CHAPTER II

THOUGHTS OF THE BUDDHA

A central point of the Buddha’s thought is that all is in flux; nothing which exists can remain unchanged. A natural implication of this is that the Law, the Buddha’s teaching itself, would also suffer corruption and change. The original scriptures announced various prophesies regarding this change. Some predicted that the Law would remain pure for only 500 years, others that it would endure for a thousand. Following this period of pure understanding, mere scholarship would replace spiritual achievement.42

GENERAL OVERVIEW

The simple fact of the Buddha’s historical life becoming a more and more distant memory is only part of the story. It appears that the very methods of the Buddha’s teaching began to lose their efficacy, for the early writings contain accounts of large numbers of people, sometimes thousands at a time, achieving sudden enlightenment merely by hearing the Law. Gradually fewer and fewer cases of conversion were reported, until the conviction spread that the time of sainthood was over. One sutra

---

conveys this sentiment clearly by describing the death of the last saint at the hands of one of the scholars.\footnote{Ibid., p. 114.}

Setting apart the fact that, according to the Buddha, flux is unavoidable, there are three obvious reasons why the Law witnessed change and reinterpretation. Firstly, due to the fact of the locality, the teachings of the Buddha were emerged in northern India and from there briskly spread east and west, eventually becoming subtle across the whole region of southern and eastern Asia. Following the death of its founder, broad decentralization of the message and the concomitant divergence of interpretation were inevitable.

A second factor which precipitated change was the fact of applying the Law to daily life and all of its concerns. No matter how complete the Buddha’s teaching, certainly some question would arise which he had not addressed. These were commonly precise disagreements over proper conduct of the monk, such as when to eat food and whether to accept money as a gift or donation received personally.\footnote{Ibid., p.116.}

A third and perhaps main source of controversy and change was the somewhat agnostic stance of the Law itself. The Buddha did not leave the community with a single source of authority following his death,
telling the monks to seek and follow the Law for themselves. This likely left the monks with a sense of freedom to interpret Law as they wished.45

He also had constantly declined to give certain answers to many types of metaphysical questions, as the parable of the arrow shows. However, as the Buddha completely knew, the human propensity to investigate into such subtleties is practically ineradicable. People were inclined to philosophize on even those very subjects about which the Buddha hindered speculation. This unavoidably led to conflicting opinions about the nature of reality. Even some modern scholars have been misled by the Buddha’s apparent agnosticism, calling it a “vagueness” in the Buddha’s teachings, a vagueness which caused “a great divergence of views” to arise.46

Buddhism remained relatively free of internal controversy for the first two centuries after the Buddha’s death. Minor disagreements over points of doctrine persisted, but were not a major cause for concern. Then, during the reign of King Asoka, 272-236 BE., another disagreement, this one regarding the nature of the saint, arose and threatened the unity of the Order. King Asoka, a nominal Buddhist whose influence in Buddhist history was enormous, wished to restore peace to

46 M. Hiriyanna, Outlines of Indian Philosophy, p.196.
the Order. While the precise history of the debate is uncertain, a few elements of it are widely accepted as being authentic and, more important to the topic at hand, had a direct bearing on Nagarjuna’s work. Asoka invited a respected monk, Moggaliputtatissa, to convene a synod of monks to discuss and settle disagreements. Moggaliputtatissa compiled the proceedings of this council in a text that, despite being written two and a half centuries after the Buddha, was so influential that it quickly was accorded canonical status.⁴⁷ Although two hundred and eighteen specific topics of monastic discipline and philosophy were debated, the key philosophical issues boil down to three: “Personalism,” “Realism,” and “Transcendentalism.”⁴⁸

The Personalists were the Vatsiputriya, nicknamed the Pudgalavada after “pudgala” = “person;” The Realists were the Vaibhasika and Sautrantika sects of the Sarvastivada, the latter nicknamed after their belief that “all,” “sarva”. The Transcendentalists were the Lokattaravada sect of the Mahasanghika, so nicknamed due to their belief in the “lokuttara,” the “supramundane.” This factional history, though technically confusing and incompletely documented, has extensive import, for it was a precursor to the bifurcation into the

⁴⁷ David J. Kalupahana, A History of Buddhism Philosophy, p. 126.
⁴⁸ This division, which is perhaps somewhat simplified and artificial, will be encountered repeatedly in this work. It can be also quite confusing and, hence, it should be summarized and more technically clarified here.
“Greater” and “Lesser Schools” of Buddhism. Broadly speaking, the Mahasanghika led to the formation of Mahayana, while their opponents, the Sthaviravada, became the Hinayana, or Theravada. These three will be summarized here and treated more fully later.

Broadly speaking, Indian philosophy witnessed two opposing traditions regarding the ultimate nature of reality. One tradition, which is represented by practically the whole of Hinduism, asserts the existence of an imminent and transcendent “soul”, the atman. The atman is the soul both of the human individual and of universal God. It is the ultimate ground of being and is immutable and eternal. Buddhism, on the other hand, denies this substratum. It presents a doctrine of an atman, “soullessness.” The Buddha taught that there is no abiding self, but rather just five ever-changing aggregates (skandhas) of elements: physical substance, sense-contacts, perceptions, psychological tendencies, and consciousness. The individual person is an aggregate of these five categories, and each category is in itself an aggregate of composite elements (dhammas and dhatus). For example, the category of physical substance is an aggregate of earth, air, water, and fire, and the category of psychological tendencies is an aggregate of habits, likes, dislikes, greed, willfulness, etc. The idea of a “person” is just a convenient way to refer to these five categories and aggregates of elements. It is a mistake to believe
that there is an underlying and unchanging self in this dynamic agglomeration of fluctuating elements. However, a small group of monks insisted that, nonetheless, the individual self must be in some way real. If there is no self which is more real than and transcending the aggregates of elements, they argued, still at the very least it should not be wrong to say that the self is no less real than the aggregates. They claimed that there is a subtle self which is neither identical with nor different from the agglomeration of elements.49

Although Moggaliputatissa and all other Buddhist schools rejected this “Personalist” argument, the notion proved to be tenacious and long-lived. As late as the seventh century C.E. a full one-quarter of Indian monks claimed adherence to the Personalist school,50 and Nagarjuna as well as numerous later writers, both Madhyamika and otherwise, felt compelled to address this misbelief.51 The “heresy” of Personalism presumably arose because some Buddhists were unwilling to abandon completely the belief in the soul, and so claimed that the aggregate of elements did not fully preclude the possibility of a self. The controversy of “Realism” also arose from the doctrine of the aggregates, but for an exactly opposite reason. The Realists asserted that, if there is no

49 Peter Harvey, An Introduction to Buddhism, p. 85.
50 Ibid., p. 85.
metaphysical soul behind the aggregates, then the aggregates themselves must be real. If the soul is not an ultimate entity, then the individual atomistic elements (dharmas) of which the world is composed must be ultimately real. These elements are reified, they taught, and each has its unique and individual atomic “self-nature,” svabhava. Only thus could the Buddha’s teaching that all aggregates are in perpetual flux be reconciled with the fact that objects are observed to have individual and continuous identities.\(^5^2\) Furthermore, these atomistic elements are themselves eternal and unchanging; while their form and the objects of which they are a part may change, their self-nature, svabhava, remains real and constant. Hence the label “Realism” were quite vocal against the concept of Personalism and insisted that the Buddha’s doctrine of an atman allowed no room for any type of belief in self-hood. However, their assertion that the atoms comprising the world have individual self-natures was seen by other Buddhists as being an unjustified realism or as just another form of Personalism. Criticism of their concept of self-nature became one of the key issues of the Madhyamikas.

