CHAPTER - VI

ETHICS

The understanding of ethical concepts and its implications forms a basic part of the religions of Buddhism and Dev Dharma. While presenting the principles of ethics, they bypass metaphysical issues relating to the origin of the world, first cause, God as the ultimate arbiter and so on as they did not consider them as necessary precepts for setting out ethical and religious values. Hence, these religions are not theistic but set out a humanitarian attitude. Their respective doctrines are devoid of references to supernatural reality and for all practical purposes, these doctrines reject the need for the notion of a Universal Being and emphasise the need for moral rectitude and the development of conduct which equips one to reach the goal. Devātmā's principal interest is in moral philosophy and he sets out certain ontological principles as he finds them to be relevant to the question of an ethical evolution in relation to the individual. This philosophy is in many respects akin to the Buddhist doctrine which can be characterised as a predominantly ethical discipline showing one the path to freedom from suffering, and it embarks on ontological and epistemological issues in
lieu of the fact that it is relevant to the goal. Metaphysical issues were left unpursued as not being conducive to the goal.

Relation between Act and Fruit:

'Dhamma' as enunciated in Buddhism is also used in the sense of truth and identified with the principle of causality or the doctrine of paticcasamupāda discovered by the Buddha himself. In many ways, the dhamma served to determine what is good and adhamma referred to what is evil. The explanatory value of the chain of causation is limited to cause links as it applies to human beings. This is indicative of the 'practical' nature of Buddhist Philosophy which is concerned primarily with the task of removal of suffering and holds itself aloof from explanatory hypothesis about the nature of the beginning and operation of the cosmos etc., considering such views as being unrelated to the question of salvation. The fact to be taken into consideration was the need to seek release from the suffering that pervades human existence and hence the Buddha states 'Whatever action, bodily, verbal or mental leads to unhappiness or suffering for oneself, others or both, that action is bad. Whatever action bodily, verbal or mental does not lead to suffering for oneself, others or both, that action is good.'

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The suffering which the Buddha alludes to is to be taken in a broad context and it is apparent that the Buddha did not follow a strict *karmavada* or rigid determinism. He did not assert that there is absolute and unqualified relation between cause and effect independent of particular circumstances but held that act and its result or fruit is dependent on various circumstances. In illustrating this factor by means of a simile, the Buddha states 'If a man were to put a grain of salt in a cup of water, the water would be undrinkable. Suppose, a man, monks, would throw a grain of salt in the river Ganges, would this river Ganges also become salty and undrinkable because of this grain of salt? In the same way monks, a man could perform here even a slight sinful action, the result of which would be experienced in this very life, and would appear to be light, much less grievous.' The ethical discipline of the Buddha was set out as a means to achieve cessation of karmic influences occasioned by deeds, which in turn lead to the cessation of rebirth. At a certain stage, one finds that the disciple performs deeds with a detached state of mind. Such actions are devoid of any form of craving and hence there is no karmic impetus in these deeds. These actions therefore do not issue in karmic effects. The major aim is the purification of mind, so that when one no longer acts
with dispositional tendencies, one is able to reach a stage wherein one is able to understand 'good' and 'evil' 'as they are'. It is due to this reason, it is asserted emphatically that "Conflicts regarding good and evil do not reach the sage".  

Dev Dharma outlines the basic necessity of the human agent to free himself from low loves and low hates which are harmful to oneself and others. He traces the source of good and evil acts to their dispositions. Motivations and intentions of the agent determine the nature of the act. While good and wholesome acts lead to the evolution of the soul or life-force, cultivation of evil leads to soul-degeneration. Dev Dharma aims at the liberation or deliverance from low loves and low hates. This leads to the strengthening of the vitality of the soul by means of 'vikas' or evolution. He therefore emphasises the need for soul knowledge. In this context, he analyses the limited value of the pleasure principle which is held to be accepted as long as it is subordinated to the good. He asserts "The acquisition of pleasures of any kind is not the goal of man's life because the love of pleasure of any kind is bound to take him towards falsehood and evil which in turn bring soul-degeneration and soul darkness".
Devātmā's system of ethics is naturalistic in nature. The values he speaks of pertain to relationships that exist in the world. He upholds the view that each field of human action has a specific value and an individual can develop as many consciousness of value as the number of senses of values which are developed in him. Such values are objective in nature independent of the cogniser and can be cognised by anyone perceiving it.

Taking an example of the concept of justice, he says each individual possesses the consciousness of what is just and unjust and therefore this sense of justice can be developed. Devātmā thus claims that "In the evolutionary course of Nature, such men appeared at times in various countries in whom the sense of justice developed in a higher degree than the ordinary people of those times and in the light of this higher sense, they felt that any prevalent custom of society or its certain rite or belief or opinion or a certain law of its government was opposed to justice and that its recognition and continuance usurped any of the birth right or true individual liberties of others"

Buddhism and Dev Dharma do not advocate an idealistic trend of thought in their religious and ethical structures. They uphold the potency of good and evil
deeds that lead to either beneficial or harmful consequences. The individual ultimately becomes the hair to his deeds in reaping its effects. They do not entertain the notion of an eternal metaphysical Self which is unaffected by deeds. They uphold a causal relation between act and fruit. While in Dev Dharma the result of deeds induces an evolutionary or devolutionary trend on the life force, in Buddhism the result is either Nibbāna — release from the cycle of birth and rebirth or a constant repetition of the chain of pati-ccasamupāda.

**Goal of Ethical Endeavours:**

In Buddhism, release from misery is the aim of the entire ethical doctrine and salvation results in the dissolution of the personality complex and cessation of the chain of rebirth. In emphasising the fetters of 'craving' and 'desire' to be the root causes of suffering the Buddha asserts "The world O Kaccana, is for the most part bound up in a seeking, attachment and proclivity (for the groups) but a priest does not sympathize with this seeking and attachment, nor with the mental affirmation, proclivity and prejudice which affirms an Ego. He does not doubt or question that it is only evil that springs into existence and conviction
of this fact is dependent on no one but himself".\textsuperscript{6} By understanding the nature of causation which is considered as the essence of existence, one overcomes ignorance and the Buddha aptly says "By a complete fading out and cessation of ignorance, O priests, all these refuges, puppet shows, resorts and writings – to wit what is birth? Existence?....attachment.... desire?..... Sensation?..... contact..... the six organs of sense..... name and form..... consciousness... karma? and what is not karma.... or karma is one thing, but it is another thing that has karma or the soul and the body are identical or the soul is one thing and the body another.... all such refuges are abandoned".\textsuperscript{7}

