda*, vol. I, p. 529. On this use of *garbha* (seed), see *RV*, 1.6.4; 95.2; 146.5; 2.10.3; 3.29.11; 4.7.9.
63. *RV*, 5.83.1 (re. Parjanya).
64. Cf. the Egyptian notion of water as causing the life of barley etc., G. Elliot Smith *In the Beginning*, pp. 84,88; Lewis Spence, op. cit., pp. 14, 15.
65. *Śepa-harṣaṇim*, translated by Whitney (p. 149) as 'penis-erecting' and by Bloomfield (p. 370) as 'that causes strength'.
66. Cf. *Kumbha-muskas* of *AV*, 8.6.15, 'jar-testicled', evil spirits said to be impotent', associated with *gandharvas* (*ibid.*, verse 19); also *Kumbhikas AV*, 16.6.8; *Kuṣmāṇḍas (v.l. Kūṣma-)*, Monier-Williams, op. cit., and the Buddhist term *Kumbhāṇḍas* (*ibid.* of which Pali equivalent *Kumbhaṇḍas* occurs in lists very similar to those including *gandhabbas*, *PTS Dict. s.v.*
67. *AV*, 4.37.7; cf. Bloomfield, op. cit., p. 370.
68. See 'The Philosophical Import of Vedic Yaksa and Pali Yakkha' in this volume, pp. 131 ff.
69. Ibid. pp. 26-28.
70. The Egyptians too believed in a similar myth of the Sun-god emerging from the pool or flood. G. Elliot Smith, op. cit., p. 89.
71. *RV*, 1.72.9, 105.1 (*suparṇa*), 164.46 (*garutam*); 3.5.5; 6.48.17; 10.5.1, 35.6; 105.2, 189.3.
72. *RV*, 1.35.7; cf. 1.164.21, 22 with Griffith's note (22) at *The Hymns of the Ṛgveda*, vol. I, p. 223; also *AV*, 9.9.21, 22.
73. Cf. *AV*, 10.8.44, *yuvānam*; *RV*, 1.164.4, '*prathamaṃ jāyamānam*; see above p. fn. 41.
74. Ibid., pp. 26-28, discussion of adorable (*Yakṣa*).
75. Ibid. pp. 25-26, *māyā* associated with Hiranyagarbha as Yakṣa.
76. Thus taken by Sāyaṇa; cf. Griffith, *The Hymns of the Ṛgveda*, vol. II, p. 392.
77. Ibid. vol. I, p. 228; on the form *Sa.as-vān* compare *Vivas-vār*.
78. Cf. RV, 1.70.2, where Agni is similarly called 'germ of waters, germ of woods, germ of all things that stand and move'.
79. *RV*, 10.177.2. '*Patańgo vācaṃ manasā bibharti, tām Gandharvo' vadad garbhe antaḥ*' Cf. 'the wise *gandharva* uttered the pleasant upward- pointing word'. *AV*, 20.128.3.
80. Cf. Prajāpati's primeval association with Vāc. Keith op. cit., pp 455. 456 (cf. 199) citing *Pañcaviṃśa Br.* 10.2.1; 6.5.10 etc.
81. '*Patańgaḥ sūryo vācaṃ trayīrūpāṃ manasā prajñayā bibharti . . . tām eva vācaṃ, garbhe śarīrasya madhye, vartamāno gandharvaḥ ... prāṇavāyuḥ, antar madhye' vadat; vadati prerayati; . . . yadvā patańgaḥ sarvopādhiśūnyo vyāptaḥ paramātmā, sa sṛṣṭyādau manasā bibharti . . . garbhe hiraṇmaye brahmāṇḍe 'ntarvartamāno gandharv . hiraṇyagarbhastām vācam avadat.*'
82. Cf. *Virāj* . *Puruṣa Sūkta*, *RV*, 10.90.5; Griffith, *The Hymns of the Ṛgveda*, vol.

II, p. 518.

83 See 'Upaniṣadic Terms for Sense functions' in this volume, pp. 155 ff.

84. '*Agnir gāndharvīṃ pathyāmṛtasyāgner*. . . '; cf. 'the ancient dustless pathways (*panthāḥ*) of Savitar in the mid-regions', *RV*, 1.35.11.

85. Cited by Keith, op. cit., p. 577.

86. Cf. *RV*, 10.129.3; *AV*, 4.2.6-8, where Hiraṇyagarbha is said to have been generated by the waters.

87. Lewis Spence, op.cit., p. 48.

88. *RV*, 10.90 where 'the material out of which the world is made is the body of a primeval giant named Puruṣa' (Macdonell, *Vedic Reader*, p. 195); cf. above fn. 82, 86.

89. Cf. equates Vena here to '*āditya*' or '*Parjanyātmā madhyasthāno devaḥ*'.

90. Cf. *RV*, 10.129.4, '*sato bandhum*' referring to '*tad*', '*eham*' of the previous verse.

91. *The Hymns of the Atharvaveda*, vol. I, p. 362.

92. Cf. *RV*, 1.68.1, 70.2; 'Heavenly Gandharva is yonder Sun', *Śatap. Br.* 6.3.1.20; cf. *Tait. Saṃhitā*. 1.7.7.1.

93. 'Prajāpati is only another aspect of Hiraṇyagarbha or Visvakarman', Keith, op. cit. p. 437. There is thus no need to regard this identification as 'peculiar', as Keith has done. *Taittirīya Saṃhitā Translation* (*HOS* Vol. 18), p. 80, fn. 3.

94. Cf. *Śāṅkhāyana Gṛhya Sūtra*, 1.19.2; See Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, p. 137.

95. Cf. G. Elliot smith, op. cit., p. 84.

96. See Macdonell, op. cit., p. 107; Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda*, pp. 168-71.

97. Macdonell, op. cit., p. 108; Soma is taken as the Moon in the *Yajurveda* (M.S.). 1.6.9.

98. That is the 'being' inside the womb; cf. *Gandharva* at *RV*, 10.177.2.

99. Cf. Macdonell, op. cit., p. 109.

100. Cf. *Kauṣ. Up.* 1.2; *Praśna Up.* 1.9.

101. The *Aitareya Br.* 1.3, gives water as the seed that develops into the embryo.

102. This idea brings the theory into close connection with the *gandharva* of the *Ṛgveda* who, as we saw, represents the celestial waters or rain.

103. Op. cit., p. 181.

104. Cf. Macdonell, op. cit., p. 172; for a rationalization of the myth, see *Śatap. Br.* 9.4.1.3.

105. Cf. Pṛthi, the first anointed king being called Vainya, son of Vena (*RV*, 8.9.10), doubtless an allusion to the primitive notion of the solar origin of kingship; see G. Elliot Smith, op. cit., p. 79.

106. Cf. *AV*, 14.2.3-4; probably a survival of some primitive solar-aquatic myth connected with the marriage rite, for Soma is aqueous and Agni clearly solar.

107. Cf. *AV*, 14.2.33-36; *Bṛhad Up.* 6.4.21-23; cf. 19.

108. *Wörterbuch zum Rigveda, s.* Gandharva.

109. Op. cit., p. 137.

110. *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda*, p. 376.

111. Cf. *Bṛhad. Up.* 6.4.21-23.

112. Nor does the *gandharva* occur in any of the *AV* hymns dealing with *pumsavana*, conception, miscarriage, parturition, etc. 1.11; 3.23; 6.11, 17, 81; 7 55.

113. *Bṛhad. Up.* 6.4.19; cf. Hume, *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, p.171 fn. 4; *RV*, 10.85. 21-22; *AV*, 14.2.33-37.

114. *AV*, 8.6.19, 'They who suddenly make die those that are born, (who) lie by the

bearing (women)—the *gandharvas*, women-seekers (?), let the brown one drive, as the wind a cloud' (Whitney's translation).

115. See Macdonell, op. cit., p. 137; above § 6.
116. Cf. *Aitareya Br.* 1.27; see Winternitz, op. cit., vol. I. p. 217.
117. Derived from√ ven, to long, love; cf. *kānta* (*RV*, 1.83.5) applied to the Sun; see Griffith, *The Hymns of the Ṛgveda*, vol. II. p. 568, fn. (1).
118. *RV*, 16.123.5-6. Griffith, *The Hymns of Ṛgveda*, p. 569.
119. *Venāḥ* taken by Griffith, (ibid. p. 341) as 'gods or especially the Maruts', and Sāyaṇa as *ṛṣis*; cf. *RV*, 9.86.30.
120. *Vedische Mythologie*, vol. I, p. 429.
121. Tylor, *Anthropology*, vol. II, p. 101, (TL); Lewis Spence, op. cit., p. 51. In fact the *Atharvaveda* (2.2.4-5) refers to the *apsarās* as 'starry', goddesses, wives of the *gandharva*, and elsewhere (4.38.5) describe them as those 'who follow in their course the rays of Sūrya, or as a particle of light attend him'; cf. 'Candramas' as *gandharva* with the stars as *apsarās*, his mates. *Śatap. Br.* 9.4.1.9; *Tait. S.* 3.4.7.3.
122. See Bloomfield, *Hymns of the Atharvaveda*, p 536.
123. *Manusmṛti*, III, 26.
124. Macdonell, op. cit., p. 13.
125. Cf. *RV*, 10.136.6, where the path of the *gandharvas* and *apsarās* is said to be treated by the *muni* with long locks; cf. also *AV*, 14.2.35.
126. *The Hymns of the Ṛgveda*, vol. I, p. 360, fn. (6).
127. '*Hiraṇya-pakṣaṃ Varuṇasya dūtaṃ Yamasya yonau śakuṇam bhuraṇyum*'. (*RV*, 10.123.6) cf. *AV*, 4.34.3. It is significant that Varuṇa as the divinity of the Western quarter, (cf. *Manu*, 5.96) is said in the *Bṛhad. Up.* (3.9.22) to be based on water. Yama and Varuna appear in the *Ṛgveda* as the two kings whom the dead see on reaching heaven (10.14.7).
128. See *RV*, 1.83.5.
129. Macdonell, op.cit., p. 171. Sāyaṇa: '*Yamasya niyāmakasya vaidyutāgner yonau*'.
130. Ibid. p. 166.
131. Cf. *AV*, 2.1.2; 20.128.3, where his *knowledge and wisdom* are referred to.
132. '*Divyo gandharvaḥ ketapūḥ ketaṃ naḥ punātu*' cf. *Tait. S.* 4.1.1.7; *Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā*, 11.1
133. *Hymns of the Atharvaveda*, pp. 520-21; cf his *Contributions*, Third Series, *JAOS*, XV.163, Fifth Series, ibid., XVI.3.
134. *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda*, p. 180; on 'dog-like' appearance of the *gandharvas* cf. *AV*, 11.9.13; 19.36 6
135. See Keith, ibid., p. 182, fn. 9; *Śatap. Br.* 14.6.3.1, 7.1; *Ait. Br.* 3.29; *Kauś. Br.* 2.9; cf. Keith, *HOS*, vol. 25, p. 28.
136. See Janavasabha's spirit (*yakkha*, cf. *Dialogues of the Buddha*, Pt. 2, p. 240), disclosing his identity to the Exalted One, *Digha Nikāya*, II.204; discussed by Mrs Rhys Davids *Indian Religion and Survival* pp. 56 ff. See also Pāyāsi as a *devaputta* disclosing his identity to the Ven. Gavampati, *Digha Nikāya*, II.356.
137. Keith, op. cit., p. 573, compares the doctrine of *Karma-devas* (*Bṛhad. Up.* 4.3.33) with the notion of *manuṣya-gandharvas*.
138. *RV*, 10.139.5; *AV*, 2.2.1 etc.
139. *Bhāṣya* on *Tait. Up.* (Ānandāśrama, edn.), p. 86.
140. See *AV*, 10.9.9, 9.16; *Bṛhad. Up.* 1.1 2; 4.4.4; *Chānd. Up.* 2.21.1; *Mait. Up.* 1.4; cf. *Le Mahāvastu*, (ed. Senart), I, p. 350, II, p. 351.
141. *Gandharv* beside *devī* and *mānuṣī*, *Le Mahāvastu*, II. p. 181.

142. 'Gandhabba-kāya' listed just after the *six* heavens and characterized as the lowest of all (*sabbanihina*; cf. D.II. 271). As the retainers of one of the Four Great Kings, they come to be included among the dwellers of the Cātummahārājika Heaven (cf. *PTS, Dict., s.v.*, Kern, *Manual of Indian Buddhism*, p. 59, and MacGovern, *Manual of Buddhist Philosophy*, p. 65). The *SN*, calls them *devas* (III.250; cf. *D. Cy.* II.641).
143. See Grassmann, *Wörterbuch zum Ṛig Veda*, *s.v.* the *Mahābhārata* represents Varuṇa as a *deva-gandharva*, Monier-Williams, op. cit., s. Varuṇa.
144. Cf. Buddhist Sanskrit *Dhṛta-rāṣṭra*, *Le Mahāvastu*, III, p. 306; MacGovern, *l.c.* 'Rāstrabhṛt' oblations offered to *gandharvas* and *apsarās*, *Śatap. Br.* 9.4.1.1.; Cf. *Tait. S.* 3.4.7.
145. See Macdonell, op. cit., p 24; *-rāṣṭra* from √*ṛaj* meaning 'rule', may semantically approximate to *vrata*, law or ordinance. Buddhism mentions among, ' *Gandhabba* chieftains Cittasena and Sūriyavaccasā (*D*, II. 258); cf. Citraratha, son of Sūryavarcas, king of *gandharvas*, (*AV*, 8.10.27).
146. Cf. *Le Mahāvastu*, II, p. 49.
147. Cf. *AV*, 4.37.3, which names five *apsarās* as Guggulu, Pilā, Naladī, Aukṣagandhī, and Pramandinī—terms derived from fragrant plants or sweet scents; Cf. Griffith, *the Hymns of the Atharvaveda*, vol. I, p. 181.
148. See *PTS, Dict., s.v.* and *Pet. Wört., s.v.*
149. Among possible births are mentioned; *deva*, '*gandhabbo va vihaṅgamo*', *yakkha* and *manussa*. Cy. has '*vihaṅgamo ti ākāsacaro gandhabba-kāyiko devo*' (*Manorathapūraṇi*, III.79) cf. *Le Mahāvastu*, II, p. 301.
150. *RV*, 9.85.11; '*nāke suparnam apa paptivāṃsam*', 10.123.6; '*nāke suparnam upa yat patantam*, referring to *gandharva*.
151. '*Puna ca paraṃ bhante mahāsamuddo mahatam bhūtānam, āvāso, tatr'ime bhūtā timitimiṅgalā timiramiṅgalā asurā nāgā gandhabba...*' *AV*, 1.200, 204, 207. It is significant that the *Atharvaveda* gives the *sea* as the home of the '*gandharva* among the *apsarās*' (2.2.3; cf. 10.10.13).
152. *AV*, 8.7.23, 8.15; 11.9.16, 24; cf. *Chānd. Up.* 2.21.1; *Mait. Up.* 1.4.
153. Keith, op, cit., p. 180.
154. Loc. cit., fn. 9; cf. p. 181.
155. Cf. Whitney in his translation of *AV*, 11.9.16. (op. cit.).
156. Op. cit., pp. 180-81.
157. '*Apsarasāṃ gandharvāṇāṃ mṛgāṇāṃ caraṇe caran . .*' *RV*, 10.136.6.
158. '*Vānaspatyāḥ*' referring to *gandharvas*, *AV*, 14.2.9.
159. See fn. 140, above. Winternitz (op. cit., I.p. 134) compares them with German popular spirits.
160. See references to *Mahāvastu* (fn. 140) above; cf. A, II.38.39; *J.V*, 420.
161. See Godage, 'Place of Indra in Early Buddhism' *Ceylon University Review*. Vol III, No. 1(1945).
162. Buddhaghosa: '*Gabbhassāti gabbhe nibbattanasattassa; avakkanti hoti nibbatti hoti*', *Papañcasūdanī*, II.310 ; but see below § 17.
163. '*Idha mātāpitaro ca sannipatitā honti, mātā ca utunī hoti, gandhabbo ca paccupaṭṭhito hoti*', *M.I*, 265. A more developed version of the statement occurs at *Divyāvadāna*, I.4.4.2.
164. *Loc. cit.*, '*Gandhabbo ti tatrûpakasatto. Paccupaṭṭhito hoti ti na mātāpitunnaṃ sannipātaṃ olokayamāno samīpe ṭhito nāma hoti, kammayantayantito pana eko satto tasmin okāse nibbattanako hoti ti ayam ettha adhippāyo*'.
165. *Tatrûpaka* = *tatra* + *upaka*; cf. *kulûpaka*, *PTS, Dict., s.v.* Here the *-k-* stands for

original *-g-*, the form *tatthûpago* actually occurring in *Milindapañha* p. 127.

166. *Further Dialogues of the Buddha*, Pt. I, p. 189.
167. See *PTS, Dict., s.v.*; cf. Monier-Williams, op. cit *s. upasthita.*
168. '*So Gandhabbo khattiyo vā brāhmaṇo vā vesso vā suddo vā ti*'.
169. See *Papañcasūdanī*, III. 412, where he passes over the crucial matter with the non-committal remark '*Imaṃ gandhabbapañhaṃ puṭṭhā . . . na sampāyissanti.*'
170. See his derogatory characterization of Indaka Yakkha (*S*, I. 206) as a '*puggalavādin*' or 'personalist' for holding a similar view, *Sāratthappakāsini*, 1, 300.
171. *Further Dialogues of the Buddha*, Pt. II. p. 89.
172. *Buddhist Philosophy*, p. 207, citing '*MN*, II. 137 (*sic*!); *Mil.*, p. 123; *J,V.* 330; *Divyāv.*, pp. 1, 440; *AK*, iii.12 . . .'
173. '*Antarābhavasattve' śve Gandharvo divyagāyane*', *Amarakośa* (Poona 1941), p. 301.
174. *Pet. Wört. s. gandharva* (2.c) 'die Seele nach dem Tode, bevor sie einen neuen Körper erwählt hat', followed by Monier-Williams, op. cit., *s.v.* Apte, *Sanskrit-English Dict., s.v.* (5), etc.
175. See Dr. Har Dutt Sharma and N.G. Sardesai, *Amarakośa* (Poona 1941), Introd. p. iii.
176. *Ibid.*, p. 301, tīkā on verse 132; '*Antarā maraṇajanmanor madhye bhavaṃ sattvaṃ yātnāśariram. Yadāhuḥ: antarā bhavadeho hi neṣyate Vindhyāvāsinā* (*Kumārila-bhaṭṭa* ?), *tanna, lakṣyavirodhāt* . . .'
177. Cf. Nalinaksha Dutt, *Indian Historical Quarterly*, vol. XV. pp. 90-100, Art., 'Doctrines of the Sammitīya School of Buddhism'.
178. *Buddhist Philosophy*, pp. 207-08.
179. 'Gabbhāvakkanti', *Milindapañha*, pp. 123, sq.
180. '*Tasmiṃ Mahārāja divase tāpasi ca utunī pupphavaṭī ahosi, devaputto ca tatthûpago paccupaṭṭhito ahosi, tāpaso ca dakkhiṇena hatthanguṭṭhena tāpasiyā nābhiṃ parāmasi. Iti te tayo sannipātā (sic.) ahesuṃ*', ibid., p. 127.
181. '*Yadi tattha gandhabbo yato kuto ci āgantvā . . . uppajjati*', ibid., p. 129.
182. '*Sāmo mahārāja kumāro Sakkena devānam-indena āyācito Pārikāya tāpasiyā kucchiṃ okkanto*' ibid., (see below § 16).
183. See Das Gupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, vol. I. p. 91, fn. 2 citing *Caraka Śārīra*, III.5-8.
184. Cf. Buddhaghosa: '*Kammayantayantito*' on *MN,I.* 265, already quoted (fn. 164, above).
185. Cf the Sammitīya notion alluded to above (§ 15).
186. *Suśruta Saṃhitā*, III 2.58, '*Karmaṇā codito yena tad āpnoti punarbhave, abhyastāh pūrvadehe ye taneva-bhajate gunān*', where the *ṭikā* takes *tad* as '*sattvaṃ*' (cf. III.3.29).
187. *The Birth of Indian Psychology and its Development in Buddhism*, p. 250; but the *gandhabba* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* is said to enter the womb at the very moment of coitus and does not wait till the fifth month of foetal life! See also her *Indian Religion and Survival*, p. 63, citing *Sāṅkhya-Karikā* (39).
188. '*Sūkṣmā mātāpitṛjāḥ sahaprabhutaistridhā viśeṣaḥ syuḥ sūksmasteṣāṃ niyatā mātāpitṛjā nivarttante*' (cf. 20.42).
189. So Gauḍapāda on *Kārikā* (39); '*Niyatā nityāstairārabdham śarīraṃ karmavaśāt paśumṛgāpakṣisarīsṛpasthāvarajātiṣu saṃsarati . . .* '.
190. '*Pūrvotpannamasaktam niyatam mahadādisūkṣmaparyantaṃ, saṃsarati nirupabhogaṃ bhāvairadhivāsitaṃ liṅgam.*'
191. Cf. 4.3.36; 'This *person* frees himself from these limbs, just as a mango-fruit

releases itself from the bond, and hastens again back to life . . .' where Śaṅkara takes 'person' (*puruṣa*) as the '*liṅgâtman*'

192. *History of Indian Philosophy*, vol. II. p. 370, quoting the text; '*asmāl lokāt praita, atha ebhir eva prāṇaiḥ saha putram āviśati*', (1.5.17).
193. Developed in connection with the doctrine of Pitṛyāna (*Bṛhad. Up.* 6.2.2).
194. See *Kaṭha*, 1.20.25; *Bṛhad. Up.* 6.2.2; cf. *Chānd. Up.* 5.3. There is, however, a point of difference between the Upaniṣadic theory and the Buddhist doctrine of rebirth; cf. Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda*, p. 575. fn. 4, citing Windisch, *Buddha's Geburt*, pp. 29.32.76.
195. Cf. '*manomaya puruṣa*' of *Tait. Up.* 1.6.1.
196. See 'Upaniṣadic Terms for Sense Functions' in this volume, pp. 155 ff.
197. Cf. Dvivedagaṅga' . . . *buddhāveyābhivyaktavijñāno bhavat*", *Śatap. Br.* (ed. Weber), p. 1150; See Hume 'one with intelligence', op. cit., p. 140.
198. Hume, Röer, Ranade and Belvalkar, etc. fail to preserve the deliberate emphasis on *eva* here in their translations; but cf. Sāti's description of the saṃsāric *viññāṇa* as '*tad eva viññāṇaṃ saṃsarati sandhāvati anaññaṃ*' (MN, I. 256).
199. '. . . *tasya haitasya hṛdayasyāgram pradyotate tena pradyotenaiṣa ātmā niṣkrāmati cakṣuṣṭo vā mūrdhno vā' nyebhyo vā śariradeśebhyastamutkāmantam prāṇo' nûtkrāmati prāṇamanûtkrāmantaṃ sarve prāṇa anûtkrāmanti, savijñāno bhavati, savijñānamevānvakrāmati* . . .' (Ā.Ā. Series ed., p. 644; text followed by Śaṅkara). But the *Śatap. Br.* (Mādhyandina recension) in the edition of Weber has '*saṃjñānameva*' for '*savijñānameva*', showing clearly that the text was confused from early times. Thus it may not be out of place to suggest an emendation of the last sentence so as to read: '. . . *sa vijñāno bhavati, sa vijñānamevānvavakrāmati* . . . a reading that would not only be more satisfactory than the above in point of syntax, for the presence of a demonstrative (*sa*) connecting the sentence to '*atmā niṣkrāmati*' is indispensable, but would also eliminate the uncertainty of meaning which has led nearly all interpreters to distort the sentence in order to satisfy their renderings of the previous clauses. Hence it would not be necessary to take the accusative in *savijñāmeva* as denoting the object of motion as the commentators view it nor distort the sense of '*anu+ava+krāmati*' to mean 'what has intelligence *departs* with him' as done by Hume, op. cit., p. 140. The masculine in '*vijñāno*' would be due to the influence of '*sa*' as in '*ahamevedam*' *sarvo* '*smi*' *Bṛhad. Up.* 4 3.20.
200. Ibid., p. 646; cf. *vijnānamaya-puruṣa* addressed as 'king Soma', *Bṛhad. Up.* 2.1.15. also § 9 above.
201. Op. cit., pp. 1149, 1150 '*liṅgâvabhāsakasyātmano liṅgasya cot-kramaṇe* . . .'
202. Cf. Divedagaṅga, ibid., '*sa prakṛto' vidvānātmā*'.
203. See 'Vitalism and Becoming', this volume; pp. 143 ff.
204. *D*, 11.63 '*viññāṇam na okkamissatha*' used in opposition to '(*okkamitvā*) *vokkamissatha*'; Buddhaghosa has '*pavisitvā pavattamānaṃ viya*', Sumaṅgalavilāsinī, M. II. 501.
205. Cf. *PTS, Dict., s. vokkamati* (= *vi + ukkamati*). The possibility of vokkamati being formed from '*vi+ava+kram*' is certainly there but very unlikely for Pali phonology.
206. Cf. *D*, II.12, 108; *M*, III.119 (*-kucchim okkam-*); *S*, III.225 (*-bhūmin okkam-*); *D*, III. 103, 231, '*Idha bhante ekacco asampajāno c'eva mātu-kucchim okkamati asampajāno mātu-kucchismiṃ ṭhāti, asampajāno mātu kucchismā nikkhamati*'; cf. *Sn.* 29 (*eti*), 152, 278; 185 (*pecca*); *D*, II. 333 (*pavisantaṃ*); *D*, III. 111 (*cuti*). See also Mrs Rhys Davids, *Indian Religion and Survival*, p. 26.

207. Occurring for the first time at *M*, I.50, '*yā tesaṃ tesaṃ sattānaṃ tamhi tamhi satta-nikāye jāti sañjāti okkanti abhinibbatti khandhānaṃ pātubhāvo, ayaṃ vuccati āvuso jāti*'. Cf. *AI*, 176. The exegetical nature of the passage clearly reveals its lateness'.
208. *D*, III.85, '*taṇhā c'assa okkami*' (and craving came upon him); cf. *vijahi*, said of '*pītisukha*' at *M*, II. 52; phonetically considered '*o-*' for '*ava-*' is certainly later.
209. Cf. '*tassa . . . etad ahosi*', *D*, II.130; cf. 107, 154 (the idea occurred to him, i.e. arose in him). Contrast Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, Pt. 2, p. 60, fn. 1.
210. *M*, I.265, II.156; *A*, I.176 (*gabbhassâvakkanti*); still later is the form *gabbhâvakkanti* as found in the *Milinda*, *loc. cit.*
211. Syntactically '*-ssa*' must be regarded as ending of the *genitive* (of agent) implying the logical subject '*gabbha*'.
212. Cf. *saññigabbha*, *D*, I.54; *M*, I.518; *S*, III. 211. See *Pet. Wört.* and Grassmann, op. cit., *s. garbha*; cf. p. 133 in this volume, particularly fn. 33.
213. '*Channaṃ bhikkhave dhātūnaṃ upādāya gabbhassâvakkanti hoti, okkantiyā sati nāmarūpam . . . etc.*', *A, I.* 176, which is obviously parallel with the usual '*viññāṇa-paccayā nāmarūpam*'. The important fact is that '*viññāṇa*' is held to be the sixth of the six *dhātus*, *S*, II.248, III.231; *D*, III.247.
214. *Indian Religion and Survival*, p. 66. It is to be noted that in Early Buddhism there are at least three different connotations of the term *viññāṇa*, *viz.*, the perceptive or cognitive, the *saṃsāric* and the yogic (as in *viññāṇañcāyatana*).
215. *M*, I.256, '*Evaṃ byā kho aham āvuso Bhagavatā dhammaṃ desitaṃ ājānāmi yathā tad-ev'idam viññāṇam sandhāvati saṃsarati anaññant*', and *ibid.*, p. 258. '*Yâyam bhante vado vedeyyo tatra tatra kalyāṇapāpakānam kammānam vipākam paṭisaṃvedetī*'.
216. '*Atikkama ca purisassa chavimaṃsalohitaṃ aṭṭhiṃ paccavekkhati purisassa ca viññāṇa-sotaṃ pajānāti ubhayato abbocchinnaṃ* [Cy., *acchinnaṃ*] *idhaloke patiṭṭhitan ca paraloke patiṭṭhitañ ca*' D. III.105. Cf. *Sn*, 1055 '*panujja viññānam bhave na tiṭṭhe*' [Cy. *abhisankhāre-viññāṇa*]; cf. *Sn*, IIII; *M*, III. 261, I. 488; *D*, I. 76.
217. *S*, IV.291; cf. *Mārassa sotam*, *M*, I.226; *papimato sotam*, ibid. 227; *vaṭuma papañca* parallel to *so* *D*, II 8; *Kaṇhassa sotam*(= *jāti-maraṇa*), *Sn*, 355.
218. Cf. 'Vitalism and Becoming', in this volume, pp. 143 ff.
219. *Viññāṇa, āyu, usmā* corresponding to *purisa, āyāma* and *vāyu* respectively; See also *M*, III.239, (*purisa*); cf. Upanishadic '*puruṣa*' in the microcosmic sense of 'individual'.
220. '*Viññāṇadharo ayatiṃ punabbhavanibbattiyā paccayo*', *S*, II. 13.
221. *Sn*, 278; cf. *D*, III. 147; *Sn*, 29, 152. In the case of Perfect Ones (*arahant, tathāgata*), this *viññāṇa* is said to become indeterminate or impossible to locate (*anissita, asaṇṭhita*) *M*, I. 140, 329; III. 223; *D* I.223; *S*, I. 122.
222. See *Bṛhad. Up.* 3.5.1, 9.26; *Chānd. Up.* 8 1.5 7.1-3, etc.
223. *A, I.* 258; II.177.
224. See *S*, IV 54 (= Kathāvatthu 67); *Vin*, I 14; *M*, I.138; Rhys Davids, *Theory of Soul in the Upaniṣads*, *JRAS*, 1899.
225. Cf. E.J. Thomas, *History of Buddhist Thought*, p. 104 (cf. 65).
226. 'Popular notions attributed birth to the co-operation with the parents of an entity, the Gandharva . . . ' *Buddhist Philosophy*, p. 207.
227. Cf. 'Yo *kho Sāriputta tañca kāyaṃ nikkhipati aññañ ca kāyaṃ upādiyati . . .*' *S*, IV. 50. Even here it may be doubted whether the Master and his greatest disciple could have been discussing merely a popular notion.

228. *S*, II. 101; cf. *ibid.*11; *M, I.* 48; *Sn*, 147. The term means literally 'seeking birth' which implies that the being has no proper *attabhāva* for the nonce, and thus approximates to '*antarābhavasattva*'.
229. *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda*, p. 376, fn, 1, citing Windisch, *Buddha's Geburt*, pp. 13 ff.
230. Ibid., p. 180, citing Oldenberg, *Religion des Veda*, p. 253, n. 1.
231. *Vedische Mythologie*, I.427; Zur *Bedeutung von Gandharva* (1906); also comparing Garbe, *Sāṇkhya-Philosophie* 2, p. 306.
232. Cf. E.J. Thomas, loc. cit., who, however, sees in this 'being about to be reborn' some connection with consciousness.
233. See Sinclair Stevenson, *The Heart of Jainism*, pp. 181, 269; cf. Apte, op. cit., *s.v.* (spirit).
234. '*Vi-antara*', lit. 'belonging to a separate interval'; cf. *antara* in '*antarābhava*' discussed above.
235. See Monier-Williams, op. cit., p. 1028 (col. 3).
236. *Birth of Indian Psychology*, p. 250.
237. *Buddhistic Philosophy*, p. 207.
238. Similarly Pali *yakkha* in its philosophical aspect, derived from a corresponding application in the *Veda* and *Upaniṣads*, denoted a state of *saṃsāric viññāṇa*, viz., its radiant purity characteristic of the 'infinity' (*ānañca*) states.
239. *Yakṣa* denotes primarily 'the mysterious' (*Wunderding*) in the Veda and *Upaniṣads* (ibid., p.24) developing the sense of 'adorable' or 'holy' (p.25), a sense relating it perhaps also to *Māyā, Vapus* and *Kratu* (p. 26), and found also for Buddhist *yakkha* denoting as it does the *viññāṇa* at the threshold of perfect purity or holiness (pp. 32-33) when it becomes *radiant* or *resplendent* (p. 33).
240. '*Nāga*' is used especially of the Buddha and *arahants*, popularly explained as 'faultless' (*na āgaṃ karoti*), and denotes primarily 'saint' or 'Holy one', thus implying that spiritual state of *viññāṇa* which is the *highest* or Perfection (*M*, I. 151, etc. cited by *PTS, Dict.*). It is, however, wrong to regard this usage as developing from a sense of 'hero' related to its meaning of 'elephant' as found in Pali, as suggested by the *PTS, Dict.*, (*s.v.*), for the 'Vammika Sutta' of the *Majjhima* clearly connects this '*naga*' with the ant-hill implying the idea of 'serpent'—a very common association in the East. '*Tiṭṭhatu nāgo, mā nāgaṃ ghaṭṭesi, namo karohi nāgassa*' (*M, I.* 143) establishes its perfection of holiness beyond any doubt, the text itself (p. 145) explaining it as 'the monk who has destroyed the intoxicants' (*khiṇāsava. . . bhikkhu*), i.e. *arahant*. Cf. association of mythical '*nāga*' with *deva, Yakṣa, gandharva*, etc., from the time of the *Atharvaveda* (§ 13 above).
241. See *Tait. Up.* 1.6.1, where '*indra*' is used for the individual soul conceived as 'the person, consisting of *mind* [cf. *viññāṇa*], immortal, *resplendent*. Cf. Hume, op. cit., p. 278; *Ait. Up.* 1.3.12, 14. It is significant that *Ṛgveda* pictures Indra as '*māyin*' and '*śata-kratu*', epithets attributing *mysterious* powers to him.
242. Prof. Rudolf Otto of Marburg has coined the term *sensus numinus* (from Latin *numen*, a divinity to be worshipped) to denote 'an experience of the mysterious and an impulse towards the mysterium' which according to him is at the basis of Religion and exists 'from the dawn of human life'; See his '*Sensus Numinis* as the historical Basis of Religion', *The Hibbert Journal*, vol. XXX, Nos 2,3; also his *The Idea of the Holy*, and *Das Gefühl der Überweltlichen* (Munich, 1931). This *numen* may be compared with R.R. Marett's '*mana*' denoting a similar 'mysterious' or 'awe-ful' feeling as the basis of the religious impulse. Cf. Julian Huxley, *Religion Without Revelation* (*TL*), p. 44.

16

Ṛgvedic River-Goddesses and an Indus Valley Seal*

The problem of the chronological relationship between the Aryan culture as preserved in the *Ṛgveda* and the civilization of the Indus Valley as brought to light mainly by the excavations at Mohenjo-daro and Harappā yet remains to be solved. But the consensus of opinion seems to favour the view that the Indus civilization preceded the advent of the Ṛgvedic Aryans at least by several centuries if not a millenium or more.[1] The following study, therefore, is not necessarily intended to be taken with any chronological implication, the writer's wish being only to direct the attention of scholars to an important aspect of the two religions, on which the available facts seem to point unmistakably to some connection, whatever that might be chronologically. However, the data here presented may hint at the probable evolution of ideas in this prehistoric period and thereby help to throw some light on this chronological problem which is so very important for the history of religion in India.

Among the archaeological discoveries of the Indus Valley area is an important seal unearthed by Dr. Mackay[2] at Mohenjo-daro about 1927 and reproduced by Sir John Marshall in his monumental work, *Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilization*, Plate XII, No. 18. It is also found in Dr. Mackay's own book, *The Indus Civilization*, Plate M, No. 8. Both these authorities have discussed its importance for the understanding of the Indus religion, but unfortunately there does not seem to be much agreement on most details relating to its interpretation. Sir John Marshall describes it thus:

> One of the most interesting of these (i.e. the seals) is that reproduced in Plate XII, Figure 18, in which the epiphany of the deity

*Dr. S. Kunhan Raja Presentation Volume, Madras, Adyar Library, 1946.

> in the tree is portrayed in a half realistic, half conventional way. The tree itself at the right-hand top corner of the seal is represented by two branches only springing from a circle on the ground, and treated in a formal fashion. Between them appears the deity; a standing nude figure, with long hair, *triśula* horns and armlets . . . In front of the tree is a half-kneeling figure of a suppliant, also with long hair, armlets and horns, but with the addition of a leaf-spray or plume between the horns. Behind this suppliant is a composite animal. . . . In the field below is a line of seven small standing figures, with dresses reaching to the knees, with a long plait of hair falling down the back, and a plume on the head. (p. 64).

Similarly, Mackay refers to

> 'the horned goddess in the midst of a *pipal* or sacred fig-tree, before which another horned deity is kneeling and doing obeisance. Both the goddess and her worshipper wear long plaits of hair, have their arms adorned with bangles, and, in the case of the latter and possibly of the former as well, there is a floral or leafy spray springing from the head between the horns . . A row of seven spirits or deities . . . occupy the lower register of the seal-amulet, each figure wearing a sprig on the head, a long pig-tail behind, but no horns' (p. 73).

A complete study of this seal in relation to Ṛgvedic myths and beliefs would demand more space than available here, and, therefore, the present discussion will be restricted to the identification of the female figures only, particularly the seven in the lower register, the other objects on the seal being referred to only by way of elucidation of the former.

As for the identification of *the female figures, the seven in the row, in particular*, there appears to be marked uncertainty among the scholars who have attempted to interpret the seal in question. Sir John Marshall remarks with some hesitation: 'The seven figures in a line at the bottom I take to be female officiants or ministrants of the goddess', (p. 66), and adds later on: 'The plumes on their head might be feathers; but it is more probable that they are small branches. . .' (*Ibid.*). Dr. Mackay, however, says: 'The figures in the lower row of the *pipal*-tree seal-amulet are generally[3] seven in number, and as they wear similar head-dresses to the goddess above them, they must also be regarded as deities' (p. 75). To cite two more recent writers on the

subject, V.C.C. Collum takes them as 'human figures'[4] while S. Srikantha Sastri thinks they are 'perhaps the seven Mothers going in procession round the fertility god'.[5] Thus, there is indeed little agreement among the critics either as to the real significance of the number *seven*, or as to the exact nature of the seven figures or the female figure just above them. It is hoped that the ensuing discussion, mainly based on the evidence culled from the *Ṛgveda*,[6] may at least settle the problem of the seven figures if not the significance of the whole seal.

Considering that the basis of the cult depicted on the seal is undoubtedly the conception of *fertility* and *fecundity*,[7] it is of paramount significance to observe that in the *Ṛgveda* there are several river-goddesses who appear quite frequently in contexts emphasizing the *fertility* aspect of the Ṛgvedic religion,[8] particularly in association with Sarasvatī who, as will be seen below, represents a distinct form of the Mother Goddess. Sir John Marshall has himself stressed the importance of the fertility aspect of the river cult in the Indus religion,[9] and it would not be a mere matter of coincidence if the fertility idea is also prominent in the Ṛgvedic myth, for it is an established principle in mythology that like *milieu* must inevitably produce like myths and cults. This aspect of the Ṛgvedic religion, however, has not received the attention due to it, chiefly owing to the 'atmospheric' bias of earlier interpreters like Max Müller, and due also, perhaps, to the general belief held consciously or unconsciously that all Ṛgvedic myths must have an 'Indo-European' basis. It is only quite recently that the value of vegetation and other cults in the formation of Ṛgvedic myths has been appreciated by such writers as J.J. Meyer.[10]

It is their importance as sources of fertility and therefore as harbingers of prosperity for the dwellers on their banks that prompted the early Aryans to deify the waters and the rivers, just as probably it prompted the Indus Valley people to do the same. Thus the (seven) rivers are said to increase the vital vigour (*vayas*) of the fertilizing and virile (*vṛṣabhasya suṣminaḥ*)god Indra, the bountiful (*maghavan*) lord over precious wealth (10.43.3); the rivers in kindness gave nurture to Purūravas so that he may destroy the Dasyus (10.95.7); the blessings that the seven rivers bring are called the 'seven-mothered guerdon' (10.107.4). Hence the seven rivers come to be regarded as the 'seven glories' (*śriyas*, 8.28.5) or 'the seven jewels' (*ratnā*, 5.15; 6.74.1), or 'the seven hands of fatness' (4.58.3; 4.7.9), bringing rich

food in seven portions (8.61.16). Even when the rivers or the river-goddesses are collectively spoken of as being more or less than seven, the idea of fertility is present just the same. The rivers thrice-seven, that is the seven triply flowing from the three heavens or reservoirs, are described as the 'sweet streams sprinkling down their treasure' (7.101.4) and are often described as the thrice-seven *milch-cows*, implying their fecund nature (4.1.16; cf. 1.72.6; 7.87.4; 9.70.1, 86.21; 10.75.1). Although in some of these contexts the reference is rather to the seven usual rivers multiplied threefold according to the three spheres in which they flow, it must be observed that the Ṛgvedic Aryans also had the notion of twenty one natural streams, for there is clear allusion to 'the twenty one close-pressed ridges (*sānu*) of mountains' (8.85.2) through which they flowed. In fact, in a late hymn an obvious attempt is made to enumerate these twentyone rivers (10.75). Elsewhere they are spoken of as the 'twentyone wandering rivers' (10.64.8) just as reference is made to the 'two much-wandering mothers or sisters' (10.120.7, 9). The two rivers Vipāś and Śutudrī are glorified in many verses in a hymn praising Indra who impels them to flow (3.33). In another place 'the fertility' is attributed to the 'four rivers' made to flow pleasantly by Indra (1.62.6), and, doubtless, the same four are meant by 'the exhaustless ones with a thousand currents, the kindred four descending with procreant power (*prajāvatī*) from the heavens, dripping with fat and bringing *amṛta*' (9.74.6). When generally the rivers are described as 'the fair ones, wives of the Steer (*vṛṣṇaḥ patnīḥ*)', *viz.*, Indra, who is the impregnator (*vṛṣan*) *par excellence*, the point stressed is again no doubt their fertility (5.42.12). No wonder then that they are figuratively conceived as being pregnant (*citta-garbhāḥ*, 5.44.5; cf. *ardha-garbhāḥ*, 1.164.36). It is thus as a result of this fertility connection that the rivers come to be invoked along with other fertilizing and progeny-bestowing deities such as Pūṣan, Viṣṇu and Earth (5.46.2; 8.54.4).

