Conclusion

In this final chapter, we have made a conclusion on how Buddhism originated and revolved the Concept of Anātman in later Buddhism: An Epistemological Analysis to impact on the whole teachings and in order to condense the contribution of the thesis as a whole including of the short notes of each chapter and the main points of the thesis. These have been referred as the explanation to the role of Anātman and its effect on Buddhist literature exactly.

The doctrine of Anātman is one of the central teachings of Buddhism. According to this doctrine, there is no “Self” in the sense of a permanent, integral, autonomous being within an individual existence, what me think of a our Self, our personality and ego, are temporary creations of the Skandhas.

Anātman is sometime misunderstanding to mean that nothing exists, but this is not what Buddhism teaches. It’s more accurate to say that there is existence but that we understand it in a one sided and delusional way.

In Buddhism, the central teaching that there is no soul, no self, it comes from the negative of Ātman, the Hindu notion of a soul which is eternal and which survives after death and enters another body. In Buddhist thought, such a notion is part of the delusion of self and of permanence which keeps we looked to the wheel of suffering. True release come when one realizes that there is no self, and thus all sense of being ceases.

What's most important to understand about the Skandhas is that they are empty. They are not qualities that an individual possesses, because there is no-self possessing them. This doctrine of no-self is called Anātman or Anattā. Very basically; the Buddha taught that "you" are not an integral, autonomous entity. The individual self, or what we might call the ego, is more correctly thought of as a byproduct of the Skandhas.
Anātman is a fundamental precept in Buddhism that since there is no subsistent reality to be found in or underlying appearances, there cannot be a subsistent self or soul in the human appearance. This is in sharp contrast to Hinduism where the comprehension of the terms Ātman and jīva gives a fundamental understanding of the human predicament and how to escape it. If all is subject to Dukkha (transient and the grief that arises from trying to find the non-transient within it) then human appearance is no exception. The human is constituted by five aggregates, Skandha, which flow together and give rise to the impression of identity and persistence through time. Thus even if there is "no soul," there is that which has the nature of having that nature. There were major disputes concerning the best candidates for constituting such an impression…but agreement in general was reached that no soul resides within the human body, so to speak, like a driver of a bus, and gets out at the end of the journey. There is only the aggregation of components, which is caused by the previous moment and causes the next. In Mahāyāna Buddhism this term was extended to apply to all appearance that arises from Śūnyatā, and is therefore devoid, empty of self.\footnote{Bowker, John, \textit{The Oxford Dictionary of World Religions}, New York, Oxford University Press, 1997, pp. 63-64.}

In general, what is suggested by Soul, Self, Ego (Sanskrit, Ātmana) is that in man there is a permanent, everlasting and absolute entity, which is the unchanging substance behind the changing phenomenal world. According to some religions, each individual has a separate soul which is created by God, and which, finally after death, lives eternally either in hell or heaven, its destiny depends on the judgment of its creator. According to others, it goes through many lives till it is completely purified and becomes finally united with God or Brahman, Universal Soul or Ātmana, from which it originally emanated. This soul or self in man is the thinker of thoughts, feeler of sensations, and receiver of rewards and punishments for all its actions good and bad. Such a conception is called the idea of self (Ātmana). In this chapter an attempt has been made to
delineate the historical evolution of the concept of Ātmana in different religious traditions of the world.

The early history of the teaching which we call Buddhism may be differentiated roughly into two phases. There is no obvious cleavage between these two phases; no distinctive name which marks a change of thought, outlook, or background as the earlier phase merges into the later. Hitherto Early Buddhism has, in the main, been regarded as forming an integral body of teaching, now enshrines in the works called ‘canonical.’ These have been made accessible to students of Pāli Buddhism through the unremitting labors of the Pāli Text Society.474

To know the reason behind the denial of Atta we have first to be clear about the exact implication of them term Atta. Scholars differ as to the precise sense in which this term has been used. But before their views were discussed it is necessary to point out that the Prakrit word Atta is the same as at Ātman for Sanskrit. This philological identification has led to philosophical misunderstanding the scholars. Some scholars automatically take ate to be of the Upaniṣad. They think that the philosophical implications of these two terms Atta and Ātman are identical and consequently the doctrine of Anattā came to mean for them the refutation of the Upaniṣad Ātman. The scholars belonging to this ground have unaltering faith in the Buddha as the unique preacher of the True law, and as such harbor no weakness for the honored traditions of the Upaniṣad. The view of Walpole Sri Rahula, and worthy representative of this group, will be presented later. On the other hand those scholars who hold both the Buddha and the Upaniṣad in high esteem do not subscribe to this view. Let us take note of the opinion of Radhakrishnan.475