The goal of ethical endeavours differs in Dev Dharma. While Buddhism speaks of 'bondage' as being one of repeated birth and rebirth and consequent suffering due to this cycle, Devatmā uses the term 'bondage' as being bound to self-love and low hates, and rejects the notion of rebirth. The ethics of Dev Dharma is found to be neither idealistic nor theistic and his view is that the universe is self-sufficient and whatever occurs in Nature, be it physical, chemical, biological psychical, ethical or spiritual has a naturalistic
basis and has its explanation in Nature. The freedom which is sought consists in eliminating the addiction to low loves and low hates and demands the cultivation of higher loves beneficial to all existences of Nature. Man's development and perfection are based on the harmonious satisfaction of all human needs and Dev Dharma therefore unlike Buddhism, does not speak of one's involvement with worldly goals as in any way a hindrance to achieving one's ultimate aim. He emphasises that higher feelings of altruism, compassion, benevolence and so on are to be developed and such selfless actions lead to the progress, betterment and sustenance of the 'soul' or life force, while evil or unwholesome deeds lead to its complete extinction. The truth relating to the human soul, its diseases and degeneration and the means to avoid such devolution of the life force, is set out in Dev Dharma. Hence the goal was to escape such degeneration by following a code of ethics, that aids in the evolution of the life force and achieves harmony with other existences. One finds that though Devatma construes the concept of salvation as being radically different from that posited by the Buddha, yet like the Buddha he emphasises the need to make man conscious of his basic responsibility in making himself free or unfree and the moral and religious life of man
has no supernatural associations or linkage. Both thinkers advocate that one should not cling unduly to sense pleasures and selfish fetters and when one is enslaved by such pleasures, one is unable to see the path of ethical progress.

**Good and Evil:**

The concept of 'good' in Devātmā's philosophy has much relevance to the question of whether it helps the evolution of soul and conversely the concept of 'evil' refers to the soul's devolution. Devātmā believes 'good' and 'evil' to be cosmic forces and not subjective ideas. He regards low loves and low hates to be evil as they are immanent in bringing about devolutionary changes in the soul or life force. In Buddhism, the terms 'kusala' and 'akusala' are used to mean 'good' and 'evil' respectively. 'Kusala' means 'wholesome' and 'akusala' means 'unwholesome' both in a physical and moral sense. Moral behaviour consists in the negative aspect of avoiding evil as well as the positive aspect of cultivating good and it is considered to be necessary for achieving the goal. According to the Buddhist dictum, Salvation or Nibbāna can be attained in this very life, so the Buddha claims that 'Those who attain the highest stage of moral perfection are
like the lotuses that grow in the muddy water but rise above and are unsmeared (anupalita) by the water". The goal of Buddhism is to overcome entanglements of finite conditioned existence which constitute 'suffering' or evil. The problem of evil for the Buddhist therefore is to recognise evil as such and look for its verifiable causes and to eliminate the root causes. Hence the Buddha emphasises that one must develop the will to prevent the arising of evil states of mind not arisen, the will to make arise good states of mind which have not arisen and the will to preserve, develop, refine and perfect good states of mind which have arisen. The pathway to achieving purification consists in the development of conduct (silā) concentration (samadhi) and wisdom (pañña).

Causes of Evil:

It is apparent that the Buddha and Devātmā in their respective ethical systems, do not reject value concepts of 'good' and 'evil' as matters of emotion. Buddhism and Dev Dharma are in accord in rejecting the extreme view that pleasure is intrinsically evil or that pleasure is absolutely good. Devātmā claims that moral blindness is caused by the failure to know the ugliness of evil, leading to the wrong association of
evil as positive good. In observing that evil is real, this-worldly and in emphasising that it can be checked and controlled, Dev Dharma comes close to the Buddhist conception of evil. Devatma asserts that low loves and low hates are the root causes of evil and being enslaved by them, man perpetuated injury and injustice to the various kingdoms of Nature. Actions motivated by low loves and low hates are said to be "the most loathsome diseases of the human soul, for unmitigated evil flows from them, involving destruction of others as well as one's own self".9

Buddhism favours asceticism while stipulating the middle way between extreme self-mortification and extreme self-indulgence, and thus the Buddha says "I preach asceticism in as much as I preach the burning away of all conditions of the heart that are evil. One who does so is the true ascetic."10 He renounced the extreme kind of morbéd asceticism leading to self-mortification. Good actions have the three basic features of absence of lust (alobha), absence of hatred (adosa) and absence of delusion (moha). The desires for the objects of the world are due to the mistaken value one places on these things without a comprehension of their true nature. Everything is held to be transitory
and this fact engenders sorrow and the Buddha's view is that with regard to the impermanence of things, whatever is felt belongs to suffering, having regard to the fact that things are subject to annihilation, to destruction, that pleasure in them ceases, that they are subject to cessation, to changeableness. Human dispositions constitute an important causal factor determining the nature of an action. The chain of causation explicate on the factors leading to freedom by means of actions.

**Elimination of Evil:**

While Buddhism and Dev Dharma place importance on the causal impact of all ethical actions, they differ in the intended motive of their teachings. The aim of Buddhism is to seek a total release from the pervasive evil of birth and death with its manifold suffering. The doctrine of karma, rebirth and moral acts with its causal implications are all linked together and give rise to the cycle of samsara. The truth in Buddhism is identified with the facts of paticcasamupāda series. Dev Dharma differs in exhibiting the goal of evolutionary perfectibilism as its goal. Devatma's theory elucidates the causal relation between value and existence. While the evolutionary trend is a necessary condition that furthers existence, devolution is a condition of disvalue.
in that it reduces the vitality or strength of the life-force. Devaum refers to emergent evolution and believes in the emergence and evolution of the capacity for appreciating and imbibing values such as those of truth, ethical values, aesthetic values and so on. In accordance with his theory of evolutionary perfectibilism he states that "The higher powers of the human soul, its power to discover and understand truth, to appreciate and create beauty, to build institutions of justice and welfare are as much evolved as the motor and sensory functions of animal soul have evolved from the nutritive soul. They are indissolubly related to the nutritive, motor and sensory functions." \(^{11}\)

Buddhism points out the root cause of suffering to be the factor of 'craving' for desires of various kinds. This is an evil that must be removed. Its elimination is only possible when one has the right understanding of the nature of transiency of all phenomena in the world. Hence, "When properly understood, suffering will be seen as an effect of action which must have been evil to produce such a bad effect. When thus understood in connection with action, it becomes living like actuality itself. No longer passive fact but active 'karma' which means self-responsibility". \(^{12}\)
Buddhism and Dev Dharma do not regard evil to be an illusion but recognise evil as being present and as needing a solution. Their main endeavour in the ethical realm was to teach the replacement of evil actions by good deeds and to subdue the pleasure principle itself to the good. In this respect, both of them are anti-hedonistic. The consciousness of pleasure and pain are not evil as long as one accepts them for what they are. These thinkers however are found to differ in their professed aims. The Buddhism the ideal is to act without dispositional tendencies so as to make karma unproductive, but Dev Dharma does not posit such karmic influences in relation to deeds. Devatma does not advocate the renunciation of pleasure, which the ordinary mortal enjoys nor does he accept an ascetic ideal; since man can lead an ideal life by having moderate desires. Both religions, despite this difference, are in accord in the assertion that it is man's insatiable desire for sensuous and ego-pleasures that is to be avoided as it is this factor that is responsible for degrading man and binding him to the clutches of evil.