In view of the above facts it is not difficult to conceive how Sarasvatī regarded as the mightiest and the noblest among these rivers comes to be worshipped as the Mother Goddess presiding over good fortune and progeny. Although, as Keith[11] says, 'It is perhaps doubtful whether the rivers can claim to be regarded as among the great gods of the *Ṛgveda*', nevertheless, their importance in the minds of the Ṛgvedic Aryans was great enough to find them personalized and anthropomorphized beyond doubt, and, consequently, deified. The

divinity of the waters and the rivers is mentioned in several places in the *Ṛgveda* (*āpaḥ devīḥ*, 10.104.8; 109.1; *devīḥ . . . nadyas*, 7.50.4; 9.9.4, 6; 10.17.10). And this divinity is most marked in the case of Sarasvatī. To the Ṛgvedic mind Sarasvatī is by far the greatest of rivers[12] and this notion of her superiority to all other streams must be regarded more as due to an early veneration of water (*saras*) going back perhaps even to Indo-Iranian times (cf. Avestan *Haraquaitī*)[13] rather than to the importance of the Indian river so-called mentioned beside Sarayus and Sindhus (10.64.9) and beside Dṛṣadvatī (and Āpayā ?) elsewhere in the *Ṛgveda* (3.23.4). This surmise is strengthened by the fact that in one place at least Sarasvatī is styled *Sindhu* (7.95.1). Thus as a river-goddess she is more strongly anthropomorphized and deified than all other such goddesses, and it is expressly stated that she surpasses the latter by her divine might (*asurya*, 7.95.1). Hence, she is addressed as the mightiest of rivers (*asuryā nadīnām*. 7.96.1) or the *most divine* of them (*devitame*, 2.41.16). She is especially called 'the holy Sarasvatī' (*yajatā Sarasvatī*, 5.43.11), being described elsewhere as being gracious by virute of her holy thoughts (7.35.11). Naturally, therefore, she is invoked as the foremost among the 'Watery Queens ruling over wealth' (*āpo revatīḥ kṣayatha*) to prolong vitality (*vayas*) for the singer (10.30.12). Such gods of prosperity as Indra and Agni are said to be her associates (8.38.10) and her wealth-bestowing nature is compared to that of Pūṣan (6.61.6). Her male counterpart is Sarasvān, who bestows wives for the unmarried and sons for the deserving, the kind protector with waves laden with the good things of life and granting food and progeny (7.96.4-6).[14] Her own procreant or progeny-granting function is clear from her being invoked in conjunction with Sinīvālī the prolific Mother whose main blessing to mankind is the granting of progeny (2.32.6-7); in fact the two goddesses are almost identical in that particular function (2.32.8, 41.17; 3.54.13; 6.61.1; 10.184.2). It is not surprising, therefore, to find that Sarasvatī like other fertility goddesses of the *Ṛgveda* is several times called the 'Mother' (*mātar*, 2.14.16; 7.36.6; 10.64.9), an appellation that certainly helps to identify her with the primitive Mother Goddess or the Universal Mother common to most cultures.[15] In view of the importance of the characteristic breast-symbolism[16] in the delineation of this Mother Goddess, it is of particular moment to remark the unmistakable emphasis made in the *Ṛgveda* on the 'exhaustless breast (*stanaḥ śaśayaḥ*) of thine (Sarasvatī's), spring of pleasure, wherewith thou

feedeth all things choicest (*yena viśvā puṣyasi vāryāṇi*), bestowing wealth and treasure-finding' (*L*, 164.49). It is significant, further, that similar reference is made to the 'swelling breast (*pīpivāṃsaṃ stanam*) of Sarasvān, which is all-beautiful' (7.96.6)a fact which establishes beyond doubt the androgynous nature of the 'Sarasvat(ī)' concept, and thereby adds further support to the identity of Sarasvatī with the Supernal Mother of most cultures.[17] That the idea of 'breast' here refers to the broad mountain ranges whence the river-beds start is seen from other contexts in the *Ṛgveda* where clear allusion is made to the '*vakṣaṇa* of the mountains' (1.32.1; 3.33.12). It is with this same natural basis that the Ṛgvedic concept of the Mother Goddess Sarasvatī develops into the particular form that it assumes in connection with the Seven River-Goddesses, *viz.*, her special aspect of being 'seven sistered' (*saptasvasṛ*) which implies that the Seven are also 'Mothers'.[18]

However, although the application of the compound *saptasvasṛ* (6.61.10) may imply that Sarasvatī is distinct from the Seven Sisters, it is still as *one of the seven* that she was, perhaps, earlier conceived, for in one place at least she is definitely called the 'seventh (*saptathī*), the Mother of Floods (*sindhu-mātā*), swelling and flowing with copious milk' (7.36.6). Thus the more primitive and popular conception seems to have been the notion of seven deified rivers from amongst whom Sarasvatī being the most important was gradually abstracted and elevated to the highest role (3.4.8; 8.54.4; 10.30.12; 64.9). It is also to be remarked that when Sarasvatī is mentioned as separate from and above the Seven, the term might rather refer not to the so-called river of the Punjab valley but to the more primitive deity of waters and floods as clear from the Avestan parallel cited above, the counterpart of 'Sarasvān' which too was applied not only to the Mountain as the source of rivers but also to the Sun floating in the waters of the atmosphere (1.164.52; 10.66.5). Whatever the relation between Sarasvatī and the Seven River-Goddesses might have been earlier, there is no doubt that the latter were also regarded as aspects of the Divine Mother. Thus they are specifically called 'the seven Mothers, Goddesses' (*mātaraḥ . . . devīḥ*, 10.17.10; cf. 9.86.36; 8.85.1; 1.34.8; 141.2). It is with this same 'maternal' notion in mind that the seven are designated the 'seven milch-kine' (*dhēnavaḥ*, 1.164.3; 5.43.1; 9.86.25; cf. 10.32.4)—an application that is clarified by the metaphor which makes Indra drive the cows out of the cave or the pen (2.12.3; cp. 4.28.1; 10.40.8; 10.67.12). In a collective sense, in

relation to Sarasvatī as shown above, their *sisterhood* becomes regularly emphasized and they are consequently called 'the seven sisters' (*saptasvasāraḥ*, 1.191.14; 8.59.4; 10.5.5; *sapta jāmayaḥ*, 9.66.8). In the same breath the *seven sisters* are called 'the Mothers' (9.86.36), and the epithet 'red' (*aruṣīḥ*) is applied to them reminding one of the red colour associated with Rudra, Agni etc. These seven are also called the 'seven damsels' (*priyāsaḥ*, 4.1.12; cf. 1.50.9) probably also 'the seven daughters' (1.50.9), an idea which clearly points to the Virgin aspect of the Mother Goddess[19]. Reference has been made previously to the other epithets such as the 'seven *ratnas*', 'seven *śriyas*' etc. It may be mentioned that these same Seven are meant in the *Ṛgveda* by such expressions as 'the seven swift ones' (*visruhas*, 5.44.3; 6.7.6) or 'the seven mighty ones' (5.43.1), 'the seven wives of the steer' (1.42.12), the 'seven sisters of Varuṇa' (8.41.2,9; 59.12), and the 'seven murmuring voices' (*vaṇis*, 3.1.6; 7.1; cf.3.4.5, 7.7; 31.5; 4.42.8; 6.22.2, etc.). Their identity with the Mother Goddess is finally settled by the significant appellation 'the seven mother streams', (*sindhavaḥ sapta mātaraḥ*, 1.34.8). *Apropos* of this identification, it is of great significance to observe that an early adumbration of the idea of propitiating the 'seven mothers' in times of endemic disease — a custom prevalent up to the present day in countries like Sri Lanka — is already found in the *Ṛgveda* where 'the rivers, gracious goddesses swelling with water' are implored 'never to cause the Śipada and the Śimidā' (7.50.4).

In view of the above facts it would be reasonable to assume that the seven figures in the lower register of the Mohenjo-daro seal are symbolic representations of the seven deified rivers of the Indus Valley. That the Indus civilization which had its main centres at Mohenjo-daro and Harappā was diffused all throughout the area of the Punjab is generally admitted.[20] It is, therefore, legitimate to hold the view that the Indus people could have had the same cult of the Seven Rivers, symbolized as Mothers or Sisters, or even Cows and Virgins, as evidenced in the *Ṛgveda*. That the frequently mentioned seven rivers (*sapta sindhu*) of the *Rgveda* applies at least in the majority of contexts to the five rivers of the Punjab and two others, whether tributaries[21] or mother-streams[22] of the same, need not be doubted even if the notion of seven rivers could be traced back to Indo-Iranian or even Indo-European times.[23] It would seem idle, in view of the evidence herein adduced, to attribute the use of 'seven' in the case of these rivers to a mere Vedic predilection for the number

seven', as Keith has done;[24] in fact, in most places their geographical basis is made quite clear as when reference is made to the seven settlements (*saṃsadaḥ*, 8.81.20) or the seven regions (*diśāḥ*), 9.114.3; *dhāma-*, 1.22.16; 4.7.5; 9.102.2) or the seven places (*pada-*, 8.61.16; 10.8.4), implying the seven areas in the Punjab Valley peopled by the Aryans.

A closer examination of the details of the seven figures on the seal in the light of the *Ṛgveda* adds further strength to the identification. As both Sir John Marshall and Dr. Mackay point out in the above quotations, the seven figures on the seal are characterized by 'long plaits' or 'pig-tails'. It is, therefore, interesting to find that the fertility goddesses of the *Ṛgveda* too are generally marked out by their long and broad tresses. Thus Sinīvāli,[25] associated, and identified at least in function, as shown above, with Sarasvatī, is definitely called 'broad-tressed' (*pṛthu-ṣṭukā*, 2.32.6). Indrāṇi is also similarly described (*pṛthu-ṣṭu*, 10.86.8), who as *śūrapatnī* is a goddess closely approximating to Sarasvatī at least in one important respect, *viz.*, in her connection with Indra (as the latter's consort) who is the ultimate agent for the flow of the seven rivers (1.32.12; 55.2; 2.12.3,12; 4.19.3; 55.6; 10.43.3). Another point of identification is found in the fact that Sarasvatī is also found in the company of Maruts,[26] the help-mates of Indra (2.30.8; 7.96.2), just as Indrāṇi (10.86.9). Even Rodasī, usually the consort of Rudra and the spouse or mother of the Maruts (5.56.8; cf. 1.101.7; 5.61.4), is similarly said to follow the Maruts with her 'loose tresses' (1.167.5), and it is to be noted that Rodasī, in Ludwig's opinion, is the goddess presiding over child-birth.[27] The *fecundity* aspect of the 'long tresses' is clearly implied when the windy gushing out of Soma juice from the press is compared to 'locks of hair unbraided' (9.97.17), for it is well-known that the *Soma-rasa* was figuratively associated with *retas* from Ṛgvedic times.[28] It is thus that the seven streams as sources of fecundity come to be connected with Soma (9.54.2; 66.6; 92.4; 10.25.11; 97.22). In one particular context (1.164.36) they are called, as aspects of Soma who is *retas*, 'the seven latent embryos (*arda-garbhāḥ*)'.

Another *fecundity* emblem found in the female figures on the seal is the 'plume' or 'sprig' issuing from their heads. The sign is no doubt related to the tree-worship found in both cultures. The idea that the divine noumenon had its abode in the leaves and twigs of sacred trees is as old as Indo-Iranian times, if not, indeed Indo-European,[29] and the association of the *pipal* tree with the Mother

Goddess in India is too well known to need comment here. Thus in the *Ṛgveda* the vegetation deities, addressed as 'Plants' and called the 'mothers, the goddesses' — which doubtless identifies them with the River-Goddesses — (*oṣadhīr iti mātaraḥ . . . devīḥ*), are said to have the holy pipal (*aśvattha*) as their home and its foliage (*parṇa*)[50] as their abode (10.97.4, 5). Furthermore, it is a characteristic mark of the vitalistic philosophy of the *Ṛgveda* that the notion of biological *growth* in general is figuratively or symbolically represented as the *issuing of twigs and branches* (1.59.1; 2.5.4; 35.8; 6.13.1; 24.3; 8.13.17). It is of great importance, then, for the subject under discussion to find the *Ṛgveda* expressly stating that 'the seven swift-flowing streams (*visruhaḥ*) have grown (*ruruhuḥ*) like sprigs (*vayā iva*)[51] from the head of Agni Vaiśvānara . . .' (6.7.6). It is noteworthy that Agni too, like Indra, is generally regarded in the *Ṛgveda* as an ultimate agent for the flow of rivers (3.6.2; cf. 1.58.7; 71.7; 3.1.4; 4.7; 5.1.5; 7.19.24; 8.61.16, esp. 5.44.5). These considerations would suffice to show how close the Ṛgvedic popular religion consisting of *vegetation* and similar cults approaches the religious conceptions of the Indus Valley.

In conclusion it may be remarked that the whole seal thus appears to indicate a synthetic picture of procreation, vegetation and fertility cults. In the light of the above identification of the seven figures in the lower register with the Seven River-Goddesses or Mothers of the *Ṛgveda*, it may seem only natural to find in the half-kneeling female figures just above the seven the representation of Sarasvatī, the Chief of the River-Goddesses, as has been demonstrated in the course of this essay. In this case, the figure between the branches of the *pipal* tree in the right extreme of the seal must be the *procreant* and *virile* deity (*vṛṣan, vṛṣabha, śuṣmin*, etc.) of the *Ṛgveda*, whose manifold aspects are depicted in the characters of Indra, Varuṇa, Agni, Soma, Pūṣan, Rudra, Parvata and such other gods. For a close examination of the religion of the *Ṛgveda* reveals the fact that all these deities are gods connected with the phenomena of *fertility* and *fecundity*[52]— through their *active fertilizing* nature, the ideas of *passive fertility* being symbolized in the myths of Sarasvatī, Sinīvalī, Ilā, Bhāratī, Kuhū, Gungū, etc., and such collective female conceptions as the River-Goddesses and the Herbal (*oṣadhī*) Deities. The twig or the sprig would naturally be the fittest emblem for them, while the *horns* would indicate male deities. Therefore, it is significant that the head-ornament of the kneeling figure is certainly not a three-forked horn,

as implied in the citations from Sir John Marshall and others, but a three-clustered twig or bough as a careful examination of the seal reveals. It would indeed be natural to expect that Sarasvatī should have a sprig more prominent and luxuriant than her Sisters, the Seven River-Goddesses, who stand behind her in the adoration of the Male Procreant Deity on the *pipal*, whose main emblem of the three-forked horn stands for his virile energy, and whose procreant nature is undoubtedly reflected in his *vāhana*, the composite animal, half-bull, half-goat, that stands behind the suppliant figure of Sarasvatī.

REFERENCES

1. Sir John Marshall, *Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilization*, vol. I, pp. 111-12; V. Rangacharya, *Pre-Musalman India*, Vol. II, pp. 154-55; Laksman Sarup, *Proceedings and Transactions of the Eighth All-India Oriental Conference*, pp. 1-22; 'The Indus Valley in the Vedic Period' by Ramprasad Chanda, *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, no. 31 (1926); K.N. Dikshit, *Pre-historic Civilization of the Indus Valley* (*Sir William Meyer Lectures*) 1935, Madras; 'Proto-Indic Religion' by S. Srikantha Sastri, *Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society*, vol. XXXII, pp 8 ff; H C. Raychaudhuri, *Studies in Indian Antiquities*, p. 19; 'Mohenjo-daro and Aryans' by E.J. Thomas, *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XIV, pp. 327 ff.
2. See Sir John Marshall, op. cit., p 52, n. 5
3. It is difficult to see why he uses the word 'generally', for there is no other seal or tablet having *seven figures* cited either by him or Sir John Marshall. The nearest approach to the number *seven* is found in a rectangular seal (Sir J.M., Plate CXVI, No. 1, CXVIII, No. 7), where, however, only six male or female figures occur; cf. Mackay, *Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilization*, vol. II, p. 393.
4. *The Tressé Iron-Age Megalithic Monument*—Its Quadruple Sculptured Breasts and Their Relation to the Mother-Goddess Cosmic Cult, p. 109.
5. *Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society*, vol. XXXII, p. 13.
6. See ' Vitalism and Becoming', in this volume, pp. 143 ff.
7. Cf. Sir John Marshall, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 49, 64; Mackay, op. cit., vol. I, p. 73; Collum, op. cit., p. 105; S. Srikantha Sastri, loc. cit.
8. That Rgvedic religion is not wholly 'priestly religion' but contains a great deal of 'popular religion' as well has not been sufficiently emphasized by previous writers.
9. Op. cit., pp. 6, 75; cf. Mackay, p. 82; Dikshit, op. cit., p. 34.
10. See his *Trilogie altindischer Mächte und Feste der Vegetation* reviewed by Benoy Kumar Sarkar, *IHQ*, vol. XIX, No. 4, (1943), pp. 373 ff.
11. *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda*, p. 172.
12. Cf. Deshmukh, *Origin and Development of Religion in Vedic Literature*, p. 294.
13. Cf. Gordon V. Childe, *The Aryans*, p. 33; Keith, op. cit., p. 173.
14. Keith, op. cit., pp. 173, 174.
15. Cf. Collum, op. cit., pp. 63 et seq.
16. Collum, op. cit., p. 110.
17. Ibid., pp. 77, 105, etc.

18. The epithet *saptasvasṛ* is applied to Sarasvati at 6.61.10-12, just as it qualifies Varuṇa at 8.41.2.
19. See Collum, op. cit., pp. 105 et. seq., on the *Bride*-aspect of the Mother-Goddess.
20. Sir John Marshall, op. cit., vol. I, Chaps. I and VII.
21. See Griffith, *Hymns of the Ṛgveda*, vol. p. 44 and p. 562 n 1; Rangacharya, op. cit., p. 162.
22. Sir John Marshall thinks 'that there were two large rivers instead of one, flowing in parallel courses to the sea, and that these two rivers divided between themselves the vast volume of water from the five rivers of the Punjab . . . ', op. cit., pp. 5, 6.
23. See Gordon V. Childe, *The Aryans*, p. 33; Deshmukh, op. cit., pp. 295, 296; K. Chattopadhyaya, *Proc. and Transactions of the Sixth Oriental Conference*, Patna (1930), 'The Cradle of the Indra-Vṛtra Myth'; Keith, op. cit., p. 173.
24. Op. cit., p. 174.
25. The word itself is probably made up of *sina-* (prosperity) and *vāli* (hairy train; cf. *vāra*), thus meaning 'she who has luxuriant or prosperity-giving tresses'. The second part may also mean 'creeper' and metaphorically apply even to a 'long winding stream'.
26. Rudra as the father of the Maruts is also marked by his braided hair (1.114..5); Pūsan with braided hair (6.55.2; 9.67.11).
27. See 'Vedic Gandharva and Pali Gandhabba', in this volume, pp. 175 ff., cf. J.J. Meyer, op. cit., reviewed by Sarkar, *IIQ*, Vol. XIX, No. 4, p. 373 ff
28. See J. Wackernagel, cited by Schrader, *Prehistoric Antiquities of the Aryan Peoples*, p. 422.
29. See Dikshit, op. cit., p. 33; N.M. Chaudri, *IIQ*, XIX.4, p. 318; Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *QJMS*, XXIX, p. 126.
30. It is to be remarked that *parna* in the *Ṛgveda* never means *palāśa*. *Butea Frondosa*, as Griffith takes it in this context, op. cit., vol. II, p. 533; cf. *RV*, 10.43.4; 10.68.10.
31. '*Vayā*' is 'that which bifurcates', being developed from *dvaya* as pointed out by Grassman, *Wörterbuch zum Rig Veda, s.v. vayā*; this is extremely important as showing the basic conception behind both 'horns' and 'twigs' as emblems of divinity.
32. See J.J. Meyer, op. cit., reviewed by Sarkar, *IIQ*, XIX, 4, pp. 373 et seq.

17

A New Interpretation of the Naṭarāja Concept*

'Whatever the origins of Śiva's dance', says Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, the eminent authority on Indian Art, 'it became in time the clearest image of the *activity* of God which any art or religion can boast of.'[1] This view has since been endorsed both by Indian and Western writers on the subject. Even Havelock Ellis concedes the fact that the ecstatic Hindu dance connected with Śaiva cult is 'a great symbol' of mystical religion.[2] The fact that it is in South Indian Śaivism that the worship of Śiva-Rudra is most marked and it is in the Śaiva bronzes of the South that the Naṭarāja symbolism has found its permanent home has led to the general belief that the origin of the concept of a dancing Śiva must be sought for in some non-Aryan culture.[3] While it is admitted that in the final form of the symbolism there may be some Aryan elements, still the original basis of the cult is traced to some 'pre-Aryan hill-god, afterwards merged in Śiva'.[4] Of the Ṛgvedic Aryan culture, reference is made only to the concept of Rudra as an accountable *motif* in this mythic symbolism. Rudra, according to Havell, 'was gradually absorbed into the philosophic synthesis of the Śaiva cult and is represented in Indian art by the Bhairava, or terrible aspect of Śiva'.[5] But that this attitude ignores a good deal of the relevant evidence from the *Ṛgveda* and thereby fails to do justice to the true historical method of studying the evolution of the Naṭarāja concept becomes increasingly clear to the careful investigator. In the ensuing discussion the present writer hopes to marshal sufficient facts from the *Ṛgveda* to demonstrate that the ultimate origin of the conception of a dancing Śiva or Naṭarāja is amply illustrated by Ṛgvedic data, and specially that the origin of the idea of divine Dancer must be looked for *not* in the character of

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Rudra, however closely he may appear to be related to the later figure of Śiva, but elsewhere. Although the point has been overlooked by previous writers, misled no doubt by the otherwise undeniable similarity between the two characters, the palpable fact remains that Rudra in the *Ṛgveda* is never even once regarded, or even suggested, as a 'dancer', while references to other dancing gods are not uncommon.

The earliest evidence, however, for the existence of dancing in India — whether popular or ritualistic is not made clear — is not regarded as that afforded by the *Ṛgveda* but by the discoveries of the Indus Valley.[6] This idea is based on the general opinion as to the relative priority of the Indus Valley civilization to Ṛgvedic culture, a point however that cannot be conceded on the present show of evidence put forward even by the most ardent protagonist. In any case, the fact is indisputable that dancing as an art along with the rudiments of music belongs to the earliest known period of Indian culture. It is often forgotten that the culture reflected in the *Ṛgveda* is a complex one — a fusion of many archaic trends of civilization with very primitive barbarian cultures which latter constitute the oldest strata of the Ṛgvedic cults and beliefs. Further, it has been constantly ignored that most of the evidence of the *Ṛgveda* relates to cultural forms not existent in the contemporaneous Aryan society but to earlier and more primitive states of culture that had passed off by the time the hymns were composed, but came to be recorded in these documents by way of 'survivals'.[7] It may be seen, therefore, that the whole problem of the evolution of cultures in India awaits fresh investigation in the light of the latest available information from the anthropologist and the prehistorian, and, accordingly it will be nothing short of an inveterate pedantry that can adhere dogmatically to some inadequate hypothesis or an outworn theory.

In the late *Saṃhitās* and the *Brāhmaṇas* there is clear evidence of the fact that dancing of all sorts had developed considerably by the time they were composed, not only in the ritual but in the daily life of the people as well. At the Mahāvrata rite and at the horse-sacrifice maidens danced round the fire carrying water pitchers in their hands[8] and, similarly, during the marriage ceremony four or eight women were employed to dance in the house of the bride.[9] The popularity of this form of art in the period under discussion can be seen from the fact that some texts complain with a characteristic sense of moral puritanism that it is the bad taste of women which

prefers dance and song to the recitation of the Veda.[10] These references no doubt indicate a long prior development of the art of dancing, and, although the point has been ignored by previous writers on the subject, it is to the *Ṛgveda* that we must turn for the evidence of its primitive stage. The scholastic bias that regards the *Ṛgveda* only as a religious text containing nothing but prayers and invocations to so many gods, combined with the notorious indifference of the average Vedic scholar, particularly the Western savant, to matters aesthetic, has doubtless been the cause of this neglect. But no true history of any art in India can be successfully undertaken in the absence of the whole mass of data afforded by this remarkable Aryan document. In fact, it may be added that the evidence of the *Ṛgveda* is of inestimable value not only to the student of the evolution of Indian dancing but—and this is perhaps even of greater importance—also to the general investigator of the prehistory of this earliest of arts.

It is significant, then, that already in the Ṛgvedic period dancing was a well-known form of art however crude and primitive its technique may appear to the critic of modern times. It should not be surprising if most of the references to dancing in the *Ṛgveda* have a mythical and ritual colouring and it is only rarely that the secular forms of the art are hinted at, for the texts of the hymns as we have them is the work of priestly circles. But the already developed use of the metaphorical application of the verb *nṛt*, (to dance) certainly indicates a long prior cultivation of the art. Thus Indra is said to make his bolt dance (*nartayan*) on behalf of the sacrifice (1.51.3). Similarly, the pressing-stones employed in the preparation of the Soma-juice are said to *dance* (*anartiṣur*) embracing the sisters, i.e. the fingers (10.94.14), and it is of technical significance that the 'revolutions' of the stones are clearly referred to (*Ibid*, 8). Further, dancing of a company in close embrace (cf. 10.72.6) is also hinted at, as well as dancing in the open air (*Ibid.*, 5.52.12). The origin of the lyrical dance is seen when the poet says that the Goddess of Dawn 'like a female dancer (*nṛtūr iva*) puts her broidered garments on' (1.92.4). Poetic fancy is seen at its best in the description of morning as the time when 'this dawn and the next come dancing hither' (10.29.2), a metaphor which finds an exact parallel in Milton's 'now the bright morning star, day's harbinger, comes dancing from the east'. The vedic fancy here no doubt reflects the primitive mythological tendency to conceive the rising of celestial luminaries as a 'dancing

hither', which, as has been pointed out,[11] has an analogue in the dance of the Sun on Easter Day in German, Slav and Celtic myth. Further evidence as to the popularity of dancing in the *Ṛgvedic* period becomes unnecessary when it is found that dancing and laughter (*nṛtaye hasāya*) are cited by one poet as such ordinary characteristics of life as help to differentiate the nature of the living from that of the dead (10.18.3).

It is to be remembered that almost all of the above allusions to dancing in the *Ṛgveda* refer to the secular or the social aspect of the art, in particular to the lyrical dance of young maidens. But the more copious, and, at least from the point of view of the present subject, undoubtedly the more important, references to the art are certainly those indicating the survival from still more primitive times of the more natural and vigorous type of dancing as attributed to the male gods Indra, the Maruts and the Aśvins. Of these too the dance of Indra, the war-god *par excellence*, must be held to take the pride of place. Thus Indra, as the fighter of the foes of the Aryans or of the godless barbarians whom the Aryans confronted in India, is in three hymns addressed as 'O Dancer' (1.130.7; 2.22.4; 8.24.9, 12), and is expressly referred to as 'the Dancer' in three other hymns. 'The immortal Dancer dances forth his heroic exploits' (5.33.6); 'who as his praise was sung of yore, the Dancer, is the Lord of men' (8.57.7); 'Indra, the Dancer, be to us the giver of abundant strength' (8.81.3). It is highly significant that this epithet of 'Dancer' (*nṛtuḥ*) is generally applied to the impetuous war-god of the nomadic Aryans in contexts that clearly stress the physical vigour (*śavas*), energy (*vāja*) and manly might (*nṛmṇa*), a fact that unmistakably points back to a very primitive origin of the idea in the savages' war dance[12] and thus brings him into close relation with Rudra. In view of these authentic references to Indra's character as the Divine Dancer in the *Ṛgveda*, it seems idle to reject the suggestion of Max-Müller[13] that the *Ṛgveda* (10.124.9) contains an allusion to 'Indra dancing to an *anuṣṭubh*' (*anuṣṭubham anu carcūryamāṇam indram*), a context which is not without a suggestion as to how the original war dance may have evolved into the ritual dance, as we shall see later. The late Vedic tradition too has preserved this trait of Indra's character as may be seen from the *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* which alludes to Indra as an aged dancer (III. 244), but the main *motif* of 'the divine Dancer' originally constituting an aspect of the Indra myth has in course of time been transferred to the synthetic character of Śiva-Rudra resulting in the

celebrated Naṭarāja symbolism. Such transference of constituent part of one myth to another is a far too well-known principle of mythology to need stressing here.

This hypothesis of transference is not a mere logical postulate but one that can be amply justified by further evidence from the *Ṛgveda* itself. It is to be noted that along with Indra the *only* other gods regarded as 'dancers' are the Martus and the Aśvins. The Maruts are addressed as 'Ye Dancers, breast-adorned with gold' (8.20.22) and are said in another place in the *Ṛgveda* 'to have danced towards the spring, keeping steps to measure[14] wildly shouting and singing' (5.52.12). Similarly, the Aśvins are invoked in no less clear phraseology: 'amid the race of gods, ye dancing heroes' (6.63.5), and the basis for this identity of appellation lies in the simple, yet insufficiently known fact that according to the *Ṛgveda* the Aśvins are only the 'best' or 'chief' of the Maruts themselves, for that is the only legitimate sense possible for their description as *maruttama* (1.182.2); they are also *marutvantaḥ* or 'having the Maruts in their company' (8.35.13). Now, it is of immense import that the latter epithet is usually applied both to Indra (1.100.1; 101.8; 3.51.7 etc.) and Rudra (1.114.11; 2.23.6 etc.), the former being prominently celebrated in the *Ṛgveda* as the fighter-hero who leads the Marut host into battle against the foes of the Aryans, and the latter being regarded as no other than the father of the Marut host who thus came to be styled themselves as 'Rudras' or 'Rudriyas'. These facts no doubt present enough occasion for the transference of an epithet of Indra, relating, as his primitive war dance is,to the battle dance of the savages,[15] to Rudra, the Wild Huntsman, who is so closely similar to him by way of the Maruts as demonstrated just above. Moreover, it is in these very facts that we must seek for the ground of the *leadership* of the gods ascribed to Indra and the source of the epithet 'Mahádeva' as a synonym of Naṭarāja, which practically implies the same thing, a fact supported by the Ṛgvedic qualification of Indra himself with the parallel 'mahán' many more times than any other single god. Furthermore, the similarity of the conception of Indra as Dancer to that of Naṭarāja in point of the application of the epithet 'Śiva', which too is used for Indra in the *Ṛgveda* (8.52; 63.4; cf. 8.4.15,18) just as for Rudra (10.92.9), cannnot be ignored for that is the most important *name* of the latter divinity in South India.

Finally, the most important characteristic of Śiva's dance, as emphasized by Coomaraswamy, is its creative and cosmic aspect. But

even this greatest of *motifs* in the Naṭarāja symbolism is not without an antecedent in the mythical dance of Indra as recorded in the *Ṛgveda*. That the verse 10.124.9 contains a hint as to the evolution of the ritual dance in Ṛgvedic religion has already been indicated. When it is said that 'the sages by their (mystical) contemplation observed Indian dancing to an Anuṣṭubh' (*anuṣṭubham anu carcūryamāṇam Indram ni cikyuḥ kavayaḥ manīṣā*) it is difficult to escape the conviction that here we have the conception of an ecstatic realization of the mystical symbol of a dancing Indra. For, the Ṛgvedic' term *manīṣā* means 'spiritual reflection, (1.61.2) or 'devout contemplation' (5.83.10) or even 'divine grace' (1.186.1; 10.29.3) as pointed out by Grassmann,[16] and the verb *ci*, perceive, with the suggestive prefix *ni*, downwards, into, must imply a 'seeking downwards' or a 'probing into (*i.e.* the heart)' by sages (*i.e.* mystics) in devout contemplation of Deity (cf. 10.114.9). Such a practice of mystical religion is also referred to in other contexts in the *Ṛgveda*: 'Searching the heart (*hṛd*) deeply by contemplation (*manīṣā*) the sages (*kavayaḥ*) found there the bond of existence in the non-existent' (10.129.4). In fact, it is highly significant that the *Ṛgveda* pictures the creator gods, like Yatis (10.72.7), Sādhyas and Ṛṣis (10.90.7), at the time of the world's creation 'kicking up in dancing the atoms which formed the earth[17]. . . ' 'When ye, O Gods, in yonder deep close-clasping one another stood. Thence, as of dancers, from your feet a thickening cloud of dust arose' (10.72.6).[18] In view of these facts it is difficult to agree with Keith who says: 'dancing as a means of producing ecstasy is never mentioned though the gods as dancers may be a relic of the conception'.[19] Nor does his reserve seem wholly justified in disdaining the suggestion of Arbman that the account of the mad Muni in the *Ṛgveda* (10.136) may be a reference to Rudra as the god of an orgiastic cult, whose epithet *vyuptakeśa* in the Yajurveda (*TS*, IV.5.5) also hints at his being the lord of an orgiastic dance.[20] That even Indra has preserved the traits of a vegetation deity has been demonstrated[21] and, as it was remarked at the beginning of this discussion, the culture of the *Ṛgveda* is a complex one representing the result of the crossing of several primitive and primary cultures. Thus, in conclusion, it may be noted that the above presentation of facts leaves no room for any doubt as to the possibility of the celebrated mystico-aesthetic symbolism of Naṭarāja being a historical development from the Ṛgvedic conception of a *dancing Indra*.

REFERENCES

1. *The Dance of Śiva*, p. 56. Cf. *Mirror of Gestures*, pp. 8 ff.
2. *The Dance of Life*, p. 38.
3. But see Slater, *The Dravidian Element in Indian Culture*, pp. 106 ff.
4. Coomaraswamy, *The Dance of Śiva*, p. 56.
5. *The Himalayas in Indian Art*, p. 38.
6. E. Mackay, *The Indus Civilization*, pp. 93 ff. Sir John Marshall, *Mohenjodaro and the Indus Civilization*, pp. 38 ff.
7. See 'Ṛgvedic River-Goddesses and an Indus Valley Seal', in this volume, pp. 213 ff.
8. Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda*, p. 351; Dubash, *Hindu Art in its Social Setting*, p. 186.
9. Keith, op. cit., p. 374.
10. Ibid., p. 475.
11. Ibid., p. 121.
12. Cf. Griffith, *Hymns of the Ṛgveda*, vol. I, p. 496.
13. *Vedic Hymns*, Part I (*SBE*, vol. XXXII), p. xcvi.
14. Ibid
15. See R.R. Schmidt, *Dawn of the Human Mind*, pp. 119, 172; Dorothy Davison, *Men of the Dawn*, p. 115; cf. Curt Sachs, *World History of the Dance*, Ch. 1.
16. See Grassmann, *Wörterbuch zum Ṛgveda, s.v.*
17. Wallis, *Cosmology of the Ṛgveda*, p. 43.
18. Griffith, op. cit., II. p. 486.
19. Ibid., p. 402.
20. Ibid., p. 150.
21. J.J. Meyer, *Trilogie altindsches Machte . .* reviewed by Benoy Kumar Sarkar, *IHQ*, vol. XIX, No. 4, pp. 373 ff.

18

Tagore and Indian Culture*

From age to age India has produced great men and women, carrying on the old tradition and yet ever adapting it to changing times. Rabindranath Tagore, as Nehru has aptly remarked,[1] came in line with that great succession. But he was at the same time a most progressive thinker although rooted in India's past, and in his own self built up a synthesis of the old and the new. 'I love India', said Tagore, 'not because I cultivate the idolatry of geography, not because I have had the chance to be born in her soil, but because she has saved through tumultuous ages the living words that have issued from the illuminated consciousness of her great ones'. The conflict of the past with the present, of the ancient institutions and beliefs of Hinduism with the rational and scientific urge of the modern era, was at no time more prominent than during the last half century, and of those who faced this crisis bravely and heroically Rabindranath Tagore stands out as the most illustrious and versatile personality towering above most of his compatriots who themselves were leaders of great eminence and undoubted genius.

Before I proceed to discuss Tagore's place in Indian culture, it seems necessary to outline in brief the cultural renaissance that was taking place in India, particularly in Bengal, at the time of his appearance. Edward Thompson, in his famous study of *Rabindranath Tagore*, gives a vivid picture of the political and social state of the country at this time. The earliest Bengali literature, he points out, takes us into a different world from the Hindu one of today. The brahmanic influence had been for centuries at a very low ebb, and Buddhism reigned. Though long since replaced by Hinduism, Buddhism clung tenaciously to the mind of the people and its influence was working although out of sight. About A.D. 1200 the political control of Bengal passed out of the hands of the people of

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the soil and seven hundred years of foreign rule began. Bengali thought and literature suffered not only because the new Muslim rulers were alien in race and religion but still more because the lack of integration in the political and social aspects of the country's life. Till the British rule was established there was no unifying power. No great literature could arise as there was no throbbing of the pulse of national feeling, and hardly any progress was possible in any direction. Life was narrowed in other ways than political; with the triumph of Hinduism over Buddhism, a process which was completed about the time of the Muslim invasion of 1199, caste had hardened and women's lot become circumscribed and veiled. About 200 years after the Muslim conquest a few notable poets appeared such as Candidāsa and Vidyāpati. The Vaiṣṇava tradition of religious poetry was revived a century later and Vaiṣṇava poems came to be produced in every village of Bengal. Under the influence of the Muslim rulers the great Sanskrit epics, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata*, had been translated into Bengali. There was also a rich crop of Bengali folk-poetry and Shākta songs as well as the God-intoxicated chants of the Bauls. And finally came Western influence in the activities of missionaries beginning with William Carey — an influence which gradually led to a conflict between itself and the orthodox Hindu culture.

It was at this time that Rammohan Roy appeared on the scene and founded the Brahmo Samaj which inaugurated an era of Hindu reform the influence of which was to become a potent factor in the life of Tagore, for it was the poet's own grandfather Dwarkanath Tagore who kept the Samaj alive after the death of Roy. Two streams of movement now began to flow: the religious and the literary. The extreme reformist tendencies led to the development of a school that ignored everything Indian and preached wholesale Westernization both in literature and life. On the religious side the work was carried on by the poet's father, Debendranath Tagore, who revived the activities of the Brahmo Samaj and stopped the tide of Christian conversions that was taking place on a large scale. Bengal, in the midst of these cultural and religious conflicts, was filled with a pulsing eagerness. In the words of Thompson, it was into this ferment that Rabindranath Tagore was born on the 6th of May, 1861.[2]

The Tagore family was thus in the forefront of the reform movement within Hinduism that was started by the Brahmo Samaj. The father of the future poet was the most energetic member of the circle of zealous reformists and revivalists. Debendranath Tagore was a

theist of the most uncompromising sort and his beliefs often clashed with the polytheistic creed of popular Hinduism. He created opposition even in his own family by his vigorous denunciation of orthodox Hindu practices like idolatry. Rabindranath inherited all this zeal of the father. But it must be mentioned that this attitude did not amount to a denial of the great spiritual message of early Hinduism. The attack was only on what Debendranath felt did not properly belong to the true religion of his ancestors. This is clear from the latter part of the illustrious career of this great reformer, for in his later years Debendranath became such an enthusiastic upholder of the true spirit of orthodox Hinduism that he came to be universally known as the *Maharshi* or the great *ṛṣi*. The word *ṛṣi* means the 'sage'; it is the title accorded in tradition to the ancient promulgators of the religion of the Vedas and the *Upaniṣads*. It is necessary here to emphasize that Rabindranath not only benefitted from the zealous reformist tendencies of his noble father but also inherited in a large measure his father's spiritual conservatism and love of meditation. These facts would indicate the richness and the complexity of Tagore's background both in social and religious matters. It is solely in the context of such an environment that the full significance of Tagore's contributions in the literary and cultural fields can be properly estimated.

Tagore's achievements as poet and man of letters need not detain us long, for these are too wellknown to students of literature all over the world. His eminence in these spheres is indeed unrivalled in the East, if not in the whole world. It is not easy to point out a writer of modern times whose works have created such worldwide interest as Tagore's. Every country bestowed honours on the Poet Laureate of the East. He not only received the Nobel Prize for literature but was signally honoured by the most venerated of academic institutions in the British Commonwealth, the University of Oxford, when for the first time in its history it held a special convocation outside its precincts to bestow the highest Doctorate on the poet.

