Chapter I
INTRODUCTION

Buddhism is a philosophy of life, and not simply a theory of speculative ideas. It originated as a revolt against the prevailing beliefs of Hinduism. Without giving any importance on the metaphysical problems, the Buddha started his philosophy in search of an effective way of removing suffering from human life.* He found out the truth, the enlightenment, the knowledge that the remedy of suffering lay not in the physical world, but in the mind itself. The Buddha emphasised on freedom of mind by rejection of attachment to everything for leading a cheerful and carefree life. Thus psychology forms the foundation upon which the philosophy of the Buddha is built. Hinduism also teaches the doctrine of detachment or niskāmatā. But in Buddhism these teachings got a psychological explanation. At the very initial stage of early Buddhism we are acquainted with the psychology of nothingness. The Buddha approached the problems of the 'psychology of nothingness' from two standpoints: negative and positive. From the negative standpoint, he narrated the divergent crises of human existence. From the positive

*Being the only son of a royal family he had experienced the taste of all worldly resources which could not give happiness to his mind. So he realised that the means of getting peace did not lie in the objective world.
standpoint, he gave us both a diagnosis of man's predicaments and the remedies to overcome such predicaments.

Before the advent of the Buddha also, Indian thinkers realised that desire leads to misery. In Buddhism also trṣṇā is the root-cause of suffering, the evident problem of life. Thus suffering arises from psychological factors and its removal also lies in the psychological process itself.

Development of science offers multiple comforts to human life. But the source of happiness or mental peace does not lie in these comfortable objects; it is in the mind itself. It is the final realisation of every intelligent brain and is also announced by every genius in different fields of experience. Surely, it is very fascinating that a religion of monasticism possesses such profound scientific truth of life which cannot be discarded even today.

Different branches of general psychology explain the mental problems from different standpoints. Buddhist psychology, though not a clear-cut doctrine of mental life, may be analysed from these standpoints of psychology in general.

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*The doctrine of Niskāma Karma of the Bhagavadgītā bears the same truth that for the attainment of happiness and the achievement of liberation, we must remove the desire for the fruit of action. Desireless action is the best of the means of Yoga.

**Elemental psychology analyses mind into different elements whereas functional psychology regards it as a system of different mental activities.
As religion, Buddhism is grounded on ethical principles. It prescribes several rules of conduct for the monks and also for the laymen. Common people, unable to practise the rules are also indirectly influenced by the code of conduct followed by the monks whom they take in great esteem. As the Hinayana School of Buddhism is more orthodox than the Mahayana School of it, so the psychological impact of this religion is to be found more evident upon the followers of this school. Hinayana Buddhism is dominating mainly in Ceylon and Burma even today. The Singphos and the Khamtis of Arunachal Pradesh had come from Burma and they practised Hinayana Buddhism sincerely. Today, they are in touch of modern civilization. Yet they try to maintain the habits given by their religion.

I am trying to deduce the essential points of psychology in which Buddhism bears the significance of modern analysis. As modern psychology links up the theory and its application in practical field, Buddhist psychology also carries some psychological bearings upon the followers of this religious trend. From the observation of the code of their conduct, these influences can be realized and analysed. I am trying my best to do this in this connection.
A brief account of psychology in general:

As the term 'psyche' indicates, psychology originally was not the study of mind, but rather it was an enquiry into the nature of self or soul. With the development of analytical thought, it became evident that self or soul cannot be the subject-matter of natural science. So psychology had to limit its scope of investigation only to the problems of mind and mental activities. As mind cannot be distinguished from different conscious processes, psychology was defined, more correctly, as the study of different conscious processes.