The third false doctrine which Moggaliputtatissa reports being discussed was Transcendentalism. The Buddha had left the community of his followers with no single source of authority following his death,
telling them instead to “be lamps unto [them] selves.” “The truths and rules of the order which I have set forth and laid down for you all, let them, after I am gone, be the Teacher to you.”

Despite these words which the Buddha delivered from his deathbed, many disciples came to believe that the Buddha had totally transcended the world, not just ceased to exist. Mahayana Buddhists came to believe that, although the physical Buddha was dead, his intelligence and his teachings remained in a form called the “Dharma Body.”

Although it was claimed that this transcendent form did not really exist (for that would contradict the Buddha’s doctrines), still the Dharma Body is an expression of the ultimate reality, the true nature of things.

The Dharma Body came to be known by diverse terms, such as “Buddha-nature,” “Thusness,” or “Suchness of Existents,” and its nature has been interpreted in many ways. Moggaliputtatissa refuted this belief in a transcendent nature of the Buddha by demonstrating that it is incompatible with the Buddha’s historicity.

Nagarjuna dealt little with the theories of Transcendentalism, but it became an important topic for later Madhyamikas.

---

53 Rhys Davids, Maha-parinibbana Suttanta, p.33.
54 Paul Williams, Mahayana Buddhism: the Doctrinal Foundations, p. 176.
55 Ibid., p. 175.
56 David J. Kalupahana, A History of Buddhism Philosophy, p. 141.
57 Paul Williams, Mahayana Buddhism: the Doctrinal Foundations, p. 179.
The Abhidharma And The Prajnaparamitas

Between the third century BE. and the third century C.E. a group of writings whose purpose was the systematization of certain elements of the Buddhist philosophy took shape. This was the Abhidharma, “Further Teachings.” This collection of writings purported to be, not a new set of teachings, but merely a codification of the old. As such, it was accorded a canonical status and, along with the sutras, the Buddha’s discourses, and the Vinaya, the monastic rules, comprises the official three-tiered Pali canon. There was little controversy over the sutras and the Vinaya; although there is some variation in the latter between schools, the two are almost universally accepted in Buddhism. The Abhidharma, however, elicited a certain amount of conflict in subsequent Buddhist thought.

The purpose for compiling the Abhidharma was to distill the essentials of the Buddha’s teachings on philosophy and psychology from the discourses and attempt to avoid the inexactitudes and ambiguities occasionally found in these scriptures. This codification was achieved by stating everything in exact language and thereby providing a detailed enumeration of the elements of reality (dhamas), the basic causal processes observed to operate between the elements (pratyayas), the exact constituents of the human personality and consciousness (skandhas and ayatanas) and, finally, to draw out the relations and correspondences
between all of these factors. The endless lists and classifications found in the Abhidharma, which one modern commentator has characterized as “ten valleys of dry bones,” might seem to be of little interest to all but the most devout Buddhist. There are, however, two reasons why the Abhidharma directly relate to the study of later Buddhist philosophy: the Abhidharma provided an exhaustive analysis of the base constituents of reality, and it uncovered much of the implications of dependent arising, the process by which these elements come into being and are perceived.

What the Abhidharma achieved was also twofold: its analysis of the elements coherently and comprehensively described reality without any recourse to a theory of self-hood or ultimate reality, and it refined the doctrine of dependent arising by showing how the basic patterns of causation condition each other in a web of complex ways.

Notwithstanding, the Realist school managed to find in the Abhidharma classifications support for their view that the elements do have a self-nature, svabhava, a view which had definite repercussions on the doctrine of dependent arising.

The Abhidharma literature was avowedly part of the “Older School,” Theravada. Its sole purpose was to systematize the teachings

---

58 Peter Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism*, p. 175.
59 Ibid., p. 83.
found in the Pali scriptures, and it made no use of the innovative interpretations and doctrines that were becoming an important aspect of the “Greater School,” Mahayana. The Abhidharma was, however, being written during approximately the same time as the Prajnaparamita writings. These “Perfection of Wisdom (Prajnaparamita)” writings mark the inception of and the core teachings of the Mahayana, a school which defined itself in large part as being the “new” Buddhism no longer bound by the limitations of the old. The Abhidharma provided the starting point for the Perfection of Wisdom School, both as historical influencer and by being the focal point of criticism.

Further, the Abhidharma thinkers did their job so well that subsequent thinkers, such as those of the Prajanparamita, had no choice but to adopt a different tack interpretation and expounding the Buddha’s teachings. That is, the general approach of the Abhidharma thinkers was to take the agenda of analysis and systematization to its furthest extreme. “Rarely in the history of human thought has analysis been pushed so far,” The result of this is that the Perfection of Wisdom writings, representing a reaction to this influence, are quite unlike those of the Abhidharmas in style, thought, and intent.

---

60 David J. Kaluhapana, The Philosophy of Middle Way: The Mulamadhyamakakarika of Nagarjuna, p. 22.
61 Etienne Lamotte, History of Indian Buddhism, p. 605.
The Perfection of Wisdom scripture are a collection of voluminous writings from ca. 100 BE. to 100 C.E. which emphasize the ultimate incomprehensibility of the world. They utilized paradox and even nonsense to demonstrate that true wisdom is intuitive and cannot be conveyed by concepts or in intellectual terms.\textsuperscript{62} The writers of the Prajnaparamitas regarded the Abhidharma of the older school of Buddhism, with its dry emphasis on the proper path towards and means of achieving enlightenment, the rules of the Order, and the niggling debates over fine point of ethics, as being on the wrong track.\textsuperscript{63} This approach stifled the essence of the Buddha’s teaching, which essence is that all doctrines are empty of reality and are but mental creations. According to the Prajnaparamitas, true wisdom consists, not in cataloguing doctrines, but in intuitively understanding that the true nature of the universe is this emptiness, sunyata.

The Perfect of Wisdom writings were in many ways a reaction to certain trends found in Abhidharma thought, particularly that of Realism. The Realist school, though refuted by Moggaliputtatissa, remained a potent force in discussion for some time. A primary Prajnaparamita criticism of this realist trend was that it did not go far enough in

\textsuperscript{62} Michael H. Kohn, \textit{The Shambhala Dictionary of Buddhism and Zen}, p.171.