It is, however, not with Tagore's literary achievements as poet, novelist, essayist and journalist that I am concerned here, but especially with the cultural and spiritual content of his varied writings. I have already pointed out how rich and complex was Tagore's social and literary background. He received no formal schooling, but yet had an education in English literature the like of which no school or even university could provide. He read English poetry, particularly

the works of such writers as Shelly and Keats, with avidity. And it must be admitted that this reading left a deep impression on the mind of Tagore. Even as a mature poet in later years his technique and imagery bore the stamp of his early acquaintance with these English masters. At the same time, however, another and more vital stream fed the current of his growing genius. This was the perennial wisdom of his ancestors coming down from hoary antiquity through the Vedas and the *Upaniṣads*. The spirit of these ancient teachings pervaded the atmosphere of the home of the Tagores, and young Rabindranath was nurtured in an environment steeped with such sublime spiritual culture. It is only with reference to this background of his early years that we can understand the abstract nature and profundity of the symbolism of Tagore's poetry and the depth of his mystical and idealistic philosophy which proved to be the greatest obstacle for Western readers and critics of his works. This is specially characteristic of his poems like *Gītāñjalī, The Gardner,* and *The Crescent Moon,* dramas like the *Post Office* and *The King of the Dark Chamber,* and his voluminous collections of philosophical and religious essays such as *Sādhanā, Personality* and *The Religion of Man.*

'What was it that made communication between the Eastern poet and his (Western) readers so difficult ?', asks Aronson in his book *Rabindranath: Through Western Eyes.* The answer may be given in his own words:

> A poet handles his material, the experiences which he communicates, in terms of symbols. Not all symbols, however, are of his own creation. He himself is part of a tradition, which is not only 'literary' but embraces the whole of his being. The language in which he clothes his experiences is rich with the symbols of a past which is foreign to most Westerners . . . Rabindranath uses symbols which are intricate enough for his own countrymen to follow, symbols that came to him straight from the soil of his people, and others again that had laid hidden in the treasure-house of ancient Indian civilization.[3]

The most precious part, it may be added, of that heritage was in fact contained in those immortal treatises known as the *Upaniṣads* to which I have already alluded as being the most significant source of Tagore's inspiration. A critical analysis of his symbolic concept of the *Jībandebatā*, or the *life-deity* motive, which emerges in the period beginning with the lyrical compositions such as *The Golden Boat,*

would doubtless show the extent to which Tagore's religious and philosophical background had influenced his poetry. The idea, the poet himself once explained, 'has a double strand. There is the Vaishnava dualism—always keeping the separateness of the self—and there is the Upaniṣadic monism: God is wooing each individual; and God is also the ground-reality of all . . .' (Thompson, p. 105). It seems appropriate here to add that even the so-called 'Vaishnava dualism' has its roots in the *Upaniṣads*, and that there is hardly any philosophical idea in the later Hindu systems which cannot be traced however faintly to the great store-house of Upaniṣadic wisdom.

Next to these *Upaniṣads*, it was the teachings of Lord Buddha that nourished the genius of Tagore's thought and culture. This comes out clearly in the poet's own reply to his Western critics given in his Preface to the *Sādhanā*:

> For Western scholars, the great religious scriptures of India seem to possess merely a retrospective and archaeological interest; but to us they are of living importance . . . The meaning of the living words that come out of great hearts can never be exhausted by any one system of logical interpretation. They have to be endlessly explained by the commentaries of individual lives, and they gain an added mystery in each new revelation. To me the verses of the Upaniṣads and the teachings of the Buddha have ever been things of the spirit, and therefore endowed with boundless vital growth; and I have used them, both in my own life and in my own preaching . . .

In his *Santiniketan Series* Tagore has given several illuminating studies of the Buddha and his teachings. As Thompson remarks,[4] he was drawn by the Indian ascetic prince Gotama as by no other figure in the world's history. It was not Buddha's gentleness alone that attracted him; he was drawn by his 'great strength, his supreme calm. Rabindranath is temperamentally intellectual and meditative . . . and this is why he is drawn by Gautama.'[5] In this connection reference could be made to the numerous poems written by Tagore either directly with Buddhist themes or implicitly with a Buddhist atmosphere. He always speaks of Lord Buddha with deep faith and sincere affection. His poems convey an earnest appeal for the revival of the spirit of Buddhism in his native land whence the Master's Teaching had disappeared long ago escaping from the crushing bigotry of Brahmanistic orthodoxy. With bitter sarcasm Tagore records in one

of his great poems the tragedy of how heartless Brahmanism destroyed the lamp of Buddhism which for centuries had illuminated Indian civilization. The English version of this poem, sublime in its pathetic appeal, occurs in his *Fruit-gathering* and runs as follows:

Over the relic of Lord Buddha King Bimbisār built a shrine, a salutation in white marble,

There in the evening would come all the brides and daughters of the King's house to offer flowers and light lamps.

When the son became king in his time he washed his father's creed away with blood, and lit sacrificial fires with its sacred books.

The Autumn day was dying.

The evening hour of worship was near. Shrimati, the Queen's maid, devoted to Lord Buddha . . . silently raised her dark eyes to the Queen's face.

The Queen shuddered in fear and said, 'Do you not know, foolish girl, that death is the penalty for whoever brings worship to Buddha's shrine? Such is the King's will' . . .

Shrimati walked from door to door. She raised her head and cried, 'O women of the King's house, hasten !

The time for our Lord's worship is come !'

Some shut their doors in her face and some reviled her.

The last gleam of daylight faded from the bronze dome of the palace tower.

Deep shadows settled in street-corners: the bustle of the city was hushed: the gong at the temple of Shiva announced the time of the evening prayer.

In the dark of the autumn evening, deep as a limpid lake, stars throbbed with light, when the guards of the palace garden were startled to see through the trees a row of lamps burning in the shrine of the Buddha.

They ran with their swords unsheathed, crying,

'Who are you, foolish one, reckless of death ?'

'I am Shrimati,' replied a sweet voice, 'the servant of Lord Buddha.'

The next moment her heart's blood coloured the cold marble with its red.

And in the still hour of stars died the light of the last lamp of worship at the foot of the shrine.

I need not dwell any longer on the deep religious background

of the poet's life. Those who read his poems will find that they are the outpourings of a heart that had been cleansed in the fire of the glowing ethical teachings not only of the *Upaniṣad*s and Buddhism but also of Christianity and Zoroastrianism. In his *Gītāñjalī* (IV), the poet preaches the highest religion of love and purity.

I shall ever try to drive all evils away from my heart and keep my love in flower, knowing that thou hast thy seat in the inmost shrine of my heart.

And it shall be my endeavour to reveal thee in my actions, knowing it is thy power gives me strength to act.

In accordance with Upaniṣadic teachings Tagore believes that the highest Truth or Reality is in Man's own being. The Brahman is in Man. In his Hibbert Lectures, published under the title *The Religion of Man*, Tagore gives the whole content and essence of his metaphysical beliefs, and students of the *Upaniṣads* will easily detect the source of its inspiration. In fact, the poet himself makes no secret of it. In the very first chapter he says:

The idea of the humanity of our God, or the divinity of Man the Eternal, is the main subject of this book. This thought of God has not grown in my mind through any process of philosophical reasoning. On the contrary, it has followed the current of my early days until it suddenly flashed into my consciousness with a direct vision. The experience . . . convinced me that on the surface of our being we have the ever-changing phases of the individual self, but in the depth there dwells the Eternal Spirit of human unity beyond our direct knowledge.

The whole of these Hibbert Lectures is nothing but a living commentary on the philosophy of the *Upaniṣads*. The ground of all existence is the one and unitary Brahman, the Infinite, which is present in Nature as well as all living beings. The highest empirical expression of this Reality, Tagore believes, is in and through Man. The noblest aspiration, therefore, is to realize this Infinite in Man, and those who attained that ideal, says Tagore, were the ancient *ṛṣi*s: 'They who having attained the supreme soul in knowledge were filled with wisdom . . . having reached the supreme God from all sides had found abiding peace, had become united with all, had entered into the life of the universe.' This ideal which India tried to realize led her best men to the isolation of a contemplative life, says Tagore, and the treasures that she gained for mankind by penetrating into the

mysteries of reality cost her dear in the sphere of worldly success. 'Yet, this was a sublime achievement — it was a supreme manifestation of that human aspiration which knows no limit' (*Sādhanā*, p. 14).

There are writers and critics in the West who have attempted to explain this idealistic religion of Tagore as being due in the main to Christian influence. The *Gītāñjalī*, in particular, which was substantially the cause for the award of the Nobel Prize to our poet, raised much discussion on the supposed influence of Christianity on his work. But such a view displays a sad lack of appreciation of the complex cultural background of the poet's life. The theistic element present in Tagore's thought and belief which is advanced as the strongest evidence in support of the view, may be better explained as being due to the sure theism of the Vaiṣnava and Baul religious songs. It is unnecessary to assume any other extraneous influence. Let me again quote the words of the most famous Western student of Tagore, Edward Thompson of Oxford, who was himself an ardent Christian: 'In my opinion', says this writer, 'the direct influence (of Christianity) was very slight, and his (Tagore's) attitude towards Christian doctrine was hardly friendly'.[6] The poet's intense feeling for God must in the last analysis be connected with the corresponding religious emotion pervading the theistic *Upaniṣads*.

It is from the central tenet of the Upaniṣadic teaching on God and Man, the ultimate unity of *Brahman* and *Ātman*, that the ethical and sociological doctrines that form the thought background of Tagore's poems and essays in the main derive. Even Buddhism is interpreted according to this fundamental Upaniṣadic postulate. In the *Sādhanā* (p. 17) Tagore writes:

> Buddha, who developed the practical side of the teaching of the Upaniṣads, preached the same message when he said, 'With everything, whether it is above or below, remote or near, visible or invisible, thou shalt preserve a relation of unlimited love without any animosity... To live in such a consciousness, while standing or walking, sitting or lying down . . . is *Brahma-vihāra*, or, in other words, is living and moving and having your joy in the spirit of Brahma.'

Again, in the same work (p. 106), he says, 'Buddha preached the discipline of self-restraint and moral life; it is a complete acceptance of law. But the bondage of law cannot be an end in itself; by mastering it thoroughly we acquire the means of getting beyond it. It is going

back to Brahma, to the infinite love, which is manifesting itself through the finite forms of law. Buddha names it *Brahma-vihāra*, the joy of living in Brahma.' He who wants to reach this stage, according to the Buddha, 'shall deceive none, entertain no hatred for anybody, and never wish to injure through anger. He shall have measureless love for all creatures, even as a mother has for her only child . . .'

In several other places Tagore deals with this same topic, showing the extent of the influence of this noble Buddhist concept on his own thought and feeling. In his famous Hibbert *Lectures* (p. 70), he goes on to discuss the psychological and social implications of the attitude of *Brahma-vihāra*, or, 'living in Brahma'. The poet says:

> This proves that Buddha's idea of the infinite was not the idea of a spirit of an unbounded cosmic activity, but the infinite whose meaning is in the positive ideal of goodness and love, which cannot be otherwise than human. By being charitable, good and loving, you do not realize the infinite in the stars or rocks, but the infinite revealed in Man. Buddha's teaching speaks of Nirvāṇa as the highest end. To understand its real character we have to know the path of its attainment, which is not merely through the negation of evil thoughts and deeds but through the elimination of all limits to love. It must mean the sublimation of self in a truth which is love itself, which unites in its bosom all those to whom we must offer our sympathy and service.

Whatever the philosophical implications of this interpretation may be, no Buddhist or student of Buddhism will fail to appreciate the fact that Tagore's intense ethical feeling of love and compassion is quite in accord with the social ethic as preached by the Buddha. What is even more important to observe is that it was this doctrine of unbounded love for all beings, as emphasized in Buddhism, that became the corner-stone of Tagore's social and moral teachings.

This brings us to the highest contribution of Tagore's life and work to Indian culture, namely, his great emphasis on universal love as the highest form of response between man and man, and between nation and nation. The ideal for man is to become more and more one with the Infinite in love and wisdom. We must *become* Brahma, says Tagore. He criticizes the static Vedāntic view that man as he is already Brahma or Highest Perfection. 'But can it then be said', he asks, 'that there is no difference between Brahma and our individual soul? Of course, the difference is obvious. Call it delusion or igno-

rance, or whatever name you may give it, it is there . . . Brahma is Brahma, he is the infinite ideal of perfection . . . we are ever to become true, ever to become Brahma. There is the eternal play of love in the relation between this being and the becoming; and in the depth of this mystery is the source of all truth and beauty . . ." (*Sādhanā*, p.155). This concept of universal love or universality which is thus the key-note of Tagore's philosophy makes it the most eloquent expression of Humanism that has been given by any modern writer or thinker. This is the reason why the more vociferous type of Indian nationalist disliked Tagore, referring to this attitude sneeringly as his 'internationalism'. But the great poet and thinker would not yield in his conviction. For, he writes:

> 'Men have seen the absurdity of today's civilization, which is based upon nationalism,—that is to say, on economics and politics, and its consequent militarism. Men have been losing their freedom and their humanity in order to fit themselves for vast mechanical organizations. So the next civilization, it is hoped, will be based not merely upon economical and political competition and exploitation but upon worldwide social cooperation; upon spiritual ideas of reciprocity, but not upon economic ideals of efficiency. (*Personality*, pp. 182-83)

No one who contemplates the world as it is today will fail to see the prophetic aptness of this observation. This greatest of modern humanitarians fought for the true freedom of the human mind. Whether in politics or in education or in social reconstruction he acted without the least taint of narrow prejudice. Shantiniketan, the school he founded, became the focal point of many cultures. He was at home with any lover of Truth whether he came from the East or the West. His general attitude to culture cannot be summed up better than in his own celebrated lines:

> Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;
> Where knowledge is free;
> Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;
> Where words come out from the depth of truth;
> Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;
> Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;

Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action—

Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

REFERENCES

1. J. Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, p. 687.
2. This paragraph is mainly based on Thompson's discussion.
3. Aronson, *Rabindranath Through Western Eyes*, pp. 99 ff.
4. Thompson, op. cit., p. 127.
5. Ibid., quoting Mahalanobis.
6. Ibid., p. 81.

19

Ṛgvedic Bharata: A Survival From Aryan Prehistory*

Of all the terms understood as designating Aryan tribes during the period of the composition of the *Ṛgveda saṃhitā* none is perhaps of greater significance for the later history of Indian civilization than the celebrated name *Bharata*. The part played by the Bharatas or Bhāratas in consolidating Aryan rule in Vedic times and in the succeeding centuries till about the rise of Buddhism constitutes on any account an important chapter in the social and political history of ancient India. Many are the opinions[1] that have been held by Vedic scholars regarding their ethnic identity and place among the Vedic tribes, but the mystery that surrounds this ancient name and people remains hitherto unravelled. In this paper an attempt will be made to analyse the socio-semantic content of the term as found in its several contexts in the *Ṛgveda*, which, it is hoped, will throw considerable light on the obscurity that as yet shrouds the archaic name.

In the *Ṛgveda* the word occurs both in the singular as some remote (proper?) name, and in the plural as implying a people, race or tribe, apart from the incidence of the derivative form *bhārata*. The etymological sense of the word itself has not been settled beyond doubt, and this perplexity has risen from the fact that in the *Ṛgveda* the root *bhṛ* has several senses or shades of meaning. This has led to a variety of interpretations so far as the term *bharata* is concerned, and it is only by defining the primitive sense of it with some degree of certainty that any headway could be made in understanding its social implications. Most writers and translators seem to have accepted the general sense of *bharata* as given by the standard lexicons, to wit, 'to be sustained, nourished'—the construction offered by Böhtlingk and

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Roth in the fifth part of the famous Petersburg Lexicon (*Sanskrit Wörterbuch*) dated 1868. It may be seen that this rendering depends on two considerations; first, that the root *bhṛ* here means to *maintain, sustain, nourish*, and second, that the grammatical structure of the form conveys a *gerundival* sense. This 'gerundive sense' is attributed to the form inasmuch as the majority of formations having the primary suffix *-ata* in the Vedic dialect are observed to possess such a significance, and, perhaps, because the existence of Avestan *yazata*, corresponding to the very common Vedic *yajata* whose analogy has greatly influenced scholars in this matter, apparently takes back this implication of the suffix to Indo-Iranian times. Thus Whitney explains:

> A small number of adjectives in the older language ending in *ata* are not to be separated from the participial words in *ta* although their specific meaning is in part gerundive. They are *pacatá*, 'cooked', *darśatá* and *paśyatá* 'seen, to be seen, worth seeing', and so *yajatá, haryatá, bharatá*. The *y* of *paśyata* and *haryata* indicates pretty plainly that the *a* also is that of a present tense-stem. *Rajatá* 'silvery', is of more obscure relation to √*raj* 'colour'.[2]

Of these the only forms occurring in the *Ṛgveda* are *pacata, yajata, rajata, darśata* and *bharata* and if Grassmann (*WR*, 1701) is to be followed, also *vrata* and its numerous compounds. But it must be emphasized that although generally the meaning of *-ata* is taken as *gerundive*, i.e. 'to be . . . worthy of . . .' it is neither necessary, nor, as a matter of fact, possible, in all instances. For instance, in *rajata*, which is, according to O. Schrader[3], 'clearly (from *raj*) like *darśata* 'visible' from the root *darś* and *yajata* 'venerable' from the root *yaj*', and corresponds to Avestan *erezata*, Armenian *artatic* and Latin *argentum*, and which occurs only once (8.25.22) in the *Ṛgveda* and that in the sense of 'white, shining', (*rajatam sci. aśuam*), the gerundive sense is hardly applicable. Its original sense must be 'shining' from the root *raj* going back to an I.E. base √*rag̑* from a root √*rg̑* with a suffix *-ṇto* as explained by Schrader (*Ibid.*). It is further to be noted that this suffix *-ata* is not to be separated from the participial primary suffix *-ta*, as already seen from Whitney's remark, and it is significant that the forms cited by him such as *sū-ta* 'charioteer', *mar-ta*, 'mortal' (i.e. dying, liable to die), *vā-ta*, 'wind' (i.e. blowing), and probably also *gar-ta*, 'car-seat' (prob. swallower) and *has-ta* 'hand' (prob. seiz-er) have more or less an *agent* sense, as pointed out by Macdonell (*Ved. Gr.* § 145) who puts under the same category forms

like *kīs-ta*, 'singer' and *bas-ta* 'he goat'. A similar adjectival use of *-ta* is also seen in *dvita*, *trita*, *muhūrta*, and apparently also cited by Whitney (§ 1245.c.). That *-ata* or *-ta* could have both the *active* (agent) and *passive* (gerundive) senses may be admitted from the analogy of other suffixes like *-ti*, *-tu*, *-tna* etc. as described by Macdonell (§§ 113 *et. seq.*). Thus there is no categorical reason why the form *bharata* should of necessity be construed as *bhar-ata* and given a *gerundival* sense; it may as well be taken as possessing an *agent* sense, and this hypothesis gains in probability by the analogy of *rajata*, *sūta* etc. But exactly what out of these possible senses it may signify in the Ṛgvedic term Bharata must be decided from other evidence than the merely grammatical, and it is precisely here that the analysis of the socio-semantic content of the root *bhṛ* and its derivatives *bhara* etc., as elucidated from actual occurrences in the *Ṛgveda*, may be regarded as definitive.

Thus at the very outset, a discussion of the semantic evolution of *bhṛ* in its verbal forms seems imperative. Since the root is found in most of the known I.E. dialects with the general sense of 'bear, carry' one must admit this to be its primitive sense as current at the period of unity. Thus we have Skt. *bhar-*(ati); Avest. *bar-*(aiti); Gk. *pher-*(o); Lat. *fer-*(o); Slav. *bra-*(ti); Goth. *bair-*(an); OHG. *ber-*(an); AS. *ber-*(an) Olr. *ber-*(im); Ger. (ge) *bär-*(en); Eng. bear, all having the primary sense of 'bear', i.e., 'carry'. This, in fact, is also the basic sense of *bhar-* as found in the *Ṛgveda* to judge from the contexts cited by Grassmann (*WR. s. bhṛ*). He gives altogether 22 shades of meaning for this root, of which the last two are merely the medial and intensive senses; (1) carry, bear (on *or* in); (2) hold; (3) bear child; (4) become pregnant; (5) carry a child (on the breast); (6) bear, have (a name); (7) prop, hold erect; (8) maintain, tend (the fire); (9) draw (wagon), lead, direct; (10) fare, drive (in); (11) carry along with, have about (one); (12) carry off, bear away, seize, capture; (13) bear strength or epithet; (14) have aptitude, condition; (15) bring towards; (16) bring on, up (produce); (17) bring from, (18) offer, sacrifice; (19) raise (voice, sound); (20) carry off, get, obtain; (21) be borne along; (22) surge, heave (*intens.*). From these senses, about *five* more or less different meanings may be abstracted, thus; (*i*) carry, bear, hold (1-6), possess, have (13-14); bring to, offer, sacrifice (15-18); (*ii*) prop, support, shelter, maintain, sustain, (7-8); (*iii*) draw, fare, convey (9-11); (*iv*) bear off, seize, capture (12); get, obtain (20); (*v*) lift up, raise (voice, shout) (19). This division may

be seen to agree in essentials with the one made by Monier-Williams (*Dict. s. bhṛ*).

Although the general sense of *bharata* has been taken by most writers as derived from the root-meaning (*ii*), namely, 'he who is to be maintained, supported, tended' (in particular, Agni), yet a study of the contexts under (*iv*) clearly indicates that the sense of 'carry off, bear away' hence 'rob, plunder, raid, win (obtain) in fight or race', has a significantly pronounced vogue in the *Ṛgveda*. The significance of the following references is unmistakable:

In *Ṛgveda* (2.30.2) Indra is described as one 'who was about to rob the prosperity of (*lit.* plunder booty against) *Vṛtra* (*yaḥ vṛtrāya sinam atra abhariṣyat*)'.[4] Again (5.32.9) he is thus glorified: 'Who may arrest his strength or check his vigour? Alone, resistless, he bears away all spoils (*ekaḥ dhanā bharate apratītaḥ*)', where Sāyaṇa himself does not hesitate to take *dhanā* as spoils or booty (*dhanā dhanāni śatrūnāṃ vasūni, bharate bibharti harate vā*), a sense clearly established by '*gantā vajeṣu sanitā dhanaṃ dhanam*' (2.23.13). The following verse (9.79.2) not only shows the sense of 'plunder' for *bhar* but also pictures the kind of social context in which alone such activity could arise:

'pra naḥ dhanvantu indavaḥ madacyutaḥ—dhanā vā yebhiḥ arvataḥ
junīmasi.
tiraḥ martasya kasya cit parihvṛtiṃ—vayaṃ dhanāni viśvadhā
bharemahi'.

'Yet the drops mead-distilling cause us to rush forth to the spoils, for whose sake we urge the racers on. Beyond the trap of any mortal may we continually bear the spoils away'.[5] Emphasis must be laid here on the use of *dhanvantu* from *dhanv*—run, rush, race—which is only a derivative base of *dhan*, move swiftly, whence is also derived *dhana*. That this *rushing* is no other than the *swooping down* in raiding, foraging or pillaging, and that *dhana* is the material object (food, cattle etc.) thus won as booty, is made patent not only by several Ṛgvedic contexts but also by the related derivatives *dhanus* and *dhanvan*[6], both meaning bow, and perhaps even by *dhanu* (f.), *dhanvan.* signifying 'barren land'[7], which may easily refer to the steppeland wherein such nomadic raids first came into vogue, as will be explained in the course of this paper. The sense of 'bow implies the concept of *instrument* and the meaning 'barren land' the notion of *locality* which may develop from the same verbal idea of

'(nomadic) plunder, attack', as suggested by Monier-Williams (*op. cit.*), at least for the meaning of 'bow'. It is also significant that such incursions or forays were made *on horse-back* (*arvataḥ junīmasi*). That these involved actual fights and were not merely races undertaken in sport is seen from another passage (10.64.6) where such horses are referred to as 'racers (*arvanto*), vigorous (*vājino*) winners of thousands in the winning of nourishment (*medha-sātau*), who carry away (*jabhrire*) great booty in every encounter (*samitheṣu*)'. This last word like *samiti* is found in the *Ṛgveda* in the sense of 'battle, encounter', meaning rather a clash than a competition.[8] And 'arvanto' obviously refers to the *swift horse* which the nomadic Aryan raiders are said to have tamed and employed in their booty-winning incursions, as will be shown below In this connection *medha-sāti* is also important, for, like its parallel *vāja-sāti* it literally signifies a forage or winning of food. It actually occurs beside '*vāja-sati*' at 8.40.2 where Indra is implored to 'come unto us with his swift horse (*arvatā*), for winning (strength-giving) food (*vāja-sātaye*) and for the winning of fatness (*medha-sātaye*)'. Sāyaṇa's gloss on the last word is *yajñabhajanāya* and it is not improbable that by *yajña-* he implied sacrificial viands (cf. *bhaj-*, partake of). Grassmann (*WR, s.v.*) relates the compound with *medha* in his second sense of 'nourishment' and Monier-Williams has no hesitation in taking it as 'juice of meat, nourishing or strengthening drink' (*Dict., s.v.*). Historically, *medh* is, undoubtedly, the earlier form of the common root *med*, be fat, going back to a likely I.E. **mesd(h)* as may be inferred from the existence of OHG, *mast*, fattening; Gk. *mé(d)zca, mestós*; AS. *mos*; Goth. *mats*, eatables etc. which are also related to Skr. *mad-* in the sense of 'drip, be full of liquid, fat' corresponding to Avestan *madh*. It becomes clear that these raids were originally at least, made for the express purpose of winning forage, and *vāja*, the usual object of *bhar-* (2.24.9, 26.3; cf. 2.23.13; 3.37.6; *bharad-vāja, vājambhara*, etc.), is a word that originally meant '(strengthening) food, nourishment', became the most popular term for 'plundered food' or forage. There is no doubt that *vāja* comes from the root *vaj* meaning 'to be strong' (Whitney, *Sanskrit Roots, s.v.*), and since it was food that gave bodily strength it developed the sense of 'food, nourishment'. It is curious that this etymology seems to have escaped Max-Müller in his semantic study of Ṛgvedic *vāja*[9] in which he completely ignores the sense of *food*, although Sāyaṇa everywhere has taken it as *anna*. In the above-cited contexts (2.24.9, 26.3 etc.) the winning of food or nourishment

is said to result from the worship of Brahmaṇaspati (or Bṛhaspati) and it is highly significant that he too, like Indra, is an Aryan culture-hero celebrated for his *forages* (2.23.26, in particular 2.23.13). Similarly, (1.64.13) the Maruts, who are famous as the bellicose associates of Indra in his exploits, are described in exactly parallel terms to help their devotee to gain 'food with his racers and spoils with his men' (*arvadbhiḥ vājam bharate dhanā nṛbhiḥ*). This may be compared with the Indra-worshipper 'gaining swiftly food and spoils with his men'. (*makṣū sa vājam bharate dhanā nṛbhiḥ*) (10.147.4). In the use of *vājinam* as an epithet of Indra (*ibid.* 3) one may, therefore, see the same sense of 'master of forage' (*vāja+in*) rather than the adjectival sense of 'strong' which is already denoted by *ugra* from the same root, another verse (5) of the same hymn showing clearly that the finding of food and fodder (*pitvaḥ*) was an important aspect of the Indra-worship. Similarly, in the light of the above references to the indispensability of the swift, racing horse for these raids or food-plundering expeditions it is not surprising to find that animal being specifically called 'booty-winner' (*vājam-bhara*), 4.12.14 (*vājin*), 1.60.5 (*āśum*), 10.80.1 (*saptim*), and, that in all the cited contexts this horse is said to have sprung from Agni whose cult was typical of the religious practices of these Aryan nomadic raiders, as shown by anthropologists.[10] The sense of 'prize-winner' (at races)[11] that may be possible in a few instances for *vājam bhara* must be regarded as a secondary development from the original, and culturally more primitive, idea of 'booty (i.e., forage)-winner', for it is well known that racing as a pastime evolved from the more primitive use of the horse in raids or fights, just as the chase as civilized sport arose out of the primitive habit of hunting for food.

From the foregoing facts it would be legitimate to draw the conclusion that the verb *bhar-* has in the *Ṛgveda* the prominent sense of *foraying* (*foraging*), that is to say, *finding food or fodder by ravage, plunder, which naturally involved raiding and looting.*[12] The use of *muṣ* in identical context referring to the raid-leader Indra (see *muṣe*—5.34.7) leaves no room for doubt that this was a traditional Aryan occupation, for *muṣ* as shown by several contexts in the *Ṛgveda* (WR) and by its I.E. parallels means clearly *rob* or *plunder*, particularly, food. Thus it is no wonder that in several contexts of the *Ṛgveda bhar-* too gives the precise meaning of 'stealing, robbing' (10.36.9, 87.16, 113.6; cf. *AV*, 8.3.16).[13] That these senses of 'foraging, raiding, stealing' of the root *bhṛ* were current from a very early

period, as seen from the fact that most citations are from Book II and other family books, is further indicated by the clear occurrence of the derivative noun *bhara* in exactly the same sense of *forage*, that is to say, *food or fodder obtained by robbing, plundering, pillaging or raiding*, developing into the general idea of 'loot, booty' and hence 'spoils' of war. Grassmann gives the following *four senses* for *bhara* (masc.):

(i)	obtaining, gaining, what is obtained	4 references
(ii)	winning of booty, capturing	5 references
(iii)	battle, as gathering of booty, spoils	27 references
(iv)	laud, shout	7 references

It is clear from the ratio of incidence as given that the most frequent occurrences of *bhara* in the *Ṛgveda* is in the sense of *battle* as gathering of booty (either forage, i.e. food, or spoils of war). What is of even greater significance is that ancient Indian tradition as preserved by Yāska ascribed to the term the very same sense, namely, 'battle' (*vide, Nirukta*, 4.24; '*Bhara iti saṃgrāma-nāma, bharater vā harater vā*'). Sāyaṇa himself accepts this meaning for a number of contexts (e.g. in 1.100.1, 2, etc.). It will be seen that there is no real difference between the senses (*ii*) and (*iii*) as given by Grassmann, and the following list of references, all significantly pertaining to Indra, leaves hardly a shadow of doubt as to the validity of the meaning here suggested:

'I invoke that mighty Indra for the winning of food (*vāja-sātaye*) for the foray (*bharāya*)'—8.13.3; cf. 3.30.22.

'Yea, Indra, of yore (*purā*), all the gods installed thee as their one strong (champion) for the foray'—6.17.8.

'Since, when born, all the gods adorned thee (Indra) for the great foray'—3.51.8. One may compare with the above use of *bharāya* its occurrence at 9.97.6, 106.2 (cf. 6.23.9), where, although Griffith has translated 'for maintenance' or 'for support', the Petersburg Lexicon and Grassmann (*s.v.*) have seen the same sense of 'for the fight'.

'With homage to thee, Indra, have the Soma drops flowed, singing (the war-song)[14], for the great foray'—9.16.5; cf. 1.112.1.

'Helped, O mighty Indra, by thee in the incursion of yore (*pūrvye dhane*), may we subdue those who fight against us . . . on this day at hand . . . at our (Soma) sacrifice, may we divide (*vi cayema*) what is made in the foray (*bhare kṛtam*), accumulating strength (-giving food) (*vājayanto*), what is made in the foray'—1.132.1; cf. (prayer to

Soma) 'may we share (*vi cinuyāma*) what is made in the foray'—9.97.58; cf. 10.102.2.

'May the thunder-armed Indra uphold us in the foray (*bhare*)'—5.36.5.

'O Indra, thou art great when the booty is at hand (*dhane hite*), thou unshakeable in the foray'—6.45.13.

'Him I invoke with eulogy, the best of chieftains (*jyeṣṭha-rājam*), active (or efficient) in the foray (*bhare*), the lord of food (*vājinam*), for victories of glory'—8.16.3.

Indra Vaikuṇṭha says of himself: 'I have been victorious . . . in every foray (*viśvasmin bhare*)'—10.49.1; cf. 10.50.4.

With this idiom *viśvasmin bhare* may be compared the constantly occurring phrase *bhare bhare* meaning similarly 'in every foray' in which Indra is extolled as victorious, as in 1.100.2 (cf. 1.100.4; 7.32.24; 82.9; 10.67.9; cf. Heaven and Earth in 5.43.2). Indra's connection with these forays or fights, as well as Agni's is further brought out clearly (8.40.3) where they are said to be 'dwellers in the midst of forays' (*bharāṇām madhye*). It is important to bear in mind that this plural use of *bhara* as referring to Indra's and Agni's exploits of the past (see *purā, pūrvye*, above) and practically approximating to 'battles' shows that the original fights in raids and incursions had by this time developed into actual warfare between *tribes and nations*.

Similarly, the plural use of the locative *bhareṣu* is indicative of the common occurrence of these fights as in 1.100.1; 109.8; 10.63.9; 107.11, where Indra is invoked for aid and succour, but the traditional sense is yet preserved (3.37.5) where Indra is invoked 'for Vṛtra's slaughter . . . to win us booty (*vāja-sātaye*) in the fights (*bhareṣu*)'. Among other culture-heroes similarly invoked for prosperity in battles (*bhareṣu*) are Soma (9.47.5; cf. *bhareṣ u-ja*, 1.91.21, *bharānām madhye*, 8.40.3), the Ṛbhus (1.111.5) or the *gods* in general (10.107.11; *Vāl.* 5.7). In 2.23.13, Bṛhaspati, whose connection with these raids has already been noted, is described as 'to be invoked in raids . . . the goer on forays, the winner of booty after booty (*bharesu havyo . . . gantā vājeṣu sanitā dhanandhanam*)'. In 4.38.5, the function of Dadhikrās, who is no other than the mythicized and idolized Aryan war-horse, already referred to, is extolled in a graphic description alluding to the stealth and swiftness of such incursions or forays: 'loudly the (settled) folk (i.e. the victims of pillage) cry after him (Dadhikrās) in the forays (*bhareṣu*) as if it were a thief stealing a garment, speeding at (their) wealth (*śravas, lit.* glory, or food; Sāy.

annam kīrtim vā), or a herd of cattle, like a hungry falcon sweeping downward'. [One cannot be far wrong in tracing back to this employment of the swift horse in such plundering expeditions its specific use in the institution of *dig-vijaya* (or *dig-jaya*) as practised by the Aryan monarchs of India (*vide, Mahābhārata,* II.983-1203; *Raghuvaṃśa,* etc.)]

The occurrence of the same word *bhara* in the sense of 'war cry' or 'battle song'as in 10.44.5, and of the compound *bhara-hū(ti)* (1.117.18; 5.29.8; 8.66.1 etc.) in the same sense, adds further support to the hypothesis that the *general* meaning of *bhara* in the *Ṛgveda* is 'raid, fight, battle'. Böhtlingk and Roth have already referred to the existence of Greek *khármē* with a similar meaning, (Greek lexicons usually giving the sense of 'joy of battle, lust of battle' and later 'victories'), which may indicate that this kind of primitive warfare with shouting and exhibition of brute force arose at some remote time among the early Aryans. Here too must be sought the origin of the later application of the 'word' *bharata* or *bharata* as actor, singer, etc., for as the present writer has shown elsewhere[15] the origin of Hindu dance, drama and, perhaps, even singing, can be historically traced to that kind of culture as reflected in the character of Indra, the Maruts and other fighter-heroes of Ṛgvedic mythology.

The foregoing discussion makes it clear that at some period of their cultural evolution the Ṛgvedic Aryans had taken to raiding and pillaging, for food, fodder, booty or wealth and that in the archaic Aryan speech such activity had come to be denoted by the verb **bher-*. The idolizing of the swift horse used in such incursions into the lands of settled communities,[16] and the almost ritual connotation that the word *bhara* had come to acquire, along with the deification of the nomadic raid-leader, swashbuckling Indra, who is unashamedly referred to as the champion who 'drives forth to plunder (*lit.* rob) the food (*bhojanam muṣe*) of the niggard (*paṇch*),[17] and distributes (that) excellent wealth among the pious (followers)' (5.34.7; cf. 1.33.3), show unmistakably that this institution had by the time of the composition of the text become merely a 'survival' from the archaic past (cf. *pūrvye dhane,* 1.132.1 and *purā* 6.17.8). Indra, who as we saw above, was regarded as the 'best of chieftains' (*jyeṣṭha-rājā*) was no other than 'a copy of the earthly princes', that is to say, of the nomadic Aryan chieftains who led their followers on raids and invasions which brought them immense wealth and regal glory, as so well described by Prof. V. Gordon Childe in his masterly treatise on

The Aryans (vide, pp. 30, 193, etc). In the light of this remark one can well understand the significance of the term *vaṇik* (*lit.* trader, i.e. one who possessed enough wealth to barter) as applied to Indra at 5.45.6. Speaking of the tombs found in the northern slopes of the Caucasus of Aryan chieftains who had led their followers on plundering expeditions into Armenia, Cappadocia, and even Mesopotamia, this famous authority on Aryan culture and prehistory says:

> Masses of gold and silver buried in the enormous barrows must partly be *loot* [italics mine] from the rich states south of the range . . . manifest in the gold and silver lions and bulls that decorated the canopy under which one prince was laid to rest . . . The *raids* that brought them north were prelude to invasions. We may suspect that the *ancestors of the Indians* and the Iranians discovered *as free-booters* the roads that eventually led them to the throne of Mitanni and the Indus Valley . . . While some nomads were settling down in the valleys and others were constituting principalities on the slopes of the Caucasus, the remainder left upon the steppe would be forced to find outlets for their increasing numbers and fresh pastures for their growing herds by means of *migration*. . . pastoralists do not spread slowly and regularly like [Danubian] cultivators but more rapidly by darts. Actual migration is preceded by exploratory expeditions in the summer, and such excursions reveal to the nomad other goals than mere *grazing grounds* —— centres of *wealth to be plundered* and held to ransom. The enforced expansion from the steppe seems in fact to have been guided by some such ends (pp. 194-96).

Giving the ecological reasons for this theory of the enforced expansion of the nomads from Central Asia, Childe says: 'the revelation of the cyclic desiccation of Inner Asia has provided a motive for the great exodus of the nomads, perhaps for their very nomadism. Such desiccation might have begun the process of expulsion and isolation which the incursion of the Mongols completed'. (p. 96). Finally, it may be added that the same authority has shown that the *swift horse* was '*a pre-eminently Aryan animal* (p. 156). . . whose introduction in Hither Asia went indubitably with Indo-European speech (p.78) . . . and whom the Aryan nomads were the first to tame' (pp. 109, 190).

In the light of the above remarks there can be no doubt that the basic or historical sense of '*bharata*' in the *Ṛgveda* is 'fighter' or

'warrior'[18] as a cultural development from the more primitive 'raider'. This applies without exception to all the references given by Grassmann (*WR*) for *bharata* (4) and *bhārata* (2), and *bharatāya* cited by him under sense (3) of *stammavater* (i.e. tribal progenitor) also should simply mean 'to the warrior' (*yūyam arvantam bharatāya dhattha* . . . 5.54.14), as Max-Müller took it in his *Vedic Hymns* (Pt. I, p. 327). There is, thus, left only one single context *bharatasya putrāḥ* (3.53.24) where the implication of tribal progenitor is valid, for the only other instance cited by Grassmann under (3), namely, *Agniḥ bharatasya* (7.8.4) clearly should belong to (4), if the meaning suggested in this paper is correct. By *bharatasya* (3.53.24) the reference made is undoubtedly to the founder of the Viśvāmitra family, more as a mythological than a genealogical personage. This should really be taken along with the only other similar reference *bharatasya sūnavaḥ* (2.36.2) which Grassmann classifies as his sense (2), namely, 'Rudra', whose sons, the Maruts, are certainly implied. An analysis of Rudra's character in the *Ṛgveda* shows that he is only the primitive Hunter deified (cf. Pali *ludda-ka* for 'hunter'), and as we intend proving elsewhere the Maruts are also such hunters (*mar-ut*, orig. kill-er'). This use of 'Bharata' is thus only a faint reminiscence of the evolution of the 'warrior' from the primitive hunter. As Childe has shown, at the end of the palaeolithic stage the Aryans were 'a sparse population of pre-neolithic hunters strung out indefinitely over the steppe' (*op. cit.* p. 192), who roamed over these Central Asian wastelands for a long period before they acquired enough wealth and position by raiding and looting to develop into the military aristo-cracy that they became in course of time (*ibid.*, 41, 126, 151-52). The other references of Grassmann [s. *bharata* (1) and *bhārata* (1)] all are taken correctly as implying Agni, but as clear from the facts adduced in this paper the sense of 'to be maintained' (*der zu pflegen ist*) is not the original implication of this use. The key-context given by the Petersburg Lexicon for this meaning *ūrjaḥ putram bharatam sapradānam* . . . (1.96.3) need in fact give no such sense at all! Nor is it warranted by Indian tradition: *bharataṃ haviṣo bhartāraṃ yad vā prāṇarūpena sarvāsāṃ prajānāṃ bhartāram* (Sāy.) which, if at all, may support the agent construction of the form.[19] This is the only place where *bharata* is used for Agni, the others all having the derived form *bhārata* as an epithet, and, it seems quite legitimate to suggest that the singular use could have developed from the constant use of the term *bhārata* as implying 'the dweller among the Bharatas' (1.33-45, 59.6 etc.).