The Problem of Evil:

The Buddha and Devatma alike render a psychological analysis of the source of evil in the human personality.
The feelings of pleasure and pain begin in man from his birth and he gradually develops the love of pleasure alone and aversion to pain of any kind. While pleasure by itself is not an evil, giving undue importance to it can make it a major source of evil. When man is enslaved by the exclusive dominance of the pleasure principle he could perpetuate injustice, cruelty and various wrongs. According to Dev Dharma, unjust acts are a result of attachment to low loves and low hates. In Buddhism, craving in its manifold forms is the root cause of evil and suffering. The fundamental truth set out is the explanation of the origin of evil. Human life is linked to its beginnings by a chain of cause and effect, due to karmic compulsion. These causes are to be nullified.

Buddhism and Dev Dharma speak of evil in varying contexts yet both religions appear to be in agreement with the fact that good and evil are not subjective in Nature. While Buddhism would contend that evil is a product of our ignorance and it is the fact of evil deeds that maintain karmic residue occasioning continuing births, Dev Dharma would contend that 'good' relates to an ethical evolution and human acts that are evil lead to a destructive process that weakens the vitality of
the life force of the individual. These religions readily agree evil can be rooted out by practicing an ethical path conducive to the good. Devātmā points out that ego-consciousness is not evil if it is truly revealing and is dominated by a consciousness of altruism; while the Buddha advocates that 'Karma' is to be overcome by wholesome actions. According to Buddhism, when a person is able to rid oneself of false notions of the ego and recognize all things to be of an impermanent nature and is able to adopt a dispassionate attitude to the objects of the world, then he performs actions which do not generate karmic consequences.

Rejection of a Theistic Hypothesis:

Neither the Buddha nor Devātmā posit the existence of the Ultimate Being or the Creator of the Universe. Consequently, they reject all theistic interpretations of evil which if accepted would lead to the paradox of how a perfect God could allow the existence of evil. If the existence of a good God is inferred from the presence of good in the world, the presence of evil is to be judged by the same standards and attributed to the Creator which would be contradictory to the definition of the Universal God who is the personification of
goodness. These thinkers reject an idealistic interpretation and conclusions based on such grounds. Though both thinkers are emphatic that human personality is the source of evil in so far as evil intentions and motivations lead to all kinds of vicious actions, yet they do assert that one can overcome evil tendencies and seek the path of deliverance. Man can follow an ethical path, lead a life of goodness without giving way to the slavery to pleasure and thereby avoid courting evil. The consequences of evil as mentioned before are differently envisaged in each of these individual doctrines.

**Conflict of Good and Evil in Dev Dharma:**

Devātmā states that pursuit of pleasure for its own sake is the main cause of moral evil. Good and evil actions are recognised from the observance of one's conduct towards human and infrahuman existences. Evil feelings, motivations and actions generated by them obstruct the process of an evolutionary perfection in the human being. Devatma writes that "Man hardens his soul by thus following the path of falsehood and unrighteousness, and creates darkness and becomes blind to the true existence of his soul and the degeneration of such actions." 13 Being thus enslaved, one does not heed the evil disguised in such actions. This
process of degeneration wastes away the constructive power of the life-force. He demarcates that pleasure itself is not intrinsically evil, it is to be subdued to the good and these concepts need to be viewed in the right perspective. For example, altruistic pursuits may bring pleasure to the individual but that is not evil. The life power is held to be vitalized by good and wholesome actions. The route to evolutionary perfectibilism in the ethical and moral sphere entails that the evil that takes its source in the human personality is destroyed. Devātmā makes the 'ideal life' and destiny of the human being independent and autonomous of an Universal Being and all Supernaturalism. Dev Dharma refers to the constant conflict of good and evil. In declaring evil to be real in the world, the view of Dev Dharma comes close to the Buddhist conception of evil. The Buddha fought against the evil that permeates one's life and brings in its wake suffering or dukkha which could be eradicated only by striking at the root cause of all evil and unwholesome tendencies and dispositions.

**Conditioning Factors in the Buddhist Analysis:**

There are different ways of accounting for evil and it is often asserted that evil in creation is caused by
imperfection in the creation itself or even that evil cannot be rationally justified. Buddhism discounts such views and accounts for the presence of evil by claiming that man as a consequence of his previous births has committed deeds and accumulated karma which needs to be exhausted. The law of karma is a causal one, fostered by desire and craving and in performing deeds encumbered by these dispositions, man is the cause of and responsible for evil deeds and consequences of such evil. The Buddha proclaims the fact that since a thing arises dependent on its cause, with the elimination of the cause, the thing ceases to be. It is the birth of defilements of greed, hate, delusion, pride, false belief etc., that gives rise to the birth of actions which in turn leads to consequences in terms of offering fresh fuel for rebirth. Beings are the owners of deeds in this sense. In this connection the Buddha says "Whatever deed, they do, either noble or evil, they become heir to that". Karma constitutes the result of actions which are moral or immoral and is not a fatalistic theory which refers to a predetermining power disregarding any type of action. A human being can put an end to the cycle of birth and rebirth by making karma unproductive. The Buddhist doctrine of karma sets out a conditional and not an absolutely rigid
law of cause and effect, nor is it fatal predetermination nor blind chance. One of the Nikāyas asserts the fact that "There are three sources of irrational views, which are questioned, investigated and abandoned by the wise who follow the hereditary traditions, three sources of irrational views which establish themselves of the denial of karma;

(i) There are some who believe that all is a result of acts in the previous lives.

(ii) There are others who believe that all is the result of creation by a Supreme ruler.

(iii) There are others again who believe that everything arises without reason or cause. But then, if a person becomes a murderer or thief or adulterer etc., if this would be due to past actions, or made by the creation of a supreme ruler, or if this would happen by mere chance, then one would not be responsible for evil action." 15

The law of karma is opposed to the above mentioned views as it asserts that each new action produces results and these results correspond to their cause. The law of karma is not strictly deterministic and depends on various factors such as the circumstance in which the deed is committed and the nature of the person performing the deed. Hence it is claimed "If anyone says, O monks,
that a man must necessarily reap according to (all) his deeds, in that case there is no religious striving possible, nor is there an opportunity to end sorrow. But if one maintains O monks, that which a man reaps is the result of (some of) his deeds, in that case striving for holiness is possible and also the ending of sorrow'. In Buddhism, the cessation of rebirth is achieved through the elimination of karmic influence caused by evil deeds.