\textsuperscript{63} Heinrich Zimmer, \textit{Philosophies of India}, p. 185.
understanding the Buddha’s doctrine of an atman. The Realists accepted that there is no substantial soul abiding in the person, but just a series of fluctuating elements whose agglomeration gives the appearance of a self-identity. However, as explained above, the Realists took this analysis of elements too far. To explain reality without invoking atman, the Realists defined the elements as being point entities having absolutely small special and temporal extension. To reconcile this infinitesimal atomism with the fact that the individual elements still interrelate and that continuity is experienced, the Realists had to posit a form of self-nature. The Prajnaparamitas saw this explanation as falling short of the mark.

The predominant themes of the Perfection of Wisdom teachings do not differ either from the teaching of the Buddha as recorded in the discourses or from the explanation of reality given in the Abhidharma. That is, the essence of reality does not allow for real change or decay, origination or extinction, identity or differentiation, unity or plurality, existence or non-existence. All of the above are imagined only by the ignorant. The criticism lies in the fact that some Buddhist school were not satisfied with this description of reality and felt the need to add the notion

64 Peter Harvey, An Introduction to Buddhism, p. 97.
of svabhava, self-nature. This is not necessary, the Prajnaparamitas taught, for the Buddha’s theory of dependent arising is alone sufficient to explain all perceptions of the world and its elements as well as fully explain the ways in which these elements exist and interrelate.

The authors of these texts most likely had no intention of producing innovative theories and saw themselves as just explaining the teachings of the Buddha in a deeper and more profound way, relying more on insight than no intellect. Nonetheless, the Perfection of Wisdom writings are often defined as marking a clear transition from old to new, Theravada to Mahayana. The emphasis on emptiness as characteristics of reality “revolutionized” Buddhism “in all aspects,” writes modern commentator T.R.V.Murti.66 While the intention of these writings was not to produce innovations in philosophy but just to teach with a different emphasis, their method of philosophizing was decidedly original. The Prajnaparamita adopted a dialectic that was only implied in the original discourses, that of seeking the middle between all extremes, and utilized this dialectic to a much fuller extent. This rejection of extremes led to the assertion that all dualities are empty of reality. Notions whose basis is one half of a duality, such as existence and nonexistence or atman and anatman, can be used to speak of common, everyday truths, but their

applicability fails when referring to ultimate truths. The ultimate reality is devoid of all dualities and thus is wholly impervious to conceptual thinking. It can only be accessed in non-dual intuition, prajna.\textsuperscript{67} There are thus two levels of truth: the everyday, relative truth and the higher, absolute truth. One should not be confused, the Prajnaparamita taught, by the Buddha’s use of words like “person” or verbs like “exist,” for he used these words only pragmatically, as a necessary for discussing commonly perceived things. He in no way intended for such relative concepts to be reified or applied to the absolute sphere.\textsuperscript{68}

The Perfection of Wisdom writings set the tone for what would become the majority of Buddhism, the Mahayana. Its anti-dogmatic rejection of extremes, mystical mood, use of paradox, and emphasis on intuitive wisdom are still famous in the form of Prajnaparamita that has come down to us today, Zen.\textsuperscript{69} This collection of work was also found quite compelling by Nagarjuna and the subsequent Madhyamika School. The philosophical system that the Buddha taught is remarkably clear and simple. It would, however, be very easy for a presentation of his thought to degenerate into hundreds of pages of confusion and nonsense, and it could be argued that much of the history and doctrinal development of

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{67} Ibid., p. 86. \\
\textsuperscript{68} Peter Della Santina., \textit{Madhyamaka Schools in India}, p. 12-13. \\
\textsuperscript{69} David J. Kalupahana, \textit{A History of Buddhist Philosophy}, p. 228-236.
\end{flushleft}
Buddhism has been just such an endeavor of obfuscation. His teaching is simple in that it can be summed up in two words: the keyword of his philosophy is “impermanence” (anitya) and the keyword of his religion is the “path”. All elements of the Buddha’s teachings fall out from these two concepts. The purpose of the Buddha’s teachings is to bring people to their own enlightenment by means of the “Noble Eightfold Path,” the prescriptions for living the “noble” and beneficent life. Thus, while his philosophy is the subject of this thesis, a brief presentation of his soteriological teachings will be apposite here. The key to the moral life is following the “middle way” between extremes. The Buddha had attained enlightenment by renouncing the two extremes of worldliness and world-renunciation. Neither his twenty-nine years of living in luxury nor his six years of living in self-denial had led him to his goal; it was only after he abandoned such extremes that his search came to an end. The first sermon the Buddha delivered after his enlightenment opened with an admonition to give up both the seeking after pleasure and the practice of asceticism. The correct way to lead a proper life, he taught his first audience, is “the middle path,… a path which opens the eye, and bestows understanding, which leads to peace of mind,” and eventually to nirvana. The significance of following the middle way is greater than merely the

---

70 Michael Coulson, Sanskrit, p. xvii
71 Ibid., 272
renouncing of the two extremes of hedonism and asceticism: the middle way is the principle which infuses the entire corpus of moral teachings of Buddhism.

Buddhism is primarily a path, not a philosophy. As has been aptly stated, Buddhists often insist “If you wish to understand the Buddha’s doctrine, you must practice it.”\textsuperscript{72} The Buddha likened the human situation to a man who has just been shot with a poisoned arrow by an unknown assailant. If the man refuses to have the arrow removed until he finds out who shot him, what caste the assailant is from, what color his skin is, how tall he is, what kind of bow he used, and what types of feathers were on the arrow, that man will die. The important thing for the man to do is to remove the arrow. The arrow in the side of humanity is afflicted existence, duhkha. The poison on the arrow is the cause of duhkha, which cause is craving. The way to remove the arrow of duhkha and the poison of craving is by following the Buddha’s path and teachings, the Dharma.\textsuperscript{73}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{72} Ibid., 274  
Basic Metaphysical Teachings of the Buddha

From the history of Buddha on above, we have been seen that He worked hard all his long life for proclaimed his doctrine for the orders and another, and at first He is hesitated offered to public, because it is very difficult to another understood in his doctrine, but it is at only at first, finally He offers to first old colleagues by Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta, which we will be discuss in detail in this chapter.

THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

At the first, we will be talk known as Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta which the Buddha taught to his old colleagues, the ascetics, at the Deer Park of Isipatana (modern sarnath) near Benares in the first year of his ministry, contains the Four Noble Truths (Caturariyasacca). They are

i) The Noble Truth of Suffering (Dukkha)

ii) The Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering (Dukkha-Samudaya)

74S.V. 420; Dhammacakkappavattana is variously rendered into English as “turning of the wheel of the law” or “the foundation of the kingdom of righteousness”, or “setting in motion the wheel of truth”
75 Literally translating, the word ‘Ariyasacca’ means the Truths that are by themselve ‘Noble’, or the Truths of Noble One, or the Truths that ennoble a person who realized them. (See phra Rajavramuni, Dictionary of Buddhism, p. 181).
iii) The Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering (Dukkha-Nirodha)

iv) The Noble Truth of the Eightfold path leading to the Cessation of Suffering (Dukkha-Nirodhagaminipanipada).