In India also, the Vedas and the Upanisads mainly were interested in the questions relating to the self or Atman. "This is Thy Self, who is within all"¹ is the version of Yajnavalka. Again "This body, indeed, withers and dies when the living Self has left it. The living Self dies not."² Mind, there, was recognized as the organ of functioning on the part of the self. Atman or self was estimated as the whole of man and mind was treated as an organ like other sense-organs of the body. There are different terms used as synonymous to mind or manas expressing almost the same meaning. The words - citta, vijnana, cetas, cetana and buddhi are used almost in the same sense. The term nāma-rūpa is found in the early Upanisads also. But it is in the Majjima Nikaya that nāma is used to mean different parts into which mind could
be analysed. The Upanisadic conception of namā-rūpa was held to mean the self and its appearance. The self or the mind-holder was always given primary importance. A completely new concept of man is found in the Pitakas, the older Pali books of Buddhism. Man here is treated as an aggregate of visible and non-visible components. A human being is said to consist of the fivefold agglomerate or skandhas (of which four are psychical).

Thus the conception of psychology as the study of mental processes is found in the philosophical analysis of Buddhism, almost at a time which may be recorded as the fifth century B.C. 'There is no other salvation because all other doctrines hold to the erroneous view of the real existence of a soul. The term soul is not regarded by them as a conventional term applied to what is only a flux of elements.'

In western psychology, Structuralism holds the same view about mind. It also tried to find out the elements of mind by using introspective method.

On the other hand, functionalists used to study mind from different functions or behaviour. They analysed mind into different mental activities. But behaviourism completely rejected introspective method and insisted on external behaviour. Gestalt psychology insisted on the organisational
character of the mental experience and behaviour. In modern psychology the supporters of humanistic view also do not like to separate elements from the totality of personal experience.

Whether mind is the totality of the elements, or it is a process of different mental activities, is a controversial point of psychology. Again the operation of these functions or elements upon each other is also recognised by some psychologists and not by others.

Buddhist psychology regarded mind as a continuous process of different states conditioned by previous experience. It bears enough scope of modern treatment. The contents of consciousness, i.e., thinking, feeling and willing are the elements of mind in the analysis given by the traditional psychologists reputed as Structuralists, whereas Functionalists regard these faculties as functions or behaviour. Insistence on this opinion leads to behaviourism. This school applied objective observation or inspection in addition to the introspection or subjective method in psychology. Behaviourism raised psychology to the rank of experimental sciences. Some of the scholars used to regard psychology as mental chemistry. But nevertheless, psychology cannot be treated as material or physical science. Man and his mind are related to society and environment. Thus the findings of Gestalt psychologists developed the different branches of
applied psychology in different fields of society.* Our thoughts and behaviours are influenced by the society and consequently social development also depends on the psychological strength and spirit of the individual. The entire happening is viewed as a whole and society and individual are taken as meaningful parts of the whole. Thus psychology is extended to our domestic as well as social life. It is no more a speculative science of self. Pure psychology was concerned only with the principles of mind. Applied psychology uses these established principles in the interest of the human beings in society.

"Psychology from the Indian standpoint is out and out an applied science."4 The general trend of the philosophical analysis in India was related to practical life. The aim was the same - liberation from bondage or suffering. Western psychology is applied in the different fields of material development, but Indian psychology aims at mental development only. The other important point of distinction is that the field of applied psychology is the society as a whole, but traditional Indian psychology was applied to individual psychic development only. The Buddha also

*By recognising the synthetic nature of mind, the Gestaltians accepted genetic method to discuss the gradual development of mental attitude of a person who is but an inherent part of the social unit. The shape of the mind of the individual is made up by the dynamic forces of society such as politics, economic problems and different institutions.
formulated such a psychological theory by which every individual, if he tries, can bring himself out of the plunge of misery. It must be mentioned here that psychology is concerned not only with the functions or elements of consciousness, but discussions on the unconscious level of mind is also an important part of this science. The psycho-analytic school is specially busy with this part of psychology. Buddhist scholars also felt that the subperipheral region of the mind is more voluminous than the conscious one. These scholars realised that the secret truth of actual human behaviour lies in the subconscious and unconscious level of mind.* Buddhism, while emphasizing the internal motive of behaviour recognized that the unconscious level of mind is the determining factor not only of this life but of the future life also.