REFERENCES

1. Ludwig, *Der Ṛgveda*, III.175 ff.; Pischel, Geldner, *Vedische Studien*, I.55, II.136; Oldenberg, *Buddha* (Eng.), 405 ff., Muir, *Old Sanskrit Texts*, I.354; Ragozin, *Vedic India*, 319 ff.; Mookerji, *Hindu Civilization*, 68-71; Kennedy, *JRAS*, 1919; Pargiter, *JRAS*, 1908; *CHI*, Vol. I; Cal. Rev. 1923, 1924; *JAOS*, XV.259, XVI.41-42; Grassmann *Wörterbuch zum Ṛgveda, s. bharata, bhārata*, Böhtlingk and Roth, *Sanskrit Wörterbuch* (Pt. V), *s. bharata, bhārata; bhar*; Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-Eng. Dictionary, s. bhṛ., bharata, bhārata.*
2. *Sanskrit Grammar* § 1176 (c).
3. *Prehistoric Antiquities of the Aryan Peoples*, pp. 180-81.
4. The words of the text are given separated, following the *pada-pāṭha*; *sinam* occurs only here at 3.62.1 and Whitney is certainly right in preferring to place *sina* under root *san* (*sā*). gain, *Sanskrit Roots, Verb-Forms*, p. 183; cf. Sāyaṇa: *sinam annam.*
5. *pari-hvṛti* from *hvṛ*, be crooked, deceive, acc. to Monier-Williams. *Dict., s.v.* Grassmann gives 'Nachstellung', i.e. 'trap'. But it may as well mean 'what surrounds' or 'rampart', particularly since it goes with *ati.*
6. Cf. Monier-Williams, *Dict. s. dhan*, for sense of 'attack'.
7. Cf. ibid. s.v.
8. *samiti* nearly in every context refers to 'battle' or 'encounter'; cf. Grassmann, (WR), *s.v.* Sāyaṇa is clear: *saṃgrāma-nāma etat.*
9. *India—What can it teach us*, p. 164 ff.
10. Cf. W. Schmidt, *The Origin and Growth of Religion*, p. 50 ff.
11. Grassmann, *WR, s.v.*
12. See Skeat, *English Etymological Dict., s.* foray, forage; cf. *The Oxford Dict.*
13. Cf. Latin *fur*, thief; *furtivus* from *furtum*, theft, giving Eng. *furtive*, Skeat, *op. cit.*, p. 738. Cf. Ghose, *Aryan Trail in India and Iran*, p. 49. The peace-loving nomads had to be robbers and plunderers before they would need a host-leader.. of the character of Indra.
14. '*karin*' from *kar(kir)*, songster, particularly, singer of battle-song; cf. Grassmann *WR, s.* 2, *kāra, kārava*, and *kārin*. A clear reference to war-song or rather 'war-cry' is found at 8.66.1 (*kāriṇam bharam*) as well as at 9.10.2 (*kāriṇām bharāsaḥ*)
15. See: A New Interpretation of the Naṭarāja Concept in this volume, pp.225 ff.
16. It is significant that in 4.38.5, the victims of these raids are referred to as *kṣitayaḥ* or 'settled colonies' (cf. Monier-Williams *Dict., s. ksi* 2); the allusion is no doubt to the settled agricultural communities in the fertile river valleys, like the Punjab area (cf. *kṛṣṭayah*). See, V. Gordon Childe, *Man Makes Himself*, p. 133: 'very early settlements... probably protected by some sort of ramparts (cf. *parihvṛti*). And if so, it is equally necessary to admit some degree of organized defence against such raiders on the part of the prosperous settled communities.'
17. Cf. Sāyaṇa: '*paṇer vaṇija iva lubdhakasya...*'
18. Cf. the use of Old Nordish *börvar* for 'son of a warrior', as adduced by Ludwig, *Der Ṛgveda*, III.175. Other I.E. parallels have been cited before leading to the same sense of 'battle' or 'warrior'.
19. Cf. the word *bharant-* (part.) at *Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa* XVIII, 10.8. for 'warrior' almost synonymous with *bharata*; see Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, vol. II, p. 98.

20

An Aspect of Upaniṣadic Ātman and Buddhist 'Anatta'*

The doctrine of *Ātman* along with that of *Brahman* constitutes the most important topic of Upaniṣadic philosophy, and, in view of the fact that Buddhism, as recorded in the earliest Pāli *Nikāyas*,[1] is generally held to refute the doctrine by its *anatta-vāda* or the theory of 'soul-less-ness', the problem posed here may appear to be of such magnitude that its solution within the scope of this discussion must be considered utterly impossible. The aim of the writer, however, is the much more modest one of attempting to outline the principal macrocosmic connotations of the term *Ātman* as found in the early Upaniṣadic texts,[2] and to discover the attitude of early Buddhism towards these several implications. Thus it is not intended even to discuss the microcosmic applications of the term as occurring in the *Upaniṣads*, for that would involve a much longer discussion than is permissible here. It may, however, be conceded that the ultimate solution[3] of this vast problem, as envisaged by the concepts of *Ātman* and *Anatta*, must necessarily depend on the clear ascertainment of the several meanings of these terms and their historical relationship to be gleaned from a comparative study of the two literatures.

That in the early Upaniṣadic texts the term *Ātman* is used in several distinct senses such as the metaphysical, psychological, biological, physical and so on, becomes increasingly clear to careful students of these texts, and most of the evident discrepancies in their interpretation can be directly traced to the lack of appreciation of this important fact. It is well-known that the *Upaniṣads*, in their main doctrines, presuppose a fairly long development of thought, and,

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*The Siddha Bhāratī—The Dr. Siddheshwar Varma Presentation Volume, Hoshiarpur, 1950.

thus it is not surprising to find that concepts like the *Ātman* are already found even in the *Ṛgveda* in a somewhat developed form.[4] The word occurs several times in the *Ṛgveda*, and generally denotes an immaterial principle ascribed to various phenomena of nature and living beings, if the purely physical and grammatical uses be left aside. That in most philosophical contexts it denotes some aspect of what is popularly understood by the word 'soul' cannot be seriously doubted.[5] Whatever the original meaning of the term might have been,[6] it is clear that in the *Ṛgveda* it is primarily used in the sense of 'breath' (e.g. X.16.3)[7] held to be the *life-principle* in man and beast, along with an appreciation of the fact that wind (*vāta, vāyu*) is its macrocosmic parallel.

Thus it is interesting to observe that, even in the earliest parts of the *Ṛgveda*,[8] the word (*Ātman*) has already acquired the sense of 'self' or 'soul', whether signifying the 'breath' or the vital spirit as the life-principle in living creatures or denoting in a metaphysical sense, the 'intrinsic nature' (*svarūpa*) or the 'essence' (*sāra*) of persons and things, as interpreted by Sāyaṇa in some contexts.[9] Furthermore, it is clear that macrocosmic considerations — no doubt the result of the incipient and perhaps unconscious feeling for *bandhutā* or the tendency to correlate the microcosm with the macrocosm[10] — had already begun to influence the development of the notion of *Ātman*. Thus in one place in the *Ṛgveda* the Sun is described as the 'soul' (*Ātman*) of that which stands and moves, that is to say, of all existence (I.115.1); similar macrocosmic associations are found for the term in reference to Parjanya (VII.101.6) and Soma (IX.2.10; 6.8). But, as pointed out by Keith (*loc. cit*), it is probably in *Atharvaveda* that the macrocosmic sense proper of *Ātman* is clearly recognized, for there (X.8.43-44) the word is distinctly used to denote the macrocosmic *Yakṣa* (i.e. *Hiraṇyagarbha*)[11] which is no other than the Primeval Soul or empirical *Brahman* in its incipient stage. The latter idea is foreshadowed, however dimly, in *Ṛgveda* (X.168.4) where reference is made to: 'the *soul* of the deities, the germ of the universe' (*ātmā devānām bhuvanasya garbhaḥ*). In view of the embryonic analogy that is implied here, it is not unreasonable to interpret the concept of Primeval Male (Man) as occurring in the famous Puruṣa-sūkta as the macrocosmic, anthropomorphic representation of the same *Ātman*.

Hence, the important term evolves throughout the succeeding centuries into one of the most pregnant philosophical concepts, coming very early to be identified with the other important concept

of *Brahman* which was gradually gaining the position of the 'World-ground'.[12] This identification is, at least partly, but consciously, made for the first time in the *Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa* (III.12.9) where the further idea is expressed that the self of man is the sure key to the knowledge of this 'World-ground' (*Ātman = Brahman*), a belief from which it may be inferred that already the individual self was coming to be regarded as an aspect of, if not identical with, the Universal *Ātman*. As it has been pointed out by Keith (*loc. cit.*), this passage and the parallels at *Pañcaviṃsa-Brāhmaṇa* (XXV.18.5), *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* (X.6.3), *Taittirīya-Āraṇyaka* (III.2.1), etc., are clearly transitional to the period of the early Upaniṣadic texts, where the term *Ātman* is seen to develop its most weighty connotations and is also subjected to considerable analysis.

The earliest Upaniṣadic texts, however, show very little change as compared with the pre-Upaniṣadic literature in the evolution of the concept. In the majority of contexts the term seems to imply nothing very different from the idea of 'World-Soul' as adumbrated in the *Atharvaveda*. Thus the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* (I.1.1), speaking of the primeval *Ātman*, as the prime cause of all existence, says: 'In the beginning, verily, this (universe) was *Ātman*, one only — no other winking thing whatever. He bethought himself: 'Let me now create the worlds.' He created these worlds.' An equally old passage in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (I.4.1.17) identifies this *Ātman* with the (cosmic) Person who is no other than the mythical Giant whose immolation is said to have brought about the production of all existents in the already cited Puruṣa-sūkta. It is significant that the *Ait. Up.* (I.3.13-14) cryptically designates this same *Ātman* by the mythical name 'Indra' (*idaṃ-dra*), and, at another place, clearly refers to the intelligential aspect of *Ātman*, i.e. Prajñātman, with such mythical terms as 'Indra', 'Prajāpati' and 'Brahma' (V.3). These mythical associations persist even in more developed texts: for instance, the *Kauṣītakī-Up.* (III.8) identifies the cosmic *Ātman* in its intelligential aspect with *prāṇa* regarded as 'World-ruler' and the 'Lord' (*īśa*) of all times.

It is necessary to bear in mind for the purpose of this discussion that the above-mentioned *theistic* (*iśa, īśāna, īśvara*) sense of *Ātman* is emphatically asserted in several passages. Thus *Bṛh-Up.* (II.5.15) calls this *Ātman* the overlord (*adhipati*) of all things, the king (*rājā*) of all things, who holds together all worlds, all gods, all living beings and selves... The same *Upaniṣad* describes Him as the 'Lord (*īśāna*)

of what has been and what is to be, the *Ātman* (who is clearly God(*deva*) . . .' (IV.4.15 cf. 22; V.6.1; VI.3.5). Thus He is all-perceiving (*sarvānubhū*) *Puruṣa* (*Bṛh-Up.* II.5.18-19). He is also the Maker (*kartā*) of everything and is consequently given the appellation *viśvakṛt* or Cosmic Creator (*Bṛh-Up.* IV.4.13). The conception is seen in a more developed form when the *Kau-Up.* (IV.19) regards Him as 'the Maker' (*kartā*) of all *puruṣas*. *Bṛh-Up.* (IV.4.24) points to a still more advanced idea in characterizing the *Ātman* as 'the eater of food (*annāda*)', that is to say, the Enjoyer (*bhoktā*). It must be added, however, that this theistic sense is not found entirely free from pantheistic associations which too seem to emerge concurrently.

Thus a very early passage of the *Bṛh-Up.* (I.6.1-3) represents the entire, actual (*satya*) world as a threefold (*nāma, rūpa, karma*) appearance of the unitary, immortal Soul (*Ātman*). He is found in all beings (*Īśa-Up.* 6-7). One should worship the World (*loka*) as the *Ātman* (*Bṛh-Up.* I.4.15; cf. 16,17; IV.4.22), and recognize (*dṛś*) this World (*loka*), the *Átman*, as his own (*sva*). Thus this whole universe (*idaṃ sarvam*) is the *Ātman* (*Bṛh. Up.* II.4.6; IV.5.7; *Chānd-Up.* VII.25.2), the ontological *prius* of everything (*ātmata evedaṃ sarvam, Chānd. Up* VII.26.1). *Ātman* pervades the whole Universe and is, therefore, the immanent Soul of the World (*sarvāntaraḥ, Bṛh-Up.* III.4.1; *antaryāmi* (III.7.3). In a section of the *Bṛh-Up.* (II.5) the statement is made fourteen times that 'He, indeed, is just this Soul (*Ātman*), this Immortal, this Brahma, this All', being applied to such categories as the elements, the Sun, Moon etc. Pantheism, in fact, could go no further but, however much it soared, the Highest Reality was still Soul or *Ātman*. The *Upaniṣadic* conception of the Absolute as expressed by the neuter *Brahman* could never dissociate itself from this all-embracing notion of the *Ātman*. No doubt the two principles are identified: *the Ātman is the Brahman* (*Bṛh-Up.* II.5.19;IV.4.5). In fact, the *Bṛh-Up.* itself asserts that 'Apart from the *Ātman*, there is no *Brahman*' (II.4.6. *et.seq.*), and the *Chānd. Up.* goes to the very limit of this identification and declares: 'That is *Brahman*, that is Immortality (*amṛtam*),[19] that is the *Átman*', in a passage extolling *ākāśa* as the Highest Principle (VIII.14). The Universal Soul (*Vaiśvānara Ātman*) is said to have been identified by various philosophers with various categories like Heaven, Sun, Wind etc. (*Chānd-Up.* V.11-18), and is pantheistically conceived as a thread (*sūtra*) running through the whole Cosmos (*Bṛh-Up.* III.7.23; cf.IV.2).

In the identification of the *Ātman* with Immortality (*amṛtam*), an important fact emerges in the development of this concept, viz., its approximation to the notion of the Absolute. This is significant inasmuch as the same epithet (Pāli *amataṃ*) is applied to the Absolute in early Buddhism. In the *Upaniṣads* the idealization of the *Ātman* concept can be inferred from several passages of great importance implying its perfection, timelessness etc. The *Ātman* is called the Great (*mahān*), Unborn' (*aja*) in the *Bṛh-Up.*, several times (IV.4.20, 22,24,25) and in the first context is clearly characterized as constant (*dhruva*). It is also ageless (*vijara*) and deathless (*vimṛtyu*), among other things (*Chānd-Up.* VIII.7. 1-13; cf. VIII.1.5). Again, it is Imperishable (*avināśi*) and of indestructible quality (*anucchittidharmā*) — epithets which idealize it unmistakably (*Bṛh-Up.* IV.5.14). In fact, it is clearly asserted in the *Chānd-Up.* (VIII.5.3) that 'the *Ātman* does not perish (*na naśyati*)'. But it must not be forgotten that even in such idealistic sections as those ascribed to Yājñavalkya the self-same pantheistic and absolute *Ātman* is referred to in crudely mythical and theistic terms as *Īśvara* and *Puruṣa* (e.g., IV.4.22; III.9.26).

That early Buddhism as found in the Pāli *Nikāyas* directly refutes all theistic conceptions of a Cosmic Soul (*Ātman*) as prime cause, agent, creator, or enjoyer of the universe is seen from several authentic passages. The idea of an *Īśvara* (*issaro*) as Maker (*kattā*) or Creator (*nimmātā*) is clearly denounced as a fallacy (*DN*, I.18; *MN*, I.327), and the cosmos (*loko*) is said to be *anissara* or 'without any theistic agency' (*MN*, II.68). It is certainly not the playful work (*kutta*)[14] of an *Īśvara* or Brahmā or any other god (*DN*, III.28). Agency as such is here denied not only to the macrocosmic *Ātman* but even to the individually reflected *attā* or the microcosmic soul (*MN*, III.19). Thus it is clear that for early Buddhism there is neither a capricious or interfering God as the creator and sustainer of the universe, nor is there in reality any *Ātman* who may be described in the words of Dr. Radhakrishnan as 'an eternal self-sustaining spirit, the active mind of the universe'.[15] It is unnecessary to emphasize this *atheistic* nature of early Buddhism which is evident to any careful student of the *Nikāyas*.

Not only is the *Ātman* in any theistic sense clearly denied in the *Nikāyas*, but even its *pantheistic* implications, as seen in the *Upaniṣads*, are consistently refuted. It is plainly declared (*MN*, II.68) that the cosmos or the world (*loko*) is totally lacking (*ūna*) in any metaphysi-

cal substance and that the world cannot be held to be permanent (*dhuva*, cf. *dhruva*), thus making it impossible to regard it as one's own (*saka*, contrast *sva* above), or as a haven of security (*tāṇa* cf. *Chānd-Up.* VIII.5.2 *sata ātmanas trāṇam vindati*). Pantheism in the sense that everything (*sabba*) or this All (*sarvam idam*), as the *Upaniṣads* put it, is identical with any essential Being as *Ātman* is attacked (*MN*, I.329) The famous *skandha* analysis of the early *nikāyas* (e.g., *DN*, II.297) refutes the notion of an *Ātman* both in the external world (*bahiddhā rūpa*) and in the individual (*ajjhattarūpa, vedanā, saññā, saṅkhāra, viññāṇa*), asserting that there is no *atta* in the eye, ear etc. (*DN*, I.29; *MN*, III.282) in direct contradiction of the Upaniṣadic notion of the Unseen Seer, the Unheard Hearer, etc., the *Ātman* residing in the individual as ultimate agent of all actions, perceptions etc. (*Bṛh-Up* III.7.15-23). In both philosophies, the concept of the empirical world is denoted by the term *idam*, but while the *Upaniṣads* declare its fullness (*pūrṇam idam*), the early *nikāyas* characterize it as *void* (*suñña*). Thus *MN* says in more than one place: 'This is *void* of a Soul or anything derived from a Soul (*suññam idam attena vā attaniyena vā*, I.297; II.263)', and objects to the identification of the microcosm with the Soul or its derivative (*na hi no etam attā vā attaniyam vā*, I.141). It is, indeed, a fallacy to identify the cosmos with any *Ātman* (*so loko so attā*, *MN*, I.135,138; II.338; III.265,271), and to view[16] the external world of matter (or the personality) in terms of the *Ātman* (*attato samanupassanā*) or to so characterize it (*MN*, I.300; III.18; *Udāna* 32, *attato vadati*). The contemplation of this 'voidness' is recommended as one of the best meditations (*MN*, III.294, *suññatā-vihāra*), and the ethical superiority of this attitude to the worship (*upāsanā*) of the pantheistic *Ātman* (*Brahman*) as inculcated in the *Upaniṣads* (*Bṛh-Up.* 1.4.15-17) is clearly brought out in the famous philosophical text of the *Sutta-nipāta* (*SN*). A young brāhmaṇa named Mogharāja asks the Buddha what his view (*diṭṭhi*) is with regard to the nature of the World and when viewed in what way it leads to Immortality. Buddha replies:

Suññato lokam avekkhassu Mogharāja sadā sato
Attānudiṭṭhim ūhacca, evaṃ Maccutaro siyā . . . (1117, 1119).

'O Mogharaja, always mindful and self-possessed, view this world as void, having eradicated the notion of an *Ātman* (underlying it); thus would one reach Immortality (*lit.* cross over death)'. The previous citations from *MN* should dispel any doubts regarding the

interpretation of the term *atta-* here, which, as the old commentary Niddesa points out, must refer to the macrocosmic *Ātman* as held in brāhmaṇic philosophy and its several manifestations or derivatives (*attaniyena vā*). It is in view of this radical *anti-pantheism* that early Buddhism regards as futile all such questions as whether the World (*loka*) is finite (*antavā*) or infinite (*ananto, DN*, I.22, 23; *MN*, II. 228-33). Furthermore, in view of the absolutist tendencies of the *Ātman* as seen in some Upaniṣadic texts, it is of great significance to observe that the state of Brahmā or the highest Reality (*idam*) is definitely declared to be neither permanent (*niccam*, contrast *Bṛh-Up*, IV.4.23), nor constant (*dhuvam*, i.e. *dhruvam*), nor eternal (*sassatam*, contrast *anucchittidharmā, Bṛh-Up*, IV.5.14, i.e. 'having no *uccheda* or annihilation', the very word that is used in the *nikāyas* in opposition to *sassata*), nor absolute (*kevalam*, contrast *Śvet-Up*, VI.11 — epithets which are generally applied to the Soul as the Absolute (*MN*, I.326). Apart from any notion of pantheism, Buddhism regards all empirical existence as being impermanent (*anicca*), and sorrowful (*dukkha* contrast *ānanda, Bṛh-Up*, III.9.28; *Tait-Up*, II.4.1), and hence *anatta* or void of any *Ātman* (*DN*, III.243). That the real meaning of the epithet *anatta* here is that the whole cosmos and the individual are in a constant process of *change* is seen from the parallel characterization of everything as *anicca, dukkha* and *vipariṇāmadhamma* (*MN*, III.217, 271,278); and change is clearly denied for the *Ātman* (*Brahman*) in the *Upaniṣads* by such epithets as *avināśi* and *dhruva*. There can be no doubt, therefore, that the earliest portions of the Buddhist canon refuted the reality of a World-Soul or macrocosmic *Ātman* or of a World-ground or empirical *Brahman* in the most unequivocal terms. These two aspects of the Cosmic Self are, of course, identical according to the *Upaniṣads* (*ayam ātmā brahma ... Bṛh-Up*, II.5.19) and the denial or the assertion of the one must necessarily imply the denial or the assertion of the other. To regard the *Ātman* (*Brahman*) as eternal (*sassata*) was condemned as a false view (*sassata-diṭṭhi*), as false as the opposite view of annihilation (*uccheda*) and this criticism is developed in full in the first sutta of *DN* It is this *śāśvata-vāda* that is attacked by the words '*attā nicco dhuvo sassato avipariṇāmadhammo*' (*DN*, 1.21) and '*sassatam attānam paññāpenti*' (*DN*, 13) occurring in that *sutta*.

The above discussion shows that the early *Nikāyas* are quite outspoken on the question of an *Ātman* conceived either theistically or pantheistically, that is to say, as Creator or Immanent Soul. There

is no question of 'silence'[17] on these issues. Nor is the Buddha reported to have maintained any silence on the question of a *transcendental* (as opposed to pantheistic, immanent) Absolute. The Udāna makes it very clear that Buddha was positive on the reality of a transcendental state which is describable as unborn (*ajāta*), unbecome (*abhūta*), unmade (*akata*) and uncompounded (*asaṅkhata* VIII. 3.10). Thus a transcendental *Brahman* (neuter) seems to have had no antagonism to the Buddhist view of ultimate Reality and thus Buddha calls himself *Brahma-bhūta*, i.e., one who has become '*Brahman*' (*SN*, 561). As it was mentioned at the beginning, this paper has not touched upon the problem of individual personality; and as I have shown elsewhere,[18] Buddha's 'silence' was actually concerned with that complex issue.

REFERENCES

1. Such texts as *Dīgha-nikāya* (*DN*) and *Majjhima-nikāya* (*MN*), the *Sutta-nipāta* (*SN*), *Udāna* etc.
2. Only those that are regarded as 'pre-Buddhistic' are discussed here. See Belvalkar and Ranade, *History of Indian Philosophy*, vol. II. pp. 135 ff.
3. I intend to deal with the whole problem in a book on *Ātman and Anatta* to be published shortly. (Unfortunately, this expectation of the author did not materialize. *Editor*).
4. See Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda*, pp. 450 etc.; also Narahari: *Ātman in pre-Upaniṣadic Vedic Literature*, pp.43 etc. The latter's attempt to see too much of the Upaniṣadic philosophy in the *Ṛgveda* on the plea of unbroken continuity of the Vedic tradition is, however, difficult to commend. Cf. the form '*tman*' also, as discussed by them.
5. Whether the meanings given to it by Sāyaṇa such as '*svarūpa*', '*cetanā*', '*dhārayiṭṛ*' are all admissable is extremely doubtful; contrast, however, Narahari, *loc. cit.*
6. See Keith: loc. cit., for a good summary of views; also Narahari, loc. cit. and Belvalkar and Ranade, op. cit., p. 357.
7. Grassmann in his *Wörterbuch zum Rig-Veda* (*s.v.*) takes 'breath' (Hauch) as its primary sense.
8. See Grassmann, loc. cit. for references from Maṇḍala II, VIII and IX.
9. See Narahari op.cit. p.44.
10. See 'Vedic Gandharva and Pali Gandhabba', in this volume, pp. 175 ff. (and fn. 48).
11. See 'The Philosophical Import of Vedic Yakṣa and Pali Yakkha', in this volume, pp. 131 ff.
12. See Hume, *The Thirteen Principal Upaniṣads* (trans.), pp. 13 ff.
13. From the time of the *Ṛgveda* the term *amṛtam* was used for the highest ideal; Buddhist *amatam* also denotes the same.
14. See *PTS*, Pāli-Eng. Dict. (*s.v.*) where it is correctly pointed out that the word *kutta* in *Issara-kutta* and *Brahma-kutta* implies the Divine play, the term being used in Pāli very much like 'līlā', a word sometimes found synonymous with *kutta* (q.v.)

15. *Indian Philosophy*, vol.I.p.460, where he argues for the existence of such a Spirit according to Buddhism.
16. This *viewing* is the same as the *recognizing* (*saññānana*) of the *Ātman* in terms of or by the individual self (*attanā*, *MN*, I.18; *Sn*, 477). Just as in Pāli *samanupassati* (*attato*) so in the Upaniṣadic use of the verb *paśyati* for this viewing (*Bṛh-Up.* VI. 4.15, 23) with the prefix *anu* one may see the same tradition. Cf. *manye* (*Bṛh-Up.* IV.4.17) with the philosophical use of *maññati* (e.g., First Sutta of *MN*) in contexts objecting to such viewing of the world as *atta*.
17. See Radhakrishnan, op. cit., pp. 676, etc.
18. See 'The Buddha and Metaphysics', in this volume , pp. 3 ff.

21

The Symbolism of the Wheel in the Cakravartin Concept*

Many and varied are the opinions that have been expressed on the significance of the term *cakravartin* (Pali: *cakkavatti*). It is the occurrence of the term in the early Buddhist canonical works, mainly in the *Dīgha Nikāya*, that has formed the principal subject for discussion by scholars; and this is natural because it is the Buddhist texts that provide the most detailed, and perhaps, also the earliest, description of the *Cakkavatti* and his jewel of the *cakka*. Wilson[1] took the term *cakravarti* to mean 'he who abides in (*vartate*), or rules over, an extensive territory called a *cakra*.' According to Kern[2], *vartin* here means *vartayati*, 'who rules'. Jacobi[3] agrees with Wilson in the sense of *vartin* but points out that the meaning given to *cakra* by Wilson does not occur in the ancient Sanskrit literature, though it is found in the lexicons. He would take *cakra* in its original sense of 'circle' and equate it with the political term *maṇḍala* as found in Manu (VII.156 ff.) and Kāmandaka (VIII.20 ff). Another etymology was proposed by Senart.[4] *Cakravartin* is 'one who owns a *cakravāḷa*', deriving the latter from *cakravarta*, a word not found either in Sanskrit or in the Prakrits, to which the suffix *-in* (possessive) has been added. At the end[5] of his work, however, Senart gave up this interpretation and accepted the idea of Lassen that *Cakravartin* is 'the Sun God who sets his adorable wheel in motion across the space'. Weber[6] endorsed this opinion in a review of Senart's work. Prof. Rhys Davids too supported it, translating the term 'a king of the rolling wheel', understanding by 'wheel' the 'disk of the sun'[7] as hymned in Vedic poetry, although earlier he had wavered between this idea and

*Felicitation Volume presented to Professor Sripad Krishna Belvalkar. Benares, 1957.

that of 'setting in motion onwards of the royal chariot wheel of . . . supreme dominion'.[8] Mrs Rhys Davids, on the other hand, refuses to go the whole hog with the solar theorists. She says: 'We must by no means give all the credit to the sun as suggesting a wheel'.[9] She opines that the *cakka* here implies 'the progressive discus, rolling on as well as round, symbols of the procession of cosmic forces, or the advance of an aggressive conqueror.'[10] By 'cosmic forces', presumably, she refers to the cyclic movements of nature such as those of the year, seasons and months, and, by 'advance of an aggressive conqueror' this resourceful writer obviously alludes to the war-chariot of a victorious monarch in its militaristic progress. Another interesting sidelight on the problem is provided by a remark of Jacobi that 'the first part of the compound word *cakravartin* being popularly referred to the discus of Viṣṇu, the symbol of the sun, the *cakravartin* assumed in popular imagination some traits which properly belong to the divine wielder of the cakra'.[11] Thus the term *cakra* has been understood in several ways by these writers and regarded as referring to a political 'circle' or *maṇḍala*, a cosmological 'sphere' (*cakravāḷa*), the solar disk, cosmic cycle, the chariot-wheel, or the discus of Viṣṇu.

It may be indicated at the outset that in the following paragraphs the attempt is made only to determine the Vedic antecedents, if any, of the symbolism involved in the *Cakravartin* concept. Thus, out of the 'interpretations' cited above, only those that are relevant for a historical treatment, in other words, only those hypotheses that deserve attention on account of the pre-Buddhistic character of the evidence adduced, will be subjected to consideration. For instance, the notion that *cakra* here may mean the political *maṇḍala* as referred to by Manu and others is obviously post-Buddhistic and is unlikely to have been at the bottom of the symbolism of the 'wheel' relevant to the concept of the Universal Monarch. It can be seen from the interpretations cited above that the sense of the compound *cakravartin* varies with the particular significance attached to the grammatical form *-vartin*. There is no question about the *root* which is *vṛt*, although its meaning may be taken as either 'to proceed', 'to exist', 'to abide', or 'to turn', 'to rotate', 'to roll'. Jacobi[12] hesitated to follow Kern; he felt that 'in all other compounds, *vartin* has the force of *vartate*, not of *vartayati*, so that Wilson's etymology seems preferable.' Thus, the syntactical value of the form *vartin* appears to be the main crux of the morphological problem and, therefore, deserves some consideration before we proceed. As for the formation, *vartin*

can be regarded either as *vṛt* with primary suffix *-in* (agent) or as noun *varta* with secondary suffix *-in* (possessive). Macdonell[13] has observed that 'the very frequent secondary suffix *-in* seems sometimes to have the value of a primary suffix, exclusively, however, at the end of compounds'. But how far it had gained a primary value in the early language is not clear, for most of the words in *-in* occurring in the *Ṛgveda* and *Atharvaveda* are explainable as possessives. Yet Whitney states that 'in many, the other (agent) value is possible'.[14] In the later language, however, both uses are found extensively. It must be admitted that a nominal stem *varta* does not occur in the early language at all and is citable only from the lexicons.[15] Thus one is left with the probability that in *-vartin* (of *cakra-vartin*) the first element is the *guṇa* form of *vṛt*, as in *todin*, cited from Vedic by Macdonell (*ibid.*), with the primary agent suffix *-in*. Hence it is reasonable to conclude that it originally meant 'one who turns or rolls' (either transitively or intransitively). It is true that in the *Ṛgveda vṛt* generally means the act of 'turning or rolling (itself)' in an intransitive sense, and the transitive idea of 'turning (something)' is conveyed only by *vartaya-*, the causative form. Yet, *vartana* occurs in both intransitive and transitive senses of despatching, turning, twisting according to the *Nirukta* and Pāṇini,[16] and *vartin* itself occurs in the epic language in the sense of 'performing, exercising'.[17] Hence it appears quite legitimate to translate *Cakravartin* (or Pali *Cakkavatti*) as 'turner of the *cakra*', or 'wielder of the *cakra*', and, at least for the sense of the Pali term, there is no need to accept Jacobi's reservation as to whether *vartati* can mean *vartayati*. In fact, Pali has another similar compound with *-vatti* in *vasa-vatti* which has clearly the *causative* (transitive) sense of 'wielder of power' (*vaśa*) at several places in the early *Nikāyas*.[18]

In the classical passage in the *Mahā-Sudassana Suttanta* where the *cakka* appears to the king it is thus described: 'the tresure of the *cakka*, with its thousand spokes, with its felly and its nave, and all its parts complete'.[19] There is no doubt that in this symbolism the picture of the *chariot-wheel* is the most prominent factor. After the necessary spiritual and ritualistic preliminaries, when the king addresses the Wheel: 'May Your Honour, Precious Wheel, roll on, may Your Honour, conquer (all)', it rolls on (*pavattati*) to the East and the king with his fourfold army follows it. The rival kings in the East submit to his authority, and so on the kings of the South, West and North accept his hegemony.

Now, it is important to observe, in the first place, that the *agency* of the Wheel's movement towards conquest is attributed to the king; it is the king who causes or initiates the *rolling on* of the wheel. This, therefore, should be the meaning of the relevant epithet *cakka-vatti* given to such a king; that is to say, he is 'one who sets the wheel rolling'. Thus at least from the Buddhist point of view, it is clear that the term *-vartin* is to be regarded as an *agent* form made from the verb *vṛt* in its causative implication (*cakkaṃ vatteti*).

Once this interpretation of the compound *cakra-vartin* is accepted, it becomes necessary to settle the problem regarding the 'Wheel', which such a sovereign is held to 'set rolling'. It is evident from the Pali texts cited above that the Wheel should symbolize in its original state the militaristic *power* of a conquering hero. Has such a conception of a *cakra* wielded by a conquering hero any place in the pre-Buddhist Vedic culture? The solution of this historical problem is bound to throw some light on the genesis of at least one[20] aspect of the *Cakravartin* legend.

It is well-known that the *Ṛgveda* possesses a god, the very essence of whose character is heroism of a warring and conquering type. Indra is called 'the conqueror of men' (*nṛ-sāḥ*., VIII.16.1), 'conqueror of peoples' (*carsaṇi-sāḥ*, I.119.10 etc.), 'all-conquering' (*viśvāsāḥ*, III.47.5 etc.) and, particularly, 'the Hero, Indra, all-conquering, mightiest, lord of all the tribes' (VI.44.4).[21] It is with reference to his characteristic heroic might as universal conqueror that Indra is described in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* (VIII.xiv) as having 'won all victories to be won . . . having attained the overlordship, the paramount rule, the self-rule, the sovereignty, the supreme authority, the kingship, the great kingship, the suzerainty of this world. . .'[22]. One cannot fail to note the striking similarity of these achievements of Indra to the career of the *Cakravartin* as found mainly in the Buddhist works.

Now, a fact of singular importance for the problem at hand is that the *Ṛgveda* also refers to Indra in a number of passages as the wielder of a *cakra*, particularly, against his foes. For instance (II.11.20) the poet glorifying Indra's exploit against Vala says: 'Indra let roll (on), like Sūrya, his wheel, and with the Aṅgirasas (as associates) rent Vala' (*avartayat sūryo va cakraṃ bhinad valam indro aṅgirasvān*). It is of interest, in view of the above discussion of the grammar of *-vartin*, to note that here the *causative* verb *avartayat* is used with the particular implication of 'hurling' in attack.

In another passage (VIII.96.9) Indra is implored to 'scatter the weaponless *asuras*, the godless ones, with the wheel: cf. *anāyudhāso asurā adevāś cakreṇa tān apa vapa ṛjīṣin*. Whatever the term 'wheel' may mean, here it is certain that it is either the symbol or the instrument of Indra's militaristic might. Not only Indra but also the Maruts, who are his associates, are said to use the 'wheel' in this manner: 'with your glowing wheel, O Rudras, hurl at (or, overcome) him (i.e. the enemy...' (*vartayata tapuṣā cakriyā abhi taṃ... Rudrāḥ* ... II.34.9). On this particular use of *vartaya*—with the instrumental (of the weapon) one may compare *Ṛgveda* (VII.104.5): *Indrāsomā vartayataṃ divasparyagnitaptebhir yuvamaśmahanmabhiḥ*. It may also be observed that at several places the *Ṛgveda* uses the feminine noun *cakrī* as equivalent of *cakra* [23] At another place this 'wheel' of attack used by Indra is described as 'chariot-wheel'—a fact highly significant when it is remembered that the wheel of the *Cakkavatti* is similarly qualified as 'having a thousand spokes, with felly and nave complete'. In *Ṛgveda* (1.53.9), it is said that 'with the unassailable[24] chariot-wheel, O Indra, thou far-famed, hast overthrown the 60099 (warriors) of Suśravas', cf. *ṣaṣṭiṃ sahasrā navatiṃ nava śruto ni cakreṇa rathyā duṣpadā avṛṇak*. Why the chariot-wheel symbolizes Indra's prowess in war is easily understood when it is remembered that the epithet 'car-fighter' (*ratheṣṭhā*) is exclusively used for Indra in the *Ṛgveda*.[25] In view of this fact it is of utmost importance to note that in a very early text of the Pali Canon, viz., the Sutta Nipāta (552), the *Cakkavatti* has the parallel epithet *rathesabha*, 'the lord of chariots'. Indra does, indeed, reflect the career of the tribal warrior-hero who introduced the swift battle-chariot in the antiquity of Aryan culture and revolutionized the art of warfare among the Aryan tribes. A reference that is of much significance for the 'wheel' of the *Cakkavattin* occurs (*RV*, X.93.9): '... Indra directs the *wheel* over those nations[26] like the reins' (*indro ... ni eṣāṃ carṣaṇīnām cakraṃ raśmiṃ na yoyuve*). It is significant that Geldner sees in this context a probable allusion to a 'wheel of sovereignty (Herrschaft).'

Further evidence of a similar nature can be cited from the *Ṛgveda* to show that Indra *helps* the wheel to roll forward. In *RV* (VIII.63.8), it is given as the most notable of Indra's heroic deeds that he 'helped forth (promoted) the rolling of the wheel' (*prāvaś cakrasya vartanim*). It is significant that in a parallel passage in *RV* (IV.30.6), it is said that 'Indra helped forth the sun', that is to say, 'he promoted the course, or rolling on, of the sun', (*sūryaṃ prāvaḥ* . . .). One need not be

surprised that the 'chariot-wheel' that Indra speeds on its way should have its counterpart in the nature-mythology which is the other aspect of hero Indra's character. Obviously, the sun is regarded as a 'wheel' on account of its shape, in other words, the symbol of the circular wheel on earth is projected on to the natural phenomenon of the sun. Thus in *RV* (IV.17.14) we find the claim made for Indra that 'he urged the wheel of Sūrya' (*ayaṃ cakram iṣaṇat sūryasya*; cf. V.31.11). These notices, however, do not support the 'solar' interpretation of the *Cakravartin's* 'wheel' in the form it has been generally proposed, for it is clear from the earlier quoted passages that, apart from Indra's promoting the course of the sun, he is, as earthly hero, the wielder or turner of a wheel of power and might, probably, of *sovereignty*, as Geldner suggests. The solar aspect of the wheel symbol seems to be a secondary development, a projection, so to say, of a figure of speech from the earthly to the celestial sphere.

In view of the above considerations we may come to the conclusion that the wheel as a symbol of the *Cakravartin's* universal sovereignty has an antecedent in Indra's *cakra* of conquering might and paramount dominion. A full explanation of this symbolism, however, will be complex and multiple. What has been attempted here is only to demonstrate the fact that in seeking for the origins of the *Cakravartin* concept all previous writers have missed an important parallel closer at home, namely *the all-conquering wheel of Indra*. Finally, it is necessary to emphasize that even in the parallelism brought about, it has not been possible to refer to several other aspects of Indra's *cakra* — such as its use as a whirling weapon or discus — which need to be gone into fully before a final judgment is passed.

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2. *Der Buddhismus*, I.27, note ***.
3. *Ency. of Religion and Ethics*, ed. Hastings, vol. 3, p. 337.
4. *Essai sur la legende du Buddha*, pp. 6, 17.
5. Ibid., p. 190.
6. *Indische Streifen*, vol. 3, p. 422.
7. *Dialogues of the Buddha*, p. 202, fn. 3 & 4; cf. Hibbert Lectures, p. 131.
8. *SBE*, XI, p. 140.
9. *Wayfarer's Words*, II, p. 549.
10. Ibid., p. 540.
11. *Loc cit.*, reference may also be made to Waddell's suggestion that *cakra* denotes the *moon* as a symbol of Assyrian origin, *ERE*, 7, p. 554.

12. Ibid.
13. *Vedic Grammar*, § 132.
14. *Sanskrit Grammar*, § 1183.
15. See Grassmann, *Wörterbuch zum Ṛgveda*, s. varta.
16. Ibid., Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dict.*, *s. vartana*.
17. Monier-Williams, op.cit., *s. vartin*.
18. *DN*, I.247; II.261 ff. cf. Majjhima Nikāya, I.214 (*vasena vatteti*).
19. *DN*, II.172.
20. This writer is of the opinion that the 'Cakravarti' concept has a complex origin and is the result of diverse social, political, cultural and mythological trends.
21. '*Indram viśva-sāham naran mahiṣṭam viśvacarṣanim.*'
22. '*sarvā jitīr ajayat . . . sāmrājyam bhaujyam svarājyam vairājyam pārameṣṭhyaṃ rājyam mahārājyam ādhipatyaṃ jitvā . . .* ' (Keith's Tr., *HOS*, 25, 332 ff.).
23. See Grassmann, op. cit., *s.v.*
24. Sāyaṇa: *duṣpadā duṣprapadanena: śatrubhiḥ prāptum aśakyenetyarthaḥ*'.
25. See Grassmann, op. cit., *s. ratheṣṭhā*, cf. Zimmer, *Altindisches Leben*, p. 294 ff.
26. See Geldner's German Tr., (*HOS*, 35) which has mainly been followed.

22

A Pali Reference to Brāhmaṇa-Caraṇas*

The *Dīgha Nikāya* of the *Sutta Piṭaka* contains some of the oldest dialogues of the Pali Canon, and, of these, the *Tevijja Sutta* (No. 13) belongs to the earliest group. Thus Mrs. Rhys Davids says: 'the Tevijja has for me a core of very old teaching, for it shows Śākyan and Brāhman seeking salvation under the figure of a Way or Path (mārga)'.[1] Prof. T.W. Rhys Davids, citing the opinion of Bühler, expressed the belief that the Pali *Nikāyas*, of which the *Dīgha* is admittedly the earliest collection 'are good evidence, certainly for the fifth, probably for the sixth, century B.C. . . . And it is this which gives to all they tell us, either directly or by implication, of the social, political and religious life of India, so great a value.'[2] A careful analysis of the contents of the *Tevijja Sutta* not only confirms the above view but also makes it highly probable that the early Pali *Nikāyas* reflect religious and social conditions prevailing in India *before* the actual end of the *Brāhmaṇa* literary period when the *Upaniṣads* had not yet assumed the character of independent texts.