These Four Truths are called ‘Noble’ or ‘Ariya’ for three main reasons, namely:

i) Because they have been discovered by the Noble One-the Buddha,

ii) because they can be fully realized only by the Noble Ones such as the Buddha, the Pacceka Buddhas and the Arahants, and,

iii) because “they are real, they are not unreal and not otherwise’, they deal with reality.

Which we will be see that the Four Noble truths is importance in Buddhist and is keynote in all the Buddha’s doctrine, and every things include in this, which in this case that the Buddha enumerated to this importance of it, because it is the most basic all things in Buddhist doctrine, profound as well as original for the discovery of which he deserves to be called the Buddha-the Enlightened One. The Buddha

---

76Vin.19; S.V. 421; Vbh.99; Vism 494.
77Vism. 495: The Path of Purification., p. 564.
proclaimed that ‘not until he had fully realized the twelve aspects in the three cycles of the Four Noble Truths which he could understand through his own effort and intelligence, was he able to declare himself the Enlightened One.79

Therefore, These Four Noble Truths, it is not only form the heart and core of the Buddha’s teaching, but also constitute the essence of the Buddha Dhamma, pervading every aspect and every part of it. Just as the foot of every creature that walks on earth will go into the elephant’s footprint, so are right states of mind said to be included in the four Noble Truths.80 One day the Buddha addressed his disciples at kosambi in the Samsapa grove regarding the Four Noble Truths. As follows:

“The Dhamma he preached to them was intended particularly to put an end to suffering. It could be compared in quantity to the leaves in his hand. What he had also known, but did not bother to teach them, was as much as the remaining member of leaves in the whole forest. The reason was that it was not directly conducive to the termination of suffering or the eradication of defilements”.81 Therefore, for a better understanding of the Four Noble Truths, we should look into the details of this for clarity.

78 The three cyles of the Four Noble Truths are; (i) the knowledge of the Four Noble Truths; (ii) the knowledge of the duties to be done about them; (iii) the knowledge that those duties have been done.
79S.V. 422; The kindred Sayings, V. 359.
80M.I. 133.
81S.V. 437; The Kindred Sayings, V.370.
a) **The Noble Truth of Suffering**

The First Noble Truth called ‘*dukkha or suffering*’ is the keynote around which the remaining truths revolve. This first truth concerns all the problems of life represented by birth, old age, sickness and death, including sorrows and frustrations of all kinds. In short, “the five aggregates of existence that form the objects of clinging are suffering’.\(^{82}\) This truth teaches that a right attitude towards, and a right knowledge of, all things must be maintained; that is to say, one must learn to see things as they really are. Properly speaking, the unsatisfactoriness of life must be observed, located and comprehended. Besides, one has to proceed to other steps set forth in the other remaining truths.

b) **The Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering**

The Noble Truth of the origin of Suffering is the second which is affirms that all kinds of ‘*dukkha or suffering*’ have their origins in craving, or selfish desire(*tanha*), rooted in ignorance (*avijja*). Not seeing things as they are or being ignorant of their true nature, one craves for and slavishly clings to those things. Through this process, one develops three kinds of craving: craving for sensual pleasures (*kamatanha*), craving for existence (*bhavatanha*) and craving for non-existence.

---

\(^{82}\)S.I. 62, *The Kindred Sayings*, I. 86.
Through these three kinds of craving, one also performs various evil actions with the body, speech and mind, which we have been seen that the result in the suffering both of oneself and others, and will be make other evils are caused to grow. In fact, this second truth deals with the examination and explanation of the cause of suffering by means of causality known as *paticcasamuppada* or the Dependent Origination, the practical part of which is the ‘law of kamma’.

c) The Cessation of Suffering

In fact, the cessation of suffering is Nibbana, it is same things but call difference, and this the truth represents Nibbana, the goal of every Buddhist attempt. Nibbana is a state of mind where ignorance and cravings are replaced by wisdom and compassion. And on another hand, Nibbana is the realization of the stage of perfect peace, absence of defilements and freedom from suffering. Therefore, Nibbana serves as a guide of hope toward which we should be try more for finally reach. This truth is the outcome of living the Middle path.

d) The Noble Eightfold path

The Noble Eightfold path is last in the Four Noble Truth, which it is outlines the method one has to adopt in order to achieve complete
freedom from suffering, that is, it provides the way and means to attain the goal as set forth in the Third Truth. Moreover, this Fourth truth contains all the ethical teachings and practices of Buddhism. It defines the Buddhist way of life, which there are comprising the eightfold constituents of the Noble path, namely,

i) Right view,

ii) Right thought

iii) Right speech

iv) Right action

v) Right livelihood

vi) Right effort

vii) Right mindfulness

viii) Right concentration.\(^{85}\)

These factors of the Eightfold Noble Path are further organized into a system called threefold Training (\(Ti\)-sikkha) of Morality (\(Sila\)), Concentration (\(Samadhi\)) and Wisdom (\(Panjna\)).\(^{86}\) To put it in simple

\(^{85}\)S.V. 431; \textit{The Kindred Sayings}, V. 365.  
\(^{86}\)See \textit{Vin.} I.9; S.V. 421; \textit{Vbh.} 99; \textit{Vism.} 494; and See cf. Phra Rajavaramuni, \textit{Thai Buddhism in the Buddhist World}, pp. 6-8.
words, these practices are sometimes summed up in the Three Fundamental Principles of Buddhism, namely,

i) Abstention from all evil

ii) Cultivation of the wholesome

iii) Purification of the mind.

This is the Eightfold Noble path or the Threefold Training that is technically called “Majjhimaṭṭipada” or “Middle way”

DEPENDENT ORIGINATION

The Dependent Origination is keynote of Buddhist doctrine, the Dependent Origination is the English term which is commonly used by translators to allocate the purposely Buddhist scriptures by the terms paticcasamuppada (Sanskrit: patityasamutpada). Scholars and writers have in many forms rendered this term into English. ‘Dependent Origination’ ‘dependent arising’, ‘conditioned co-production’, ‘causal conditioning’, ‘causal genesis’, ‘conditioned genesis’, ‘causal dependencies’, ‘conditioned arising’, or ‘causal interdependence’, these words have been used as an alternative translation while the concept has also been discussed as ‘the principle of conditionality’, or ‘relativity’ in
the field of causality. Throughout this thesis the term ‘Dependent Origination’ is used in the sense of causal principle.