Galton's individual psychology is another important branch to be mentioned here. McDougall writes about it "... the aim of this psychology is to define the peculiarities of mental constitution which render the behaviour and development of each individual and human being unique." Individualistic

*Freud's division of mental contents into Id, ego and super-ego reminds us of the Buddhistic gradation of consciousness into peripheral, sub-peripheral and sub-limital zones of mind, though with a difference in their respective viewpoints. Id is the unconscious reservoir of instinctual urges and the explanation of Freudian libido as given by Prof. Edler as the sum total of all impulses indicates the points of similarity with the sub-peripheral zone.
standpoint of psychology is found in Buddhism also. But here psychology is not a pure science. As pure science, psychology gives simply the description of mental phenomena which are observed or logically deduced from the observed facts. But as applied science it finds out the direction of application of these analyses. This is what we call practical psychology. Lama Anagarika said "the amplitude of 'The boundary lines of the given' is the determining factor as to the value of any such psychology. In the case of Buddhism, whose psychology belongs to the latter category, these boundary lines are extraordinarily wide-stretching, since they embrace not only the experiences of the average man but also the planes of the highest experiences which no science of the West as yet has ventured to approach."6

An account of Buddha's life and Philosophical Teachings:

Buddhism, one of the greatest religious traditions of the world, originated in India recordedly in the 5th century B.C., and for more than twenty centuries it spread outside India throughout the Eastern Asia and some neighbouring Islands. Theravad or Hinayana form of Buddhism is practised mainly in Ceylon, Burma, Thailand and Camposia, whereas the followers of Mahayana Buddhism are found in Bhutan, Nepal, Tibet, China, Japan, Korea and Vietnam. In India the Buddhists
are fewer in number in comparison to the people of other religions and they live mainly in Ladakh, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh.

Every religious faith is grounded upon some devotional feelings and actions. This devotional belief of common people creates some myths or mysterious imaginations. As a religion, Buddhism also is tinted by such imaginations. According to the Tales of the Jatakas, Buddha's life was the last of hundreds of incarnations in the path of achieving the 'Buddha-hood'. In different forms of existences Bodhisattva attained different stages of perfections. Buddhism recognizes six types of perfections required for a Buddha. These are perfections of (1) charity, (2) morality, (3) patience, (4) vigour, (5) meditation and (6) wisdom. For the fulfilment of these different types of perfections, the Buddha entered different categories of life as Bodhisattva narrated in the Jatakas.

But Buddhism was neither a religion nor a philosophy in its origin. The founder of this religion was an ordinary man frightened by the miseries of everyday life. Buddhism is a theory of life flourished in individual's true experience.*

*Born and brought up in the royal family of Kapilavastu, Siddhartha left away all worldly relations in his striving after the truth about the problem of suffering. It is the universal problem of mankind, of human suffering as a whole, typically known as jarā-marana, which is inevitable to everyone from the beggar to the king.
In search of the remedies to overcome the predicaments of man, Siddhartha began to practise penance and finally discovered that asceticism and mysticism could not give the required answer to his questions. At last he got himself absorbed into profound meditation and finally achieved the Great Enlightenment, and became 'Buddha'. The truth about the riddle of suffering flashed before him by itself. This sudden experience of Gautama is left for us in the form of four noble or excellent truths (catvariṣāryya satyāni) of Buddhist Philosophy.

The first one of these four truths is 'Dukkha' or suffering. The problem of suffering dominates the whole world, including human life. Birth is suffering. Old-age is suffering. Death is suffering. Moreover, there is grief, lamentation, misery and despair. Suffering is a brute fact of life and it is evident. But the peculiarity of the teaching of the Buddha is that in his opinion there is nothing but suffering in this world. The Buddha has given us an introspective analysis of suffering and said that it is for the lust we possess for life that suffering is inevitable to us. It is the clinging or attachment that covers the truth and the truth is nothing but suffering, 'dukkha'.

The Buddha's view of life and things is based upon the transitory nature of worldly objects. The most cheerful moments of life also do not last for long, and the loss of
gratification is painful. So everything of the world is painful.