The divergence between Dev Dharma and Buddhism becomes apparent with reference to the factors of karma entailing rebirth which principle is accepted by the latter and rejected by the former. Devatmā also differs from Buddhism in the fact that he does not claim desirelessness to be the true ideal of life and man's desires are not branded as evil. Pleasures are not to be extricated but channalised in a better direction to aid the soul's growth and this basically involves the pursuit of nobler activities like altruism in a social milieu and selfless service to all beings. The Buddhist ethical path stipulates the middle path between extremes. The Buddha advocates detachment in following any course of action so that one neither leans towards sensual indulgence nor extreme asceticism in terms of self-mortification. The escape from the pervasive evil of existence requires a
psychological re-orientation, a power of discriminating between the real and unreal facts of existence and a development of the will to detach oneself from the mundane. The binding fetters of karma can only be broken by the extripation of desire and shunning attachment. While suppression of the egoity of the individual is considered necessary, this does not preclude compassion for the suffering of others. Buddhism would contend that altruism while admissible as a principle exhibiting compassion to others, would however defeat its purpose if it resulted in enlarged identification. Hence it upheld the practice of loving kindness.

Buddhism, unlike Dev Dharma posits the goal of salvation or Nibbāna while Dev Dharma adopts the view that a person's psychological framework involves the capacity for developing evolutionary perfectibilism which is the true goal. This process also prevents degeneration and complete extinction of the life force. While Buddhism would concede that levels of perfection is possible by the adherence to the moral code, yet this does not form part of the goal of salvation as it is to be discarded once the goal is attained. According to Buddhism, deathlessness is the ultimate consequence of overcoming the effect of karma. And deathlessness is rebirthlessness and cessation of the process of becoming.
Neither the Buddha nor Devatma are concerned with the theological problem of evil and suffering as they do not postulate an Omnipotent God as responsible for creation. These thinkers alike eschew certain principles which tend to lead to evil and suffering, namely:

(i) Undue attachment to bodily desires,
(ii) Clinging to personal ends.
(iii) Clinging to traditional beliefs and dogmas.

Actions originating from such attitudes lead to suffering and both thinkers are found to assert that the intentionality involved in acts cannot be ignored as of no consequence. Devatma holds that low loves and low hates are directed to objects and there is a conative and cognitive aspect involved. One should overcome such lower pleasures and hatred and develop the higher loves of altruism and higher hatred for injustice and evil. Hence the values one attaches to things is viewed in this light. The Buddha in setting out his ethical path is also found to reject undue attachment to objects of the world due to the false values one may attach to them.

The Place of Altruistic Principles:

The core of the religions of Dev Dharma and Buddhism reveal altruistic principles and its various effects with
regard to the individual, his destiny and ideal, as well as emphasising its own value apart from such considerations. This principle is opposed to egoism and has its basis in human psychology as no person is normally immune to others' suffering but feels the need to ameliorate suffering. In Buddhism, the main quest was to seek a lasting solution to the suffering of mankind. In gaining enlightenment and insight into the factors responsible for suffering, the Buddha set out a path to overcome suffering. His basic intent was that the whole of humanity may be benefited with the insight he had gained and this interest may justly be termed to be the best altruism. Dev Dharma is a religion that operates on altruistic principles, as beneficial acts to all kingdoms of Nature is a part of the goal of evolutionary perfectibilism. The goals of Dev Dharma include gaining freedom from selfish and debasing fetters and the cultivation of altruism. This forms part of the idea of evolutionary perfectibilism.

**Evolution of Altruism:**

The concept of peace as enunciated in Buddhism is such that the mere absence of strife does not in itself constitute peace unless there is also active friendliness, goodwill and reverence for life. In other words, one
should seek others' welfare and happiness (parahita sukha kamana). According to Dev Dharma, the pathway to perfection in the ethical sphere does not consist in taking to the attitude of escapism, extreme asceticism, ritualism etc., instead one should give up low loves and low hates, cease to be ego centric and must cultivate and develop altruistic interests and motives. In defining altruism he states "When any person awakens in his soul some such feeling which moves him spontaneously and without any persuasion from others to render service or help of any kind for the good of any other person, animal, plant or tree etc., with whom he is not bound by any ties of low-love or undue attachment and in doing so, he does not in return seek to satisfy any of his selfish ends, he is said to possess the higher feeling of altruism". To live a life not only in the service of other human beings but of the other orders of existence is the essence of a truly altruistic life. Altruistic spirit reigns dominant in this discipline.

The Effects of Altruism:

In both religions alike, it is found that the principles of altruism have far-ranging implications and hence it retains some pragmatic value. Devatma speaks of evolutionary perfectibilism/and all beings
of the various worlds of Nature are said to evolve or become better to the extent to which they cooperate with the evolutionary process. Hence, Devatma says that it is the "good fortune of man to be able to work with the unselfish feeling of service for the betterment of any kingdom of Nature which may be capable of betterment in any way and to any extent. This is because man can better his soul life and can attain soul welfare only by being able to render such unselfish service and in proportion to the quality and quantity of such service,"18. Certain conditions are held to be necessary for the evolution of altruistic feelings. This evolution depends on the awakening of the feelings of justice, aesthetic sensibility, service of others inspired by reverence, gratitude, sympathy and love of the good of others. Devātmā recognises the fact that the feeling of altruism is in a dormant stage and it is not a dominant trait in all men, though a sense of altruism may be found in varying degree in different individuals. He contends that when the consciousness of social welfare and altruism dominate in an individual, then evil is replaced by good. On the other hand the corollary to this is also true as he says 'The most degenerating low pleasure-affording loves and their consequent harmful low hates created in man various
kinds of false beliefs, thoughts and myths, various kinds of hypocrices and various acts of deception.\textsuperscript{19} Devolutionary changes are thus harmful to the inner soul growth. It is with the aid of altruistic principles that one must try to evolve such powers as are conducive to an evolutionary trend. Man's freedom consists in getting himself freed from the degrading effects of clinging to selfish desires and by developing higher altruistic feelings.

\textbf{The Range of Altruistic Pursuits:}

One of the main criticisms against the Early Buddhist ideal of a perfect man or arahat is that it is a selfish rather than an altruistic ideal. However, it can be contended that it is by the cultivation of moral virtues that the ideal is attained. The arahat has no thought of self as he has gained insight into the causal nature of phenomena and the cultivation of moral virtues are intended to bring about not only the moral development of the individual as a means to the goal, but also social upliftment, harmony and concord. Hence "Only those who have gone through such moral training are able to attempt the cultivation of the higher moral values (adhisil\textsuperscript{a}) and the mental concentration (adhi citta) which is necessary for the development
of higher knowledge (adhipañña) and able to attain freedom (vimukti)." The Buddha emphasises that the moods of loving kindness (maitrī), compassion (karunā), sympathetic joy (muditā) and equanimity or impartiality (upekṣa) towards all beings are to be cultivated. There are systematic attempts made to make such sentiments extend towards the world of all sentient beings. The importance that the Buddha attaches to the cultivation of love for our fellow being above all else is seen in this statement: "None of the good works employed to acquire religious merit, O monks, is worth a fraction of the value of loving kindness (metta)." The state of liberation when attained in an individual, is frequently stated as signifying the absence of craving (lobha) hatred (dōsa) and delusion (moha) in one who has realised it. With the elimination of hatred, perfect love takes its place overcoming the bonds of fear, greed and all forms of selfishness. It is objected that the Buddha is guilty of sublime inconsistency due to the fact that he claimed Nirvāṇa as signifying the supression or elimination of all desires and if the Buddha's teaching arose from love, and sympathy, then at least some desires (love, pity, sympathy) have not been suppressed. Yet, far from it being inconsistent for one who has attained Nirvāṇa to
preach unto others out of pity and compassion, it would be quite natural for him to do so and he does not minister out of a sense of duty or discharge obligation but is just what such a person would do by virtue of his attainment. Love and compassion as ideals exemplified in the lives of the Buddha and his disciples have a central place in Buddhist philosophy. Selflessness and loving kindness as the opposites of craving and hate, when they occur in the purest form, do not have the characteristics of 'thirst' or 'craving' and hence are not considered as 'desire' which basically is taken to connote some kind of self-centredness. Hence, there is no lack of compassionate love and benevolence for fellow beings and activities directed towards their benefit on the part of the Buddha and his disciples.