We will see that the doctrine of Dependent Origination is one of Buddhism’s most important and unique teachings, and is generally found to be accepted in the Buddhist literature of most schools. It is explained as a natural law that all phenomena (dhamma): mental or physical, are dependent on conditions for their happen; therefore, if we will be say to it we should be talk that there is nothing which occurs independently, isolated or fortuitously; there is nothing separate, nothing standing alone. Everything is relation of them, not separate things, and a phenomenon arises because of a combination of conditions which are present to support its arising, and it will cease when those conditions and components change and no longer sustain it.

The Twelve Elements of Dependent Origination

Dependent Origination applies is an all phenomena, but the Buddha was especially concerned with applying it to human situation. He wished only to show the specific causes and conditions which bind people to an existence of suffering, and through understanding those causes, how to change them. To this end, the Buddha explained the twelve elements of Dependent Origination.
i) Ignorance (Avijja)

Avijja is the first in Dependent Origination, the word ‘avijja’ (Sanskrit: avidya) means ignorance. Delusion and non-knowledge are synonyms for avijja as well.

To the question that what is ignorance? According to the text, the ignorance in the sense of avijja are: not knowing suffering, not knowing the origin of suffering, not knowing the cessation of suffering, not knowing the way leading to the cessation of suffering. This is called ignorance.\(^{87}\)

According to the Abhidhamma, not-knowing composes what went before (the past), what comes after (the future), what came both before and after (the past and the future)\(^{88}\), and the principle of Dependent Origination.

Sometime, the word ‘Avijja or ignorance’ can used in Buddhist teachings in a very different meaning. Ignorance is often explained a kind of blindness; it is compared to darkness of mind, it does not know things as they really are. Sometimes, we use it for explained to perceiving the unsatisfactory as satisfactory, the impermanent as permanent, not beautiful as beautiful, and the selfless as self. Therefore, ignorance makes

\(^{87}\text{S. II. 4; IV.256; Vbh. 135.}\)

\(^{88}\text{Dhs. 183. Pubbant–aparant–pubbantāparanta}\)
man not know things as they actually are, but seeing life, seeing ourselves, seeing other people through a veil of beliefs, opinions, likes, dislikes, projections, clinging, attachments, and so on.

Therefore, we can sum up to Ignorance or delusion that it is the root causes of all unwholesome actions, all moral defilements (*akusala*). All conceivable wrong notions are the result of ignorance. Independently of this crowning corruption, no ill action, whether mental, verbal or physical, could be performed.

**ii) Volitional Impulses (*Sankhara*)**

Ignorance is the causal condition or climate which permits for the arising of certain kinds of *sankharas* – volitional impulses or karmic formations. It can divided three kinds of volitional impulses, viz., (i) bodily formations (*kayasankhara*), or intentional actions; (ii) verbal formations (*vacasankhara*), or intentional speech; and (iii) mental formations (*manosankhara*), or thoughts. It is said in the text that:

*And what, monks, are the volitional formations? There are these three kinds of volitional formations: the bodily volitional formation, the verbal volitional formation, the mental volitional formation. These are called the volitional formations.*

---

89S. II. 4; *M.* I. 54; 39; *Vbh.* 135.
However, in the *paticcasaṃuppada*, *sankhara* is restricted to mean simply all good and evil actions (*kusala-akusala kamma*), all actions physical, verbal and mental which bring about their consequences. According to the *Abhidhamma*, there are also three kinds of *sankharas*:

a) Meritorious formations, or good kamma,

b) non-meritorious formations, or bad kamma,

c) fixed or unmoving formations, or special meritorious kamma.

### iii) Consciousness (*Vinnana*)

Formations condition the arising of consciousness. Consciousness arises through eye (*chakkhu*), ear (*sota*), nose (*ghan*), tongue (*jiva*), body (*kaya*), and mind consciousness (*mano-vinnana*) – the six senses.

The word ‘*Consciousness*’ that we always use in sense of an awareness of all the sensations that enter through the sense doors. For example, there is the consciousness of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching and thinking. At any given time, one or the other of these senses door consciousness dominates our experience. Therefore, Consciousness always be explained to the basic climate of the mind at any particular moment, the way it is actually shaped or flavored. So any particular moment might be aversive or dull or greedy, for example, though without interest or intention some of these flavorings of consciousness may not be

---

90 *Ps.* II.206.; *Vbh.* 135.
noticed. Consciousness is also interactive: not only is it shaped by formations and by ignorance, it also shapes everything going on around us regardless of whether we pay attention to it or not.

On the other hand, consciousness is an explanation to the perception and awareness of sensations which will be related to particular intentions. Mind or consciousness is fashioned into specific qualities by intention. At death, the momentum of volitional impulses, propelled by the Law of Kamma, induces the so-fashioned re-linking consciousness (patisandhivinanna) to take a sphere of birth and level of existence appropriate to it. This is rebirth.

iv) **Mind and Body (Nama-Rupa)**

Consciousness gives rise to nama-rupa, in more simple terms it is called as name and form. Nama (name or mind) which it consists of feeling (vedana), perception (sanna), intention (cetana), contact (phassa), attention (manasikara), or according to the Abhidhamma, khandhas of feeling, perception and volitional impulses. And rupa (body or materiality) which it consists of the four elements: earth, water, air and fire and all forms dependent on them. Which there are referenced in SamyuttaNikaya, DigahaNikaya, and AngutaraNikaya, as follows;
And what, monks, is mind and body? Feeling, perception, volition, contact, attention: this is called mind. The four great elements and the body derived from the four great elements: this is called body. Thus this name and this form are together called mind and body.  

This word “Mind and Body” always used in the sense of encompasses into four of the five aggregates – body, feeling, perception, and volition. ‘Mind’ is applied to feeling, perception, and volition as well as contact and attention. These five always accompany consciousness as supportive functions which are involved in the recognition of experience. ‘Body’ is constituted by the four great elements which are elsewhere listed as earth, water, fire, and air. These four elements do not simply refer to earth, water, fire, and air as we commonly relate to them.

Therefore, the process of rebirth proceeds to create a life form primed to generate more kamma. As a result there are the rupa, vedana, sanna, and sankhara khandhas in their entirety, complete with the distinct qualities and defects endowed on them by the fashioning influence of conditions, or kamma, and constrained by the limitations of that particular sphere of existence (bhava), be it human, animal, divine, and so on.