The conception of transitoriness as given by the Buddha includes both the material world and human personality. The Buddha clearly explains that everything including personality is conditioned and consequently perishable. Human personality is nothing but the aggregate of pāṇca-upādāna 'kkhandha' or elements. These five skandhas (kkhandha) or groups are (1) rūpa (physical form), (2) vedanā (sensations and feelings), (3) sanjñā (perception with understanding and naming), (4) vijñāna (consciousness) and (5) saṃskāras (pre-dispositions). These saṃskāras are the tendencies generated by the impressions of the past life. The particles forming the body are incessantly changing. Neither the body nor consciousness is permanent substance. Of course, our life does not end with the end of this existence. Life is a continuous process of re-birth. But the Buddha does not recognize a permanent self or soul. The concept of permanent substance as self is an abstract idea and in his opinion, abstract ideas are totally meaningless. What our reason can reach that is the being with its five components, viz., rūpa, vedanā, sanjñā, vijñāna and saṃskāra. Nothing of these elements is permanent. So everything is subject to suffering. The corporeal organism itself is 'the machine of suffering, as George Grimm likes to call it, "Since, further, as we know,
these five groups constitute at the same time all the elements and thereby the totality of all suffering, we might also well call the 'corporeal organism' the machine of suffering. Everything in life is transient and so full of suffering. But culmination of suffering is jara-marana, i.e., old age and death.

But it is not the whole of the noble truths. Buddha's teaching does not end in the truth of suffering only. In the second noble truth, the Buddha explains how jara-marana arises in life. It is related with the theory of Dependent Origination or paticcasamuppada which was formulated for the explanation of world-causation. The Buddha discovered the conditional nature of objects and this conditional nature of suffering paves the way for its removal. Samsara is an endless chain of cause and effect, so also is birth and death. The logical theory of causal condition when applied to this chain, the Buddha discovered that jati (birth) is the immediate cause of suffering. To stop suffering, its cause must be stopped. To stop rebirth its immediate cause must be traced out. The Buddha found out that bhava or will to be born is the immediate cause of birth. This bhava is the universal principle of becoming. It is conditioned by grasping or strong attachment to life. This clinging to life is called upadana. The world is a constant flow of becoming

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resulted from the grasping of different objects; trṣṇā or tanhā, i.e., desire or thirst is the immediate cause of this upādāna. Thirst originates from the experience of different objects of enjoyment. This sense experience or vedāna is the result of the contact of different senses with the objects of the world. For this contact or sparśa (phassa) different sense-organs, i.e., sadāyatana must operate in the mind-body complex or nāma-rūpa. This nāma-rūpa or the corporeal organism will operate only when it is endowed with vijñāna (vinnāna) or consciousness. This consciousness again is the result or effect of past impressions or saṅkhāra. These saṃskāras are the totality of the entire mental dispositions which determine the future birth of the individual concerned. The saṃskāras again remain in consciousness only because of avijjā (avidyā) or ignorance. This ignorance is the ultimate cause of all suffering.

But ignorance is not the end of the philosophical teaching of the Buddha. It is the philosophy of Bodhi or wisdom. So in the third Noble Truth, the Buddha comes to the removal or cessation of Avidyā with its consequent suffering, i.e., jarā-marana. Cessation or annihilation of suffering is dukkha-nirodha or Nibbāna. By simple logical argument the Buddha comes to the most expected conclusion that dukkha is not the ultimate fact and it can be removed by the removal of its causes. From the analysis of the causal chain, it is
clear that suffering occurs in the corporeal apparatus because of craving or desire. So, logically, cessation of suffering depends on cessation of craving. If we want to be free from the claws of suffering we must, first of all, be free from our desire or thirst. If trṣṇā can be annihilated, rebirth will be stopped and suffering will end for ever. It is possible only if ignorance about the truth or about real meaning of life is removed first. Wisdom can remove ignorance and consequent attachment to life. When attachment is removed, misery is also removed and liberation or freedom is attained in this very life itself. From the extinction of thirst, detachment arises in mind. When detachment grows in mind, no kind of sensation can impress the consciousness. The liberated persons attain complete freedom from desire. Nothing can arouse attraction or repulsion in his mind. Liberation from thirst is deliverance and Nibbāna literally means extinguishing. It is extinction of desire, extinction of grasping and extinction of becoming. This Nibbāna or liberation attained in the life-time is called sopādhiśeṣa-nibbāna. Anupādhiśeṣa-nibbāna is parinibbāna. Positively, it is eternal rest, eternal peace or highest bliss.