Thus, it may be summed up that in the opinion of the Buddhist, the aim of life is to attain supreme enlightenment. This is to be achieved by the cultivation of mental culture and insight, through service and perfection. Service includes boundless friendliness, loving kindness and absolute selflessness. Buddhism adheres to the practice of *panca-sīla* respecting the sanctity of life, the rights of others, abstainance from sensual indulgence, not appropriating more than
one's share of things in life or non-coveteousness and abstainance from drugs. These prevent men from being a burden on society and the cultivation of such principles helps to retain harmony. However, it is found that morality which is conducive to the good of others is founded on the right feeling of correlation which finds expression in one's attitude toward others and all that one lives with. This is ensured by the eight-fold path that contains principles that are altruistically inclined. 'Right Perspective' leads to moral reformation and one of the principles of Buddhism is that because one has to depend on his fellowmen for one's welfare, the debt that one incurs thereby is immense and the way to repay it is by service to humanity. This is a duty enjoined on the monk and laymen alike. 'Right resolution' entails the renouncing of all attachments to the world, giving up ill-feeling towards others as well as dedication to others' welfare. 'Right speech' is conducive to truthfulness. The Buddhist monk preaches altruistic principles that may be inculcated as a result among others. Various principles of altruism and social welfare may develop in the ideology that is taught and this may find expression and manifestation in reinforcing such active principles among one's fellowmen. 'Right conduct' and action' involves living for the good and
benefit of all beings. The ascetic as he is above dispositional tendencies does not generate karmic influences by his actions. 'Right Effect' requires the practice of the virtues. 'Right Livlihood' is concerned with seeking maintenance such that one does not interfere with the rights of others. The ascetic thus lives a life directed towards others' Welfare without losing his detachment to the objects of the world and hence retains a purity of motive in his actions, which is the mark of true altruism. 'Right mindfulness' is the right application of the mind to the precepts of the Buddhist law. Morality and mindfulness are equally important in Buddhism and one without the other is fruitless. The factor of 'Right concentration' involves the stages of meditation which leads the intellect to tranquillity born of freeing oneself from passions and evil thought and following the other rules of the eight-fold path. Speaking of the middle path the Buddha says: "These two (dead) ends (anta) should not be followed by one who has go forth. Which two? That which is among sense pleasures, low, of the villager (boorish) of the average man and unariyan, not connected with the goal. And the other of asceticism or self mortification which is painful, unworthy and unprofitable. Now monks, without
adopting either of these two (dead) ends, there is a middle course fully awakened by the Truthmaker, making for vision, making for knowledge, to awakening, to Nirvāṇa. 22.

Dev Dharma and Buddhism seek the elimination of all egoistic forces which lead to selfishness and vice. Man has both egoistic and altruistic tendencies and it is only by striking out the egoistic forces the latter tendencies can be developed. Altruism brings about in its practice destruction of hatred and eliminates undue attachment to desires. The ideal man in Dev Dharma and the arahat in Buddhism uphold the principles of compassion, friendliness, sympathy, benevolence etc., in their ethical pursuits. Humanitarian concern stands as a feature of paramount importance in these religious doctrines.

(e) PROBLEM OF IMMORTALITY:

Dev Dharma does not posit immortality of soul as he rejects the notion of an eternal entity. His interpretation is naturalistic to the exclusion of any type of anthropomorphism as well as any type of Idealism. The Soul is interpreted as being a life-force and man in every aspect is held to be a part of Nature. The soul of each individual being is asserted as being similar
to the life force in plants and animals and operates according to the laws of change in Nature. It is neither immortal nor supernaturalistic in Nature.

'Subtle Body' Theory in Dev Dharma:

Devātmā's theory of soul depicts the human personality as a psycho-physical organism caught up in a vortex of change and there is no principle in it that is exempt from change. The belief in rebirth is rejected. The soul is but a name for the life-force which aids in body-building and sustaining activities. It is the addiction to low loves and low hates that weaken the vitality of the soul and hence the goal to be aimed at is one of evolutionary perfectibilism by the elimination of low loves and low hates and cultivation of higher principles of altruism, justice, benevolence and hatred of all untruth and vice. Thus it is maintained that "On the production of various diseases, the organised body of a human being, besides suffering various kinds of troubles and pains also loses its strength..... when various soul diseases are produced in the organised soul of a human being due to his pleasure-affording low loves and their consequent low hates, if such diseases go on aggravating and they continue to cause its degradation, then due to this degradation, his spiritual strength goes on decreasing.
and when its strength is completely lost, his soul gets completely annihilated. Thus if at the time of death, the soul is not able to build a subtle body, Devatma claims that the entire being dies. He states 'But if at that time it is able to draw from its entire body, the finer living cells or particles that are stored there and build out of them, by means of its constructive power, a body almost identical in form and features with its gross body, through finer in its essence, it lives closely related to it and continues its pilgrimage of life.'

However, even the construction of the subtle body is only possible subject to certain conditions. Certain mishaps may occur preventing the possibility of building a subtle body, a person dying in fire accidents or those who get killed in landslides, explosion of gun powder etc., also cannot construct subtle bodies. Devatma states "In short, even if a person possesses the capacity of building finer cells and has in fact got a sufficient store of such finer cells in his gross body, his whole personality dies if he does not get suitable physical conditions to draw out these finer cells at the time of the death of the gross body, collect them near his dead body and build a finer body out of them." Apart from such explication, the question of whether there is the death
of the subtle body due to certain causes is not dealt with.

**Criticism:**

Though Devātma insists on the basis of scientific verification and procedures to test the truth of his views, the 'subtle body theory' appears to go beyond the range of such data. Prof. S.P. Kanal remarks in this context: "The existence of subtle physical bodies is verified by experimental work by scientists like Sir William Crooks, Prof. Zollner of Physical Astronomy, Leipzig, Sir Oliver Lodge; Dr. Russell Wallace. There is no doubt that this belief requires further scientific experimental work." To be true to a scientific basis, one is forced to regard the 'subtle body theory' of persistence of existence as a moot question till conclusive proof is achieved.