This historically important *Sutta* commences with a reference to the sojourn of several distinguished Brāhmaṇa leaders with their pupils at the brāhmaṇa centre of Manasākaṭa in Kosala. The commentator Buddhaghoṣa adds that Manasākaṭa was a pleasant retreat to which at various times influential brāhmaṇas resorted to spend their time in reciting and studying the Vedic *mantras* (*manta-sajjhāya-karaṇattham*).[3] Among such Brāhmaṇa leaders are mentioned Caṅkī, Tārukkha, Pokkharasādi, Jāṇussoṇi and Todeyya. It is significant that at least one of these names could be traced in the later *Brāhmaṇa* literature, namely, Tārukkha, which, at least phoneti-

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cally, is no other than Tārukṣya found as the name of a teacher in the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka* (III.1.6) and the *Śāṅkhāyana Āraṇyaka* (VII.19).[4] The episode begins with a discussion between two young brāhmaṇas, Vāseṭṭha, pupil of Pokkharasādi, and Bhāradvāja, pupil of Tārukkha, regarding the true way to union with Brahmā (*ayam eva ujumaggo ayam añjasāyano niyyāniko niyyāti takkarassa brahma-sahavyatāya*, § 5). Being unable to settle the dispute (*viggaha, vivāda*, § 8) among themselves, they approach the Buddha who Himself was staying at Manasākaṭa to ask Him for his opinion. The Buddha enquires as to the precise point about which there is difference of opinion between them and Vāseṭṭha replies:

> *Maggāmagge bho Gotama. Kiñcāpi bho Gotama brāhmaṇā nānāmagge paññāpenti—Addhariyā brāhmaṇā, Tittiriyā brāhmaṇā, Chandokā brāhmaṇā, Chandāvā*[5] *brāhmaṇā, Bhavyārijjhā*[6] *brāhmaṇā—atha kho sabbāni tāni niyyānikāni niyyanti takkarassa Brahma-sahavyatāya? Seyyathā pi bho Gotama gāmassa vā nigamassa vā avidūre bahūni ce pi nānāmaggāni bhavanti, atha kho sabbāni tāni gāma-samosaraṇāni bhavanti evam eva kho bho Gotama kiñcāpi brāhmaṇā nānāmagge paññāpenti—Addhariyā brāhmaṇā . . . Brahma-sahavyatāyāti?* (§ 10)

This passage may be translated literally as follows: 'Concerning the (real) path and the false path, venerable Gotama. Although, venerable Gotama, the *brāhmaṇas* declare various paths—(that is to say) the Addhariya *brāhmaṇas*, the *Tittiriya* . . . Chandoka . . . Chandāva . . . the Bavharij(jh)a *brāhmaṇas* yet do all those [*tāni*, neuter] saving paths, do they lead to the Brahma-companionship of the pursuer thereof? Just as venerable Gotama, near a village or a hamlet there are many and various paths, yet they all meet together in the village—just in that way all the various paths declared by various *brāhmaṇas*,—the Addhariya *brāhmaṇas* etc.,—do they lead to the Brahma-[7] companionship of the pursuer thereof?'

This, passage, it will be admitted, is important both for its language and for its subject matter. In the first place, the neuter plural *tāni* referring to the various 'paths' to Brahma-companionship is a curious anomaly if its antecedent is to be regarded as *nānāmagge* which has the accusative plural ending (*-e*) of the masculine declension, for this noun (*magga*) is never found in the *neuter* gender either in Pali or in Sanskrit. Buddhaghoṣa has noticed this irregular employment of the neuter plural in *sabbāni tāni* referring to *magge* but dismisses

it with the curt remark that it is a case of gender change (*liṅga-vipallāsa*).[8] Prof. Rhys Davids surprisingly ignores *sabbāni tāni* but commenting on the following *nānāmaggāni* says that the latter is 'noteworthy as a curious change of gender'.[9] But the neuter plural used in *nānāmaggāni* is obviously due to the influence of the preceding *sabbāni tāni niyyānikāni*, and the real problem, as the Pali commentator has appreciated, is to explain the change of gender in *sabbāni tāni*. Now, change of gender is not an unusual phenomenon in Pali. As Geiger has pointed out,[10] the sense for grammatical gender has already become hazy in Pali, and due to 'syntactical irregularities' masculine and feminine substantives sometimes show neuter inflexional forms and vice versa. However, this kind of gender change is without exception confined to *substantives* only, and not a single case of an irregular change of gender of a pronoun can be adduced from the literature. Moreover, the subject of *niyyanti* can only be *tāni* for *niyyānikāni* never appears in Pali as a substantive but is always an adjective.[11] Hence, it cannot be argued that *tāni* is due to the influence of *niyyānikāni*. These considerations rule out the possibility of any syntactical irregularity being the cause of the gender change in *tāni*.

What, then, could have contributed to this surprising anomaly of gender? It may be pointed out here that in Pali as in the Prakrits, idiom and syntax are to a considerable extent governed by popular psychological factors which hardly find a place in a strictly codified system of grammar as that of classical Sanskrit. Instances of morphological, phonological and syntactical irregularities can be adduced from these dialects, which are in the main due to reasons of 'popular psychology'. It is obvious that in the above paragraph, the parenthetical clause beginning with *Addhariyā* is not a negligible factor and could have had some semantic influence on the rest of the sentence. An examination of the meaning of these terms appear to justify such a surmise.

The term *Addhariyā* is derived from *adhvarya* — the denominative verbal base from *adhvara*, sacrifice, from which the usual Vedic derivative is *adhvaryu*[12] and has doubtless the same meaning, i.e. 'follower of the *Yajurveda*'. *Tittiriya* (*Tittiri+ya*) is beyond doubt a parallel form of Taittirīya, 'followers of a school of the *Black Yajurveda*,[13] *Chandokā* represents the Vedic *Chandogāḥ* (hymn-singing),[14] denoting 'the followers of the *Sāmaveda*', with the phonetic confusion of the latter part *-ga* (from the root *gā*) with the frequent

suffix *-ka*. The next term *Chandāvā* which occurs in the majority of manuscripts, although it is dropped, probably for its obscurity, in one Sinhalese and one Burmese manuscript presents a more difficult problem. If any word in the *Brāhmaṇic* nomenclature of the relevant period can be considered to be the original form of this obviously corrupt term, there is no doubt that *Cāndrāyaṇāḥ* found among the Pravara-gotra names, as will be shown below, appears to be the most plausible. This, however, should in the normal course of phonetic development become in Pali *Candānā*, by the well-known contraction of *-āya* -to *-ā-*.[15] The aspirated *ch* in the Pali *chandāvā* can be accounted for as being due to the influence of the aspirate *ch* in the initial syllable of the immediately preceding *Chandokā*. The only real difficulty in this identification is the substitution of the sound *-v-* in the last syllable for the original *-n-*. In view of the rather frequent confusion of sonantal sounds (*y, v, r, l, m, n*) in Pali and Prākrit,[16] and the fact that the term in question is an obscure proper name borrowed from the learned *Brāhmaṇic* vocabulary and incorporated into the popular dialect and thus more liable to phonetic corruption, the suggested etymology may not be wholly unjustifiable. The last term appears in four variant readings listed in the Pali Text Society edition of the text. For its own reading it selects the form *Brāhmacariya*. The Burmese manuscripts show three different forms: *Bhavyārijjhā, Bavhadijā* and *Cavhadijā*. Prof. Rhys Davids has adopted the reading *Bavharijā*[17] and has also identified it correctly with the Vedic *Bahvṛcāḥ*, the name traditionally accorded to the followers of the *Ṛgveda*.

From the foregoing discussion of the names of Brāhmaṇas occurring in the Pali parenthetical passage the important fact emerges that the author was presumably referring to various schools of Brāhmaṇas holding different views as to the path of union with Brahma. To regard these names as merely indicating the classes of *priests*[18] divided according to their functions in the sacrificial ritual would be to miss the author's point altogether. If that were the intention the three names—Bavharijā, Addhariyā and Chandokā would have certainly sufficed, and Tittiriyā, and C(h)andāvā would not have been added, because there were no officiant priests by those names. Moreover, the specific terms *hotṛ* and *udgātṛ* in their corresponding Pali forms should have been preferred. But the author's idea was to indicate that these five schools held different (*nānā*) views regarding the way to union with Brahma. The history of Vedic literature shows

that such schools of ancient Brāhmaṇas did exist holding different views in such matters. In fact we read in an ancient text, the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka* (III.2.3) [= *Saṅkhāyana Araṇyaka* (VIII.4)], 'That same [Self] the Bahvṛcas formulate in the great *Uktha*, the Adhvaryus in the Fire, the Chandogas in the Mahāvrata rite. They see him in this earth, in heaven, in the air, in the ether, in the waters, in plants, in trees, in the moon, in the constellations: in all beings, Him they call the Brahman.'[19] It is well known that the exegetical works of the followers of these three Vedas, namely, the collections known as the *Brāhmaṇa* texts, contain both commandments (*vidhi*) and explanations (*arthavāda*). As Sāyaṇa points out in his introduction to the *Ṛgveda-bhāṣya*, 'The commandments are of two kinds, either causing something to be done which was not done before, or making something known which was not known before . . . Of the latter kind are all philosophical passages, such as, "Self was all this alone in the beginning." '[20] This shows that from very early times the Vedic schools in which these explanations and speculations were developed had differences not only in their separate interpretations of strictly ritual matters, but also in their speculative beliefs regarding the method of attaining the Goal. Past investigations, especially the researches of Max Müller,[21] have established beyond doubt that such schools or communities had grown up among the Brāhmaṇas of Vedic India long before the composition of the *Brāhmaṇa* texts. In fact, with cogent reasoning Max Müller has postulated the existence, during the centuries of the development of Vedic literature, of three classes of such communities or 'ideal successions of teachers and pupils who learn and teach a certain branch of the Veda,'[22] which traditionally came to be known as *caraṇas*. In his opinion, the name *caraṇa* should be reserved for 'those ideal successions or fellowships to which all belonged who read the same *śakhā* or recension of the Veda'.[23]

First of all, argues this authority, arose the *Saṃhitā-caraṇas* or those which originated with the texts of the *Saṃhitās*; secondly, those which originated with the texts of the *Brāhmaṇas*, which he calls the *Brāhmaṇa-caraṇas*; and, thirdly, those which originated with the *Sūtras* called the *Sūtra-caraṇas*.[24] He points out further that the first *caraṇa* to grow up must have been that of the Bahvṛcas or followers of the *Ṛgveda Saṃhitā*, as there is no evidence of the existence at the period of the compilation of that *Saṃhitā* of *caraṇas* or *śākhās* of the Adhvaryus and the Chandogas, followers of the *Yajurveda* and the

Sāmaveda respectively. 'When the growth of a more complicated ceremonial led to the establishment of three or four classes of priests . . . there must have been a floating stock of brāhmaṇas *dicta theologica*, peculiar to each class of priests'.[25] It was the adoption of a *Brāhmaṇa* text by each community that led to the second class, the *Brāhmaṇa-caraṇas*. There was originally only one body of *Brāhmaṇas* for each of the three Vedas; for the *Ṛgveda* the Brāhmaṇas of the Bahvṛcas, for the *Sāmaveda* the Brāhmaṇas of the Chandogas, and for the *Yajurveda* in its two forms the Brāhmaṇas of the Taittirīyas, and the more ancient elements of what later became the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*.[26] The earliest *Brāhmaṇa* text to be put together was naturally that of the Bahvṛcas,[27] and the *Āpastamba Śrauta Sūtra*, which is not later than 250-300 B.C., cites a Bahvṛca Brāhmaṇa nine times.[28] This must have been followed soon after by the compilation of the *Brāhmaṇas* of the Adhvaryus and the Chandogas, a state of affairs reflected in a passage in the *Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa* (V.11) which lists these three schools.

There is evidence that the Adhvaryus developed several schools, the earliest of which was known as the Carakas; the Taittirīyas together with the Kaṭhas were but two original sections of these.[29] The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* of the *White Yajurveda* is only the 'sacred code of a new *Caraṇa*', which according to tradition, broke away from the Taittirīya school of the Adhvaryus as the result of 'a schism introduced by Yājñavalkya Vājasaneya'.[30] Hence, Keith remarks that the *Brāhmaṇa* portion of the *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* must be reckoned among the older *Brāhmaṇa* texts, earlier than the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*,[31] and is to be dated about 600 B.C.[32] The omission of the name of this new school in the Pali list is, therefore, not without considerable significance for the relative chronology of the early Buddhist canon and the period of the composition of the *Brāhmaṇa* texts, as we shall see below. A *Brāhmaṇa* of the Chandogas which included *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* is referred to in the *Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra* (XXII), the *Parāśara-smṛti* (I.38/39.4.28) and by Pāṇini (IV.3.129). Thus it becomes clear that the Pali passage refers to the followers of the *older* schools or *caraṇas* that were distinguished by their separate *Brāhmaṇa* texts and are, therefore, designated *Brāhmaṇa-caraṇas* by Max Müller. The only doubt is about the C(h)āndāvā who, as suggested above, may represent the Candrāyaṇas. Although there is no evidence of a Vedic school so named, the Pravara lists do make mention of Brāhmaṇas with that designation,

both as an *upa-gaṇa* of the Bhṛgus and of the Kevala-Aṅgirasas.[33] This occurrence may be paralleled by the fact that even the Chandogas appear in the Pravara lists as Chāndogeyas.[34] It is quite possible, therefore, that there was an older *Brāhmaṇa-caraṇa* by the name of Cāndrāyaṇāḥ which disappeared as such by the time of the conclusion of the *Brāhmaṇa* period.[35] Probably the reference is to a 'school' that practised the Cāndrāyaṇa ritual fast regulated by the observation of the course of the moon as referred to also in the *Tāṇḍya Brāhmaṇa* (XVII.13.17). The Pali passage may have included these inasmuch as the followers of such a rite must have regarded it too as a path to union with Brahma.

The general conclusion cannot thus be avoided that the Pali passage in citing these names was referring to *doctrines* held by these various schools of Brāhmaṇas. The 'collective *Brāhmaṇas*'[36] of the earlier *caraṇas*, as has been indicated above, must have been partly records of such doctrines or *dicta theologica* which are generally referred to in Vedic literature by the neuter plural *brāhmaṇani*. In analyzing the linguistic peculiarities of the Pali passages it was suggested that the 'irregular' neuter plural in the pronoun *tāni* could have been the result of a psychological factor. If it is now suggested that the author had at *the back of his mind* the idea of the several conflicting theological doctrines, *brāhmaṇāni*, of the various brāhmaṇa schools, cited in the Pali parenthetical clause and called *Brāhmaṇa-caraṇas* by Max Müller, then it would be easy to justify the use of the neuter plural *tāni* as a case of unconscious psychological influence on syntax. Such a phenomenon is not infrequently met with in the syntax of popular dialects such as Pali. This interpretation receives definite confirmation from the traditional use of the *masculine plural* for the names of the followers of the *older* (*Brāhmaṇa*) *caraṇas* to indicate their respective *works* or *doctrines*. In fact, as Max Müller has clearly shown,[37] Pāṇini rests his opinion as to the old and the new *Brāhmaṇas* on precisely this usage. 'A book', he says, 'composed by a certain author may be called by an adjective derived by the author's name.'[38] A book composed, for instance, by Vararuci may be called *vararuco granthaḥ*. If, however, the supposed author was only the promulgator of a traditional body of knowledge and not responsible for its actual composition, it should not be called his *grantha*, but should bear its own title such as *vyākaraṇam* together with an adjective derived from his name.[39] Thus Pāṇini's own work may be called *Pāṇinīyam vyākaraṇam*. Or, it may be alternatively called

Pāṇinīyam in the neuter singular.[40] 'But, if the work referred to', insists Pāṇini, 'consists either of Vedic hymns (*chandas*), or of old Brāhmaṇas (*purāṇa-proktesu brāhmaṇeṣu*), then it is not correct to use their derived adjectives in the *singular* (unless we employ secondary derivatives, such as *Taittirīyakam, Kāṭhakam*), but it is necessary to use the *masculine plural*.' It would, therefore, not be correct to use *Taittirīyam* (from Tittiri) or *Taittirīyam brāhmaṇam*, in the sense of an *ancient Brāhmaṇa* promulgated by Tittiri. According to Pāṇini we must speak of 'the Taittirīyas' meaning 'those who study and know the *Brāhmaṇa* promulgated by Tittiri'.[41] Max Müller points out that such an idiomatic plural was only to be expected 'as in those old times literary works did not exist in writing, but were handed down by oral tradition in different communities, which represented, so to say, different works, or even different recensions of one and the same work, like so many manuscripts in later times. It was much more natural, therefore, to say the 'Taittirīyas relate' than to speak of a *Taittirīyam* a work proclaimed by Tittiri, who was perhaps a merely nominal ancestor of the Taittirīyas, or to refer to a Taittirīya *grantha*, i.e. Tittiri's book, which in reality never existed'.[42] It is of extreme significance in this connection to observe that Pāṇini further lays down that it would be wrong to speak of the Yājñavalkyas in the same sense as we speak of the Taittirīyas, and the works promulgated by Yājñavalkya, although they are *Brāhmaṇas*, are to be called *Yājñavalkyāni brāhmaṇāni*.[43] Kātyāyana adds: 'because they are of too recent an origin; that is to say, they are almost contemporaneous with ourselves'. 'Here then, we see', says Max Müller, 'that as early as Pāṇini and Kātyāyana a distinction was made, not only by learned men, *but in common language*, between old and modern Brāhmaṇas'.[44]

The above discussion of the evidence from Pāṇini show, firstly, that the use of the plural masculine forms *Addhariyā brāhmaṇā*, etc., in the Pali indicates that the author was referring thereby to the doctrines or utterances of the promulgators of *ancient Brāhmaṇas*, that is to say, their *brāhmaṇāni*; and secondly, the omission of any reference to Yājñavalkyas or Vājasaneyins (Pali *Yaññavakkā, *Vājasaneyā) is quite in keeping with the chronological position of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*. For, if Pāṇini in the fourth century B.C.[45] and even his successor Kātyāyana, could characterize the *Brāhmaṇas* of the Yājñavalkyas as contemporaneous with themselves, obviously then the author of the *Tevijjā Sutta*, probably in the fifth, or according

to the lowest estimate fourth century B.C., omitted that *caraṇa* either because he preceded it in time or because he was prompted by the same reason as Pāṇini to regard it as a modern school that did not count among the ancient *Brāhmaṇa-caraṇas*. The obvious conclusions that results in regard to the relative chronology of the early Pali *Suttas* and the *Brāhmaṇa* texts, namely, that at least the older Suttas of the *Dīgha Nikāya* were composed *before* the end of the *Brāhmaṇa* period when the *Upaniṣads* had not yet come to be regarded as independent texts, is supported by the general observation that no specific reference is made to the *Upaniṣads* either as texts or doctrines anywhere in the Pali *Nikāyas*.

REFERENCES

1. *Wayfarer's Words*, vol. II, p. 601.
2. *Dialogues of the Buddha*, Pt. I, p. xx.
3. *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, vol. II, p. 399.
4. *v.l., Tārkṣya* in the former passage can also give Pali *Tārukkha*.
5. Omitted in one Burmese Ms. and one Sinhalese Ms. out of six Mss.
6. I have prefered the Burmese *v.l* to *Brāhma-cariyā* of the *PTS*, text.
7. Here Brahma is masculine; cf. Buddhaghoṣa, *Sumangalavilāsinī*, vol. II, p. 400: '*Tassa Brahmaṇo*'.
8. Op. cit., p. 401.
9. *Dialogues of the Buddha*, Pt. I, p. 303, fn. 3.
10. *Pali Literature and Language*, §§76, 78, 7.
11. See references listed in *PTS Dictionary*, *s.v.*
12. Cf. Grassmann, *Wörterbuch zum Rgveda*, *s.v.*
13. Suffix *-ya* being added in the popular dialect to the simple base *Tittiri* without *vṛddhi* instead of *-iya* with *vṛddhi*; see Macdonell, *Vedic Grammar for Students*, § 182.2. This was possible due to the popular syncopated form **Titti*. *The Pali Proper Names Dictionary* cites only *Addhvariya* and *Tittiriya*, the rest being omitted altogether.
14. Keith and Macdonell, *Vedic India*, *s.v.* take *chando* here as 'metre' without justification.
15. Cf. Geiger, op. cit., §27.2.
16. *Ibid.*, § 43-46; Pischel, *Prakrit Grammar*, § 254-56
17. *Dialogues of the Buddha*, Pt. I, p. 303, he does not indicate Ms.
18. Rhys Davids, op. cit., footnote 2.
19. Cf. Ranade and Belvalkar, *History of Indian Philosophy*, vol. II, p. 167; Keith (Introduction to *HOS*, 25—*Rigveda Brāhmaṇas Translated*) opines that this part of the *Aitareya Brahmaṇa* belongs to about the latter part of the sixth century B.C.
20. See Max-Müller, *A History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature* (1906), p. 342.
21. Ibid., pp. 125 ff. 187 ff., 360 ff.
22. Ibid., p. 130.
23. Ibid., p. 378; the later confusion of *śākhā* with *caraṇa* has probably led N.Dutt (*Early Monastic Buddhism*, vol. I, p. 10) to regard the Pali terms as referring to 'Vedic Śākhās'.

24. Op. cit., p. 187.
25. Ibid., pp. 188-89.
26. Max-Müller, ibid., p. 345, seems to have omitted the qualification necessary in including the *Śatapatha Brahmaṇa* in the same class as the older *Brāhmaṇas*; but see ibid., p. 360.
27. Cf. Keith, *Rigveda Brahmanas* Translated (*HOS* 25), p.22.
28. Ibid., pp. 48-49.
29. Max-Müller, op. cit., p. 350.
30. Ibid., pp. 349-50; cf. Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda*, p. 19.
31. Keith, *The Veda of the Black Yajus School Translated* (*HOS* 18), p. clxvi.
32. Ibid., p. lxxii.
33. See *Gotra-Pravara-Mañjarī* translated, 31, 76 in J. Brough's *The Early Brahmanical System of Gotra and Pravara*, pp 82, 124.
34. Brough, op. cit., p.144; cf. Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary, s.v.*
35. Cf. Max-Müller, op.cit., p. 365, they were absorbed or replaced by a more modern class of *Caraṇas*, the *Sūtra-caraṇas*.
36. Ibid., p. 360.
37. Ibid., pp. 361-62; the following paragraph is almost completely based on Max-Müller's treatment.
38. Pāṇini, IV.3.116; '*kṛte granthe*'.
39. Ibid., IV.3.115: 'upajñāte'; and IV.3.101; '*tena proktam*' (Bhāṣya: '*yat tena proktam na ca tena kṛtam*').
40. Cf. Pāṇinī, iv.3.101; IV.2.64.
41. Ibid., IV.2.66: '*chandāṃsi brāhmaṇāni ca proktapratyayāntānyadhyetṛveditṛpratyayaṃ vinā na prayoktavyāni*'; cf. IV. 3.102,124; *vārttika* on IV.3.120. Cf. Keith, *The Veda of the Black Yajus School Translated* (*HOS*, 18) p. clxvi.
42. Max-Müller, op. cit., pp. 362-63.
43. Pāṇinī, IV.3.105.1: '*yājñavalkyādibhyaḥ pratiṣedhas tulyakālavāt.*'
44. Max-Müller, op. cit., p. 363 (italics mine).
45. Keith, *The Veda of the Black Yajus School Translated*, (*HOS*, 18), pp. clxviii, clxix.

23

Some Prehistoric Survivals in the Rgveda*

An analysis of the contents of the *Ṛgveda* unmistakably reveals that there is much in it that comes down from ages long before the composition of the *Saṃhitā*. Of such materials found in the *Ṛgveda* whatever pertains to human development or social evolution before the advent of recorded history may be called 'prehistoric survivals', using these terms in the technical sense found in modern archaeological and anthropological literature. It is intended in this essay to discuss a few aspects of this problem. It will be realized that to give a comprehensive summary of all such 'prehistoric survivals', as found in the *Ṛgveda*, would be beyond the scope of a single essay.

In a paper published earlier,[1] I attempted to show how an analysis of the term 'Bharata' on these lines leads to certain deductions which are to a considerable extent compatible with the independent conclusions of archaeologists on Aryan prehistory. The *Ṛgveda*, of course, is not a document consciously meant by its authors to be a record of contemporaneous or even past events. The main purpose of the composers of these hymns was the magnification of the gods of the invading Aryans and the glorification of their leaders (*rājās*) and the priestly families. Yet innumerable facts regarding the prehistory of these Aryans and their struggles with other peoples could be gleaned from stray references and hints. Moreover, a careful 'social' analysis of the myths and legends with which these hymns abound provides much material regarding prehistoric developments. This method of interpreting the obscure social data of the *Ṛgveda* would comprise both the 'linguistic-palaeontological' method of Schrader

*Indologen-Tagung. Göttingen, Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1960.

as well as what in more recent times has come to be called 'applied semasiology' by others. In a previous discussion I had occasion to refer to this kind of *Ṛgveda* analysis as the 'socio-semantic' approach. The doubts entertained by earlier writers on prehistory regarding the value of such linguistic methods for the discovery of facts concerning human developments have in the past few decades somewhat abated, and now we find that even recognized archaeologists and prehistorians like Gordon Childe and Mortimer Wheeler have at times made use of such linguistic deductions to strengthen their own hypotheses on such intricate problems as the decline of the Indus Valley culture.

It is to be remembered that the prehistory of the Vedic Aryans is connected not only with those lands from which they migrated into the Punjab regions but also with the indigenous prehistoric cultures of India itself. The earlier phase or phases of their wanderings must be deemed to be shrouded in obscure myths while some data concerning the entrance-phase are, at least partly, inferable from certain legendary allusions found in the *Ṛgveda*. But since the composition of the *Ṛk-Saṃhitā* is by several centuries posterior to the period of the Aryan invasion of India, even the references to the entrance-phase appear only as 'survivals' in these hymns. As an example of such a 'survival' I may refer to the mention of the *Bharatas* in the *Ṛgveda*. In the paper, already cited, I have attempted to show that the references to these legendary or semi-historical personages represent a 'survival' from Aryan prehistory.

The word *bharata* in the *Ṛgveda* occurs both in the singular as the epithet of some remote mythical figure, and in the plural as denoting some race or tribe (III.33.11, 12; V.11.1; VII.33.6). A general study of these contexts gives us a picture of a most warlike class, referred to especially as *grāmāḥ* or 'war-bands', who took the most prominent part in the famous 'Battle of the Ten Kings'. Their military prowess and adventurous spirit in the Ṛgvedic age are displayed in their successful campaigns both against the Aryans in the West as well as against the non-Aryans in the East. The Bharatas are said to have led expeditions along the Yamunā. There is no doubt that their expeditions to the East were only attempts at territorial expansion. The *Śat. Br.* actually refers to such raids by the Bharatas, and an early text of the Pali Canon makes mention of seven such rulers (*satta-bhāratā*) who had established sovereignty over the land.[2] It is also significant from the prehistoric point of view that the Bharatas are especially

referred to as votaries of a distinct Fire-cult (e.g., *RV*, V.11.1; cf. VII.8.4; II.7.1.5; IV.25.4, etc).

If we now attempt to get at the etymological significance of the term *bharata* we would discover a close connection with the idea of 'warrior'. It is true that most writers and translators have accepted as the general sense of *bharata* the meaning 'to be sustained, nourished' as given by the Petersburg Lexicon. Such a rendering depends on two considerations: first, that the root *bhṛ* here means 'to maintain, sustain, nourish'; and second, that the grammatical structure of the term conveys a gerundival sense. But the grammatical form of the word (*bhar-a-ta*) may also justifiably be taken to indicate an agent sense — a construction which appears quite plausible in view of such citable parallel forms as *suta*, *rajata*, etc., found in the Vedic language. And although the general sense of *bharata* has been taken by most scholars as derived from the root *bhṛ* in the sense of 'to maintain', a study of all the contexts where this root is found proves that the sense of 'bear away, carry off, seize', hence 'plunder, rob, raid, capture in fight', has a much more pronounced vogue in the *Ṛgveda*. The following examples bring out the sense very clearly: In Ṛgveda (II.30.2) Indra is described as one 'who was about to plunder booty from (lit., against) Vṛtra' (*yo vṛtrāya sinam atra abhariṣyat*). Similarly, at V.32.9 he is said to bear away all 'spoils' (*dhanā bharate*), where Sāyana himself does not hesitate to take *dhanā* as 'spoils' or 'booty' (*śatrūṇāṃ vasūni*). The parallel use of the root *muṣ* in identical contexts (e.g. V.34.7 where Indra is said to rob or plunder food) leaves room for doubt as to what *bhar* means in the above cited passages. That the senses of 'robbing, plundering, foraging, raiding' were current from a very early period is seen from the fact that most references are from the family books. It is further indicated by the clear occurrence of the derivative noun *bhara* in exactly the same sense of 'forage', that is to say, food or fodder obtained by plundering, pillaging or raiding, developing into the special idea of 'loot, booty' and hence 'spoils' of war. Out of the 43 references to *bhara* given by Grassmann 32 relate to the winning or capturing of booty or the gathering of spoils in war. Again, the occurrence of the same word *bhara* (X.44.5) and the compound *bhara-hū(ti)* as in I.117.18; V.29.8; VIII.66.1 etc. in the sense of 'war cry' or 'battle song', supported by the Greek *kharmē* with a similar meaning, leaves no room for doubt as to the original sense of robbing, plundering, raiding for the root *bhṛ*. It can be easily seen that the idea of 'battle' or 'warfare'

is a direct development from the above meaning, and, consequently, it is of great significance that even Sāyaṇa accepts this sense for a number of contexts (e.g. in I.100.1, 2 etc.), doubtless following Yāska who clearly took the word in the sense of battle (*bhara iti saṃgrāma-nāma bharater vā harater vā*; *Nir.* IV.24). We may compare the synonymous use of the participial form *bharant* in *Pañcv. Brāhmaṇa* (XVIII.10.8) meaning warrior.

From the above discussion it should be clear that the word *bharata* must have originally meant 'plunderer' or 'raider'. But here a problem arises. In the *Ṛgveda* the contexts show that the Bharatas were actually warriors or fighters, and the more primitive profession of raiding is attributable not to the Bharatas but chiefly to the mythological figure Indra and his associates, the Maruts, in addition to Bṛhaspati (II.23.13) and Agni (VIII.40.3). *Ṛgveda* (IX.79.2) has a special significance in this connection in so far as it not only confirms the above conclusion but also gives us a picture of the geographical and social context in which such activity could have arisen:

prá ṇo dhanvantu indavo madacyúto
dhánā vā ṽcbhir árvato junīmási/
tiró mártasya kásya cit párihvṛtiṃ
vayaṃ dhánāni viśvádhā bharemahi/[4]

'May the mead-oozing drops (i.e. Soma) cause us to rush forth to the spoils wherefore we urge the racers on; beyond the trap (or, across the encirclement, i.e. rampart) of any mortal may we continually bear the spoils away.' Several words in this stanza deserve special attention. The verb *dhanvantu* comes from the root *dhanv* 'to rush forth' and is only the derivative form of the primitive radical element *dhan* meaning 'to move swiftly' whence is derived also the noun *dhanam*. That this rushing forth is no other than the 'swooping down' in raiding or pillaging and that *dhanam* implies the material object, namely food, fodder or cattle thus seized as booty is made patent by several contexts. Further, the related derivatives *dhanus* and *dhanvan*, both meaning 'bow' and *dhanvan*, perhaps also *dhanu* (fem.), signifying 'barren land' (*RV*, I.168.5; V.36.1 etc.) may easily refer to the steppeland where such raids first took place. The sense of 'bow' could imply the instrument of attack employed and that of 'barren land' the locus in which such raids were conducted. It is significant that prehistorians have surmised that the bow was prob-

ably invented on the Asiatic steppes and formed part of the early Indo-European armoury.[3] Another very interesting fact brought out by this verse is that such incursions or forays were made on horseback, for the words *arvato junīmasi* must be taken to refer to the urging forward of the racers rather than the driving of steeds yoked to war-chariots. That riding on horseback must have preceded their being used to draw war-chariots appears more probable on general grounds, and, the archaic atmosphere of this stanza seems to support such an idea. Pigott[4] has referred to the fact that horse-riding was not unknown to the nomads of the Asian steppes. There is a good deal of evidence in the *Ṛgveda* to show that such raiders as implied by the terms I have cited above used the horse for such purpose. In *RV*, (IV.38.5) Dadhikras, who is no other than the mythicized Aryan war-horse, is extolled in a graphic description alluding to the stealth and swiftness of such incursions or forays: 'Loudly the folk cry after him in the raids (*bhareṣu*) as it were a thief stealing a garment, speeding at (their) wealth or a herd of cattle, like a hungry falcon swooping down.' This description leaves no doubt as to the employment of the swift horse (but not of the war-chariots) in these raids. *RV*, (I.165.2) clearly refers to Indra mounting the horse (*adhi-atiṣṭhat*), and in V.61.2 the horses of the Maruts (the associates of Indra in such raids)are said to have 'seats on their backs' (*pṛṣṭhe sadaḥ*), which clearly refers to the fact the Maruts rode on horseback. These references indicate a survival from the time when the Aryan nomads became the first among such peoples to tame the swift horse whom Gordon Childe[5] calls 'a preeminently Aryan animal' . . . 'whose introduction to Hither Asia went indubitably with Indo-European speech'.

An important point that emerges from a study of the above cited passages is that most of the characteristics of the nomadic Aryan raider are attributed to Indra. Several other contexts help to prove his undoubted leadership in these nomadic raids, supposed to have taken place in the distant past (*puras, purvye dhane*). *RV*, (VI.17.8) says: 'yea Indra, of yore (*puraḥ*) all the gods installed thee as the one strong champion for the foray (*bhara-a*)'. In *RV*, (I.132.1) the prayer is made: 'Helped, O mighty Indra, be thee in the incursion of yore (*pūrvye dhane*), may we subdue those who fight against us. . . ', a context which clearly proves the connection between raiding (*bhara*) and incursions (*dhana*), the significance of which we have already discussed (cf. I.100.2; VII.32.24 etc). That not only Indra but Agni

also is connected with these raids or forays is clear from *RV*, VIII.40.3 where they are said to be 'dwellers in the midst of forays (*bharānāṃ madhye*)'. In fact, Agni is elsewhere called 'Bharata' (I.33.45; 59.6 etc.), a term that should be taken as meaning the 'dweller among the Bharatas', as I have shown in my previous study. It is significant that the Agni cult, as shown by anthropologists,[6] was typical of the religious practices of these nomadic raiders.

It is, however, in the conception of the Maruts that the *Ṛgveda* preserves the most primitive 'survival' in this connection. They are said to have lived in the earliest age (*purā*; *RV*, I.39.7) and been the closest associates of Indra (I.5.1; 10.2, etc.) as well as of Agni (VIII.92.14). If the Bharatas are the nomadic warriors of Aryan antiquity, the Maruts are the fighters of the period of Aryan barbarism. This fact is clear from their being called 'son of Rudra' or the Rudras or Rudriyas (I.38.7). An analysis of Rudras character in the *Ṛgveda* supports the view that he represents a 'survival' from the primitive hunting period. The Pali derivative *ludda-ka* for hunter is certainly not without significance in this connection and it is not totally without linguistic support to connect the etymology of the word *mar-ut* with the same idea of hunter, since it can be justifiably derived from the root *mṛ-mṛṇāti*, to crush, although the usually given derivation is from *mṛ-mriyate*, to die. It is well-known anthropologically that the most primitive method of killing the hunted animal was by crushing with stones or clubs. As Childe has shown, at the end of the palaeolithic stage the Aryans were 'a sparse population of preneolithic hunters strung out indefinitely over the steppes',[7] who 'roamed over these Central Asian waste-lands for a long time before they acquired enough wealth and position by raiding and looting to develop into the military aristocracy that they became in course of time'.[8] He further adds: 'The raids that brought them north were preludes to invasions. We may suspect that the ancestors of the Indians and the Iranians discovered as freebooters the roads that eventually led them to the throne of Mitanni and to the Indus Valley.'[9] In the light of these remarks it may not seem so absurd as would appear at first sight to suggest that while the earliest attacks on the Indus culture were the work of the savage Maruts the final decisive onslaught on this venerable civilization must have been made by the more advanced warrior-hordes (*grāmās*) whose memory is concealed in the term *Bharatas*. It should be apparent from what has been said above that these 'survivals' must be considered to go back

to two different epochs in the development of human culture, viz., the evolution of the ancient warrior from the savage hunter.

If the general thesis I have attempted to put forward very briefly be taken even partly as correct, then it would become clear that there is a need to reinterpret the *Ṛgveda* in terms of this somewhat new methodology. I have called it the 'socio-semantic' method, but whatever be the name we may give it, it is my earnest hope that the application of such a method in regard to the relevant hymns of the *Ṛgveda* will prove to be of great value both to the Vedic scholars and to the pre-historians. It appears to me that in such matters we have yet not moved very far from the time of Max Müller, Grassmann and others in analyzing and interpreting this hoary document of Aryan prehistory—the *Ṛgveda*.

REFERENCES

1. See 'Ṛgvedic Bharata. A Survival from Aryan Pre-history', in this volume, pp. 245 ff.
2. *DN*, II.236.
3. Pigott, *Prehistoric India*, p. 282.
4. Ibid., p. 266.
5. *The Aryans*, pp. 78, 109, 156.
6. W. Schmidt, *The Origin and Growth of Religion*, p. 50 ff.
7. Op. cit., p. 192.
8. Ibid., pp. 41, 126, 151 f.
9. Ibid., pp. 194-96.

24

Discoid Weapons in Ancient India: Vedic Cakra, Pavi and Kṣurapavi*

Of the weapons of attack mentioned in the ancient literatures of India the *cakra*, quoit or discus, appears to be an implement peculiar to the Indian warrior's armoury, for it is hardly found in other cultures. Apart from its lexical citations, the references to this weapon occur mostly in mythical or legendary contexts, especially in Epic mythology where it is best known as the battle-disk Sudarśana of Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa, Vāsudeva or Nārayana.[1] In the *Mahabharata* it is significantly referred to as being 'hurled with force from the hands of Viṣṇu' (I.1103, 1188), and Kṛṣṇa is stated to have cut Saubha in twain by means of the Sudarśana (III.883). That a weapon, and not merely an ornament, was implied by the Epic writers is further clear from Kṛṣṇa's epithet *cakrāyudha* found in the *MBh* (V.56; XV.665; cf. I.1163), *Harivaṃsa* (5800, 9242) and the *Rāmāyaṇa* (VI.102.12), a use with which may be compared the term *cakrayodhin*, 'discus-fighter', applied to a *dānava* in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (I.21.12). Most conspicuous among the gods of epic and Puranic mythology as wielder of the *cakra* is doubtless Kṛṣṇa and such epithets as *cakradhārin, cakra(gadā)bhṛt, cakra(gada)dhara, cakrapaṇi* and *cakrāyudha* are applied especially to Kṛṣṇa, or to Kṛṣṇa *qua* Viṣṇu, and in a few instances to Viṣṇu himself.[2] The *Bhagavadgīta* (XI.46) describes the Kṛṣṇa-Viṣṇu epiphany as *cakrahasta*, 'having a discus in hand', and the *Harivaṃśa* (8193, 8376) applies the epithet *cakrapāṇin* to the same. The discus of Viṣṇu is also referred to in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (1.13.46) and the *Varaha Purāṇa* gives an allegorical interpretation of Viṣṇu's *cakra* as 'the Cycle of Time'[3], doubtless echoing *RV*, (I.155.6). Another symbolic representation of the idea

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is found in the *Rāmāyaṇa* (*NW*, IV.35; cf. *Hariv.* 12408, 12847). The *Rāmāyaṇa* also mentions along with Guhyakas and Suparṇas a class of semi-mythical beings called the *cakradharas* (V.44.22), which is probably explained by the *MBh* reference to the Siddhas as *cakradharas* (XIV.429). In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (1.9.4) Kṛṣṇa appears as *cakrin* and Śiva himself receives that appellation in the MBh (XIII.745). That the term *cakradhara* is probably earlier than the Epic period may be inferred from its incidence in the *Ṣaḍviṃsa Br.* (V.10) and the *Adbhuta Br.* (10). It is extremely significant that the term *cakradhara* is used in the *MBh* (III.8221) for a 'universal monarch', or emperor, an idea which may throw considerable light on the meaning of the famous epithet *cakravartin* which, perhaps, occurs in Sanskrit literature for the first time in the *Maitri Up.* (I.4) if the Bṛhaddevatā reference (V.123) is considered posterior.