Anātman is a basic concept in Mahāyāna Buddhism although in an altered form. The Mahāyāna tradition extends the analysis of an individual No Self applying it to all things (dharmanas). This led to the Mahāyāna teaching of

474 See Table of Pāli Buddhist Literature, above, p. 15
Śūnyatā or empties. According to the Buddhist understanding of Anātman, the true self can be understood as the sever-changing configuration of five elements know of five elements karma as the five Skandhas. Rather than possessing an eternal and unchanging Soul, the individual is actually an ongoing process of transformation. The classical text explaining the concept of Anātman is the question of king Milinda. In the text, Nagasena, the Buddhist monk, user the image of a chariot made from a configuration of interdependent parts to express this concept.

In most schools of Mahayana Buddhism, Bhikhu applies to any male who has received full ordination, usually based on the Vinaya, the same code used in the tradition Buddhism.

Mahāyāna Buddhism emerged and grew between 150 BCE and 100 CE. With the rise of this sect, new Sūtras emerged. The most significant ones are the Lotus Sūtra, the Diamond Sutra and the Heart Sūtra.

Mahāyāna, in this light, can be conceived as the outcome of a strong missionary movement, going even beyond the borders of the Indian continent, probably following the period of the great migrations of people on the Central Asian continent, starting from a few centuries before the beginning of the Christian era. In such process foreign elements were adapted to the original Buddhist lore. LaMotte, for example, sees in the Mahāyāna figure of the Buddha Amitābha an echo of an Iranian solar god and the also finds notable analogies between the Bodhisattvas of Mahāyāna and the Ameshapenta of Zoroastrianism.476

The fundamental principles of Mahāyāna doctrine were based on the possibility of universal liberation from suffering for all beings (hence the "Great Vehicle") and the existence of Buddha and bodhisattvas embodying Buddha Nature. Some Mahāyāna schools simplify the expression of faith by allowing salvation to be alternatively obtained through the grace of the Amitābha Buddha.

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by having faith and devoting oneself to mindfulness of the Buddha. This devotional lifestyle of Buddhism is most strongly emphasized by the Pure Land schools and has greatly contributed to the success of Mahāyāna in East Asia, where spiritual elements traditionally relied upon mindfulness of the Buddha, Mantras and Dhāraṇīs, and reading of Mahāyāna Sūtras. In Chinese Buddhism, most monks, let alone lay people, practice Pure Land, some combining it with Chán.477

Concept of Anātman, as selflessness, stems from the idea of impermanence. One of the sources of unsatisfied for human beings is the belief in a permanent self, or soul that is independent and separate. Buddhism acknowledges that the implications of dependent origination apply to human beings, and consequently, human existence is conditioned by causative factors. If human existence is grounded in the same reality of interconnectedness and interdependence as all other things, then humans are a reflection of this reality. Cultivating personal insight through Buddhist practice leads to the recognition that the notion of “self” or “soul” has no independent, permanent validity, and the elemental human fear of separation passes away. This understanding of selflessness is critical to releasing us from the types of human fears that produce unsatisfied (fear of death; fear of rejection; fear of eternal punishment). By embracing selflessness, a freedom emerges in the Buddhist practitioner that grounds itself in the realization that the Universe, including the human realm, is already unified. Furthermore, this knowledge of the way things really are gives rise to the emergence of true human autonomy. Without exposure and insight to reality as it is, one cannot be considered “free.” With this freedom of exposure and insight comes a clear moral responsibility in followers of the Buddhist Path.

Twenty-five centuries ago when the Buddha turned the wheel of the Dharma and began to teach, he presented a philosophy which differed significantly from the current belief systems of India, by presenting a profound

spiritual path, which had at its very core a denial of God and soul. The Buddha proclaimed the three characteristics of impermanence, unsatisfactory and insubstantiality (*anītya, dukkha* and *anātman*).