Buddhism denies the principle of an immortal soul substance. The Buddha posits the ultimate goal of Nibbāna which individuals can reach by following the precepts of morality which pertain to conduct as well as to meditative techniques. The individual is comprised of the various physical and psychical aggregates and the
personality does not have any permanent Self. Taking up each of the factors of the human personality, material form, feeling, perception, disposition and consciousness, the Buddha observes that none of them can be identified with a permanent, immutable, eternal and unchanging self.

A passage in the Samyutta Nikaya, clarifies the puzzle of why the Buddha left certain questions concerning the 'self' unanswered, for example whether it was identical with the body or different from the body or so on. This was one of the issues termed indeterminables. The passage alluded to refers to the wandering ascetic Vacchagotta who came to the Buddha and enquired

"Now, Master Gotama, is there a self?"

At these words, the Exalted One was silent.

"How, then, Master Gotama, is there not a self?"

For a second time, the Exalted One was silent.

Then Vacchagotta the Wanderer rose from his seat and went away.

Now not long after the departure of the Wanderer, the Venerable Ananda said to the Exalted One:-

"How is it, lord, that the Exalted One gave no answer to the question of the Wanderer Vacchagotta?"

"If Ananda, when asked by the Wanderer: 'Is there a self?', I had replied to him 'There is a self', then
Ananda, that would be siding with those recluses and brahmins who are eternalists. But if, Ananda when asked: 'Is there not a self?' I had replied that it does not exist, then Ananda that would be siding with those recluses and brahmins who are annihilationists.

Again, Ananda, when asked by the wanderer: 'Is there a self?' had I replied that there is, would my reply be in accordance with the knowledge that all things are impermanent?"
A: 'No. Surely not; lord,
Then the Exalted One said 'Again Ananda, when asked Is there a Self? had I replied that there were not, it would have added to the bewilderment of Vacchagotta, already bewildered. For he would have said 'Formerly indeed I had a Self, but now I have one no more'

Other unanswered questions which the Buddhist texts refer to are those which pertain to the problem of immortality are whether: (i) the saint or arahat exists after death. (ii) the saint does not exist after death. (iii) the saint does and does not exist after death. (iv) the saint neither exists nor does not exist after death. With reference to the context in which these questions are asked by Vacchagotta, it is explicated that the Buddha shows how the different alternatives
do not apply in the case of the arahat. The Buddha relates this to the analogy of a fire that has gone out and states "If someone were to ask you 'This fire in front of you has gone out, in which direction has it gone, eastern, western, northern, southern?' questioned thus, how would you reply?"
Vacchagotta: (I would say)"It does not fit the case. The fire which blazed on account of the fuel of grass and sticks comes to the reckoned as 'gone out' since it has consumed (the fuel) and not fed with more fuel."28 Thus certain questions were regarded as inappropriate whose logical character is such as to make it impossible of being answered with a categorical reply. In indicating the kind of question our logic and symbolism apparently permits, Wittgenstein remarks "Thus it can come about that we are'nt able to rid ourselves of the implications of our symbolism which seems to admit of questions like where does the flame of a candle go then it is blown out?' 'Where does the light go to?' We have become obsessed with our symbolism. We may say we are led into puzzlement by an analogy which irresistibly drags us on."29 The Buddha regards human life to be a continuous process and with the attainment of the arahat ideal, as the fire does not burn when the fuel is exhausted, so
also in the case of the human being, there will be no more formation in future of the aggregates that form the human personality when the causes i.e. the karmic influences causing rebirth are eliminated.

**Vikāra of Evolution of Life-Force in Dev Dharma:**

In Dev Dharma evolutionary naturalism provides the data for the interpretation of the human soul as a life-force possessing numerous powers. The life force in man in the process of evolution developed certain additional powers which demarcates the differences from the life forces of the animal world. The human soul is born with the union of the male and female gametes and in the process of the development of the human child, there is the emergence of a new body with the new life-force. The human soul thus has a beginning in time and is not unborn or self-existent nor is it changeless or immortal. Along with the changes of the body, the life force undergoes changes as well and is not separable from the body. Devatma rejects the conception of moksha or liberation allied to transcendental metaphysics. He does not regard the self to be in bondage in the physical body and needing to seek freedom in a noncorporeal state. Freedom in Dev Dharma connotes the elimination of low loves and low hates.
which weaken the vitality of the life-force and determine one from the goal that is sought. One should thus liberate oneself from slavery to such desires. It is the concrete individual that is effected by deeds and there is no reference to a transcendental immortal self within the personality. Devatma traces altruism which is the way to the goal to be as much an original motivation in man as egoism. 'Vikas' or evolution of the higher virtues of any kind such as these of selfless service, reverence, gratitude and so on and higher hatred of vice such as injustice, inequality, cruelty and so on lead to the soul's evolution. While moksha constitutes freedom from low loves and low hates inculcated by baser motives, 'vikas' initiates the development of energising forces that work towards the preservation and integration of the life force. It is asserted that 'A soul whose urges are determined by the principle of truth and goodness is technically 'Devatma .... such a supervirtuous personality is not to be mistaken for a supersensible being". Hence in Dev Dharma, the evolution of the higher ethical stage merges into the religious path.

**Immediate Aim of Buddhism: Cessation of Suffering:**

The ultimate goal of Buddhism is the cessation of becoming. When the arising of craving is extinguished,
there is no further grasping. When there is absence of karmic residue, there is no more rebirth. This higher state can be attained in this very life by an arahat. However, in this case, when the lust for life has ceased, life itself will not simultaneously disappear. The arahat completes his span of life and the acts performed by him are neither moral nor immoral as his actions are not impelled by craving or desire and do not entail karmic consequences. Like arising is a process, similarly cessation is a stoppage of the process. The will to live cannot be conquered by will for no more life, but by understanding that there is no more cause for the arising of the process. Nibbāna is the resultant of the cessation of becoming, 'Bhavanirodho nibbānam'.

The comparison of Buddhism and Dev Dharma in this aspect demarcates one major variance. While Buddhism advocates a path to the freedom from 'becoming' for the individual, Devatmā advocates a path that leads to the 'persistence' of existence. Yet, both thinkers are in agreement that immortality of soul is a fiction for they point out that there is only constant change pervading everything and there is no such entity as permanent soul substance.
Conception of the Ultimate End of Life:

Dev Dharma and Buddhism aim at the ideal that is to be sought by following an ethical path and a moral code. They alike place emphasis on the development of higher powers of perception. The following analysis of each of these religions with reference to the ultimate aim and Goal of all ethical endeavours clearly delineates the parallels and divergences with respect to the means to the goal and the final goal itself.

Buddhist Goal of Nibbāna:

Buddhism posits Nirvāṇa as its final aim. Its attainment requires the realization of the way out of the conditions of misery. It can be achieved in this very life with the destruction of desires, hate and illusion. Freedom from egoism and attachment is necessary. A passage in the Buddhist texts states "There is a not-born, a not-made a not-compounded. Monks, if that not-born, not-become, not-made, not-compounded were not, no escape from the born, made, compounded would be made here. But monks, since there is a not-born, not-become, not-made, not-compounded, therefore, an escape from the born, become, made, compounded is known." The arahat who has been freed from obsessions and gained the highest knowledge does not think of himself in Nibbāna,
think himself as Nibbāna nor does he think Nibbāna is his. The casual pattern involved in the attainment of such a highest stage is that the elimination of ego-consciousness brings in its wake revulsion to things which earlier were desires and thought to be substantial and enduring.