91 S. II. 3; cf. D. III.279; A. III. 134.
v) **Six Sense Bases (Sarayatana)**

The six senses arise from ‘*mind and body*’, which contains of six senses viz., eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind. These six organs are the tools used to get in contact with the external objects and to be aware of the existence of an objective matter. According to *Sumyutta Nikaya*, *Digha Nikaya* and *Majjhima Nikaya*, they are explained to organs of our characters and personalities, as follows;

> *And what, monks, are the six sense bases? The eye base, the ear base, the nose base, the tongue base, the body base, the mind base. These are called the six sense bases.*

These six senses bring one into contact with the world. They are sometimes called the six doors because through them the world enters into our awareness. They are also referred to as the six roots because through them we are rooted in the world. They are the psychophysical organism that provide us the capacity to see, hear, smell, taste, touch and think. One of the deeper understandings we can have is to acknowledge that the mind is one of the sense-spheres. The thoughts, images and perceptions that arise and pass away in the mind are not so essentially different from the sounds or bodily sensations that come and go in the realm of the senses. We may sometimes have the impression that mind is

---

92S. II. 3; cf. *D.* III.243; *M.* III. 216.
constant or always ‘on duty’, but a little bit of a deeper exploration of what happens within the mind actually shatters that perception.

vi) Contact (Phassa)

The word ‘Contact’ arises from the ‘six senses’, which is the mentality process created by the six senses, the objects and the consciousness. Therefore, contact is the condition for feeling. If without contact, we will be no feeling. It is the very first link where suffering begins. According to Samyutta Nikaya and Digha Nikaya it is explained as follows;

And what, monks, is contact? These are the six classes of contact: eye-contact, ear-contact, nose-contact, tongue-contact, body-contact, mind-contact. This is called contact.\footnote{S. II. 3; D. III. 243.}

When the sense doors are functioning, contact arises. Contact is this meeting between the sense door and the sense information. For example, I beat the table, hearing arises through the ears-sense-door. You smell something cooking in the kitchen, the smell arises through the nose-sense-door. This kind of arising always involves the coming together of the sense door, the sense object and consciousness – the three elements together constitute contact. By The Buddha explained to this one that with contact the world arises, and with the cessation of contact there is...
the cessation of the world. This statement acknowledges the extent to which we create our world of experience by selectively highlighting the data of the senses. Each moment of contact involves isolating an impression out of the vast stream of impressions that are present for us in every moment as we sit here. Contact is what happens when something jumps out of that background and becomes the foreground.

Therefore, the process of awareness now operates through the contact of three factors. They are:

(i) the internal sense-doors (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind),
(ii) external sense objects (sights, sounds, odours, tastes, bodily sensations and
(iii) mind objects and consciousness (eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness, tactile-consciousness and mind-consciousness).

We call all that things mentioned above as ‘contact’.
vii) Feeling (Vedana)

Contact is the base or the condition for the arising of feeling. Vedana is the feeling, or the ‘appreciation’ of the qualities of sense contacts.

Feelings *(of pleasure, pain and indifference)* which arise from impingement on eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind, are six folds: (i) feeling born of visual contact, (ii) feeling born of sound contact, (iii) feeling born of smell contact, (iv) feeling born of taste contact, (v) feeling born of body contact, and (vi) feeling born of mind contact. According to *Samyutta Nikaya* which is explained to that;

*And what, monks, is feeling? There are these six classes of feeling: feeling born of eye-contact, feeling born of ear-contact, feeling born of nose contact, feeling born of tongue-contact, feeling born of body-contact, feeling born of mind-contact. This is called feeling.*

In discussion about feeling here, we are not speaking about the more complex emotions such as anger or jealousy or fear or anxiety, but the very fundamental level of feeling impact that is the basis not only of all emotions but of all mind states and responses. We are speaking about the pleasant feeling that arises in connection with what is coming through any of the sense doors; or the unpleasant feeling, or those feelings that are

---

*S. II. 3; cf. S. IV. 232.*
neither pleasant nor unpleasant. This does not mean they are ‘neutral’, in the sense of a kind of nothingness. Some feelings are certainly there, but they do not really make a strong impression to evoke a pleasant or painful feeling response in us. Actually the impressions, and sensations, and experiences that are neither pleasant nor unpleasant are some of the more interesting data received by our system.

It is important to acknowledge that the links of contact, of sense doors and feeling that we have been talking about are neither wholesome nor unwholesome in and of themselves; but they become the catalyst of what happens next. The sense doors, the feelings and the contact are the forerunners of how we actually react or respond and how we begin to weave a personal story out of events or impressions that all of us experience at all times. Therefore, contact, feeling and sense doors are important factors to pay attention to.

viii) Craving (Tanha)

According to AngutaraNikaya and Abhidhmmatthasangaha, craving (tanha) is divided into three kinds:

(i)  kamatanha: wanting to possess and enjoy,

(ii) bhavatanha: wanting to be, and
(iii) *vibhavatanha:* wanting to destroy or be rid of.\textsuperscript{95}

Craving begins to be that movement of desire to seek out and sustain the pleasurable contacts with sense objects and to avoid the unpleasant or to make them end. It’s the craving of having and getting, the craving to be or to become someone or something, and the craving to get rid of or to make something end. According to *Samyutta Nikaya* which is explained to that;

*And what, monks, is craving? There are these six classes of craving: craving for forms, craving for sounds, craving for odours, craving for tastes, craving for tactile objects, craving for mental phenomena. This is called craving.*\textsuperscript{96}

Therefore, when the craving or aversion arises in response to pleasant or unpleasant feeling that our responses become very complex, and we run into a world of struggle. When we crave for something, we in a way delegate authority to an object or to an experience or to a person, and at the same time we are depriving ourselves of that authority. As a result, our sense of wellbeing, our sense of contentment or freedom, comes to be dependent upon what we get or do not get. We all know that kind of restlessness of appetite – there’s never enough; just one more

\textsuperscript{95}A. III. 445.; *Vbh.* 365.

\textsuperscript{96}S. II. 3.
thing is needed; one more experience, one more mind state, one more object, one more emotion, and then I shall be happy.

ix) Clinging (Upadana)

We will see that the word Craving and clinging (also called grasping) are very close and inseparable. There are many scholars tried to explain that craving is a certain momentum, and a certain one-way direction, and when it becomes intense, it becomes clinging.

It is a stronger feeling of desire that becomes grasping, clinging, or being engrossed in something. When we do not have something, we crave for it; and when we get it, we attach ourselves to it. Once we have attached ourselves to something, this is not only linked up with the object of desire, it is also linked up with attachment to various opinions, theories, and biases. Attachment to certain patterns of behavior or courses of action that allow us to fulfill our desires and attachment to a self are involved. According to Samyutta Nikaya and Digha Nikaya it is explained as follows;

And what, monks, is clinging? There are these four kinds of clinging: clinging to sensual pleasures, clinging to views, clinging to rules and vows, clinging to a doctrine of self. This is called clinging.⁹⁷

⁹⁷S. II. 3; D. III.230; M. I. 66; Vbh. 375.
To sum up, there are four types of clinging:

i. clinging to sense pleasures,

ii. clinging to views, theories and beliefs,

iii. clinging to rituals, rules and observances,

iv. clinging to the notion of a self within the five aggregates.