These three characteristics are seen as applying to all phenomena. The one great law of the universe, then, is change. Phenomena come into being, mature and disappear. They are the result of conditions; when the conditions change, they also change or disappear. Even those things which appear as permanent are impermanent. Entire universes come into being, mature and disintegrate. Buddhism does not recognize a primal cause, nor does it recognize the existence of a permanent unchangeable substance in anything. Rather, it sees all things as constantly changing, as conditionally created. The constant creation and modification that occurs is seen as being the natural result of the influence of all beings that live within that sphere. We, then, along with all other beings, create our own world. This is sometimes called collective karma or collective action. There is no beginning and no end to this process which continues endlessly, because desire and aversion, which is followed by craving and clinging, produces the constant re-enactment of bringing into existence all manner of things, physical, mental and emotional.

Things do not exist because they have an innate quality to them. Rather, they come into existence because they have no innate quality. They are created out of our own desires. Because there is no fixed quality to anything, anything can be created. Each creation carries within it its own seeds of destruction, because the conditions which brought it into existence cannot continue ad infinitum. So there is the endless round of process of production and extinction, fueled by desire, which arises from a profound ignorance of the conditionality of things, of what causes our own suffering. This ignorance comes from a basic misunderstanding of the nature of all things. The mistaken and fabricated notion of an ego creates within us a need to make permanent those things which we desire. Since we desire more than anything immortality, we will create the
notion of an immortal self or soul. This belief in an immortal soul is viewed as the cause of the endless round of our unsatisfactory existence.

The Buddha explained that we should not become too attached to our bodies and their sensual experiences and thoughts that arise from them, because the attachment to our bodies and to life causes us great Dukkha, suffering and misery. Sense contact brings us sense experiences which we then term as desirable or undesirable. From this judgment arises the desire to re-experience similar sensual experiences, which lead directly to attachment. This attachment then leads to a great thirst or craving for the experience. Soon we are entrapped in the need to continue such experiences, for we feel we need or want them. But all experience is very momentary. Hardly have we grasped onto one, when it disappears and a new attraction grabs our minds. Soon we are enmeshed in a great, complex web of desire, all of which is very transitory, and thus unsatisfactory.

The Buddha stated that for us to become free from the constant round of rebirth and suffering, we would need to realize the changing nature of things in its true perspective, so that we could free ourselves from the need for certain experiences, attachment to self and to the illusion of permanence.

One of the major causes of Dukkha is our puny attempts to make impermanent things permanent. We want to amass and hold on to things which please our ego concepts. We strive to hold on to youth, to wealth, to fame, to romance. All of these experiences are fleeting. They arise, mature and disintegrate. It is not change itself which causes the greatest pain; it is our resistance to this change that causes the real Dukkha. The Buddha again and again explained: "Impermanent indeed are all conditioned things; they are of the nature of arising and passing away. Having come into being, they cease to exist. Hence their pacification is tranquility."
Chapter two *Anātman* in early Buddhism, the doctrine of *Anātman* is one of the central teachings of Buddhism. According to this doctrine, there is no “Self” in the sense of a permanent, integral, autonomous being within an individual existence, what me think of a our Self, our personality and ego, are temporary creations of the Skandhas.

This idea of *Anātman* or "no-self" is evident in Buddhist cultures and society. First, Buddhist cultures generally emphasize the body as one of the five constituents. In *Samkhya* Hinduism and in Christianity to the contrary, there is a strong idea of separation between the two. Second, there is also a focus on the present rather than on the past or the future, as some other cultures tend to do. Because of the notion of impermanence, Buddhist knows that the only constant thing is change itself, therefore they emphasize the present moment. This notion of enjoying one’s present situation is also apparent in cultures of Buddhist religious and very different than the Western notion of working so hard to plan for the future that one often forgets the present moment they are in.\(^{478}\)

Emptiness is as important in the *Theravāda* tradition as it is in the *Mahāyāna*. From the earliest times, *Theravāda* Buddhism has viewed emptiness as one of the important doors to liberation. Two key Theravada sutras are devoted to emptiness: the Greater Discourse on Emptiness and the Lesser Discourse on Emptiness.