In the fourth noble-truth the Buddha gives direction to the road to nibbana. The path comprising of eight steps is called ārya-astāṅgika-mārga. For the removal of misery, its causal chain must be destroyed. The noble path enables
the followers to remove ignorance, the final cause of all types of misery. For this, a clear and correct view of life, i.e., **sama�drsthī** is essential. This is the first step to be trodden in ascending the noble eight-fold path. It is the right view about life and object as components of transitory elements producing pain and suffering. But mere abstract knowledge is not sufficient for the great task of annihilating desire. Strong determination or **sama�-samkappa** (samyak-samkalpa) is necessary for it. Moreover, thought, deed and speech must be purified by meditation, i.e., **sammaśati** (samyak-smṛti), **samma-kammanta** (samyak-karmanta) and **samma-vācā** (samyag vāk) must be cultivated. For the maintenance of life **sammaśājīva** (samyagājīva), i.e., good means of livelihood must be adopted. Constant effort or **samma-vāyāma** (samyag-vāyāma) is needed to prevent the temptations arising in mind from the things around us. Ceaseless watchfulness and deepest contemplation is the most essential condition for liberation. **Sammaśati** or constant watchfulness is inevitable. **Samma-samādhi** or right-concentration is the last and highest step in the path leading to nibbāna - to the extinction of all craving and consequent suffering.

The teaching of the Buddha is based on intuitive knowledge which is higher than mere theoretical understanding. It is also free from mythological disguise and mystical clothing. We can easily understand this character of the
Buddha's teaching when we go through the 38th Discourse of Majjima-Nikāya, where he addressed the monks, "Then, monks, what you say is only what you yourselves have recognized, what you yourselves have comprehended, what you yourselves have understood, ...?" He himself said that his doctrine is clearly visible and always accessible to the man of judgement. Surely Buddha's theory is simple and accessible to every reasonable person. The knowledge which the Buddha achieved was intuitive knowledge which we call wisdom. Only for communication it depends on logical analysis of the problems. The doctrine of the four noble truths is the result of this logical analysis. It is a religion of reason. "In the canon it is characterized by the word 'vibhajjavāda', which is translated as religion or theory of logic or reason."9

Buddhism is not a blind faith of communal religion. It is a scientific doctrine to be understood by logical argument in pure deductive procedure. The Buddha and his men always emphasized this rational sagacity of a person to understand the teaching given by him. It is exemplified in the dialogue between Mahinda and King Devanampiya of Ceylon on the eve of the latter's being converted to Buddhism.*

*By questioning in different ways Mahinda tested the sagacity of the king and decided that he would be able to understand the teachings of the Buddha and only then he began to deliver the lessons.
The Buddha's doctrine is unique as it treats of the most practical problem of human life. Its method of exposition is also unique. He who follows it must understand it first. It is one of the most noble and simple philosophical enquiries. The Buddha "claimed for himself to have solved the problem in such a manner that everyone by his own direct perception, by his own immediate insight might convince himself of the correctness of the solution, and even at any time, if only he wishes to do so, may test it upon himself."10

The teaching of the Buddha, may it be called religion or metaphysics, is knowledge, pure scientific knowledge based on self-experimentation.

Thus, Buddhism which originated in the feeling of suffering, becomes a dependable strong hope for thousands of its supporters. This character of philosophical thought is observed, recently, by some American scholars. "The main dynamic of nothingness is the urge to find deeper meaning in life. ... Nothingness is a life force in that the apparent breakdown of a person's worlds of meaning can actually be a breakthrough to more authentic meaning."11 He also says, "... the painful experience of nothingness is essential to becoming healthy."12 Again "we can see that the experience of nothingness is important if for no other reason than that it keeps man honest. Nothingness does not let man take life
for granted. It consistently hounds man to grow deeper into life, to experience more and more meaning in living. Nothingness is an innate force in man's existence that encourages him to become more and more of himself. Because of nothingness, man is always restless and restive. Because of nothingness, man is always searching for, wondering about and enjoying new horizons.\(^{13}\)