Kalupahana's Distinction Between Nibbāna with Substrate and Nibbāna Without Substrate:

A distinction is made by Kalupahana between Nirvāṇa with substrate and Nirvāṇa without substrate and it is towards this end that a passage from the Itivuttaka is made use of: 'Herein monks, is a worthy one who has destroyed the defiling impulses, lived (the higher) life, done what has to be done, laid aside the burden, achieved the noble goal, destroyed the fetters of existence and is freed through insight. He retains the five senses, through which as they are not yet destroyed, he experiences pleasant and unpleasant sensations and feels pleasure or pain, happiness and suffering. The cessation of craving, hate and confusion is called Nibbāna with substrate left. 32 With reference to the dead arahat it is said 'Herein monks, a monk is a worthy one, who has destroyed the defiling impulses, is freed through insight. Monks, all his experiences (literally things he has felt)
none of which he relished will be freed here. This is called Nibbāṇa without substrate.\textsuperscript{33} Nibbāna is thus considered under two aspects: 'saūpādisesa nibbāna', i.e. 'Nibbāna with the groups of existence still remaining', and 'anupādisesa nibbāna', i.e. 'Nibbāna without the groups remaining'.

**Cruise on Kalupahana's Interpretation:**

This distinction drawn by Kalupahana wherein he equates Nirvāṇa with substrate with Nirvāṇa obtained in this life and Nirvāṇa without substrate with Nirvāṇa after death is questioned by Cruise. Cruise asserts that 'saūpādisesa' meaning substratum of life remaining is here understood by Kalupahana to have reference to bodily existence and not to something like 'potential for rebirth' or 'having inclination of life remaining'. This he clarifies as being a misconception. Kalupahana's claim that the only reason that one cannot say anything about one who has Nirvāṇa without substrate is because such a one is dead and therefore beyond empirical description is also held to be a misconception. He concludes 'It is therefore my contention there is little essential difference between a living and a dead Tathāgata, and the reason the Buddha said little about such a being must be seen not only because of the scope and limits of
knowledge but more important, because of the 'nature' of one who has attained Utter Nirvana Without Attachment*.34

**Johansson on 'The Psychology of Nibbāna':**

According to Johansson, the whole gamut of Buddhist methods of meditation aims at purification of citta (mind). If this purification is complete, nibbāna is attained. Hence, when thoroughly developed through understanding, it is quite set free from obsessions, namely from the obsession of sensuality, becoming, views and ignorance. This is clearly expressed in the following statement: 'If a monk's citta is without need for the element of form (feeling, ideation, the activities, consciousness) and is released from it without attachment to the obsessions, it is immovable by its release: by its immobility it is satisfied, by its satisfaction it is not excited, without excitement it by itself attains Nibbāna. And it knows: 'destroyed is birth'.*35 This implies that Nibbāna comes as a climax after a number of higher psychological states. Nibbāna is a transformation of citta. Johansson writes that the six abhiññā help one to read the minds of other persons, to remember one's own former existences and to see how other beings are reborn according to the law of karma. He therefore says that the disciple could check
for himself all the basic teachings of Buddhism. Meditation is the means by which the monk could experience for himself how desires disappeared and thus gain insight. The person could attain Nibbana in this very life as in the case of the living arahat which is termed 'the condition of Nibbana with the basis still remaining'. Of the dead arahat, nibbana is termed as 'the condition without a basis which belongs to the state hereafter, where all becomings completely cease'.

Jayatilleke's Analysis of the Early Buddhist Conception of Nibbana:

Jayatilleke makes the claim that Early Buddhism is an empiricist doctrine and does not recognise any special 'mystic' source of knowledge. In speaking of insight by the higher powers of perception he asserts that there is a causal relation between the attainment of mental concentration and the emergence of this knowledge and insight. Of such a means to knowledge it is claimed that 'it is a natural and not a supernatural occurrence; Hence, "It is in the nature of things (dhammatā) that a person in the state of (meditative) concentration knows and sees what really is". 36 Jayatilleke comes to the conclusion that Nibbana cannot be described, as one who has attained Nibbana does not have that with
which one can speak of him. It can only be realized.

The Tathāgata gave no answer regarding the question of whether the saint exists after death, does not exist after death, does and does not exist after death or neither does nor does not exist after death. It is interpreted that the silence of the Buddha is due to the lack of adequate concepts and due to the uncharacterizable and non-describable nature of the Enlightened Ones. The conclusions that can be drawn about Nirvāṇa are:

(a) Knowable but not directly perceivable by another.
(b) Not meaningfully describable to one who has not experienced it.
(c) Not describable using language which gains its reference from experience that are 'other man' Nibbāna, that is, it is not describable". While early Buddhism speaks of Nirvāṇa as a transformation of personality and consciousness, the Abhidharmists of later Buddhism refer to it as an objective independent reality. The factors responsible for leading one to the ultimate goal of life is considered to be those of bīja (morality) meditation (samādhi) and prajña (wisdom).
The Paradox Concerning Desirelessness:

The Buddhist ideal consists in giving up desire so as to reach the goal of desirelessness. Critics of Buddhism have pointed out that the principle of eliminating all desires itself constitutes a desire. Thus the desire to give up desires is made paradoxical by considering it in relation to suffering: "It is this desire to escape suffering that fills out the paradoxical quality of the desire to give up desires, for if I give up the desire to give up desires, I will still be locked in suffering, while if I try to give up desires, I will only add to the cause of it". 38 "To desire Nirvāṇa' becomes a statement that involves a contradiction. As a solution to the paradoxical question "If you desire Nirvāṇa, the Buddhist ideal, how can you be said to end desire? it is pointed out Nirvāṇa is desirelessness, By putting an end to all desires, to the very will-to-live, that manifests as desire, Nirvāṇa comes to be". 39

In Buddhism, the phrase 'Attasa idamattaniyam' is used to connote a notion of self or objects connected with such essence. All inanimate and animate objects are held to become associated with 'attaniya', only when one is attached to and takes delight in them through craving. When through the acquisition of insight, the
real nature of things is revealed, one's attributing a property of underlying essence is known as a misconception. Thus with the knowledge of the transient nature of all things as known by experience, one acquires the intuitive wisdom. Thus knowing the real characteristic of things, they discard these objects and cease to be attached to them. The 'paradox of desire' gets dissolved with the clarification of the term in Buddhist philosophical nomenclature. It is apparent that people do not perform bodily, verbal or mental acts which are conditioned by desire, on account of things which they do not regard as their own or in relation to themselves and this fact is what one sees and experiences in the world. In Buddhism, regardless of whether one's present craving is caused by past karma or not, one still has the task of eliminating desire and this does not involve an interest in future rewards. The goal in Buddhism cannot b. attained by striving for or by desiring it, for striving in any form keeps the process moving and is therefore a futile enterprise. In so far as the concept of 'self' is misconceived, impermanence will not be seen as suffering.