Apart from the above allusions of a mythical character, there are several references in the epic and later Sanskrit literature which prove that the *cakra* was a real weapon wielded by human warriors and which also provide some knowledge of its construction and method of use. The *MBh* itself refers at one place to an actual warrior as *cakradhara* or 'discus-bearer' (I.6257). The same epic (I.33.2 ff.) describes the weapon *cakra* as being made of iron (*ayasmaya*) and sharp edged (*tikṣṇadhāra*) and adds that it is cast by revolving or whirling (*paribhrama*). The *Matsya Purāṇa* (150, 195) defines it as a wheel having eight spokes and besmeared with oil.[4] According to the *Vāmana Purāṇa* (79), the *cakra* has lustrous and sharp edges. Kauṭilya (II, ch. 18) defines it as a *calayantra*, probably meaning a 'projectile mechanism'. Of the classical texts, the *Raghuvaṃśa* (VII.46) characterizes this weapon as *kṣurāgra*, that is, as Mallinātha understands it, 'whose edge is as sharp as that of a razor'. The *Śiśupalavadha* of Māgha (XVIII.45) describes it as a weapon which is hurled from a distance and cuts off the limbs of the enemy. The very late text on diplomacy, the *Nītiprakāśikā*, enumerates among the projectile or *sopasaṃhāra* weapons four kinds of *cakras*: the *daṇḍacakra* or the lethal discus, *dharma-cakra*, the wheel of righteousness, *kāla-cakra*, the discus of Death and *aindra-cakra*, the discus of Indra.[5] It further says (IV.47) that the weapon is a circular disc (*kuṇḍalākāra*) with a triangular hole in the middle. The *Agni Purāṇa* (252.8) defines the techniques of handling the discus, and the *Śukranīti* gives five or seven motions connected with the hurling of the weapon. Commenting on this passage, Oppert says that the *cakra* 'is most probably

identical with the quoit still in use in some Sikh regiments and also among the troops of native Indian princes'.[6] Reference may also be made to representation of *cakras* in sculpture. In the *Siṃhala* fresco in Ajanta discoid weapons are seen to fly through the air. Hindu iconography shows several examples of *cakras*, some with spokes as in the chariot-wheels and others with spokes shaped like the petals of the lotus.[7] In some of these the sharp edges are distinctly marked. A few examples of Viṣṇu's discus also occur in sculpture.[8] Thus although most of the notices concerning the *cakra* as discus or quoit occur in the sphere of myth and legend, there seem to be sufficient grounds for inferring that in ancient India an actual weapon by that name was in use. In fact, in a South Indian text, the *Kalingattu Paraṇi*, it is said that it was part of a prince's education to be trained in the use of 'the five kinds of weapons, beginning with the discus'.[9] Moreover, certain epigraphic references too seem to confirm this idea.[10]

In view of the above evidence for the existence of a real discoid or quoit-like weapon in post-Vedic India, it becomes an interesting problem to seek to discover whether such an implement of attack is found in the warlike culture of the *Ṛgveda*. Such a weapon, if it existed, would naturally be mentioned in connection with the more bellicose deities, particularly Indra and the Maruts. And this is exactly what we find in the hymns of the *Ṛgveda*. Among the weapons used by Indra against the *asuras* and other opponents we do find mentioned a *cakra*, or sometimes a *cakrī* of which the suffix *-i* may be regarded as only pleonastic on the authority of Wackernagel.[11] In *RV*, [VIII.85 (= 96), 9] Indra is implored to scatter, aided by the Maruts, the godless and weaponless *asuras* with *cakra* (*anāyudhāso asurā adevāś cakreṇa tāṃ apa vapa ṛjīṣin*). Griffith in his translation has a note to the effect that *cakra* here means the 'discus, a sharp-edged quoit used as a weapon of war',[12] and Wilson actually translates it as 'discus'.[13] Sāyaṇa's comment *cakrarūpeṇa vajreṇa* shows that he regarded it as a weapon of discoid shape but was doubtful as to its specific function as a club or projectile. Similarly in *RV* (II.11.20), Indra is reported to have 'hurled forth his *cakra* as the sun [sends his disk rolling], and, aided by the Aṅgirases, rent Vala' (*avartayat sūryo na cakraṃ, bhinad valam indro aṅgirasvān*); the figure of Sūrya rolling the solar disk is otherwise attested (e.g., VII.63.2). Sāyaṇa's explanation is as before: 'whirled his *vajra* for the slaughter of the *asuras*' (*asurahananārthaṃ vajram abhrāmayat*). In another context (*RV*, II.34.9; cf. 14), the Maruts are requested to 'save us from the

injurer, the mortal foe' and 'attack [lit. whirl at] him with glowing [lit. heated] disk' (*vartayata tapuṣā cakriyābhi tam*). The use of heated missiles in battle is referred to even in other places (e.g., *aśnā tapuṣā, RV*, II.30.4; *tapuṣiṃ hetiṃ*, III.30.17; cf. VI.52.3; VII.104.5). There is no doubt that the *cakrī* must have been made of metal (or stone?) to be able to be heated. In fact, Sāyaṇa understands some kind of javelin or dart in this instance (*ṛṣṭyākhyayā cakriyā*) and, in the same hymn, on *cakriyā* in verse 14 adds: *ṛṣṭyākhyenāyudhena*. Moreover, it is noteworthy that in the above examples the causative verb *vartaya-* is used in the sense of 'to hurl by rotating' or 'to send whirling'. Such a use is exemplified also in other contexts[14] both with the accusative of the object (weapon) and the dative of the victim as in *RV*, (VII.104.4) (cf. I.121.9), and, with the instrumental of the implement and the accusative of the person attacked as in the passage under discussion, and, for example in *RV*, (VII.104.5). Such an idiomatic use of *vartaya-* may also be found in *RV*, (V.30.7; VIII.14.13). The sense of weapon for *cakra* is also clear from *RV* (X.73.9) where the term obviously signifies the thunderbolt of Indra. Although this stanza has not been elucidated by Sāyaṇa for the *Ṛgveda*, yet in his comment on the parallel passage at *SV*, (I.331), he gives the sense of *āyudha* and Griffith renders it by 'quoit'. There is another instance of *cakra* in *RV*, (I.155.6) which seems particularly important in view of the famous connection of Viṣṇu with the discus already referred to. It is said there that 'like the whirling *cakra* he [Viṣṇu] has set in motion his ninetyfour racing steeds' (*cakraṃ na vṛttaṃ vyatīravīvipat*). Sāyaṇa's comment here is most illuminating: '*vṛttaṃ cakraṃ na: bahvaropetaṃ cakram iva taṃ yathā śatror upari prakṣepaṇāya bhrāmayati . . .*' (like a *cakra* with many spokes, which he whirls with the intention of casting it on the enemy). It is certain that Sāyaṇa has at the back of his mind the celebrated discus Sudarśana, the first of Viṣṇu's five weapons. For all these contexts Geldner in his translation[15] merely renders *cakra* by *rad* (wheel) without commenting on its actual implication, probably following Grassmann who too groups all these under the simple sense of 'wheel' in his *Wörterbuch* and gives the same sense in his translation.

The nature-myth imagery of the *Ṛgveda* has in some places equated the solar disk[16] with the *cakra*, and in some contexts Indra is said to have hurled at his enemies the solar disk tearing off or plundering it from the sun (*svar, sūrya*). In *RV*, (I.130.9) he is eulogised as having torn off (*pra bṛhat*) the wheel of the sun (*sūras*) and deprived his

opponents (the tyrannous ones of verse 8) of their life (lit. speech). Sāyaṇa on this verse records a legend (*itihāsa*) as to how Indra used the sun's disk as a weapon against the *asuras*. In another passage (IV.16.12), Indra is implored to 'crush the Dasyus at once . . . tearing off in the onslaught the disk of the sun' (*sadyo dasyūn pra mṛṇa . . . pra sūraś cakraṃ bṛhatād abhīke*). This idea has an exact parallel in *RV* (I.174.5) where the poet says 'let him tear the sun's disk off in the onslaught, let the thunderbolt-armed go forth to meet his rivals' (*pra sūraś cakraṃ bṛhatād abhīke abhi spṛdho ɣasiṣad vajra-bāhuḥ* cf. V.29.10). We are not wrong, therefore, if we see the same idea of tearing off the sun's disk in *RV* (IV.28.2) where Indra is said to have wrenched (*khidat*) the disk of the sun, and in another passage where he is described as having plundered (*muṣāyaḥ*) the sun's *cakra* in the fight and driven away the evil-doers[17] (VI.31.3; cf. I.175.4; IV.30.4). Just as in the above instances the authors of the hymns seem to have associated the image of the sun's 'wheel' with the *cakra* as a mythical weapon of Indra, so do they appear to have connected in their imagination the latter with the wheel of the war-chariot. In a much discussed context, namely *RV* (I.53.9), Indra is said to have 'beaten down (*ni . . . avṛṇak*) with his evil-footed[18] chariot-wheel (*cakreṇa rathyā duspadā*) the twice ten rulers of tribes . . . [who advanced]'. Whether we find here a reference to armed wheels of the war-chariots, as Whitney suggested for the term *ksura-pavi* of the *AV*, to be discussed later, remains problematical.

From the above discussion it may be surmised that the *cakra* as a weapon of attack implies a 'crossing' of two or three poetical images. The stone discus as a primitive implement, probably surviving[19] from the neolithic hunting cultures of the primitive Indo-European period[20] may, perhaps, be the prototypal concept. That Stone Age primitive man might have already devised even in a crude and rudimentary form such an implement (a potential weapon of attack) is inferable from the sharp-edged discoid flakes that have been unearthed by archaeologists.[21] Moreover, it is significant that in ancient Greece the massive *diskos* made of stone was popular, although as an object of sport.[22] The throwing of the discus or the quoit had become a game as had the throwing of the javelin both originally perhaps projectile weapons of attack.[23] In the Ṛgvedic period, however, the discus seems to have survived at least as the mythical weapon *cakra* used by Indra, with its nature-myth counterpart in the solar disk of the heavens. On this image already

complex, mytho-poetic fancy apparently super-added (see *RV*, I.53.9) the symbol of the *wheel* of the war-chariot whose popularization among Vedic Aryans must be solely attributed to the chariot-warriors reflected in the characters of Indra and his hosts, the Maruts. Indra, indeed, is the *ratheṣṭhā, par excellence*, the epithet being exclusively used for him in the *Ṛgveda*.[24]

The above attempt to establish the sense of Ṛgvedic *cakra* as referring in some contexts at least to a discoid weapon receives considerable support from an isolated instance of its occurrence in the Avesta. In a fragmentary text, *Aogemadaēcā* (81) we find the phrase *haēnayā cakhravaityā*, which the Sanskrit commentary of Nairyosang has rendered by *cakra-śastra-dhāri*, that is to say, 'bearing the weapon discus or quoit'. In spite of Herzfeld's ingenious suggestion that the text may be referring here to a 'chariot-regiment'[25]— *cakhra* in his opinion being used in this compound *pars pro toto* for the *ratha* — one would rather agree with the traditional explanation, and regard the *cakhra* as a discus or quoit like the Vedic parallel. Bartholomae's interpretation of *cakhravant* here as 'bearing a wheel as field-badge (military emblem)'[26] is far more justifiable, although he has offered no further explanation of its significance. If the meaning of discus or quoit be accepted for the Avestan word also, it may indicate an Indo-Iranian provenance for this particular weapon, which, as we had reason to surmise above, possibly survived into the Ṛgvedic period from an earlier era.

There is further evidence in the Vedic literature supporting the idea that the Aryans of the early period knew of a sharp-edged, circular metallic weapon of attack. It has been generally recognized that apart from its simple sense of wheel-band or tire of the chariot-wheel (*Nirukta*, V.5; *ratha-nemi*) the word *pavi* also implies in a few instances in the *Ṛgveda* some kind of weapon[27] although its exact character is not sufficiently clarified. This latter meaning, no doubt, is based on *nirukta* XII.30 (= *śalya*) and *Naighaṇṭuka* II.20 (= *vajra*). Consequently, *pavi* has been taken as 'metallic point of spear or arrow' or a 'bolt'. The etymology of this word is somewhat obscure,[28] but if connected with Latin *pavīo, pavīre*, to strike or crush, Lithuanian *pjáuti*, to cut or immolate, and probably also with Greek *paíō*,[29] the meaning of some sort of weapon as Indian tradition pictured it is certainly plausible. It is significant that in some contexts of the *Ṛgveda* the term *pavi* while obviously signifying the *tires* or rims of the chariot-wheels of the Maruts (or the Aśvins) also contains the

suggestion of their being employed as rain-making implements (e.g., I.64.1; 180.1) reminding one unmistakably of the dual role of Indra's *vajra*. Perhaps, it is the same idea that is implied in *RV* (I.88.2) where the Maruts are said 'to strike the earth with the tire of their chariot' (*pavyā rāthasya jaṅghananta bhūma*). These instances show a 'crossing' of the ideas of *tire* and *weapon*, just as in the case of *cakra* as indicated above. It is, however difficult to visualize an implement or the shape or a tire being used as a weapon, since in several contexts *pavi* is compared to a sharp blade, as of an axe, falling on the victim and chopping his trunk or limbs. On the other hand, if the weapon is understood as some form of quoit, which in the poets' imagination had sometimes been associated with the tire, on account of its circular metallic nature, the sense of several contexts seems to improve.

In *RV*, (VI. 8.5) Agni is implored to 'cut down the wicked (foe), as it were, with the *pavi*, like a tree with a sharp edge [of an axe][30] (*pavyeva . . . aghaśaṃsaṃ . . . nīca ni vṛśca vaninaṃ na tejasa*). Here Sayaṇa equates *pavi* with *vajra*, as he often does for the term *cakra*. Griffith guesses with 'sharpened bolt', while Geldner cautiously takes it as 'iron weapon' (*Eisen*). What has to be emphasized here is the intended parallelism between *pavyā* and *tejasā*, the latter, as Geldner has rendered it, meaning the 'sharpened edge (of a cutting instrument)' —a sense several times found for *tejas* in the *Ṛgveda*.[31] Hence by *pavi* reference to a weapon with extremely sharp edge, used with that edge striking the victim, is clear from this context. A similar appeal is addressed to Indra in *RV* (X.180.2) (= *AV*, VII.84.3): 'Whetting thy darting, sharp *pavi*, O Indra, dismember our foes . . .' (*sṛkaṃ saṃśāya pavim indra tigmaṃ vi śatrūn tāḷhi*). Sāyaṇa takes *sṛkam* as adjective to *pavim* in the sense of 'moving' (*saraṇaśīlam*) which seems preferable to regarding it as a noun with the meaning of 'dart' as most translators have done. It is significant that both the verbs *ni vraśc* and *vi takṣ* are most appropriate to describe the action of a sharp-edged weapon falling suddenly on the victim and severing his head or limbs from the trunk. We may compare the use of *vi takṣ* in *RV* (I.158.5) (*śiro yad asya traitano vi takṣat*). It would certainly be odd to conceive of a rim-shaped metal band being capable of such a function. It is only if we take *pavi* as a quoit that these contexts assume some intelligible meaning. In particular the difficult stanza in *RV* (X.156.3) becomes amenable to a reasonable interpretation if *pavi* is taken in that sense. There Agni is addressed with the words: '*aṅgdhi*

khaṃ vartayā paṇim" Grassmann in his *Wörterbuch* promptly suggested the emendation of the curious *paṇim* to *pavim* and in his translation gave the rendering 'turn the wheel'. He had the support of the *Sāmaveda* (II.7.15.3) which reads *pavim*, the reading followed by Griffith too in his *Ṛgveda* translation. Geldner, who is not enthusiastic about this emendation, renders the phrase (with *paṇim*) as 'smear the hole [or the hub] and turn [i.e. convert] the niggard', adding a note to say that the idea is figurative. Unfortunately for him such a sense of *vartaya* is nowhere attested in the *Ṛgveda*, whereas its constant use in the sense of 'whirling' (such as wheels or discoid weapons) has already been referred to as in the case of *cakra*. Griffith's 'oil thou the socket, turn the wheel' following Grassmann seems much more reasonable, the only objection being that *pavi* never means the *wheel* of the chariot in the Veda or elsewhere. As shown earlier, it means only the metallic rim or tire round the wheel. If we regard *pavi* here as the weapon, i.e. some form of quoit, a positively clear meaning is attained. In that case the oiling would refer to some application of a lubricant to the inside socket (*kham*) of the quoit for swifter whirling and easy release. That some discoid weapons had a triangular hole in the middle has been recorded in the *Nītiprakāśikā* as referred to earlier. We may also compare the art of throwing the Greek *dískos* which was swung with the help of a helve of wood put into the hole.[32] In fact, the *Matsya Purāna* (150, 195) actually refers to the weapon *cakra* as being oiled, an idea which clearly supports the above interpretation.

In view of the above occurrence of *pavi* in the likely sense of a quoit, the incidence of the term *kṣura-pavi*, 'razor-edged *pavi*', twice in the *Atharvaveda* (XII.5.20, 55) assumes particular significance. In this hymn, inculcating the danger of robbing or harming a Brāhmaṇa's cow, it is said that 'she is a bolt (*vajra*) when running (18); a missile (*hetiḥ*) when she draweth up her hooves . . . (19); a *kṣura-pavi* when she beholdeth (20)'. Again lower down (54-55) in the same hymn the cow is addressed: 'Burning, consuming, as the *vajra* of the Brāhmaṇa, becoming Death, as the *kṣura-pavi*, pursue thy course' (*kṣurapavir mṛtyur bhūtvā vi dhāva tvam*). In both these contexts Griffith translates the term by 'sharp as a razor'.[33] Whitney too taking it as an adjective renders it as 'keen-edged', but in the latter context adds a note that the reading *vi dhāva tvam* 'probably carries on the figure implied in *kṣura-pavi* which applies especially to the armed wheels of a battle chariot'.[34] Whitney possibly refers to the

sense of *pavi* as 'tire' developing into that of 'wheel'. But such a semantic development is hardly attested in the language, as remarked earlier. Thus, considering also what has been said above regarding the meaning of *pavi*, it appears justifiable to conclude that *kṣura-pavi* most probably was a weapon of the shape of a *flattish metal ring* with its outer edge as sharp as a razor blade. Further evidence as to the substantive 'weapon' sense of the term may be found in the *Taittirīya Saṁhitā* (II.1.5.7) where, in a cryptic simile, prosperity is compared to the *kṣura-pavi* and the sacrificial post, shaped like a wooden sword, to the *vajra*; its terror-striking character being implied in V.6.6.1; VI.2.5.2, etc.[35] This substantive sense is also found at *Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhita* I.10.14 (= *Kāṭhaka Saṁhitā* XXXVI.8) where the Martus are described as having destroyed the victim with the *kṣura-pavi*, the *Nirukta* (V.5) glossing it as 'tire' or 'wheel-band'. The *Śatapatha Br.* (VII. 3.2.5, 6) refers actually to *vajrān kṣurapavin*, and with this may be compared the statement at *Jaiminīya Br.* (I.98) which equates the *kṣura-pavi* with the *vajra*. It may be observed that *vajra*, although prominently used for the celebrated thunderbolt of Indra, in course of time assumed in the Vedic period itself the general sense of 'weapon'.[36]

Definite support for the above interpretation comes from the existence in Pali (*Jataka*, IV.3) of the term *khura-cakka* which is clearly conceived as a 'wheel' which immolates the victim by its rotation (*ibid.*, p. 4). Cowell[37] rendered the term as 'a wheel sharp as a razor'. The real character of this weapon is brought out in the phrase *khurapariyantenāpi cakkena* found in the *Dīgha Nikāya* (I.52) which Rhys Davids translated as 'with a discus sharp as a razor'[38], the Pali commentary on this passage[39] equating *khura-cakka* with *khura-nemi*, where *nemi* is the exact equivalent of *pavi* as shown earlier. It may be added that in Prakrit too *pavi* is found in the sense of *vajra*, the weapon of Indra[40] a use which receives confirmation from the phrase (*vajreṇa*) *kṣura-bhṛṣṭinā* in *AV* (XII.5.66), which Whitney has translated as 'razor-pronged (*vajra*)'.

The above discussion should throw some light on the obscure passage of Ṛgveda (I.166.10) where the Maruts are described as 'having blades [razors] on their *pavis*' (*paviṣu kṣurā adhi*). Max Müller translated the phrase as 'on their fellies (are) sharp edges', suggesting, as Whitney did for the *Atharvaveda kṣura-pavi* referred to above, 'armed wheels of a battle chariot'. However, he is doubtful 'whether in India or elsewhere the tires or the wheels of chariots were

ever used as weapons of attack, as detached from the chariot . . . '.[41] Sāyaṇa says that weapons like the *vajra* with sharp edges is meant (*paviṣu vajrasadṛśeṣvāyudheṣu kṣurāḥ kṣuradhārāḥ*), and, according to the context, *pavi* does not appear to imply any connection here with chariots. Considering the *real* nature of the other weapons carried by the Maruts, it seems very probable that the reference is to some sort of sharp-edged quoit. Even more puzzling an occurrence of the term is found in *Ṛgveda* (V.31.5) which states that 'without steeds or chariots the *pavis* sped by Indra whirled upon the Dasyus' (*anaśvāso yo pavayo 'rathā indreṣitā abhyavartanta dasyūn*). It may be that this reference too is to rim-like quoits in their (horizontal) flight which the poet seems to connect with chariot-wheels in his imagination.[42] At the beginning of this paper reference was made to *cakras* conceived of as having spokes like the chariot-wheels. Thus it seems most probable that even in these contexts the reference is to a discoid or quoit-like weapon which, as we have attempted to show in this paper, formed part of the ancient Indian warrior's battle gear.

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1. See Sörensen, *An Index to the Names in the Mahābhārata*, p. 653 (*s.v. Sudarśana*)
2. Ibid., pp. 171, 421, 717.
3. See V.R. Ramachandra Dikshitar, *War in Ancient India*, p. 148.
4. Cf. Chakravarti, *The Art of War in Ancient India*, pp. 171 ff.
5. Cf. *Śukranīti*, ch. 4, see VII.I.430 for three kinds of quoits.
6. *On the Weapons etc. of the Ancient Hindus*, p. 15.
7. See Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, vol. I (*āyudha-puruṣas*).
8. Bhattasali, *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum*, p. 78; cf. Zimmer, *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization*, pp. 76, 78.
9. See *Indian Antiquary*, pp. 19, 332.
10. *South Indian Inscriptions*, vol. I, p. 153; *Corpus Inscr. Indic.*, vol. III, p. 184 et. seq.
11. *Altindische Grammatik*, vol. II, Pt.2, § 247 e.
12. *Hymns of the Ṛgveda*, vol. II, p. 245.
13. *Ṛgveda*, vol. V, p. 183.
14. See Grassmann, *Wörterbuch zum Rig-veda, s.v. vṛt* (9, 10).
15. Reference is to Geldner's *Der Rig-veda* (*HOS*, vols 33-35) and to Grassmann's *Rig-veda* (2 vols.). Hereafter translations of the R.V. will be cited by the author's name.
16. See Von Bradke, *ZDMG*, vol.40, p. 357.
17. Grassmann, *Wörterbuch zum Rig-veda, s.v. rapas.*
18. Geldner takes *duspadā* as 'with the lame', but Griffith as 'outstripped', following Sāyaṇa (*śatrubhiḥ prāptum aśakyena*), qualifying *cakreṇa*. Grassmann's 'evil-footed' (*Wörterbuch*) seems to suit the context much better, meaning, as

he gives in his translation, 'a sharp wheel' although previously the present writer gave the sense of 'unassailable' to the compound (see 'The Symbolism of the Wheel in the Cakravartin Concept' in this volume, pp. 267 ff.

19. See paper on 'Some Prehistoric Survivals in the Ṛgveda' in this volume, p. 285.
20. See V. Gordon Childe, *The Aryans*, pp. 160-61.
21. See Burkitt, *The Old Stone Age*, 2nd edn., pp. 68, 99; De Pradenne, *Prehistory*, Row's trans., pp. 58 ff.
22. Homer, *Odyssey*, VIII.186, 188, 190; *Iliad*, II.774; *Pindar*, I.1.34. Excavated specimens are circular plates of stone, later of metal, nine to ten inches in diameter and four to five pounds in weight. See *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (14th edn.), vol. 7, p. 420.
23. Cf. the *bolas*, a primitive hunting missile, now used as a game or toy in Africa. *ibid.*, vol. 23, p. 454.
24. See Grassmann, *Wb.*, *s.v.*; cf. Piggott, *Prehistoric India*, pp 260, 273.
25. *Zoroaster and His World*, vol. II, p. 687.
26. *Altiranisches Wörterbuch*, *s.v. cakhravant-*.
27. See Grassmann, *Wb.*, *s.v.*; Geldner, *Ved. Studien*, vol. II, p. 12, fn.1; Zimmer, *Altindisches Leben*, p. 218; Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, *s.v.*; Mayrhofer, *Kurz. Etymo. Wörterbuch des Altinidischen*, *s.v. pavi*.
28. See ibid., *s.v. pavi*.
29. Pokorny, *Indogermanisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, p. 821 (*s.v. pēu*); cf. Mayrhofer, *loc. cit.*, Charpentier, *Indian Linguistis*, II. 70 ff. see also Grassmann, *Wb.*, *loc. cit.*
30. Cf. Geldner, *HOS*, vol. 34, pp. 100.
31. See Grassmann, *Wb.*, *s.v.*
32. Liddell and Scott, *Greek Lexicon*, *s.v. dískas*.
33. *Hymns of the Atharvaveda*, II.pp. 128, 130.
34. *Atharvaveda Saṃhitā* (*HOS*, vol.8), p. 706.
35. Cf. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, III.6.2.9; *Hiraṇyakeśin Gṛhya-sūtra*, I.24.5.
36. Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dict.*, *s.v. vajra*.
37. *The Jātaka*, English trans. IV.p. 3.
38. *Dialogues of the Buddha*, I. p. 69.
39. *Sumaṅgalavilāsini*, Pt. I p. 160.
40. *Paia-sadda-mahaṇṇavo* (Pt. I), *s.v.*
41. *SBE* vol. 32, p. 173.
42. But see Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, vol.I, *s.v. pavi* for a different interpretation.

25

New Orientations in the Study of World Religions*

The interest in the study of world religions in the United States dates back to the final decade of the last century. Landmarks in the development of such studies were the foundation of an American Society of Comparative Religion in 1890 and the institution of the American Lectures on the History of Religions in 1892, as well as the holding in 1893 of the First Parliament of Religions at Chicago, which was attended by Swāmi Vivekānanda of India and the Anagārika Dharmapala of Ceylon. Religion became a recognized area of studies in the universities and higher institutions at the same time, and Harvard and Cornell Universities established their Chairs for the History of Religion as far back as 1891. Although the subject has not generally been given independent status in the academic curricula, the study of religion is pursued with much keenness in several institutions in the United States at present.

The most striking fact presenting itself to the outsider observing the development of religious studies in America is undoubtedly the renewed interest that is being taken by leading academic bodies and institutions in the oriental aspects of the subject, and, consequently, the attempt to revise the scope, content and methodology of the discipline. Characteristic of this new trend is the revolutionary change in perspectives and orientation. Thus in the words of Jerald C. Brauer,[1] the study of the history of religions is at a critical stage in its development. For the first time in modern history Christianity, the predominant faith of the West, is faced by the reinvigorated Eastern religions, and this has put the history of religions on a new footing in the modern universities.

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It appears from recent writings by experts in the field that there is a positive shift from a study oriented to the external manifestations of religion (phenomenology) to the deeper and more vital issue of man's *religiousness*. And in this movement the contributions of Dr. W. Cantwell Smith, Prof. of Religion at Harvard University, have sought to give the subject a distinctly novel direction. Reference here is mainly to his recent works, *The Meaning and End of Religion*[2] and *The Faith of Other Men*.[3] Till now writers on Comparative Religion, being exclusivist Christian dogmatists or else irreligious individuals, generally tended to be mere observers from the outside of alien 'religions', but according to Prof. Smith it is necessary to participate in the *religiousness* of others to be able to grasp the significance of their piety or Truth. Hence, he points out that even the best Christian and secular minds have usually failed to understand other faiths.[4]

Students of early Buddhism will be pleased to find that Prof. Smith's work in this field attempts to bring the study of that and other Eastern religions within the legitimate compass even of the theologian's concern. The pure phenomenologist cannot be expected to have much regard for a system that evinces no interest in a 'personal theism' or in the more external 'hierophanies' or manifestations of the sacred.[5] Buddhism is, in fact, too intellectual and psychological in its essential features for such formal or 'structural' analysis, and it is only as a result of the *personalist* approach so ably represented by writers like Prof. Smith that we have today in the United States a new interest in the study of the non-theistic forms of man's faith as is reflected in the Theravāda Canon. 'The task of comparative religon', says Prof. Smith, 'should be not only to describe the institutions, beliefs and practices of a tradition but to ascertain also, if one can, what these things mean to those who participate in them;'[6] here he goes farther than most other writers in insisting that the student of other faiths than his own should be a participant or *engage* in their religious life.

Penetrating is his observation that 'if there is any truth in the Buddhist tradition, then its truth is not in "Buddhism"; it is in the nature of things'.[7] The Buddhist reader will no doubt recall the statement of the Pali Canon that whether Buddhas appear or not in the world, the Truth will be there. This author does not believe in the, *either/or* kind of comparisons between religions: 'One simple point,' he says, 'is that on the whole there has been a tendency to hold that, the Christian faith being true, it must follow logically that other

faiths are therefore false. This logic is simply not cogent. It has done a lot of mischief, but it will not survive much longer.' According to him, this fallacy stems from 'confusing faith with theology, in one or other of its various forms'.[8] The moral lesson of these observations may be summarized in his own words: 'Let us not fool ourselves into thinking that we can love a Hindu or a Hottentot if we refuse to take seriously what is his most precious possession, his faith.'[9] What Prof. Smith thinks should be the most urgent task of the comparative religionist at the present juncture is to formulate ideas that will do justice to both the profundity and the diversity of the faiths of all men.

A Buddhist approach to Comparative Religion will naturally have its own *dialectics*, as Kitagawa has observed.[10] This is inevitable since to the Buddhist, religion is simply not a 'mode of human reaction to ultimate Reality', as for some Western writers, but a matter of deep emotional and intellectual concern resulting from the experience of *dukkha* or the unsatisfactoriness of all empirical existence. Hence, the Buddhist attitude to religion is ultimately based on an empirical fact. Nor is it just the subjective reaction to the 'element of the sacred in religious phenomena' as postulated by Eliade,[11] who believes that 'every religious act and every cult object aims at a meta-empirical reality'. A Buddhist may agree with Radhakrishnan that religion is not a creed, code or revelation but the *discovery* of the process leading to insight into Reality, if by 'Reality' is meant the total emancipation of the mind (*ceto*) and the highest attainment of insight (*paññā*) leading to absolute freedom (*vimutti*) from empirical limitations (*upadhi*). Even to most advanced Western thinkers like Tor Andrae who have superseded the merely historical or the phenomenological, the origin of religion is ultimately a *metaphysical* question, but for the Buddhist it must be regarded as being fundamentally a *psychological* (or existential) and an *intellectual* one. Hence the 'religion' of the early Buddhist texts dispenses with the idea of God in any *theological* sense as conceived in the West, and even if 'God' and 'Reason' are interchangeable categories as seems to be implied by Prof. Smith,[12] from the Buddhist standpoint there seems to be no justification for any theistic approach to the Ultimate Ideal. This, perhaps, is the very reason for the neglect of characteristic features of Buddhism like its pronounced spiritual-psychological orientation, in books on Comparative Religion which are popular in the West. The need of a greater interest in the wider study of religion at institution of higher learning in the East thus becomes patent.

Prof. Smith's conception of the *meaning* of Religion may be considered to accord largely with the Buddhist valuation. 'Religions do not exist up in the sky somewhere', he said in a previous essay,[13] 'they exist in men's hearts'. Clarifying his concept of 'religion', he states that by the term 'religion' he means 'the faith in men's hearts', which is 'their piety'.[14] Such a definition of faith would, I presume, stand comparison with the idea of *Dhamma* or piety as generally understood to be the central theme of the Edicts of Aśoka. It can be shown that the attitude of religiousness implied in the Aśokan *Dhamma* is exactly what in early Buddhism was regarded as the *gihi dhamma* or 'lay-religion' with its goal of heaven or the Brahma-world, and this is identically the same as the consummation sought through the fourfold Brahma-*vihāra* or 'dwelling with Brahma', which at least phrasecologically parallels Prof. Smith's 'personal engagement with the divine'.[15] This is what he understands by 'personal faith'[16] and defines as 'a dynamic response to the living reality of God'.[17] Prof. Smith is inclined to regard this as analogous to *love* which is 'involvement of person with person' and 'a life lived out in terms of that relationship'. It would not be a remote analogy if one sees in it the notion of Buddhist *mettā* or 'friendliness' or 'loving-kindness' which is essentially the attitude of Benevolence that is basic to the fourfold 'dwelling with Brahma'.

It is of interest from a Buddhist point of view to compare Professor Smith's notion of 'faith' with the concept of *saddhā* as found in the Pali Canon... Many writers have minimized the importance of *saddhā* in Buddhist spiritual life on the ground that 'faith' does not have much value in the Buddha's Way to Emancipation. But a closer study of the dialogues of the Buddha tends to produce the conviction that 'faith, plays a very significant part both in the Buddhists' motivation for spiritual effort and in the (psychological) progress along the Path to the final release of the individual from conditioned existence' More precisely, however, the weight of canonical evidence seems to be in favour of the view that 'faith' in the sense of 'belief in religious doctrines apprehended without rational grounds' is given little value in early Buddhism. In fact, a discourse in the *Majjhima Nikāya* definitely characterizes true faith as 'reasoned faith' (*ākāravatī saddhā*) in the possibility of release. This is also used to signify trust in the ability of the Buddha to show the Path to emancipation. Such 'faith' in the Buddha is also indicated by the term *pasāda* (confidence). A person can be encouraged by the

thought that the attainment of *Nibbāna* is possible for him just as it was for the perfected ones (*Arhants*). At this level, *saddhā* is considered empirical and 'analogical'. This is the atttitude of the follower (of the *Dhamma*) through faith' (*saddhânusāri*), but this does not refer to any final stage of spiritual realization as the person is yet subject to the banal tendencies of his worldly mind (*āsavas*) although he has intense faith and confidence in the Master and his Teaching. However, there is also a higher level of *saddhā*, regarded as supra-mundane (*lokuttara*) in the Commentaries, as contrasted with the former which is simply regarded as mundane or worldly (*lokika*). It is certainly this higher conception which occurs in the frequent characterization of one of the particular modes of emancipation as *saddhā-vimutti* or 'release by faith'. Even this, however, as a stage of spiritual progress is clearly stated to be inferior to arahantship or ultimate perfection in the 'Kitagiri Sutta' of the *Majjhima Nikāya*. This is higher than the level indicated as *saddhânusāri* or 'follower through faith'. The purely personal (or emotional) faith in the Master, the Teaching and the spiritual leaders of the Order, is not rated very high in early Buddhism. In the 'Sampasādanīya Suttanta' of the *Dīgha Nikāya* the Master praises his senior disciple Sāriputta, whose confidence in the Buddha's supreme knowledge was exemplary, for his intense 'faith', admonishes him at the same time that he must always be on guard lest he should commit himself 'to an unreasonable belief through mere emotion'. Thus 'faith' in early Buddhism has several gradations or levels of significance, which on examination turn out to be relatively important and spiritually valuable modes of progress on the Path.

However, all this does not imply that for Prof. Smith religiousness is a mere matter of emotion, for in his major discussion he explains that 'Faith lies beyond theology, in the hearts of men. Truth lies beyond Faith, in the heart of God.'[18] And to be 'in the eyes of God' is for him the same as to be 'in the eye of Reason'.[19] He seems to argue that the truth of the great religions and the scientific historical tradition are not counter trends in the mental development of humanity but parallel and supplementary processes at work throughout man's career on earth. What the Buddhist may consider inadequate in his presentation is this all too brief reference to the problem of the inter-relation of the 'divine' (faith) and the 'rational' in man's spiritual quest. Yet Prof. Smith is conscious of the 'lucid and important notion that there may be gradations of reality'.[20] And this, if

interpreted existentially, is an approximation to the Buddhist view of gradations of spiritual experience as implied in the 'Right Attainments' (*aṭṭhasamāpatti*) or the stages (of the progressive purification) of consciousness (*viññāṇa-ṭhiti*) as described in the early Pali Canon. The study of what in Western terminology may be called 'comparative mysticism' has hardly had any devoted adherents in this part of the world since the pioneering attempts of William James. But, to be sure, the new horizons brought before the intellectual ken of scholars by Prof. Smith are bound before long to have their salutory effect on the phenomenological and theological inadequacies that seem to characterize 'Comparative Religion', or rather, 'History of Religion'. In his *Faith of Other Men*[21] Prof. Smith has argued that theology is incomplete and theological approach to the study of man's religiousness deficient. With this attitude may be compared Professor Smith's view[22]:

> It is difficult for us to understand the non-theistic notion of Buddhism because the personalistic idea of God plays such a fundamental part in our Western logic. It took constant effort and new trials on my part to realize that the basic differences between the two is not one of abstract theological concepts. It goes deeper than that, because this particular form of expression is attained by a certain *training in meditation*. It is here that the experience of the transcendent is cultivated and secured for the total life of Buddhism. (Italics mine)

It is further of great moment to the Buddhist to find Prof. Smith providing a near solution to the problem whether Buddhism is a 'religion' as understood in the West. Dismissing the concept of *religion* as conceptualized and verbalized in the West, Prof. Smith adds: 'Perhaps the most eloquent testimony to the inappropriateness of the new concept to that situation and those processes lies in the persistent problem of whether or not primitive Buddhism was a religion. The modern West has proven incapable of answering the question.'[23] He regards religion not as an 'entity' but as a dynamic 'quality' of man's *interior* nature. Such a description would be typical of the Buddhist attitude to the problem of 'religion' as prevailing in Theravada countries. For Smith, as for E.J. Thomas, early Buddhism was *religion*, but not *a religion*.[24] What he shows here is that the conceptualized or deified notion of 'religion' as developed in the West does not at all do justice to the dynamic and psychological

value of man's *religiousness*. The mere externalia of religion and dogmatic creeds do not suffice to provide an insight into the deepest spiritual recesses in Man's being. His historical and scientific treatment of the origin and development of the concept of 'religion' as found in Western culture is a highly original contribution to the study of the subject. He is bold and convinced enough to recommend a complete breakaway from the traditional usage of the term and pointedly refers to the content of this study as 'religiousness'. Even if others may not wholly concur with the author, there is no doubt that this new orientation in the study of man's spirituality is bound to gain wider acceptance in course of time.

Prof. Smith can be said to value the 'aesthetic' approach to religiousness, for he believes that 'in the case of works of religious art, it is relatively clear that they give overt expression to the religious faith of the person who made them and continue to give expression to that of the persons who continue to reverentially cherish them.' One is reminded of the similar attitude to religion as was shown by Karl Portheim of an earlier generation. Prof. Smith's argument is based on the inferential (symbolic?) value of art. Although a work of art is necessarily imperfect as he himself believes, yet its significance lies in the fact that it points, beyond itself, to the spirit of the man who framed it and beyond him to the transcendent vision that he saw.[25] The latter inference may not appear strictly justifiable from the Buddhist standpoint in view of the Buddha's conviction that even symbolic language is bound to give a false idea of the *transcendent*, but there can be no argument that at the empirical level of emotional experience art has played and can play a distinct role in the religious life of man. At such a level even the followers of the Buddha will appreciate the author's 'Buddhist' sentiments when he describes the status of the Master which '. . . to belittle them by prose, present a figure where a total joy and peace have been attained, not by abstracting oneself from this world but by living through it in compassion and righteousness until, as it were, one has come out on the other side in the most utter serenity. The hint of a smile almost playing on the lips of the Buddha and the eyes that almost seem closed in not a faraway look but a look that sees far through the world of tumult to quiet — this tranquil truth, this incarnate TRUTH, this ultimate serene.'

In these writings Prof. Smith gives expression to the realization gaining currency in the West that a deeper study of the faiths of Eastern peoples is a *sine qua non* to their full apprehension of the

present world crisis in order to achieve the ideal of international harmony. Religions are to be studied, to echo the words of Brauer again, not merely to provide *knowledge* of other men and their faiths or to find 'ammunition to uphold a given religion', but because in view of the world situation it has become urgent to grasp the social and political significance of man as *homo religiosus*. The further advance that appears to be afoot in religious studies at the present time, pre-eminently evidenced in Prof. Smith's writings, is the attempt to discover what basically man's religiousness is, although it is yet considered too early to attempt any relative valuation of the diverse and dynamic modalities of the deeper religious experience of mankind. If such an enterprise were to be undertaken with sincerity and boldness the works of writers like Prof. Smith would assume an obvious importance.

As Brauer points out, there is, however, a great danger that the study of religion 'will be completely absorbed by certain other fields.' In the opinion of an Eastern observer such a process of absorption appears to have gone rather far at least in the United States, especially in respect of the allied fields of anthropology and theology. However, the attempt of Prof. Smith and others mark a definite tendency to reclaim this submerged area of the study of world religions from such inundations. And so, perhaps, Max Müller's warning that the new 'Science of Religions' was not to be dominated by Christian theology may have the full effects even in Western institutions owing to the indefatigable labours of a few devoted scholars among whom Prof. Smith appears as the one most favourably oriented towards the faiths of men outside the 'Western' orbit.

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26

A Socio-Semantic Analysis of Sanskrit *kalp-**

The study of the prehistory of ancient peoples by means of deductions made from the data of Comparative Philology commenced about the middle of the nineteenth century and came to be known as 'linguistic palaeontology'. The name given to the new area of study (from Greek *palaios*, ancient) itself reveals its close proximity to archaeology as was then known (cf. Greek *arkhaios*, ancient) and the whole designation was understood to mean the study of antiquities with the aid of linguistic comparisons (of words). Although earlier and limited efforts like Mommsen's *History of Rome* had paved the way and indicated a few guidelines for the new study, it was with A. Kuhn that the systematic investigation of liguistic parallels for the 'reconstruction of the prehistoric era of the Indo-Germanic peoples' made a real start, and thus were laid the foundations of this new branch of linguistic science. His first essay on the methodology of such a branch of knowledge entitled "Die Sprachvergleichung und die Urgeschichte der Indog. Völkar, i" appeared in 1855 in the *Journal for Comparative Philology of German, Greek and Latin* edited by himself.[1] As O. Schrader has pointed out in his masterly treatise on the *Prehistoric Antiquities of the Aryan Peoples*,[2] Kuhn's pioneer study of linguistic palaeontology, although limited to the western branch of the great Indo-European family, had a special value in that it was the first attempt to provide some directions on the *method* to be pursued in the new subject, 'through which the attempt plainly makes itself felt to obtain stricter laws than heretofore for establishing historical facts by means of linguistic arguments.'[3] But it is to O. Schrader himself that the credit must be given for

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making the first earnest attempt to work out a fuller prehistory of the Indo-European peoples, basing it on a much more systematic comparison of data from *all* the languages of the I.E. family as explored up to that time.