These characteristics of nothingness can rightly be applied to the philosophical teaching of the Buddha.
We have already discussed the logical character of the teaching of the Buddha. But it will be a serious mistake if we rank Buddhism with pure logic. The logical doctrine of the Buddha is not drawn from pure axioms or abstract definitions. In fact, correct knowledge must have its basis on experience. Abstract ideas without any empirical basis are meaningless and as such always rejected by the Buddha. His denial of metaphysics is grounded upon this reason. Pure abstract theories which have no relations with life, should not be allowed to waste time in discussion and the Buddha always remained silent about these questions. His doctrine is based on individual experience, and then analysed with logical method. This is the method of pure psychology also. The Buddha tried to solve the problems from subjective points of view. Clearly it is different from physical sciences, dealing with objective materials. So the doctrine of the Buddha is not pure logic, it is not a metaphysical theory, not an empirical science also. Some scholars like to treat Buddhism as an ethical doctrine. But this opinion also cannot be regarded as complete characterization of the teachings which the Buddha delivered for mankind, for the suffering human beings. The Buddha preached a doctrine not of simple ethical code or rules of conduct. He did not give any importance to the outward
activities of our daily life, nor to any principles of social
and ethical life. What he discussed was the mental activity,
mental tendencies that we should cultivate according to his
guidance. "Indeed, these worthy beings were possessed of
wrong conduct in body, speech, and thought, ... holding a
wrong view, incurring deeds consequent on a wrong view, ...
But these worthy beings who were possessed of right conduct
in body, speech, thought, ... holding a right view, incurring
deeds consequent on a right view ..." Such dialogue
very clearly proves the importance of mental attitude, asser­
ted in the doctrine of the Buddha. The theory of Dependent
origination is not a theory of metaphysical causation. But it
is a psychological theory analysing the different factors of
mind which are responsible for the whole process of suffering.
These psychical factors are responsible for the particular
mode of birth and also for its consequent suffering. These
processes are so strong and effective that these can deter­
mine the modes of life, both the present and the future.

Life is analysed into five khhandhas or groups of
psychical factors - sensation or rūpa, perception or sanjñā,
feeling or vedanā, consciousness or vijñāna and impressions
or saṃskāras. With the admission of sensation only the
external world is admitted to his theory. The objective
world presented by the senses acquires its different meanings
and different colours by the impositions of different mental
attitudes; and consequently psychical factors become the determining factors of human life.

But we must not regard Buddhism as a theory of pure psychology.* This purely scientific or theoretical psychology largely depends on logical proof. But Buddhist psychology is based on experience. *Psychology, as 'pure science', also takes the facts of experience as its starting point but arrives at its results by the path of logical development, thus going beyond the given data and building up a system dependent upon logical operations and abstract principles. Practical psychology remains within the boundary lines of the given, ... in the case of Buddhism, whose psychology belongs to the latter category, these boundary lines are extra-ordinarily wide-stretching, since they embrace not only the experiences of the average man, but also the planes of the highest experiences which no science of the west as yet has ventured to approach."\(^{15}\)

In the psychology of Buddhism, every analysis is related to the practical meaning of life. The mental activities of perception and feeling together with consciousness

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*Psychology is treated as 'pure' when it is studied as a 'pure science'. It is simply an explanation of the perceptible mental phenomena and other processes logically deducible from these. It is distinguished from practical psychology which is studied with a definite purpose, with a view to definite practical application of it.
formulated the impressions which accordingly give shape to the life of the individual. Not so much only, the impressions upon consciousness become the powerful agent which furnishes the abode of the countless future lives.

Thus the element of samskāra combines psychology with metaphysics in the Teaching of the Buddha. Buddhism bridges the gap between life and matter, between present and future and also it combines the theory of empiricism with the ideal of salvation or Nibbāna. It also synthesises the results of natural sciences and psychology in the single theory of suffering.
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