**Conception of Salvation and Role of 'Soul' in Dev Dharma:**

Dev Dharma points out that all beings have evolved
through the evolutionary process of nature and this naturalistic process applies to the physical and psychological make-up of the human being. It is the life forces in living existences that are said to possess the power and capacity for building the physical body for use and expression. This life power is manifested in various forms in the plant and animal world and in the human being as well. It is observed that the force which manifests itself by various activities of life is the 'organised life force' termed 'soul' and thus it has no supernatural connotation. The whole of Devatma's philosophy is directed towards the soul's welfare and as long as the soul's constructive power is retained, it aids in the preservation of the physical body during one's life time and at the time of death, it is said to be capable of building a subtle body. He holds that there is a kind of life open to the deceased according to the character of deeds done in their life. The immutable process of change can lead to either evolutionary changes or devolutionary changes and in the latter case, one cannot build the subtle body and prolong the life force. The life force is not exempt from changes and is subject to evolution by virtuous deeds or is effected by the degenerative trend by vicious actions and this leads to a devolutionary change. The soul is not changeless and eternal.
Concept of Salvation in Dev Dharma

The concept of salvation or moksha as set out in Dev Dharma is characteristically different from the traditional conception of liberation. Devātmā's philosophy is not directed towards achieving a state of disembodied happiness or bliss. There is no conception of 'Self' which is imprisoned in the body and which is to be released from bondage. True salvation is the freedom from low loves and low hates which vitiate the soul and hinder its qualitative development. There may be continuous dominance of low loves and low hates and a result of this fact is that the exclusive pursuit of pleasure or desires for its own sake constitutes bondage for it produces insensitiveness, moral perversions, suffering and endangers the very life of the soul.

Evolutionary Perfectibilism

According to Dev Dharma, as the body of man cannot live when the life-force leaves it, so too if after leaving the gross body, if the soul is not able to build a finer body for itself it also loses its individuality and regresses into inorganic forces. Devātmā's system of ethics is directed towards an evolutionary perfectibilism of the individual. Deviation from this ethical code leads to soul degeneration while adherence to it
leads to the evolution of the life-force or soul of the individual. Perfectibility therefore connotes the capacity for evolutionary progress and Dev Dharma associates the 'ideal man' as subject to further levels of evolutionary perfectibilism. He has realised a relative ideal of perfection. 'Vikas' or evolution of the soul necessitates the development of higher love of truth and goodness as well as a higher hatred toward untruth and evil. In this context, the necessity of man's harmonious relations to all orders of Nature is emphasised. Devatma asserts "That knowledge is alone the knowledge of true religion which is based on the immutable laws of and the true occurrences of Nature and which are related to the constitution of the human soul, its different diseases created by low loves, the various kinds of degeneration that comes in the wake of these diseases, the complete dissolution of the life power or individuality that such continued degeneration brings about, the way of salvation from such continued soul degeneration and also the spouting and evolution in it of the higher forces of higher life". 40

Dev Dharma depicts an ideal \( h_{4}^{4} \) as one who lives an altruistic life in a social milieu, having developed feelings of compassion, justice and selfless service to
all kingdoms of Nature. The important fact which is stressed is that as man has appeared as the latest link in the process of evolution, he is most intimately bound up with the entire Nature and its various kingdoms. Harmonious relations with all other existences is emphasised.

According to Dev Dharma, the survival capacity of the human life force is linked to the character of its thoughts and actions. If there is exclusive dominance of truth and goodness in all his acts, this ensures its survival capacity or if there is addiction to untruth and evil, such action devitalizes the life force. Devātma's doctrine of evolutionary ethics circumscribes the satisfaction of human desires within the bounds of truth and goodness. Devātma is against the view that soul's moksha or liberation consists in release from bodily appetites, nor does it assert that physical and social worlds are to be shunned as they are in no way a hindrance to the goal and do not act as snares for the individual.

Conclusion:

In comparing the doctrines of the Buddha and Devatma it is evident that both thinkers do not posit an eternal principle of self and consequently due to the lack of
such an (Absolute) notion of immortality of soul, they alike do not adhere to the doctrine that liberation enables one to realize the true nature of a supersensible Self. They alike advocate the need for the development of higher powers of perception in order to gain higher knowledge, and are emphatic in their claims that the enlargement of higher powers of perception is naturalistic in character. It is not achieved by the grace of a supernatural agency. They are equally emphatic in the rejection of Omniscience and mysticism. They do not subscribe to a theory of rigid determinism or fatalism but emphasise instead the freedom of the individual to direct his actions so that the result is the achievement of the final goal. The final and ultimate end as posited in the religions of Dev Dharma and Buddhism is considerably divergent. While the Buddha speaks of the 'total dissolution' of the personality complex of the human being so that there is no rebirth, Devatma on the other hand is of the view that there is 'persistence of existence' after the death of the gross body in a finer subtle body by a process of evolving such power in the 'soul' or 'life-force'. The Buddha in referring to the ultimate goal of the individual outlines the fact that there is freedom from the cycle of births so that in this sense there is an 'extinction' of being in the form of an
individual as there is no more formation of the composite of physical and psychical aggregates. In this context, the Buddha advocates the elimination of desires responsible for future rebirth. Those who have eliminated craving and clinging to passions and desire for existence, to them that was the last birth and they were freed from the clutches of rebirth. Devatmā, unlike the Buddha does not posit the goal of desirelessness. In acquiring knowledge of the soul’s evolution of devolution, the human being is in no way indifferent to failure or success and must have the desire to reach his goal. It is the development of altruism that leads to an evolutionary trend in the life-force. Buddhism does practice in its ethical code, some of the principles which Dev-Dharma advocates and the ideal man or arhat in Buddhism is found to show benevolence towards all creation (maitrī), compassion towards the distressed (karuna), joy at others' happiness (mudita), impartiality (upekṣa) and altruistic tendencies of friendliness, mercy, justice and selfless service to others.

Devatma, in the acquisition of higher psychic powers (Dev Tej), psychic light (Dev Jyothi) and Dev Jiwan (ideal psychic life) considers these powers and the knowledge revealed by them as being the ultimate truth and part
of the goal. The Buddha upholds the development of higher powers of perception which though necessary in the process of attainment of knowledge, nevertheless is not part of the goal of salvation. Hence the ultimate goal of 'Nirvāṇa' is different from the means employed to reach it. The ultimate end of 'Nirvāṇa' as envisaged in Buddhism is unique to that discipline. The goal of Dev Dharma points to the horizon of evolutionary perfectionism.
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2. Anguttara Nikāya iii, 991.


7. Samyutta Nikāya xii, 351.


19. Ibid., p. 51-52.