The difference between craving and clinging is illustrated with this example: craving is when a thief extends his hand to grasp an object that he intends to steal; but clinging is when the thief grasping hold of the object and takes possession of it.

x) **Becoming (Bhava)**

The meaning of ‘Becoming’ is divided into two kinds, and at first we should be understood as two processes: they are kamma-process (kamma-bhava) and kamma-resultant rebirth process (upapatti-bhava). The former is the accumulated good and evil actions, the ‘kammically active side of life’. And the later, upapatti-bhava, is the ‘kammically passive and morally neutral side of life’, and signifies the kamma-resultant rebirth-process in the next life.
When these kammas are accumulated, after death they bring about a new existence. That is upapatti-bhava or the ‘kammically passive and morally neutral side of life’,

The next life may be in any sphere of plane of sentient existence (kama-bhava), that of form existence (rupa-bhava), or that of formless existence (arupa-bhava). According to Samyutta Nikaya and Digha Nikaya it is explained as follows;

And what, monks, is becoming? There are these three kinds of becoming: sense-realm becoming, form-realm becoming, formless-realm becoming. This is called becoming.98

The sense-realm (kamabhava), that is, unhappy realms (apayabhumi) consist of woeful state (hell), the realm of beasts, the realm of hungry ghosts, the realm of demon, and blissful realms (sugatibhumi) consist of human realm and the six heavens. The form-realm (rupavacarabhumi) is of sixteen realms. And there are four kinds of formless-realms (arupavacarabhumi).

---

98 S. II. 3; D. III 215; M. I. 294.
xi) Birth (Jati)

In this the word ‘birth or jati’ here, it is not means the actual childbirth, but the appearance of the five aggregates (material form, feeling, perception, formation, and consciousness) in the mother’s womb.

By there is kamma-bhava is the process to conditioned. The present birth is brought about by the craving and clinging kamma-volitions (tanha-upadana) of the past births, and the craving and clinging acts of will of the present birth bring about future rebirth.

Therefore, we will see that birth is the beginning with the re-linking consciousness, which is endowed with features contingent on its kammic momentum and connecting to a state appropriate to it. The five khandhas arise in a new life continuum, comprising mind and body, the six sense bases, contact and feeling. As according to Samyutta Nikaya explained to birth of the process into conditioned, as follows;

And what, monks, is birth? The birth of the various beings into the various orders of beings, their being born, descent [into the womb], production, the manifestation of the aggregates, the obtaining of the sense bases. This is called birth.99

99S. II. 3.
xii) Ageing and Death (Jara-Marana)

Ageing and Death are last one in Dependent origination, by the dependent on birth as a condition ageing and death arises. Because we take birth in the future, we pay the inevitable price with ageing and death and also sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair. Birth, therefore, leads to another round of old age and death, grief, lamentation, suffering, dejection and despair. And in this case there are explained in Samyutta Nikaya that;

*And what, monks, is aging-and-death? The aging of the various beings in the various orders of beings, their growing old, brokenness of teeth, greyness of hair, wrinkling of the skin, decline of vitality, degeneration of the faculties: this is called aging. The passing away of the various beings from the various orders of beings, their perishing, breakup, disappearance, mortality, death, completion of time, the breakup of the aggregates, the laying down of the carcass: this is called death. Thus this aging and this death are together called aging-and-death.*

From the text mentioned above which we will see that the decay and dissolution of that life is continuum. For the unenlightened being these things are constantly threatening life in overt or covert ways. In the

---

100S. II. 3.
cycle of ordinary human life, therefore, ageing and death go together with sorrow (soka), lamentation (parideva), pain (dukkha), grief (domanassa), and despair (upayasa), which, all in all, can be summed up as simply ‘dukkha’. Therefore, we have, in the final words of the principle of Dependent Origination, the formula: ‘Thus is the arising of this whole mass of suffering’.

Therefore, we will see that the principle of Dependent Origination functions as a cycle, it does not stop there. The last factor becomes a crucial link in the further continuation of the cycle. That is, sorrow, lamentation and so on are all manifestations of the outflows. These outflows are four in number, namely:

a) the concern with the gratification of the desires of the five senses;

b) attachment to views and beliefs, for example that the body is the self or belonging to self;

c) desire for various states of being and the aspiration to attain and maintain them; and

d) ignorance of the way things really are.

Sorrow and suffering affect the mind in negative ways. Whenever suffering arises, the mind becomes confused and muddled. The arising of
sorrow is thus commensurate with ignorance, as according to in the Visuddhi Magga explained in this that;

Sorrow, pain, grief and despair are inseparable from ignorance, and lamentation is the norm for the deluded being. For that reason, when sorrow is fully manifest, so also is ignorance fully manifest.¹⁰¹

As we have well known that the cycle of Dependent Origination is the ‘Wheel of Becoming’ (bhavacakka), or ‘Wheel of Samsara’ that is, the cycle of death and rebirth. It can be seen that these explanations are linked with three phases of life: ignorance and volitional impulses are in one lifetime, consciousness to becoming are in a second lifetime, while birth and ageing and death including sorrow, lamentation and so on occur in a third. Taking the middle life-span as the present one, we can divide the three life periods, with the entire twelve links of the Dependent Origination cycle, into three time periods, thus:

a) Past life – Ignorance, volitional impulses:

b) Present life – Consciousness, mind and body, sense bases, contact, feeling, craving, clinging, becoming:

c) Future life – Birth, ageing and death (sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair).

¹⁰¹Vism. 576.
Among these three periods, the middle period, the present life, is our base. From this perspective, we can see the relationship between causes in the past to effects in the present (\textit{past cause} $\rightarrow$ \textit{present result}), whereas for future, we can trace from present causes to see what kinds of results may come about in the future (\textit{present cause} $\rightarrow$ \textit{future result}). Thus the middle phase – the present – contains both effects and causes.

We can now represent the whole cycle in four phases:

a) Past cause – Ignorance, volitional impulses;

b) Present result – Consciousness, mind and body, sense bases, contact, feeling;

c) Present cause – Craving, clinging, becoming, and

d) Future result – Birth, ageing and death (sorrow, lamentation, and so on).
TILAKKHA NA IN BUDDHISM

Tilakkhana consists of three keynotes, which we will consider according to the Samyutta Nikaya, Dammapada which reveals the natural truths that all conditioned things are impermanent (anicca), subject to suffering (dukkha), and are without self (anatta). 102

These three characteristics of existence (tilakkhana) follow a continual process of cause and effect. The philosophical problems of change and substance are whole with the Buddhist causal view in similar manner. Therefore, the teaching of Dependent Origination, which is unique with the doctrine of impermanence (anicca) and not-self (anatta). P.A. Payutto writes:

To state this in a reverse and contrary manner, if all things had a real self, then there must be permanence; if all things are permanent, even for a moment, then they cannot exist as related causal factors; when they do not exist as related causal factors, then they cannot make up a current; when there is no current of factors, then there is no natural process; and if there is any kind of real self at the centre of this current, then it is impossible to have existence according to real causal factors. 103

102 S. IV. 1; Dhp. 277-79.
i) Impermanence (*Anicca*)

The word ‘Impermanence’ (*Anicca*) means the law of impermanence states of all phenomena are subject to continuous change, to arise and cease; that means, everything there is no permanent state, either physical or animate, existing. in fact, all phenomena exist in a constant flow or flux. This flow is progressing in a related and interdependent manner as connected causal factors following the principle of Dependent Origination. And by aims of the Dependent Origination wants explained to pointing out the interrelated condition of all things as the continuous flow of relationships between causal factors.