One fact which emerges from a careful perusal of Schrader's work, particularly its second chapter, is that in the early stages of its development linguistic palaeontology was almost entirely based on deductions made from the *phonological* and *morphological* study generally of *nouns* having parallel incidence in the languages of the I.E. family. The main preoccupation of these early workers in the field was to identify the *objects* (artifacts, etc.), as deductible from such *names* when found common in several languages, with things, etc., as believed to have existed in the primitive period,[4] especially when and if such deductions were also supported by the archaeological findings of the times. These studies did not evince a clear indication of the possibility of the *evolution of the meaning* of these terms in themselves. There was, in other words, hardly any conception of *historical semantics*. This deficiency in the methodology followed by early writers is clearly reflected in the comparative neglect of verbal *roots* which should have engaged their attention when attempting to determine, for instance, the occupational *activities* that were characteristic of society at various periods of its evolution. Further, the consciousness that semantic changes of words, both verbs and nouns, might have some correlation with the particular stage of social and cultural evolution of the speakers was slow to enter the minds of these founders of the new science, probably because the study of cultural anthropology had not yet progressed very far and sociological method was but in its infancy. That even Schrader's otherwise excellent treatise suffers considerably from this deficiency can be seen from the fact that the proportion of *verbal roots* to *nouns* as listed in his Index is about one to ten, while in the modern standard *Indogermanisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* by Pokorny the meanings are generally accorded to *radical stems* which form the majority of head-words and *nominal* concepts are only derived wherever possible therefrom. The latter method, accordingly, would pay greater attention to *actions* rather than *things*, and this dynamic perspective can more easily approximate itself to the systematic study of social evolution as developed in more recent times. Such a method has been called the socio-semantic approach by the present writer.[5]

In a previous study[6] dealing with the semantic prehistory of a Sanskrit root, viz., *bhṛ*, it has been shown how this new approach could become a useful tool in the 'social' analysis of the Ṛgvedic data. That the hymns of the *Ṛgveda* reflect not only the conditions and events contemporaneous with their composition but also much that had occurred in Aryan antiquity long prior to that period is clear from many evident 'survivals' found in the text as has been sufficiently demonstrated by several students of the subject. Memories of primitive times lie embedded in the mythological allusions, legends and other references that are recorded in these hymns. It has been shown by the present writer that a socio-semantic analysis of such data could, if pursued diligently, throw considerable light even on the darkness that surrounds the period of Indo-European unity. In the present paper an attempt is made to study the prehistory of another Vedic root on the same socio-semantic lines, revealing an archaic aspect of the history of the Aryan priesthood — a subject so crucially important in understanding the evolution of Ṛgvedic religion and culture.

Several opinions have been expressed by previous writers on the form and sense of the root *klp-* (*kalpate*) which has an interesting semantic history within Sanskrit beginning with the *Ṛgveda* itself. Mayrhofer after an examination of these views, states: 'The active basic sense is presumably "divide, distribute (assign)" so that association with (an Indo-European) root *(s)*kelp-* 'cut' (Lat. *scalpare*, 'tear', Gothic *halbs* 'divided') appears feasible'.[7] According to Grassmann this root (>Skr. *kalp-*) occurs 18 times in the *Ṛgveda* in verbal forms and once in the nominal stem *kálpa*. He classifies its meaning according to these contexts into seven senses: (1) be adapted to, conform to;(Causative:); (2) bring into order; distribute, divide, allot; (3) provide anything (acc.) with something; (4) fit out, prepare, set aright (acc.); (5) perform, execute; (6) form, create, produce; (7) consecrate; (with *vi-*) remould (acc.). He remarks that this verbal root is plausibly developed from *kṛ* and that except for a single occurrence outside (I.170.2) its incidence is restricted to the tenth Book. It is significant that for Grassmann its primitive sense is 'to work' (*kṛ*), a sense which he ascribes also to the noun *kalpa* (IX.9.7 only), namely, 'regulated (ordained) work'. A close scrutiny of the contexts referred to by Grassmann, however, shows unmistakably that the ascribed senses are only vaguely applicable in most cases and in some glaringly inappropriate. For instance, sense (3) as given

by him is nowhere applicable and many others are at best only tentative. The results obtained by a closer study of all these references in the light of later interpretations and comments[8] may be summarised as follows: (1) be transformed; X.130.5, 6; (causative); (2) assign, allot, X. 2.4 (cf. with *vi-*, to divide, apportion, X. 90.11); (3) form, shape, mould, fashion, X.114.5, 184.1, 15.14, 190.3, 90.14, 157.2; (arrange); X.18.5,(metaphorically): X.2.3 (cf. 4), 114.6; (4) perform, ordain, X.52.4 (sacrifice?) VIII.58.1 (*vālakh.* 1027, I.170.2; (metaphorically: indulge pleasures, X.10.12, 86.2. It is significant that in the *Atharvaveda,* the verb *kalp-* has more than double this incidence and particularly in its *active* form (*kalpate*), means principally 'distribute, arrange, form, shape, fit, be transformed, order' etc. The fact that in the *Ṛgveda* the verb occurs only in the late Tenth Book, if we except the single instance I.170.2 which too occurs in a portion of the text definitely later than the Family Books, as well as its undoubted popularity in the *Atharvaveda,* shows clearly that the word is essentially an 'Atharvanic'[9] term, or, in other words, a term that survived in the culture of the eastern Aryan tribes. In several of the Atharvavedic contexts the verb is used in the sense of 'arranging the sacrifice' (e.g. *AV,* IV.23.2, XVIII.4.13, XX.128.1; cf. *RV*, X. 52.4 etc), and in one particular context of the *Atharvaveda,* viz., IX.4.14, in connection with the Bull Sacrifice, it is said 'to Sūrya they assigned the skin, when they distributed (*akalpayan*) the Bull'. One can see the same original sense of distributing the parts of the sacrificial victim in the famous 'Puruṣa-Sūkta' of the *Ṛgveda* (X.90.11): 'When they divided the Puruṣa, into how many parts did they distribute (*vi-akalpayan*) him'. This sense of *distribute* has survived into the later Vedic period as we see from the *Śat. Br.* (I.8.1, 10): *yajñe ava kalpaya,* 'divide (me) into parts at the sacrifice'. Thus it is not surprising if the meaning of 'sacrifice', and then, as generalised the meaning of 'rite', comes to be attached to this root. Mayrhofer correctly points out that the basic active sense of the root is 'to divide, to assign', and this *assigning* appears from various Vedic contexts, as shown above, to pertain to the allotment to the several deities invoked at the sacrifice of the various parts of the immolated sacrificial animal. That such an idiom persisted even in the later Vedic literature is seen from the occurrence of the term *paśu-kalpa* 'animal-sacrifice' in Āśvalāyana-Gṛhya-Sūtra (I.11). Thus it becomes clear that the root *klp* had originally the sense of *divide* and at a very early period came to be specifically used for the *distributing* or *apportion-*

ing of the parts of the sacrificial victim. The evidence from other I.E. languages definitely supports such a deduction.

Pokorny gives two radical elements *(*s*)*kel-p-* and *(*s*)*ker-p-* for Indo-European, either of which could develop phonetically into *kar/lp-* (weak stem *kṛ/lp-*) in Sanskrit. As the following considerations will show, these two reconstructed forms appear to be *r/l* alternants of one and the same primitive radical stem *(*s*)*kel/r-p-* where *-p-* is admittedly an extension and the original element would then be **kel* or **ker*. Such *r/l* alternation is not altogether unknown in the primitive I.E. language and several examples can be cited in support from Pokorny's *Wörterbuch*. For instance, **mel* (I), crush, grind (p. 716), and **mer* (5), destroy by rubbing, crush, giving Skr. *mṛṇāti*, crush (p. 735); *pel* (I), shed, melt, fill (p. 798) and **per* (I), emit, gush forth (cf. *(s)per-ma*) (p. 809); **lei*, possess (Skr., *rāti*, wealth, Gk. *latron*, reward) (p. 665) and **rei*: *rēi*, possess (Lat. *rēs*, material possession) (p. 860); **lā*, obscure, be concealed (Skr. *rā-trī*, night, Lat *lateō*, obscure, see Pok. p. 853) (p. 651) and **rē*, dark (Skr. *rāma*, dark black; *rāmī*, night; Mid. H. Germ. *rām*, dirt) (p. 853); **sel*, creep, (p. 900); and **ser*, stream, flow (p. 909), **ser-p*, creep (p. 912); **wel*, twist (p. 1140) and **wer*, twist (p. 1152), **pleu*, flow, run (p. 835) and **preu*, spring, hop (p. 845). Thus there can be no serious objection to the phonetical identification of **kel* and **ker*, and it is found on examination of the meanings attributed to these by Pokorny that **kel*-[10] and **ker*-[11] are only variants of an earlier **kel-/r* whose original significance was 'to cut'.

The correspondences that help to reconstruct **kel-*, cut, as cited by Pokorny, are : Skr. *kā.-ā*, part; Gk. *skuallō*, hack, scrape, engrave, cf. Thracian *skalmē*, sword; Arm. *čelukem* cut open, cut up; Goth. *skilja*, butcher; O. Icel. *skilja*, separate. Noteworthy is the sense of 'cut up' that is seen to develop in Armenian, Gothic and Icelandic, and the specialization of meaning into cutting up the body (of a slaughtered animal) in Gothic 'butcher', Gk. (parallel) *skullō* (*skoliō*) 'to skin' etc. The killing, skinning and cutting up (into portions) of the body of the animal are all *actions* that are closely associated, which in the primitive cultural period as reflected in I.E. reconstructions must have been naturally indicated by the same or similar phonetic elements.[12] The study of the alternating **ker-* supports such a conclusion. Under *(s)ker- (4) Pokorny places such extensions as *(*s*)*ker-t*, *(s)*kret*, *(*s*)*ker-p* *(*s*)*krē-p* etc. of which the deductible basic sense is 'cutting' or some associated action like

'separating' (the skin from the body of an animal). The unextended root is found in Skr. *apa-skara*, excrement (=what is separated), *kṛṇāti, kṛṇoti*, injures, kills (lexical), *carman*, Avest. *careman*, skin, hide; Gk. *keiro*, cut off, *kōrukos*, leather bag; Attic Inscr. Grk. *haimakouriai*, bloody sacrifice, *koúreion*, sacrificial animal[15] (cf. Hitt. *kurs-*, cut up; Toch. *kärṣt*, cut up); Lith. *skiriū* =separate; Arm. *korem*, I scratch, scrape; Lat. *carium*, leather, *caro, carnis*, flesh, umbrian; *kartu* = distribute, O. Irish. *scar(a)im*, I divide; OHG, *sceran*, to cut off; O. Saxon *sker-sahs*, shearing knife. The dental extension *(*s*)*ker-t*, *(*s*)*krc-t*- as found in Skr. *kṛntati* (late), *kartati*, cut, *kṛttiḥ*, skin (cf. Gk. derma); *karttṛ*, destroyer, *kartari*, scissors; *kṛtíh* [14] dagger; Hitt. *kartai*, cut off, Avest. *kδγentaiti* cut; *karδta*, surgical knife, dagger[15], Lat. *scortum*, skin; Arm. *kertem*, skin off, etc. The labial extension *(*s*)*ker-p*-, *(*s*)*kre-p*- which gives the Skt. parallel form *karp*-(*krp*-) imply similar semantic developments: Skr. *kṛpāṇa*, sword, *kṛpāṇi* dagger, *karpara*, potsherd, fragment (cf. OHG. *scirbi* etc.); Alb. *karpë*, stone; Lat. *carpo*, pluck; Lith. *kerpù*, cut with scissors; Lettish, *cẽrpu*, shear; *šķẽrpêt*, to cut (grass); *šķẽrpis*- (plough) share etc. Of other extended forms, *(*s*) *ker-s*- is important for the purpose of this essay, as it gives *haima-kourīai*, bloody sacrifice, *koúreion*, sacrificial victim. Another extension *(*s*) *kreup*[16] is significant for the Lat. derivative *scrúpus*, pointed stone. Thus it is clear that the primitive root **ker/l* signified the act of *cutting up*, including the preliminaries of *killing* and *skinning*. It is therefore legitimate to suggest that Skr. *kalp*- could have had originally the same senses, and that Skr. *kalpana*[17] for which Monier-Williams has given the meaning of 'religious ceremony' is not to be separated from its sense of 'cutting, clipping, working with edge-tools', that he cites from *Bṛhat-Saṃhitā* of Varahamihira. In the light of what has been said above, the 'religious ceremony' referred to appears to hint at some *animal sacrifice*. A similar interpretation is possible for *kalpaka* at *Tait. Br.*, II.7.18.4 to which Monier-Williams gives the meaning 'a rite, ceremony', and adds 'of doubtful meaning'.[18] The term also means 'barber', as given by himself and he compares with it *kalpani*, scissors; Lith. *kerpikas*. The idea of 'barber' is no doubt related historically to Lat. *scalpō*, scratch, scrape (with a sharp implement) >*sulpō*, sculpture (cf. OHG. *scelpia*, hide skin, Anglo-Sax. *scielf*, stone-point; O. Pruss. *kalpus*, pin-stick etc.)[19]

The suggested shift of meaning as inferable from the evidence given above (cutting up >divide, allot (to the gods) >sacrifice) can be

supported by several analogies occurring in I.E. languages. The Vedic root *vyadh-* (*vidh-*), to worship, offer reverentially, dedicate, has its I.E. origin in **weidh-*, *widh-* which, according to Pokorny,[20] is derived from **wi-dhé*, place separately (=Skr. *vi-dhā*), which shift of meaning can only be understood as 'separating the parts of the animal and placing' (as offerings to the gods). Similar and even more convincing is the history of I.E. **weik-*, separate >Skr. *vic-*, *vinakti*, cf. Avest. *ava-váek*, separate, from which is also derived, as Pokorny[21] shows, Lat. *victima*, sacrificial victim; Gothic *weihs*, holy; Old Icel. *vē*, temple. The same idea of *separation* is implied in the Ṛgvedic *vi-śas-tṛ* (I.162.19) where the reference is clearly to the *immolator* of the Horse for sacrifice. We may compare this semantic development with the occurrence together in X.85.35 of *viśasana* and *vi-kartana*, the latter as clearly shown above meaning 'cutting up (the sacrificial victim) into separate parts'. Within Skr. we have the interesting example of *śam*, destroy, kill,[22] probably I.E. *k̃em/ k̂am*,[23] *Gk. káma*, *arrow shaft of spear etc.*, giving Skr. *śamitar* (*RV*,I. 162.9; II.3.10) dresser, dissector.[24] The idea of 'cutting' is conveyed also by I. E. **ghel*, as deduced by Pokorny, whence derives not only Skr. *halā*, plough (-share?, originally) but Grk. *gállos*, 'priest of Cybele, immolator'[25], Hittite, *iskalla*, mangle; O. Cymr. *gyllum*, knife; Gothic *gilpa*, sickle. In the light of the above facts, it would be reasonable to suggest that the Ṛgvedic word *kartar* which even Grassmann was compelled to render 'priests' in spite of his adherence to *kṛ*, to do, as its etymological origin [although he qualified it with 'service-*performing*' (!)] is undoubtedly from *kar* (< I.E. **ker*), cut, whose *-t-* extension[26] gives the parallel form *kar-t-tar*[27] also meaning 'immolator', the sense which as shown above could easily have developed into 'animal-sacrificing priest', In fact, this meaning fits in not only with *RV* (VI.19.1, VII.62.1) as cited by Grassmann for his sense of 'priest' (3), but also for III.31.2 where *kartā* is the 'immolator' and *ṛndhan* is the 'promoter (of the sacrifice)'.

The above conclusion, namely, that the Sanskrit stem *kar/l-p-* originally meant 'immolator, divider of the parts of the victim and hence came to mean 'animal-sacrificing priest' is greatly strengthened by the existence of the word *karapan* in the Avesta denoting a *daevic*, that is, hostile or anti-Zarathushtrian priest. Bartholomae[28] based this meaning on the etymological connection which he saw between the Avestan term and Vedic *kalpa*, rite as also proposed by Hillebrandt,[29] Haug[30] and others.[31] Commenting on *Yasna* 29.1

Haug observed: 'By the word *karapanō* we must understand specially the sacrificial priests, the performers of sacrifices. As to its grammatical formation, this word is derived from a root *karap-* which corresponds exactly with the Sanskrit root *kalp-*, to arrange or to perform (a ceremony), whence the word *kalpa* the ritual or the doctrine of the ceremonies' (cf. *kalpa-sūtras*). From the arguments adduced above, it can be seen that these authorities, who saw the sense of 'sacrificial priest' in *karapan*, could not go beyond it to the historical evolution of the term from the idea of primitive *immolation* and *dissection*. Haug along with others who commented on the root *kalp-* only saw the secondary sense of 'arrange, perform' in it. Geiger clearly was puzzled by the term: 'Besides the Kavis and Usij, the Karapans [fn. 1; the etymology of this word is obscure. Tradition makes it mean 'deaf'] are mentioned as hostile priests', and added, as we can now see, rather hastily: 'This name, being indeed obscure, admits of no connection with old Indian conditions'.[32] True, the religion of Zarathustra had no place for the *karapan* as given to the animal-sacrificing priest in the Vedic culture. But, as Gershevitch[33] has observed, in a number of Gathic passages (*Yasna*, 32.10.12, 14,44.20; 46.4; 51.14) 'Zarathustra undoubtedly disapproved of animal sacrifices'. In fact the general moral tone of the Gāthās precludes any other attitude to the killing of animals.[34] Even the 'deity' Yima is attacked in the Avesta for having slaughtered cattle as the first sacrificer to the primitive gods. The student of the Veda cannot miss the significance of this in that Yima's cultural counterpart in the *Ṛgveda*, Manu, is *celebrated* there as the first sacrificer (e.g. *RV*, I. 76.5). In a cattle-rearing agricultural society like the one reflected in the Avesta, the slaughter of the ox for any purpose would undoubtedly come to be condemned. *Yasna* (32.12) definitely condemns the *Grāhmà* and *Karapa* for the 'killing of the Ox', which is referred to as 'destruction of life' in 46.11. In 44.20 it is said: 'In alliance with them (Daevas) the Usijs and the *karapans* ruin the cattle, and by which the *Kavis* grew up in power'. This is Geiger's rendering of the stanza and he adds: 'Here they side apparently with a less civilized half-nomadic people, who do not take proper care of their herds and flocks.'[35] As can be inferred from the facts presented above, the last phrase is a totally inadequate picture of the situation: the *Karapans* etc. were actually 'killers' or 'destroyers' of the cattle that they carried away in raids[36] and offered as sacrificial victims to their *daevas* or gods. In view of the undeniable references to the

animal-immolating priestly nature of the Karapans as inferrable from the above evidences and the similar well-established cultural sense of I.E. **kel/rp* and Sanskrit *kalp-*, it appears futile to seek for any other etymology for Avestan *karapan* as some recent writers have done. Gershevitch,[37] following Hare and others, has attempted to relate the root of *karapan* to *karb*, to mumble, and Zaehner[38] and Henning[39] have argued for the same. Others such as Abayev[40] differ from this interpretation, but do not propose anything better. The above discussion, it is presumed, leaves no doubt as to the cultural and etymological affinity of *karapan* with Vedic **kalpa(-ka)*,[41] the conclusion which forces itself on any student examining the data presented above.

What emerges from these considerations is that, as Otto Schrader inferred decades ago,[42] there was a form of 'divine Worship' among the I.E. tribes even in prehistoric times 'in which real, if exceedingly primitive, sacrificial rites were employed', and that the prevalence among them of animal sacrifice is 'significantly witnessed by the existence in their primitive vocabulary of exact designations of the outer and inner parts of the animal carcass'.[43] Considering the fact that these Indo-European tribes consisted mainly of neolithic hunting communities,[44] it is only a further step in the same line of reasoning to conceive of this primitive sacrifice as arising in connection with the killing and cutting up of the game pursued in the hunting expeditions. It may be mentioned incidentally that such neolithic occupational activity is clearly reflected in several semantic survivals from I.E. **(s)ker-* and **(s)kel* signifying *stone*, especially *pointed stone* — no doubt a relic of the period when flint implements were used for the skinning and cutting up of the hunted animal. Significant examples of such an 'instrumental' sense are preserved in Albanian *karpë*, stone, Skr. *karpara*, fragment (esp. potsherd), Mid. High Germ. *scrove*, a pointed cutting stone (Pokorny, p. 944); Lat. *scrupus*, sharp-pointed stone (p. 947); Lat. *silex, -icis* (from older *scelic-*), flint-stone, Mid. Irish, *sce(i)lec*, stone, Gothic, *hallus*, stone, O.Ch. Slav. *skala*, Anglo-Saxon, *sciell*, stone-point, etc. etc. Schrader points to a set of I.E. words such as Gk. *hagos*, worship, (cp. Skr. *yajus*, sacrifice), Avestan, *yaz*, to worship, Lat. *victima*, sacrificial victim, Gothic *weihs*, holy, *weihan*, to sacrifice etc. which in his view express the idea of 'the holy'. With regard to the important root *yaj*, it is noteworthy that its I.E. form **yag* given by Pokorny (p. 501) in the sense of 'to venerate religiously' is considered by him to

be connected with I.E **yagh* (p. 502), meaning 'hunt after', 'long for', whence he also derives OHG *jagon*, to hunt. If such a connection is justified, as *hunting* (i.e. killing) and sacrificing as proposed above becomes more than probable even for the period of I.E. unity. Then Ṛgvedic *yahū, yahvá* as cited by Pokorny from Grassmann (*WB.* 1001) in the sense of 'rushing rapidly behind', *prayakṣati*, press forward, *yakṣin'* zealous (Grassmann: pursuing, rushing), *yakṣya*, nimble, can all be historically related with *yakṣám*,[45] 'holy, awesome', which, as it has been shown elsewhere[46] is a term of great religious significance in ancient Indian literature. The antiquity of the institution of animal sacrifice as an essential feature of I.E. religion must therefore be recognized, and the later history of the various linguistic groups amply confirms this idea. It existed in a very primitive form among the early Greeks,[47] and the Scandinavian-Russians offering the sacrifices before an upright block of wood undoubtedly suggests a survival from the animal-sacrifice. Further, in the Slavonic languages the most frequent expressions for idols or idol-temples go back almost entirely to fundamental meanings such as 'stump' or 'post'. As Oldenberg argued,[48] it is not impossible that expressions for 'magician' and 'to charm', viz., *koldúnŭ, kǫldovát i* are connected with Russian *kolóda* , 'tree stump', and it may be added that the term appears to be a derivative of an I.E. **kol*, undoubtedly an alternant of **kel*<**(s)kel* to which we traced Skr. *kal*. The same function is to be attributed to the Indian *yūpa*[49] to which the sacrificial animal was bound, but which, as the same authority pointed out, was also made an object of worship, seeing that it was addressed as 'lord of the wood' (*vánas páti*), smeared with oil and bound with plaited bands of grass. The synonym of *yūpa* in the *Ṛgveda*, namely *sváru*,[50] sacrificial post, significantly corresponds to Anglo-Saxon *swér*. stake.[51] In conclusion, we may observe that the animal sacrifice in Iran shows a very primitive character. It consisted of the victim's flesh laid on a carpet of tender grass (*barsman*) to which the deity was invited to come down. Its closeness to the Vedic custom can be seen in the similarity of the corresponding word *barhis* used for the sacrificial litter of grass. As Moultan shows, this 'has been modified in the ritual of the Avesta to suit a Magian cult instrument.[52] That in the Magian ritual may survive a pre-Zarathushtrian cultural trait, probably going back to a more distant period of Indo-Iranian antiquity, cannot be dismissed off-hand.

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9. See Bloomfield, *The Atharvaveda and the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa,* pp. 2 ff.
10. *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch, s. (s)kel (1),* p. 923.
11. Ibid., *s. (s)ker* (4), p. 938.
12. It may be noted in passing that the *cutting up* of the victim was regarded as a special act in the Vedic ritual. See Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda,* p. 326.
13. Pokorny, op. cit., s.*(s)ker-s,* p. 945.
14. Mayrhofer, op. cit., *s.v.*
15. Schrader, op. cit., p. 224.
16. Pokorny, op. cit., p. 947.
17. See Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dict., s.v.*
18. Sāyaṇa in his Cy. has merely attempted a guess and distorted the text to *kaplaka,* adding the gloss: *'kapivat gamana-samarthaḥ'.*
19. See Pokorny, op. cit., s. *(s)kel(e)p,* p. 926.
20. Ibid., *s.v.* p. 1127.
21. Ibid., *s.v.* p. 1128.
22. Monier-Williams, op. cit., *s. śam.*
23. Pokorny, op. cit., *s.v.*
24. Cf. '*samiteva carma*', 'like an immolator who stikes out the skin', *RV,* V. 85.1; cf. Atharvaveda, IX.5.5.
25. Pokorny, op. cit., p. 434.
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31. E.g. Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism,* p. 357; Lommel, *Die Gathas des Zarathustra,* on *Yasna,* 46.11.
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35. See Geiger, loc. cit.
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40. See Gershevitch, loc. cit.
41. See my paper on 'The Semantic History of Sinhalese *kapuwa*' in the *Paranavitana Felicitation Volume*, Colombo (1965), where it is equated, in the sense of 'priest' to Middle Indian *kappaka* as morphic derivative from Vedic **kalpaka*.
42. See Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, II, p. 40 ff.
43. Ibid., p. 41, citing his article 'körperteile' in the *Reallexicon*.
44. See V. Gordon Childe, *The Aryans*, p. 192.
45. Cf. *yakṣa-bhṛt, RV*, I.90.4, which according to Grassmann (W.D.) means 'carrying the pursuer (of game);'; i.e. the horse used in the chase.
46. See 'The Philosophical Import of Vedic *Yakṣa* and Pali *Yakkha*', in this volume, pp. 1131 ff.
47. See Nilsson, *A History of Greek Religion*, p. 256.
48. *Die Religion des Veda*, p. 256.
49. *Lit.* 'that to which (the animal) is bound', from *yu*, attach, with suffix *-pa;* see Burrow, *Sanskrit Language*, p. 197.
50. Etymologically *svár-u*; see Burrow, op. cit., p. 179, where *svar*, 'to shine' (see Monier-Williams, op. cit., s v). The sacrificial stake is well-polished and smeared with oil, and thus shining.
51. See Hastings, op. cit., II, p. 45.
52. Op. cit., p. 69; cf. Hastings, op. cit., pp. 40-41.

27

The Etymology and Significance of Ṛgvedic '*Khādi*'*

Of the obscure 'culture' words of the *Ṛgveda* the term *khādi* is one that has received comparatively little attention from commentators and translators. Sāyaṇa gives only *ad hoc* interpretations according to what he conceives as the general sense of the stanza in which the occurrence is found, but makes no attempt to get at any primary or basic sense. In most contexts he sees the sense of *ornament* (*ābharaṇa, alaṅkāra)* e.g. I.166.9; VII.56.13; V.87.1, or more specifically *bracelet* (*kaṭaka*) e.g. V.53.4; 54.11; II.34.2; V.58.2. It is the latter sense that has been accepted by the majority of Western interpreters. The extent to which Sāyaṇa is puzzled by this term may be seen from the fact that he gives as possibilities such diverse alternatives as 'ornament' and 'food' (eatables), even for the same context, e.g. in *RV*, I.166.9 (*khādyāni, bhakṣyāni. . . yadvā ābharaṇaviśeṣāḥ*), while in *RV* (I.87.6) he gives the only sense of '(sacrificial) food'. The only importance of the sense of *food* (*khādya, bhakṣya*) lies in the fact that Sāyaṇa obviously takes the root as *khād*, 'to eat'. He attributes the similar sense of 'biting' or 'devouring' (*bhakṣakaḥ*) for *khādin* in VI.16.40 and at II.30.2 (*śatrūṇaṃ khādakāḥ)*, as well as in X.38.1 (*parasparakhādakeṣu yoddhṛṣu;*, where 'devourer' is metaphorically applied to mean 'annihilator' or 'destroyer'. What etymology Sāyaṇa envisaged for the sense of 'ornament' or 'bracelet' is not clear, but from his alternative comment of *khādin* at II.34.2 *yadvā khādaḥ* (sic !) *kaṭakaṃ* it may be surmised that he probably saw the radical sense of 'be hard' ('be metallic'); in accordance with the sense given for '*khād*' at *Dhātupāṭha,* III.13. It is necessary to point out that in at least one context Sāyaṇa sees a different sense, that of 'weapon'. On

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śubhra-khādayaḥ used as qualifying the Maruts at VIII.20.4 Sāyaṇa has the comment 'possessed of shining weapons, (*śobhanāyudhāḥ*). In another similar instance where the *khādi* is mentioned as being carried in the hand by the Maruts, Sāyaṇa has the peculiar gloss *khādiḥ hastatrāṇakaḥ*, which shows that he regarded the *khādi* as a protection for the hand, probably a knuckle-duster. As will be seen below, it is only in Max-Müller's translation, partly followed by that of Griffith, that this meaning has been accepted for the term.

In view of this difference in the treatment of the word *khādi* by translators and commentators it will be useful to examine first of all the etymological possibilities that have been suggested. Reference has already been made above to the possibility of deriving it from a root *khād*. A root *khād* is, of course, found in the *Dhātupāṭha* (III.13), but it is significant that of the two meanings given there and listed by the *Petersburg Lexicon* (*PW*), viz. *to be solid, hard* and *to strike* or *kill*, later writers seem to have regarded only the former sense as relevant to the etymology of *khādi*. Grassmann in his *Wörterbuch zum Rig-veda* cites only 'to be hard' from the *PW* and hesitantly derives the meaning of *khādi* from that sense. Mayrhofer in his new *Etymological Dictionary* (*s. khādati*) takes into consideration only the sense of 'be solid or hard' but judiciously adds that it is uncertain, as the only citable instance (*khādat*) is itself problematical. He raises the question whether, in view of the fact that it is only in the *Dhātupāṭha* this sense is given, it may not be a 'learned' form beside *khaddati*: *kaṭhinaḥ* (cf. *s. khāduraḥ*). However it is significant that Mayrhofer is not inclined to accept the usual derivation of *khādi* from the root *khād*, 'to be hard', but refers to a suggestion of Kuiper for a possible proto-Munda origin of that noun. Although Kuiper has adduced[1] some evidence for a Munda prototype of an Indo-Aryan series implying *circular* ornaments, the phonetic form of Ṛgvedic *khādi* would have made one hesitate in connecting it with that series. If it were a 'Sanskritization' of such a foreign word one would expect either a form **khādu-* from the possible base **khaḍḍu-* as seen in the cited forms (see Mayrh. *s. khaḍūh*, especially Bengali *khāru*) or a form **khāda-* from a possible **khaḍḍa* (see *kaṭaka*=Prk. *kaḍaya*, *kankaṇa* cited by Kuiper, and possibly also *khaḍga*). It is clear that such a derivation would not explain the presence of the suffix *-i* in *khādi*. Moreover, the complete absence of the word *khādi* after the *Ṛgvedic* period — in fact, even there it is found only in the early parts, with but a single occurrence in the late tenth *maṇḍala*—makes the

connection of *khādi* with a series of words of later currency very suspicious.

In more recent years Mayrhofer has drawn attention to what he calls the 'Hurrianized' parallel of Vedic *khādi* found in documents discovered in Asia Minor.[2] It occurs as *kati-* in the word *kati-in-na* found in the El-Amarna letters and in *kati-in-ni* of the Nuzi documents, while in the Alalakh text it is found as *gati-* in the form *gati-in-ni*. Discussing this fresh evidence Mayrhofer is constrained to admit: 'There is some hope that *k//gati-nnu* which is attested in several places could be proved to be a Hurrianized parallel of Vedic *khādi*, arm-ornament; that would definitely exclude the Munda etymology that has been given to the Vedic word."[3] He thinks that the word should rather be etymologized as Aryan (*ibid.*, fn. 26). But what is more significant is that he not only takes this evidence as proof for the attribution of the meaning of 'ornament' to the term *khādi* but also attempts to derive this meaning from the root *khād*, 'to bite'.[4] He sees the relevance of this idea of *biting* when applied to a bracelet, either in the nature of an *armlet* to 'bite into' the arm on which it is worn, or in the ornamental motif of a serpent biting its own tail as met with in some types of bracelets.

In this connection it is necessary to point out that '*khād*', 'bite' is at least of Indo-Iranian provenance (Mayrhofer *s.v.*) if not of Indo-European origin, and it is quite possible that *khād* in the sense of 'strike, kill', as given by the *Dhātupāṭha* (III.13) may itself be a variant, along with *khid*, 'tear', considered as an *ablaut* form of *khād*. The only problem that arises in deriving *khādi* from the root *khād*, 'to bite', is the semantic evolution of the sense of 'bite' into that of 'destroy, annihilate'. But evidence is not wanting in the *Ṛgveda* itself to prove that *khād* ('bite') had developed even there in the sense of *devouring*, >*destroying*, >*annihilating* (in battle). The only verbal forms in the *Ṛgveda* made from the root *khād*, viz., *khādatha*, *khādati* and *ācakhāda*, can all be explained on that basis. In 1.64.7 the statement *mṛgā iva hastinaḥ khādathā vanā* is applied to the Maruts, where Sāyana has no hesitation in commenting : *vanā vanāni vṛkṣajātāni khādatha bhakṣayata prabhaṅkte' ti yāvat;* Geldner's 'fresset...ab'[5], Griffith's 'eat.. up'[6], Max-Müller's 'chew up' (note: crush or chew and eat)[7], Grassmann's 'vernichtet'[8] are all based on some aspect of the semantic development from *bite* (consume), to *annihilate*. Mayrhofer (*s. khādati*), following Neisser, has attempted to isolate this use from the general meaning of *eat* etc. attributed

by him to *khādati* (q.v.) and gives a sense of 'blow down', 'pull down', 'press down' (tree) referring to the *phonetical* connection of *khād* and *khid*. The origin of the interpretation is perhaps to be traced to Sāyaṇa's secondary sense of *prabharikte* which, it is obvious, was only added by Sāyaṇa to tally with his own interpretation of the obscure words *aruṇiṣu taviṣīrayugdhvam*. The important fact, however, is that Sāyaṇa gives as the primitive sense '*bhakṣ*' as he does for *khādati* in I.158.4, with which we may compare also his *ājaghāna* for *ācakhāda* in VI.61.1. Further, the term *vikhāde* (loc. sg. of *vikhāda* m.) which Grassmann[9] himself derived from *khād* (bite off, consume, annihilate), is clearly used in *RV* (X.38.4) in the sense of 'in the battle of annihilation', Sāyaṇa's gloss being *vikhāde viśeṣeṇa bhakṣake, abhīke saṅgrāme*. Geldner's 'bei dem Sichverbeisse'[10] which is equated in a foot-note to 'embittered fight' and Griffith's 'in the deadly strife'[11] may be compared although they are not altogether illuminating. It is highly significant that in Avestan (*Vendidad* 2.31.32) we find the exact parallel *vi-khād* which means, according to Bartholomae, 'to crush one another' (obviously in fighting).[12] This development of meaning is further attested in *vṛtra-khāda*, annihilator of Vṛtra (*RV*, III.45.2; 51.9; cf. X.65.10 of Bṛhaspati) as well as in *amitra-khāda* (X.152.21), both applied to Indra. Geldner[13] translates these by '*vṛtra*-devourer, -destroyer' and 'foe-exterminator, -annihilator' respectively. Reference may also be made here to the compound *khādo-arṇāḥ* (qualifying *nadyaḥ*) found in V.45.2 for which the sense of 'with (bank-) devouring waves' (Griffith, cf. Geldner) has been recognized by Indian tradition (*Naighaṇṭuka*, I.13; Sāyaṇa *bhakṣita-kūlodakāḥ*). The meaning of *ava-khāda* in *RV*, (1.41.4) has puzzled translators but it is sufficient to observe that Grassmann (*WB*) gives it the sense of 'consumer, destroyer'.

Since, therefore, the word *khādi* appears to be of at least Aryan provenance, the question naturally arises whether an Indo-European origin is possible for the word. Pokorny[14] has suggested that the Sanskrit root *khād* may be derived from I.E. *kṇd* where *kh-* can be explained as *expressive* aspiration. This expressive aspiration is a phenomenon met with in other instances too. For instance, I.E.**kelewo* (bald)[15] gives *khal-* in Indo-Aryan as in Skr. *khalati*, Pali *khalita* (= bald-headed), *khalvāṭa*, (parallel Armenian *kalam* etc.). Mayrhofer attributes this aspiration to 'emotional articulation' (see *Ety. Dict., s. khalaṭaḥ*). Such variation between aspirate and non-aspirate is found

in Avestan also, e.g. *kan-*, 'to dig', beside *khā*, 'well',[16] where Sanskrit preserves the aspiration right through (*khanati, khā, kham., ākhu, ākharaḥ*).[17] Perhaps the only exception is Skr. *ākara*, 'pit', which most probably is the non-aspirate form of *ākhara*.[18] Now, Pokorny connects **kn̥d* with I.E. *ken-/kenə-* (559-60, 634) and therefore, one feels justified in finding a historical relationship between Skr. *khan-* and *khād-*, clearly demonstrated by the existence of Buddhist Sanskrit *khadā* 'pit' or 'hole' (Mayrhofer, *s.v.*). I.E. *ken-* may alternate with *kne/knō* and hence, as Pokorny has seen, Greek *knōdōn* (knō-d-ōn) is etymologically related to *khād*.[19] The presence of the root-extension *-d-* in both may be regarded as added proof of the radical identity. According to Pokorny the Greek word meant (in the plural) 'the teeth or hooks marking off the handle of a sword from its blade' (p. 560). In the singular, *knōdōn* by itself is used for a 'sword' and *knōdax* is 'axle-pin'—senses which Pokorny believes developed from an original idea of 'tooth'. He further points out that *knōdalon* used from the time of Homer for 'wild beast' is derived from the radical sense of 'biting'. In the *Greek-English Lexicon* by Liddell and Scott the meaning given for the plural is 'the two projecting teeth on the blade of a hunting spear'. It can thus be seen that there is no great semantic distance between Sanskrit *khādi* 'biter' and Greek *knōdōn*, for the latter must have originally meant 'tooth' although the attested instances show different applications. It is obvious that this parallelism is not accidental but must indicate a genuine historical connection reflecting some sort of 'biting' primitive implement belonging to the hunting culture of the neolithic 'Indo-European' communities. Thus the Ṛgvedic *khādi* along with its early Greek parallels would indicate a cultural 'survival' — some weapon of attack evolved out of a primitive, probably flint or may be bronze, implement. In view of such considerations it would appear quite legitimate when Sāyaṇa in a number of contexts (e.g. *RV.* II.34.2; VI.16.40; X.38.1 etc.) offers the radical meaning of 'biting' (*khādaka*) or 'devouring' (*bhakṣaka*) with the figurative sense of 'annihilating' for the form *khādin*.

Now, it is of great significance to observe that in all the contexts where the form *khādi* occurs it is the Maruts who are connected with it. Thus they are expressly stated to 'have the *khādi* in hand' (*khādihasta*, V.58.2; cf. I.. 168.3) or to be 'possessed of the *khādi* (*khādinaḥ*, II.34. 2; X.38.1) or to 'carry' the *khādi* on their shoulders' (*aṁseṣu*, I.166.9; VII.56.13) or to 'have *khādi* on their feet' (*patsu*,

V. 54.11; cf. I.166.9 and Sāyaṇa's comment' *'pādāgreṣu'*). Special reference must be made to the context at I.168.3 where it is clearly stated of the Maruts: 'upon their shoulders rest, as it were, a lance, and in their hands are carried a *khādi* and a dagger (*eṣām aṁseṣu rambhiṇīva rārabhe, hasteṣu khādiś ca kṛtiś ca saṁ dadhe;* cf. I.166.9-10; V.53.4; V.54.11). The context makes it highly probable that the *khādi* was a weapon, whatever else it might have been regarded as when it was not used in fighting, for the parallel mention of other weapons such as dagger, lance, sword etc., in this and other contexts makes this more than probable. This idea also receives confirmation from VI.16.40 where Agni is referred to as 'whom they (that kindle) carry in their hand, like a *khādin* (or) like an infant newly born' (*ā yaṁ haste na khādinam, śiśuṁ jātam na bibhrati*). The poet clearly resorts to a *double entendre* in *khādin*, meaning both the *khādi* as a weapon carried in the hand (*haste*) and the *all-consuming* Agni carried in the arms like an infant, for grammatically the primary suffix *-in* may denote *agency* (beside possession) as in *ād-in* 'eater', just as much as suffix *i* (in *khād-i*) which too may have the *agent* value as in *kārṣi*[20] (m.) 'drawing' *krīḍi*, 'sporting' *khani* 'digging'. As for the grammatical form, it is significant that Geldner[21] too following Grassmann (*WB*) has not seen any 'possessive' sense in *khādinam*, but merely translates it as 'ring' (not 'one having a ring').