Though emptiness is important in the Theravada tradition, it is usually not taught as often as in the Mahayana. This might lead some to assume it is absent in the *Theravāda*. One reason it is not taught as often is that emptiness is seen as a liberating insight rather than a philosophical view one needs to understand intellectually. Theravada’s gradual approach to awakening includes extensive teachings on the functioning of the mind and the foundational practices that allow for the deep penetrative insight into emptiness. Emptiness is sometimes not taught until the student is ready for it.

\(^{478}\) Strong, John S, *The Experience of Buddhism*. Wadsworth, California, 1995
Another reason Theravāda contains fewer teachings on emptiness is that this is not always labeled “emptiness.” For example, Theravāda will teach that all things are insubstantial and without essence without calling this an emptiness teaching, even though it is. The frequency with which the Mahayana talks about emptiness is probably matched by the frequency with which the Theravada teaches impermanence and not-self; in practice, both traditions are often pointing to the same thing in these teachings.

Chapter three the concept of Anātman in later Buddhism it was articulated by the Buddha according to the earliest Buddhist texts, and in the two branches. Theravāda and Mahāyāna that represent the principal doctrinal divisions of early Buddhism, the central thesis is that the teaching of Anātman is to be viewed as a stereological prescription. The ultimate goal of the Buddhist path is release from the round of phenomenal existence with its inherent suffering. To achieve this goal is to attain Nirvāṇa, an enlightened state in which the fires of greed, hatred, and ignorance have been quenched. Not to be confused with total annihilation, Nirvāṇa is a state of consciousness beyond definition. After attaining Nirvāṇa, the enlightened individual may continue to live, burning off any remaining karma until a state of final Nirvāṇa (parinirvāṇa) is attained at the moment of death.

The evolution of the Mahāyāna concept came about as a gradual unfolding rather than as a sudden development.

At the time when the Mahāyāna doctrine came up for debate in the fourth religious council, nearly years 500 after the historical Buddha attained Nirvāṇa, Buddhism had well taken roots in India. It was popular among the masses. It also enjoyed the patronage of Kings and Emperors.479

Most Mahāyāna schools believe in supernatural Bodhisattvas who devote themselves to the perfections, ultimate knowledge, and the liberation of all sentient beings. In Mahāyāna, the Buddha is seen as the ultimate, highest being, present in all times, in all beings, and in all places, and the Bodhisattvas

479 Mahāyāna Buddhism in India, Sep 20, 2007.
come to represent the universal ideal of altruistic excellence.

Chapter four Anātman for Cultivation of the Mind, this distinction will help us when analyzing Buddhism, as well as the two autochthonous Chinese philosophical traditions, Confucianism and Daoism and their distinct ways of cultivation of personality, which at a cetin level might also bring the practitioner to the level of liberation of oneself from oneself. Patanjali’s system of spiritual development will serve as an illustration for one of the oldest manuals for the spiritual cleansing on the path to liberation.

Our aim is to look into important Asian philosophical texts that are centre towards the cultivation of personality or self-awareness as a way of soteriology.\textsuperscript{480}

It is suggestible that mind can be analyzes as to its nature in the disciplines of psychology, ethics and naturalism. But for the sake of being in concord with the Buddha theory of suffering and of non-substance the former mainly relating to the basic for ethical attitude and the later, for philosophical viewpoint the disciplines of ethics and of psychology are preferable. The functionalistic approach in the discipline of modern psychology, it is at the risk going a little astray to note, comes to overshadow the once dominating structuralism, emphasizing ‘the study of mind from the is for point of view.\textsuperscript{481}

The nature of mind is difficult to be seen and understood and it is very subtle, very hard to control, assuredly light and quick and attaching itself to whatever it craves. It is, in case of the wording, constantly frightened, terrified and alarmed as well as agitated, flurried and anxious.\textsuperscript{482} The nature of mind should also be counted on account of its Dependent Origination, in which the casual factors play the decisive role in the arising of mind, thus subjecting to the impermanence earmark of Saṅkāra. Even in the Buddha’s time Bhikkhu Sāti was ignored of the fact that there is no arising of the mind (in this case the term Viññāna is employed) unless it is through the collocation of causal factors.