Which we will see that everything there are relation thing to thing, nothing things causing without cause and effect, which we can enough explained that all things come to exist, exist within this flow or current, which comprises various related and interdependent causes arising and passing away in a constant and unending series. As the Pali philosopher *Buddhaghosa* says: “*There is no real production; there is only interdependence*”. ¹⁰⁴ And P.A. Payutto states, “*With all things proceeding along in this flow, they are really nothing in and of themselves, and they are unable to maintain any kind of personal self or essence*”. ¹⁰⁵

---

¹⁰⁴ Edward Conze, *Buddhist Thought in India*, p. 149.
In the Buddhist of doctrine, the word ‘Impermanence’ is inalienable from the Buddhist conception of causality. The possibility of change indicates that there is nothing permanent stuck or fixed in any one state. Which in this case Rhys Davids says, “according to the Buddhist, there is no Being, there is only a Becoming”.\textsuperscript{106} The being changes when its causes and conditions change. By really understanding the teaching of Dependent Origination, it is accepted that we have the power to change our life and to liberate ourselves from suffering by removing its causes. We have the capacity to create beneficial and wholesome conditions for beneficial and wholesome results. We may be the products of causality but we are also the producers of the very causes which will determine whether we perpetuate suffering or attain liberation.

\textbf{ii) Suffering (Dukkha)}

Many people may think that why the Buddha thought to suffering at the very first of his teaching, why the Buddha always emphasized to the suffering. The answer is that Buddha said that because suffering is original of things, if we understand it very well, then we will be searching of the cause of suffering, which will lead us to the principle of causation and search for a solution to the problem of suffering (ethical problem).

through the ground for logical inference rather than through the epistemological and metaphysical interest. It is said that the Buddha’s arrival at the principle of causation unmistakably demonstrates, causation was discovered by him as a result of a firm commitment and conscious involvement with human suffering.

iii) No-Self (Anatta)

In the Buddhist’s doctrine, the word ‘not-self’ means states of all phenomena which are not the self, and that there is no permanent essence, ‘self’, ego, or soul. By this term, originates the negation of the concept of atta (atman). Which both are difference, the Buddha denies ‘atta’(atman). What is commonly called a self is really only the collection of what are called the five khandhas. These are body, feelings, perceptions, dispositions, and awareness. G.P. Malalasekera notes:

“The uniquely Buddhist doctrine of anatta is virtually a conclusion from the argument of conditionality of all component things, the inevitable corollary of conceiving phenomena as conditioned events”.

Buddhists describe self as ‘functional’, not as entity. Indeed, each of the khandhas should be seen as function rather than entity. As David J. Kalupahana states:

---

“Rupa or material form accounts for the function of identification; vedana or feeling and sanna or perception represent the function of experience, emotive as well as cognitive; sankhara or disposition stands for the function of individuation; vinnana or consciousness explains the function of continuity in experience”. 108

In the Samyutta Nikaya, the notion of not-self is not explained in any metaphysical theory on the absence of a self, but rather for the doctrine of detachment by means of an analysis of what is not of the self. 109 For this Luis O. Gomez says, “the question is not the existence or absence of a self, but the problem of what belongs to the self”. 110 The Buddha explains to his monks:

This body, monks, is not yours, nor does it belong to others. It should be known, it should be considered, monks, as former deeds purposefully performed and thought out. In regard to it, monks, a well-instructed noble disciple practices well centred attention (yoniso manasikara) only on dependent origination. 111

There is no problem concerning whether things really exist or are eternal or subject to extinction; but those who incorrectly understand

109 Cf. S. IV. 81.
111 S. II. 64; IV. 81.
Dependent Origination also tend to misunderstand and interpret anatta to mean that nothing exists, which leads them to espouse a nihilistic view (natthikavada)—an extremely distorted understanding of reality (micchaditthi).

According to Harvey, the Buddha never rejected the existence of a life-principle (jiva), which “is not a separate part of a person, but is a process which occurs when certain conditions are present. . .”112

KAMMA AND REBIRTH

The Law of Kamma (Sanskrit: karma)113 is the most importance to Buddhist ‘s doctrine and moreover, it functions as the central motif in the most fundamental features of classical Indian philosophy, which we will see that all schools of thought except the materialists seem to accept this law as unquestionable. Simply formulated, it states that all actions have consequences which will affect the doer of the action at some future time. The Law of Kamma will emphasize the regularity of human actions and their effects in the sense that actions done are considered to lead to appropriate effects. Good actions lead to good effects or experiences and bad actions result in bad effects.

113 Kamma – the Pāli spelling – which is used throughout this present work, is not as familiar as the Sanskrit spelling, karma, although they both mean the same.
Which in this case, there is explained in the *Culla kamma vibhanga Sutta*, a young Brahmin Subha asked the Buddha, why among human beings some had short life-span, while others lived longer; some were sickly, while others were healthy; some were ugly, while others were beautiful; some had little power, others were influential; some were poor, while others were rich; and some had little wisdom, while some possessed of insight. He further asked the Buddha of the reason and cause for the lowness and excellence which were seen among men despite their being human. The Buddha’s reply was thus:

“All beings are the owners of their kamma, heirs to their kamma, born of their kamma, related to their kamma, supported by their kamma. Kamma it is which divides beings into coarse and refined states”.

Therefore, we will see that in Buddhist teachings, the Law of Kamma, says only this: for every event that occurs, there will follow another event whose existence was caused by the first, and this second event will be pleasant or unpleasant according as its cause was skillful or unskillful.

---

114 *M. III*. 202-03.
THE PHILOSOPHICAL SCHOOLS OF BUDDHISM

The four main philosophical schools of Buddhism, which were distinguished by the Buddhist and non-Buddhist writers, and became well known in Indian philosophy, are as follows:

1. The Madhyamika or school of Sunyavada

2. The Yogacara or Vijnanavada or school of subjective Idealism

3. The Sautrantika or Bahyanumeyavada school of Representationism

4. The Vaibhasika or Bahyapratyakyavada

The fourfold classification of the Buddha’s philosophy has much philosophical importance, even in the light of contemporary Western thought, where we find some of these views advocated with great force.\(^{115}\) The first two of the four philosophical schools mentioned above come under the Mahayana and the last two under the Theravada.

---

\(^{115}\) For more details of the four philosophical schools of Buddhism, see S. Chatterjee. and D.M. Datta, *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, pp. 143-53.