It has to be admitted that in a few contexts the suggestion cannot be ignored that the *khādi* was also regarded as a warrior's *ornament*. The Maruts are said (V.53.4) 'to shine self-luminous with ornaments, swords, breastplates, *khādis* and with chains', and (V. 54.11) they are said to carry 'lances on the shoulders, *khādis* on the feet (*patsu*), gold chains on their breasts, and jewels (*śubhaḥ*) on their chariots.' In this connection special mention may be made of *RV* (I.85.3) where it is said that the Maruts 'adorn themselves with glittering ornaments, the brilliant ones carry bright weapons on their bodies (*tanūṣu śubhrāḥ*)'. By virtue of their brilliant equipment (cf. *śubhra-khādayaḥ* VIII.20.4) the Maruts are constantly described as full of splendour and dazzling in beauty (*śubhā,*) I.65. 1; VII.56.9; *śubhe,* L.64.4, 88.2 etc.; *śubham vā* to march in splendour I.87.4; V.55.1-9; *śubham-yāvam,* V.61.13 etc; *śubham-yu,* wishing for display, X.78.7; *śubhra,* VII.56.8 etc). One thing is clear from these contexts: if the *khādi* is considered an ornament of beauty, so also are other weapons such as swords and lances. Neither these nor the *khādi* cease to be weapons because they beautify the warrior's body.[22] It is well-known that many

objects of the primitive warrior's armoury became ornaments or 'weapons of parade' in course of social evolution. We have evidence, from the early Bronze Period, of weapons like the sword being decorated,[23] and obviously carried for beauty when not used in battle. And in our own times we have glaring examples of swords, daggers and maces used as ceremonial objects with decorative function. The fact that the primitive use of ornaments implied both 'desire for (magical) protection and the desire for display' has been recognized by students of culture.[24] In view of the above, Mayrhofer's notice of the occurrence of *k/gati-nnu, mani-nnu* and *u-rukma-nnu*, the Hurrianized forms of Vedic *khādi, maṇi* and *rukma*, in associated contexts has special cultural relevance. Although *maṇi* in the *Ṛgveda* never occurs with reference to the Maruts or other warrior gods, the *Atharvaveda* (VIII.5.3) clearly states that the *maṇi* was carried into battle by the *kṣatriya*,[25] and this doubtlessly was with the magical purpose of protection. This explains also why, as noticed above, the chariots of the Maruts are said (V.54.11) to be decorated with jewels or gems, and probably also why the Maruts are described as having *rukmas* on their breasts (*rukma-vakṣas*). This latter compound has given trouble to the translators who have wavered between 'breast-plates' and 'gold-chains', ignoring the possibility of shining 'breast-plates' being themselves ornaments on the bodies of the Maruts. Now it would be easy to understand the 'socio-semantic' implication that lies behind the conflicting renderings of *khādi* as *ring* or *armlet* and *weapon*. As will be indicated further on the same *khādi* could on the one hand be regarded as ornament and on the other as weapon. This will also explain why such different qualifications of *khādi* are found in the *Ṛgveda* as occurring in *śubhra-khādi* and *vṛṣa-khādi* (I.164.10), having shining *khādis* and strong *khādis*. An examination of the term *vṛṣa* in the *Ṛgveda* establishes the sense of 'manly' or 'strong', as Max-Müller[26] took it in this same context. Hence, *vṛṣa-khādayaḥ* should mean either 'having strong *khādis*', or, if we may see a metathesis in the compound 'manly, daring, on account of their *khādis*'. In either case the qualification by '*vṛṣa*' seems to strengthen the idea that the primitive sense of *khādi* is weapon, which if made of bronze, as possible in that period of culture, would also suit the qualification 'shining'. The conception of weapons as 'strong' is not alien to the mind of the Ṛgvedic poets. As Max-Müller argues,[27] the term *taviṣā* (from the root *tu* to be strong) in *RV* (I.166.9) could only mean 'strong weapon', which are

there said to be piled up on the war-chariots of the Maruts. This use of *taviṣā* certainly supports the idea that the *khādis* were also held to be strong (*vṛṣa*).

The sense of weapon as the primitive concept signified by *khādi*, that is inferable from an analysis of its context as given above, receives ample justifications from Mādhava's Commentary on the *Ṛgveda*, up till now not taken into consideration by any scholar in regard to the problem. It is thus of the greatest importance to observe that in almost all contexts treated by him the sense of weapon (*āyudha*) is brought out in the clearest terms. We may in particular refer to his comments in *RV* (I.166.9; 168.3; V.53.4, 58.2; VI.16.40; cf. V. 87.1 etc.). What is even more significant is that he gives the sense of weapon for the form *khādin* as well, as in II.34. 2 and VI.16.40, although Sāyaṇa takes the form to mean 'the possessor of *khādi*'. On *RV* (I.166.9) his comment is most illuminating: 'on their shoulders (*aṁseṣu*) are laid weapons of the shape of *cakras* (*cakrākārāṇyāyudhāni*)'. This comment, as will be seen below, is of the utmost importance in the final solution of the problem about *khādi*.

Now, it is highly significant that Max Müller, who had no access to Mādhava's Commentary, had already suggested that the term *khādi* contains an allusion to some kind of weapon. Commenting on the term *vṛṣa-khādi* already referred to in the previous paragraph, he says: In several passages where *khādi* occurs, it seems to be an ornament rather than a weapon, yet if derived from *khād* (sic!), 'to bite', it may originally have signified some kind of weapon.[28] Later on he adds: Though we do not know the exact shape and character of the *khādi*, we know that it was a weapon, most likely a ring, occasionally used for ornament, and carried along either on the feet or on the shoulders, but in actual battle held in the hand. The weapon which Viṣṇu holds in one of his right hands, the so-called *cakra*, may be the modern representation of the ancient *khādi*.[29] In an earlier contribution,[30] I have attempted to establish the sense of Vedic *cakra* as a discoid weapon, that is a projectile weapon of circular (*cakra*) shape, with a sharpened edge, very much of the nature of a quoit or discus. Evidence will be found there demonstrating that such a lethal weapon of attack is alluded by not only the *Ṛgveda* but also in an Avestan text (*Aogəmadaēcá*, 81), and therefore, might have had an Indo-Iranian provenance. Most probably its evolution, as shown there, is to be traced to the stone discus, for the existence of which in the Stone Age there is considerable archaeological evidence. Thus

it seems appropriate to examine the evidence regarding *khādi* in the light of that conclusion and see whether the two terms *cakra* and *khādi* imply identical weapons. The very fact that in most contexts the *khādi* appears as some kind of ring used either on the hand or on the feet makes it certain that it was circular. If so it was, in Vedic terminology, some kind of *cakra* or 'circle'. And this is how, as we have seen above, Mādhava understood the nature of this weapon. His comment *cakrākārāṇyāyudhāni* confirms the idea that it was both circular and a weapon. If so there could be no doubt as to its relationship to the quoit or discus signified by *cakra*. In my earlier paper referred to above it was pointed out that the *cakra* or the quoit with the sharp edge was flung at the enemy in battle by whirling. The projectile metal weapons would have appeared like shining discs in horizontal flight. A similar picture of *khādis* when used in actual battle seems to be provided by the stanza in *RV*, (X.38.1):

asminna indra pṛtsutau yaśasvati śimīvati krandasi prāva sātaye/
yatra goṣātā dhṛṣiteṣu khādiṣu viṣvak patanti didyavo nṛṣāhye//

'O Indra, in this glorious surge of battle, in this vehement tumult, help us to victory. Where in the strife for kine, with the *khādi*-carrying (warriors) daring (to attack) the shining (missiles) *fly* all around, in the over-powering of heroes.'

The predicate *patanti* in the second hemistich meaning as it does 'fly' and the adjectival *didyavo* (from *dyu*, to shine) signifying 'shining (missiles)' clearly point to the fact that their subject is *khādayaḥ* (shining projectiles) as logically implied by *khādiṣu* in the previous *pāda*.

Now, it should be clear that of all the interpretations of *khādi* given by previous scholars only the one offered by Max-Müller genuinely helps in the solution of the problem; while Roth, Grassmann, Geldner and others saw only ornamental 'rings', 'bracelets' or 'armlets' of the Maruts in this term, Griffith alone has followed Max-Müller in a few contexts (e.g. I.64.10; X.18.1) where he renders *khādi* by 'quoit' or 'discus'. As we have seen above, this divergence in interpretation was mainly due to the different etymologies given to the term *khādi*. Generally, it was supposed to be derived from root *khad*, 'to be hard', and from this the development of the sense of '(metal) ring' was considered easy. But such a root is justifiable neither etymologically, as shown earlier, nor according to the evidence of the texts themselves, since the only attested form '*khadan*' at *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (I.7.4.10) as Whitney pointed out years ago,

may be a false reading, not at all clear even in its significance.

From the above considerations one may conclude that the *khādi* was originally a circular ring with a 'biting' edge, i.e., an edge sharpened like a blade and carried to battle slung over the shoulder by inserting the arm through the hole in the middle, but later evolved into an anklet without the sharpened edge. A weapon of this type would be a quoit proper, rather than a discus which is normally a heavy disc not necessarily having a hole in the centre. In view of the existence of *cakra*, and probably also *pavi* and *kṣurapavi*[31] in the sense of circular, sharp-edged weapon in the ancient Vedic period, one is justified in identifying the *khādi* with the same weapon, the quoit. The only problem that remains is to explain why the *khādi* is found mentioned only in the *Ṛgveda*, while the *cakra*, as shown in the paper earlier referred to, survived into historical times. It has been indicated above that the *khādi* was probably evolved out of some primitive Stone Age implement of a circular shape. With the advance in the civilization and the discovery of the *wheel*, the term *cakra* could have usurped the place of the term *khadi* as the lethal sense of the root *khād*, which was its most primitive according to the Indo-European evidence, went out of currency.

Furthermore, it was emphasized earlier that it is the Maruts who in almost all the contexts, are described as carrying the *khādi*. Now, the Maruts are called the sons of Ṛudra, or Rudriyas in the *Ṛgveda*. I have already pointed out in an earlier contribution[32] that an analysis of Rudra's character supports the view that he represents a 'survival' of the primitive hunting period of Indo-European culture (cf. the Pali derivative *ludda-ka* for hunter). The etymology of the word *mar-ut* indicates the same idea of hunter, since, it can justifiably be derived from the root *mṛ-mṛṇāti*, to crush. It is a well-known fact anthropologically that the most primitive method of killing the hunted animal was by *crushing* with stones or clubs. Gordon Childe in his book on *The Aryans* (p. 192) has shown that at the end of the paleolithic stage the Aryans [i.e. Indo-European speakers] were 'a sparse population of pre-neolithic hunters strung out indefinitely over the steppes' who 'roamed over the(se) Central Asian wastelands'. It is thus no cause for surprise if the *khādi* shown above to have been a primitive, lethal weapon evolved from a still earlier Stone Age implement, is found surviving in the *Ṛgveda* as the typical weapon carried by the Maruts. Childe has also shown that these same neolithic hunting tribes in course of time acquired enough wealth and position by

raiding and looting to develop into a military aristocracy (*ibid.*, pp. 41, 126, 151f.). I have elsewhere[33] shown that Ṛgvedic Indra who is celebrated as the wielder of the *cakra* reflects such a warrior chieftain as pictured by Gordon Childe. In view of the chronological relationship between these two weapons as implied in the above suggestions it would not be unjustifiable to conclude that the *khādi*, as a post-neolithic weapon of attack, was itself the prototype of the celebrated discoid weapon of ancient India, the *cakra*.

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28

Kṣatra-Dharma and Rāja-Dharma*

The historical relationship between these two concepts poses an interesting problem to the student of ancient Indian social and political ideas. While in general there has been no attempt to distinguish between the meanings of these two terms, in a few instances they have even been considered synonymous. The purpose of this paper is to examine the historical development of these concepts and determine as far as possible their exact social and political significance.

The problematic nature of this relationship appears from the fact that, beginning with the canonical Buddhist texts, at least in a few places in Indian literature, especially in the great epics, *kṣatra-dharma* or *kṣatriya-dharma* is openly condemned as anti-social, whereas generally in the orthodox Hindu view *kṣatriya-dharma* is considered as the norm or legitimate duty of kings, that is as the *rāja-dharma*, and given a definite socio-moral value. In the Buddhist canonical *Jātaka* text[1] there is a stanza (427) containing the most pronounced condemnation of *kṣatra-dharma* that is found in any Indian source. The stanza may be literally rendered thus: 'Those who are skilled in *khatta-dhamma*, generally become doomed to (suffer in) purgatory; therefore, having renounced *khatta-dhamma*, warding Truth, I have come back (to face the man-eater).' Ghoshal[2] who noticed only the preceding stanza (426) has obviously erred in taking the compound word *nakkhatta-dhamma* occurring there to mean 'knowledge of the astral lore', understanding it as '*nakṣatra-dharma*' (*nakṣatra* in the sense of asterism), whereas the correct analysis would be '*na-k-khatta-dhamma*'. In Pali it is a common phenomenon to find the '*k*' as first element in a conjunct consonant doubled after a short vowel in pronunciation. There is no doubt that

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both stanzas refer to *kṣatra-dharma*, i.e. the norm or ethos of the *kṣatra*, the sphere of activity proper to the kṣatriyas. Similarly, in a passage of the *Dīgha Nikāya* (1.9) *khatta-vijjā* is denounced as a low art (*tiracchāna-vijjā*, lit. a brutal science). One is generally inclined to agree with Prof. T. W. Rhys Davids in interpreting the term as referring to 'the craft of government, then lying in great part in adhering to custom'.[3] He bases his rendering on the commentary of the *Dīgha Nikāya* where Buddhaghoṣa takes it as '*nīti-sattha*' or 'the science of polity'. The commentarial passage on *Jātaka* 426 also has the gloss '*nakkhatta-dhamma saṅkhate nītisatthe*', identifying *kṣatra-dharma* with *nītiśāstra*. But, as will appear from the ensuing discussion, this is only the secondarily developed sense of *khatta-vijjā*, the original sense being nearer to the significance attributed to it by Śaṅkara and Patañjali, viz., 'the science of weapons (*dhanurveda*)'.[4] The exponent of the philosophy of such militarism (*khatta-vijjāvādin*) is mentioned contemptuously in another *Jātaka* story (No. 528) alongside of materialists etc. He is there pictured as a person who inculcates Machiavellian tricks, recommending naked force in carrying out political designs, a verse put into his mouth actually asserting that 'wealth is to be desired for oneself even at the expense of killing father and mother. . . .' From these references one thing becomes clear, that in the early Buddhist view *kṣatra* in the sense occurring in these compounds was a concept considered anti-social and contrary to the ethics of the Buddha.

A few passages denouncing *kṣatra-dharma* are also found in the epics. In one place in the *Rāmāyaṇa* (II.118.19) Rāma in renouncing the *kṣatra-dharma* says with moral fervour that the warriors' code masks sin as righteousness and invites hypocrisy. He denounces *kṣatra-dharma* in favour of the true behaviour of kings (*rājavṛtta*)—a statement whose significance will become clear in the course of this discussion. No doubt this was an attack on the militant ethos of the Ṛgvedic Āryan tradition very likely inspired by the heterodox religious morality of the East, the home of Jainism and Buddhism. It is significant that such passages are found in the *Mahābhārata* too, but only in Book XII, which according to Winternitz[5] did not belong to the original epic but is a later addition (although not so late as Book XIII). Depicting the code of the warrior as the earthly analogue of the sinful amoralism evidenced in the character of Ṛgvedic Indra, certain passages in the 'Śāntiparva', generally put into the mouth of Yudhiṣṭhira, make a somewhat feeble attempt to condemn the inequity

inherent in the *kṣatra-dharma*. But on the whole, the political doctrine expounded to Yudhiṣṭhira by Bhīma, Arjuna, Nakula, Sahadeva, Draupadī and the sage Devasthāna are meant to be convincing arguments in favour of the *kṣatra-dharma*.

In the *Mahābhārata*, especially in the 'Śāntiparva' which has been aptly decribed as 'a great paean to the *kṣatriya-dharma*', the image of the *kṣatriya* that emerges from the exhortations of Yudhiṣṭhira is that of a heartless desperado bent on aggrandizement even at the cost of the lives of others who stand in the way. 'Without killing others. . . . without slaying creatures as a fisherman (kills fish), no one can acquire prosperity. Without slaughter no man has been able to achieve glory or obtain subjects in this world. It is by the slaughter of Vṛtra that Indra became great. Animals live upon animals, the stronger upon the weaker. . . . .this has been ordained by the gods.'[6] In the 'Śāntiparva' it is clearly stated that 'a king desirous of prosperity should not scruple to slay son or brother or father or friend. . . .'[7]—words that recall the above cited exhortation in the *Jātaka* by the exponent of *kṣatra-vidyā*. In the celebrated words of Bhīṣma, the *kṣatriya-dharma* is beyond good and evil. His argument is that the sins incurred in battle leave the *kṣatriya* with his very blood.[8] In another glorification of the *kṣatriya* duty Arjuna asserts: 'I do not find any being in this world that maintains his life without injurying others'.[9] Thus it will be seen that the heroic ethos reflected in the *Mahābharata* is more in favour of the propagation of the traditional *kṣatra-dharma* than otherwise.

The above extracts from the canonical Buddhist texts as well as from the two great epics present in the words of a modern critic 'a diametrically opposite view of the relation of statecraft to morality'.[10] Neither he nor any other writer, however, seems to have undertaken an examination of this phenomenon in the light of the date on the evolution of this Āryan culture afforded by the Vedic literature. It is the opinion of the present writer that the solution of the riddle presented by the concept of *kṣatra-dharma*, at times denounced as anti-social and at other times considered the necessary duty of the princely class even identified with the *rājadharma*, is only to be found in the historical changes in the cultural milieu wrought during the millenium preceding the rise of Buddhism and the Epic age. Thus an examination of the evolution of the concept of *kṣatra* is the *sine qua non* for the solution of this important problem.

The word *kṣatra* is as old as the period of Indo-Iranian 'unity' as

seen from the fact that it occurs both in the Avesta and the *Ṛgveda*, while no western Indo-European language shows the existence of such a formation. The Ṛgvedic term *kṣatra* has been traced to a root *kṣi* (ksayati) meaning to 'possess', 'to rule',[11] (*dyu*) *kṣu* 'ruling (heaven)' etc. Its Avestan parellel *ksaθra* is similarly derived from the corresponding root *kṣi* (*kṣayeiti*) 'possess, rule'. Bartholomae gives two sets of meanings for the Avestan word: (1) *imperium*, rule, lordship etc., and (2) ruler's domain, sphere, province etc., and remarks that these two meanings are not always distinguishable.[12] It is relevant to note here this particular formation with the suffix *tra/θra* is not found outside Indo-Iranian,[13] although the root itself has an Indo-European provenance[14] as seen from the related Greek forms *ktaomai* 'to acquire, possess, hold' giving *kteras* 'possession', *kteana* (pl.) 'possessions' and *ktemata* (pl.) 'family possessions'. A comparison of the semantic content of the derivatives of this root in the Indo-European languages wherein it occurs, viz., Greek and Indo-Iranian, leads to the unavoidable conclusion that its primitive sense should have been 'to acquire, possess' and that the Indo-Iranian sense of 'ruling' is a later historical development. The semantic shift 'acquire', 'possess', 'be master of' 'rule' is perfectly logical, and confirms the belief that the idea of 'rule, kingship' can be a legitimate conceptual evolution from the Indo-European sense of 'gain, possess' which must have taken place in the original Indo-Iranian period. An examination of the socio-cultural context in which such a change of meaning could have occurred clearly lends support to this deduction.

The ancestors of the Persian and Indian Āryans, according to available prehistoric evidence, are found about the latter part of the third millenium before Christ in the steppes of Inner Asia as semi-pastoral tribes. These Āryan 'rugged hunters and herdsmen' appear at the dawn of history moving southwards from their original location which may have been the Pamir region as Eduard Meyer argued, or, more probably, the vast plains of the Oxus and the Jaxartes as Hertzfeld attempted to show.[15] The cause for their enforced expansion from the Steppe was, according to the pre-historian V. Gordon Childe, the cyclic desiccation of Inner Asia, a phenomenon to which this authority ascribes their nomadism itself. 'Such desiccation', says Childe, 'might have begun the process of expulsion and isolation which the incursion of the Mongols completed'.[16] We can then surmise that these pastoral tribes, the forefathers of the Persian and Indian Āryans, were gradually becoming food-plunderers and land-

hunters, being pressed from behind by the Mongols and being forced by catastrophic geographical changes in their homeland to seek for food and fresh pastures elsewhere. Such a picture of these pre-Indic Āryan tribes as land-grabbing nomads, using indiscriminate methods of attack to plunder and sometimes even to oust the settled communities of the southern regions from their territories, is not only provided by pre-historic evidence but also found to *survive*[17] in the legends and myths recorded in the Vedic literature, especially the *Ṛgveda*.

Elsewhere[18] the present writer has attempted to show the possibility of a reference to such roving bands of Āryan free-booters in the Ṛgvedic term *bharatas* (lit. raid-ers).[19] Moreover, the same contribution brings out the connection between the Ṛgvedic deities, such as Indra, Bṛhaspati (or Brāhmanaspati), Agni and Soma and the ethos of raiding and pillaging with all the means at their disposal. The use of the *swift-horse*, 'a pre-eminently Āryan animal' according to Childe,[20] in these raiding expeditions was also demonstrated by references to the celebrated mythicized and idolized war-horse *Dadhikrās* as found in the *Ṛgveda* (e.g. 4.38.5). What is important for our present purpose is to observe that according to Ṛgvedic data the main motive for these incursions into the lands of settled communities was hunger which necessitated the *plunder* of food and fodder. Not only does the root *bhar* indicate such plunder and looting for food (e.g., 10.64.6; 8.40.2), but it is also clearly found with its object indicated by such words as *vāja* and *medha*, both implying *nourishment* and hence food, as it has been shown in the contribution referred to (cf. *vājambhara, bhāradvāja, vāja-sāti, medha-sāti* etc.). The desiccation of their original homeland naturally compelled these Āryan tribes to undertake raiding expeditions for food and riches (*dhanāni*). According to Childe, there is archaeological evidence supporting the idea that these nomadic Āryan ancestors spread both North and South. Speaking of the tombs found in the northern slopes of the Caucasus of Āryan chieftains who had led their followers on plundering expeditions into Armenia, Cappadocia, and even Mesopotamia, this famous authority of Āryan culture and pre-history says: 'Masses of gold and silver buried in the enormous barrows must partly be *loot* (italics mine) from the rich states south of the range. . . .manifest in the gold and silver lions and bulls that decorated the canopy under which one prince was laid to rest. . . . The *raids* that brought them north were prelude to invasions. We may suspect that

the *ancestors of the Indians* and the Iranians discovered *as free-booters* the roads that eventually led them to the throne of Mitanni and to the Indus Valley. . . . While some nomads were settling down in the valleys and others were constituting principalities on the slopes of the Caucasus, the remainder left upon the steppe would be forced to find outlets for their increasing numbers and fresh pastures for their growing herds by means of *migration*. . . .pastoralists do not spread slowly and regularly like (Danubian) cultivators but more rapidly by darts. Actual migration is preceded by exploratory expeditions in the summer, and such excursions reveal to the nomad other goals than mere *grazing ground*—centres of *wealth to be plundered* and held to ransom. The enforced expansion from the steppe seems in fact to have been guided by some such ends' (pp. 194-96). It is necessary for the purpose of this discussion to underscore Childe's statement here that such nomadic 'raids. . . .were prelude to *invasions*', in other words, to the forcible occupation of others' territories.

It is, then, of great significance to find the word *kṣatra* used in *Ṛgveda* with exactly the same implication of 'conquered land', i.e. 'forcibly occupied territory', which in course of political evolution would become the 'domain' of chieftains who led these expeditions. In *RV* (6.50.3) Heaven and Earth are prayed 'to grant wide dominion (*uru kṣatram*)', and in *RV* (1.160.5) they are implored to 'bestow on us great *kṣatra*. . . . whereby we may extend ourselves ever over the folk (*lit.* settlers, *kṛṣṭiḥ*)'. Highly significant in this connection is the prayer addressed to the divine leader of such raids and invasions in *RV* (1.54.11): 'So give us, Indra. . . . great *kṣatra* and strength that conquers tribes (*janā*)' (cf. 7.30.3). In another stanza (1.157.2), the Aśvins (*lit.* horsemen), are prayed: 'equip your mighty chariot; bedew our *kṣatra* (i.e. occupied land) with honey and fatness'. (The translation 'power' for *kṣatra* as given by Geldner, Griffith etc. completely misses the point; Ludwig's *Reich* is certainly closer.) *RV* (1.162.22) clearly anticipates the later institution of Digvijaya when the god-descended Horse is implored thus: 'May the Steed, propitiated with oblations, win for us *kṣatra*'. That the sense proposed here, namely, 'conquered land' is the original significance of *kṣatra* in these passages is further borne out by the incidence of the plural *kṣatrāṇi* in 4.4.8. and 8.37.7, where the idea of 'conquered territories' or 'dominions' suits the context more aptly than the abstract conception of 'powers' as Griffith gives for the latter reference. In

Avestan too the plural occurs as *ksaθra* in the sense of 'dominions'.[21] That in the earlier stage of pre-Āryan antiquity this *concrete* sense was more probable is seen from the idiomatic use of the Greek plural, from the etymologically parallel root, namely, *ktɛana* 'possessions' and *ktɛmata* (Homer) 'family possessions'.[22] Thus the common meaning of Sanskrit *kṣatra* and Avestan *ksaθra* is 'dominion' and this could easily be traced to the more primitive Indo-European idea of 'possession' which as shown above in the course of the progress of Indo-Iranian culture gradually developed the specified sense of 'possessed (i.e. conquered) territory', which in turn came to acquire the meaning of 'dominion' in the course of further social evolution.

Further evidence can be adduced from the *Ṛgveda* to show that such land-grabbing formed an essential feature of the culture of these nomadic ancestors of the Āryans. As indicated above these tribes were hard pressed for new lands, due to the desiccation of their homeland and the pressures from the Mongols from the rear. Such a situation seems to be clearly reflected in the prayer addressed to the Ādityas to give 'expanse from constriction' (*lit.* narrow confinement: *aṅśor uru*), and the significant appeal to the tribal gods to find 'a way for wide settlement' (*uru kṣayāya* 5.65.4; cf. 6.25.6). Similarly, Indra the culture-hero of the nomadic hordes is prayed to 'give us a wide settlement, wide space, that we may live' (*uru kṣayāya uru no yandhi jīvase*, 8.57.12). Related is the conception of such 'nomadic' deities like Indra, Soma, Pusan etc., as 'path-makers'. In *RV* (6.21.12) Indra is implored to be 'on good and evil paths, our leader. . . .our path-preparer', and Soma is called 'path-maker. . . .with a thousand ways' (9.106.5). Pūṣan, the nomadic god *par excellence*, is the guardian deity on these land-finding expeditions, and so aptly described as 'protector of the path(s)' (*RV*, 1.42.1-3). He is significantly prayed 'to lead us past all pursuers' (verse 7) to 'meadows rich in grass' (verse 8). He is hailed as the 'lord of paths' and prayed 'to clear paths for winning of food and booty (*vāja-sātaye*: 6.53.1,4; cf.10.17.4-6). Frequent is the yearning for 'wide space' (*varivas*), and it is Indra, the divine 'leader' of these nomadic incursions and invasions who is styled 'the giver of wide space' (*varivas-kṛt*, 8.16.6) and 'finder of wide space' (*varivo-vid*, 10.38.4), and it is Soma, the never-failing associate of Indra (9.37.5; cf. 9.62.3; 64.14 etc). Puru, the eponymous hero of one of these early tribes, is said (7.19.3) to have been helped by Indra in the conquest of land (*kṣetra-sāti*)in battles against obstructions (*vṛtra-hanyeṣu*). Indra is also praised for helping Śvitra's

strenuous steed in the capture of land (*kṣetra-jeṣa*) according to *RV* (1.33.15). The use of the swift-horse in such land-grabbing adventures is certainly alluded to also in 4.38.1 where in a hymn to Dadhīkras, the divine Horse is extolled for the gift of 'a conqueror of fields and ploughlands, subduer of Dasyus'. Although the etymological identification of *kṣatra* and *kṣetra* suggested by Grassmann, Whitney[23] and others can no longer be maintained, their semantic approximation cannot be denied, for, as the above references show, both words came to signify the (alien) *lands* occupied by the hordes of Āryan antiquity. This conclusion receives definite support from the existence in the Khotan-saka dialect of *kṣirä* (derived from earlier[24] *kṣatryam*) with the accepted sense of 'lands'.[25] We may also refer here to Gershevitch's suggestion[26] that at Yasht 5.87 it would be better to render Avestan *ksaθra* by 'estate' — a rendering which he believes is confirmed by the meaning of the word *sahr* referring to 'cultivated oasis' in the dialects of Basagird. Reference may also be made to the significance of the word '*kurukṣetra*', the name given to the *land* which became the centre of Aryan hegemony in the period of the *Brāhmaṇas*.

In view of the facts presented above, if it be conceded that the primitive sense of *kṣatra* was 'conquered land' and thence the word developed the meaning of 'dominion' and finally 'rule', it becomes easy to determine the historical significance of *kṣatra-ḍharma*. At least in its original implication the term must have meant the 'ethos of the land conquerors' and it appears that this term could at no time in its subsequent evolution totally divest itself of the associations of predatory violence and the primitive tradition of aggression and encroachment which it developed in the early Indo-Iranian period. That this self-same tradition of violence evolved into the militaristic polity of the heroic age is more than clear from the concept of *kṣatra-dharma* as celebrated in many passages of the *Mahābhārata*, particularly the statements put into the mouth of Bhiṣma, as referred to above. It is important to note that this tradition of violence associated with the building up of tribal 'states' has come down to the more civilized phases of Indian political development as reflected in the *Brāhmaṇa* epics and early heterodox literatures. The Brāhmaṇas appear to have legitimized this tradition by means of their sacrificial institutions such as Aśvamedha and Rājasūya, with the associated rite of Vājapeya, and the later institution of the Dig-jaya or Dig-vijaya. No doubt many of the elements in these sacrifices are magico-religious

in character and this fact is at the root of the disagreement among modern interpreters. But when analysed with the socio-cultural context in mind, these institutions yield much that helps to throw light on their historical origins. For instance, in the Aśvamedha which in the words of Keith, 'is an old and famous rite, which kings alone can bring to increase *their realms*' (*italics mine*),[27] the animal, that has to be a swift horse, is let loose guarded by four hundred armed youths to wander over the country indicating the unlimited extension of the king's domain. 'This ancient and vainglorious Aśvamedha sacrifice', says Drekmeier, '. . . suggests an age when the limit of the territory to which the tribal leader could lay claim was the grazing area'[28] and this judgment seems amply supported by the facts above presented. The Rājasūya or Royal Consecration sacrifice, as Keith himself points out,[29] 'connects itself with Vedic history: the tribes mentioned are the Bharatas or their successors in blood and tradition, the Kuru-Pañcālas' --a fact which undoubtedly recalls the nomadic prehistory of the Vedic Āryans as indicated above. The sacrificer takes from the Adhvaryu a bow with three arrows. . . .strides to the various quarters. . . .is anointed. . . .as king steps on the tiger skin the steps of Viśnu. . . .a mimic expedition for booty is performed: the king in his chariot goes out against the cattle of his kinsfolk and, at the time of the fees, he plunders them and they surrender their possessions. In another account, the king mounts his horse and advances to the quarters, an action paralleled in the coronation of the Hungarian king.[30] The conception of Dig-jaya or Dig-vijaya is also clearly derived from the nomadic conquest of land accomplished with the aid of the swift-horse, elements present in the above-described ritual institution. The tradition obviously goes back to the prehistoric period of Āryan land-grabbing. The same idea is also reflected in the steps of Viṣṇu mimicked by the anointed king in the Aśvamedha. As it is most probable, if the term 'Viṣṇu' is a derivative from the root *viṣ*, in the sense of 'to lay hold of', 'seize' (*ergreifen*) considered by Grassmann to be its primary meaning in the *Ṛgveda*,[31] this god so closely associated with Indra, the divine leader of the proto-Āryan nomads, may etymologically deserve the sobriquet 'grabber'. Moreover, the epithets *uru-gāya*, 'wide-moving' and *uru-krama*, 'wide-striding' prominently applied to Viṣṇu and Indra bring out very clearly their connection with tribal migration and expansion traceable to the nomadic period as argued in this paper. Although we do not find the very term *dig-vijaya* in the *Ṛgveda*, there are several

references to such a practice. In 10.128.1, the king about to set forth on territorial conquest implores Agni: 'May the four quarters (*pradisaścatasraḥ*)bend before me: with thee for guardian may we be victorious (*jayema*) in battle' (cf. 3.53.11). In 4.37.7 the Vājas and Ṛbhu (*kṣan*)s, progeny of Indra (stanza 8), are lauded 'in order to conquer for us all quarters of the earth (āśās *tarīṣaṇi*; cf. 5.10.6)'. The change of meaning in the verb *tṛ* (*tarati*), which originally meant 'cross' or 'pass over'[32] to indicate 'conquer' is of great significance since it occurs also in Iranian and Hittite[33]—languages that must historically reflect the same nomadic culture as found to survive in the *Ṛgveda*. The land-grabbing ancestors of the Āryans were out to *conquer* the territories that they *passed through* in their peregrinations. Much more evidence can be adduced from the *Ṛgveda* to show that the type of rulership implied in the term *kṣatra* is the product of a particular mode of social evolution in Āryan prehistory when nomadism and aggression formed the essence of that heroism and chieftainship which in course of centuries evolved into the chivalrous concept of land-conquering sovereignty as found in the *Mahābhārata* and other literature of the Heroic Age.

There is unmistakable evidence in the hymns of the *Ṛgveda* that, even during the later period of the Punjab, tribes fought one another for ownership of new territories. That this ancient tradition which developed into the forcible occupation of border lands as part of the king's function had come down in unbroken continuity right through the post-Vedic period is definitely seen from a verse in Manu: '(The king) should (seek to gain) by force of arms (*daṇḍena*) what he has not yet conquered' (VII.101). And verse 109 clearly lays down that 'for *increasing of the kingdom*, *sāma* (conciliation) and *daṇḍa* are the two chief means'. It need not be pointed out that *daṇḍa* here must mean 'aggressive war' as implied in Bühler's translation of the word in verse 101 as 'army', following Kullūka's comment which defines *daṇḍa* as 'consisting of elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers'. This interpretation in view of what has been said so far, seems historically justifiable. Merely to give the word the penal sense of chastisement in these contexts would obviously be unsuitable. There is no doubt that what is recommended by Manu is the propagation of the *kṣatra-dharma*. The king who fulfils his duties according to *Dharma*, may seek to acquire (border-lands) that he has not conquered yet. . . .' says another verse (IX.251), and this is confirmed elsewhere (X.119) by the forthright assertion that 'the

king's inherent duty (*svadharma*) is conquest (*vijaya*)'. This political doctrine of aggressive self-interest is not restricted to Manu, for we find it upheld as a fundamental principle of the foreign policy of the ideal Hindu monarch even in the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya and in the 'Śāntiparva' of the *Mahābhārata*. The latter text (103, 105) unashamedly recommends even attacking a friendly power if it will promote the expansionist policy of the State. Thus is derived the justification for the existence of the 'ambitious, aggrandizing state'[34] termed the *vijigīṣu* by such political authorities. Another idea of these political theorists, inherited no doubt from the same militarist tradition is the concept of the 'sphere of influence', technically called *maṇḍala*,[35] a theory which assumes the inherent necessity of kingship to make itself secure by the conquest of the adjacent territory. Such concepts of political expediency and militant diplomacy clearly demonstrate the influence that the predatory institution of *kṣatra* had on the evolution of the socio-morality of Hindu kingship.

From what has been said so far it seems legitimate to draw the conclusion that *kṣatra-dharma* must have originally meant 'the policy of aggressive expansionism'. Such a meaning certainly suits the facts presented above relating to the origin and development of the concept of *kṣatra*. Given this significance, its condemnation in the Buddhist and other contexts cited above becomes perfectly intelligible. The problem, however, assumes quite a different complexion when we find *kṣatra-dharma* equated in some instances with *kṣatriya-dharma*. The intricacy of the problem results from the uncertainty of the sense of not only the much discussed term *dharma* but also from the inability of writers to determine the exact significance of the word *kṣatriya*. A reference to the *Ṛgveda* material, however, can again throw much light on the original meaning of this class-name. This derivative from *kṣatra* with the suffix *-ya* (with euphonic-*i*-) would generally mean 'related to' or 'belonging to the *kṣatra*'. If the theory proposed above is correct, *kṣatriya* must then refer to those who took part in the acquisition of alien territory. The general sense of Avestan *ksatrya*, viz., 'lord', 'master', indicates the same connection. According to Bartholomae the word is applied only to gods in the Avesta,[36] and its incidence in the *Ṛgveda* shows that in the older books its application is similarly to the Indo-Iranian deities like Mitra, Varuṇa and the Ādityas.[37] These facts clearly point to the origin of the idea in the Indo-Iranian antiquity. Thus the term survived as the name appropriate for the predatory expeditionists who grabbed

alien lands (*kṣatrāṇi*) and established their overlordship against the indigenous settlers (*kṣitiḥ*). With the passage of time these warlike conquerors of the plains of the Punjab would have developed into the 'warrior-class' as distinct from other professional groups. Thus the term *kṣatriya-dharma* came to mean 'the duty of the warrior caste'; as actually found in most contexts of the *Mahābhārata*. In the *Manusmṛti* (X.81) it is used to mean 'the law applicable to the *kṣatriyas*',[38] which clearly implies the caste-duty for the warriors as laid down by tradition. It may now be seen how the *kṣatriya-dharma* or *svadharma* of the warriors, as the *Bhagavadgīta* calls it (II.31), can be regarded as an historical evolution from the *kṣatra* of hoary Āryan antiquity. Kṛṣṇa's own definition of *kṣatra-dharma* brings out its martial nature in vivid colours: 'Prowess, boldness, fortitude, dexterity, not fleeing from battle, liberality and mastery, born of (their own) nature constitute the *kṣatra-dharma* (XVIII.43).

It has to be observed that even in the oldest parts of the *Ṛgveda* the *Kṣatriya* is connected with kingship *(rāṣṭraṃ kṣatriyasya*, 4.42.1). In a tribal invasion it is only to be expected that the 'leader' of the movement would become the 'ruler' (*rājā*) after a settled life has been established. Thus one among the invading kṣatriyas would normally become the king and the others will remain members of an exclusive class of military aristocrats or knights. Thus could arise the traditional connection between kingship and the kṣatriya. In the tribal 'states' where the king came to be 'elected' the choice would naturally be from this nobility. It is, therefore, no wonder that the *kṣatriya-dharma* or the codification of the routine duties and privileges of this class had by the time of the *Mahabhārata* assumed an importance second only to the *rāja-dharma* or the 'Norm of kings'. The likelihood of a kṣatriya being consecrated as king in the future must have required the behaviour of a kṣatriya to be as close to the *rāja-vṛtta* or royal conduct as possible. This situation is clearly reflected in the frequent characterization of a consecrated sovereign in Pali texts as *'rājā-khattiyo muddhāvasitto'* (the king—a crowned kṣatriya).[39] These facts can explain why in certain passages in the *Mahābhārata* no distinction is made between the *kṣatra-dharma*, the *kṣatriya-dharma* and the *rāja-dharma*.

But by the time the Brāhmaṇa editors of the *Mahābhārata* rationalized their notions of what a king should be, the very concept of kingship in India had undergone a radical transformation. The causes that underlay this transformation were undoubtedly many

and complex. By the sixth century before Christ, Ṛgvedic Āryanism had spread far into the eastern lands but present evidence indicates that it was not into a cultural desert that it spread. Whether as remnants of a forgotten Indus Valley civilization or as the surviving institutions of an earlier pre-Ṛgvedic Āryan colonization, there must have existed in the east, several centuries before the advent of the warrior-culture derived from the nomadic period described above, some ancient concepts of social organization and polity. The evidence of the *Atharvaveda* (especially the Vrātya section) and the traditions recorded in early Jaina, Buddhist and Purāṇic works, certainly lend colour to such a view. Whatever be the explanation for such a phenomenon, before the rise of Buddhism, in the Gangetic basin, there appears a notion of sovereignty quite different from the kṣatriya kingship pictured above. In keeping with the prevailing urban commercial civilization that we find there, a sedate type of kingship guided more by ethical and spiritual considerations than the rough and crude expedients of tribal rulership had come into being. Reference may be made to the normative (*dhammika*) ethos of the Cakkavatti ideal as recorded in the early Buddhist canonical texts like the *Dīgha Nikāya* (Suttas XXVI, XXX etc). This literature is replete with ethical observations pertaining to the righteous king, as the benevolent ruler of the kingdom.[40] According to canonical Buddhism a king must practise ten kingly qualities (*dasarāja-dharma)* without ever forsaking them: liberality, moral conduct, self-sacrifice, rectitude, self-chastisement, non-anger, non-injury (*avihiṃsā*) forbearance and not being out of harmony. It is significant that in Manu's enumeration (VII.45ff) of the similar attributes of the Hindu monarch non-injury (*ahiṃsā*) is prominent by its absence, showing that even in such an advanced stage in the evolution of Hindu polity the power of the traditional *kṣatra-dharma* was too alive to be discountenanced. In fact, the rule of *ahiṃsā* is nowhere applied to kingship in the Hindu literature of the period. As Norman Brown points out, 'on the subject of *Ahiṃsā* the text (Manu) is equivocal.'[41] According to him it was only slowly that the idea of *ahiṃsā* began to win status in Brāhmaṇic circles and never had full and unchallenged acceptance and practice among Hindus and should not be considered to have arisen in Brāhmaṇic circles. 'It seems more probable that it originated in a non-Brahmanical environment, was promoted in historic India by the Jains and the Buddhists, and was adopted by Brāhmaṇic Hinduism after it began to win its way in north India

where Brahmanic Hinduism was developed.'[42] The point to be emphasized is that it was precisely in such a non-Brahmanic environment that the Buddhist idea of kingship seems to have developed. It is natural, therefore, that the Buddhist king as a promoter of *ahiṃsā* should have unequivocally renounced the violent and aggressive policy of aggrandizement traditionally associated with the concept of *kṣatra-dharma*, a renunciation which was accomplished in historic manner by the great Emperor Aśoka.

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17. On such a theory of 'survivals' as a methodological tool in analysing Ṛgvedic data, see 'Some Pre-historic Survivals in the Ṛgveda', in this volume, pp. 285 ff.
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