\textsuperscript{482} Nicca Utrastam idaṃ Cittaṃ Niccam Ubbiggam Idaṃ Mano, S, I, p.53.
Chapter five *Anātman* and Its Impact on Society, the Buddhist way for emancipation is closely combined with the way of moral. On this way, sentient being has to avoid the ignorance to be conscious of non-self by regular introspection. So that he should avoid the attachment of the self, latter, he consciously practices self-discipline of concentration to control his deed. So that he should change himself from wrong to right and good; finally, by regular meditation he should automatically avoid karma and reach the ultimate Enlightenment and turn him to be his own nature of no-self. It is the ultimate emancipation where there is no more good or bad, right or wrong, good or evil… and perfection become human’s no-self character. This way to liberation is at that same time the one to moral goal.

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The core Buddha teaching is the Four Noble truths that leads sentient being from suffering to emancipation, at the same time from wrong or evil to right and good. First, The Noble Truths of suffering teaches about all kinds of suffering, as mentioned above. Second, The Noble Truths of Cause of Suffering explains that the initial cause of pain of sentient being is the ignorance which is always in chase of pleasure and lust, namely the craving for passion, for existence or non-existence…Third, The Noble Truths of Cassation of Suffering teaches about realization of the cessation of pain by
non-attachment, abandonment, forsaking for that craving. Fourth, The Noble Truths of the Way that leads to the Cessation of suffering teaches about The Noble Eightfold path, namely, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.

It is obvious that Buddhist teaching focuses in the Fourth Noble Truth and the Noble Eightfold Path. They are eight methods of right cultivation for everyone to consciously develop oneself on the way to final emancipation, also called Nirvāṇa. In fact, in Indian tradition, Buddhism inherited the moral tradition of Hinduism in general, and techniques of introspection from Yoga in concrete. Then it was developed to be realizable model of self-cultivation and called Noble Eightfold Path. To practice the Eightfold Path man has to concentrate on the moral value of “right” when controlling himself in every conduct such as right view, right intention, right speech, right action, and right livelihood through right mindfulness and right concentration without cessation of right effort for the ultimate liberation (Nirvāṇa) with right wisdom (Prajna). The construction of Buddhist teaching is the combination of three parts comprehensively: Commandment (Sīla) Meditation (Samadhy) Wisdom (Prajna), or in other word, they can be called three sections of self-cultivation: Self-cultivation of conduct (by Sīla), Self-cultivation of consciousness (by Samadhy) and Self-cultivation of wisdom (Prajna).

In Buddhist teaching, the final judgment of man’s deeds is the law of causes (karma) which acts secretly through lives not by any god’s decision. Happiness or unhappiness is the fruit caused by oneself good or bad conduct done in the past. The judgment as the law of causes admonishes people of being serious with every action (body, speech, thought) of oneself. Buddhist ideal examples are Buddha and Bodhisattvas who already enlightened the essence of the no-self and not be led by any craving or passion... They are omniscient and free from mundane attachment that means the perfect emancipation from the circle of lives, namely Nirvāṇa.
Buddhism was founded in 6th century BC in Indian. According to Lalitavistara sutra, numberless forms of ascetic austerities were in vogue in Buddha's time. Some of the Buddha’s teacher, Alara is an adept in Yoga. The Buddhist teachings on meditation are familiar with the Yoga methods of concentration. Four states of Dyane of Buddhism correspond roughly to the four stages of conscious concentration in the classical Yoga. Buddha himself practiced Raja-yoga.\(^{483}\)

Nirvāṇa is something which out rightly rejects the ego. Nirvāṇa is indefinite and space less. It is very difficult to enter Nirvāṇa because it is formless (Aristaka). To enter Nirvāṇa, we must also be as formless as Nirvāṇa. The entrance to Nirvāṇa is very narrow. It is as thin as hair feather, so thin that we cannot go through it, if we still carry our possessions with us, be it our body, our concept of the "I" and the "ego". The bigger our ego becomes, the further we will be away from Nirvāṇa. So it is ruled that ego will lead to Samsāra non-ego to Nirvāṇa.\(^{484}\)


\(^{484}\) Thich Thien Sieu, *Nirvāṇa is Non-Self*, Buddhist Institute of Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh City, 1990