CHAPTER IV

NON-VIOLENCE IN BUDDHISM

The development of Buddhist philosophy naturally falls into three stages: original Buddhism, Hinayana, and Mahayana. The division of Buddhism into Hinayana and Mahayana is common enough, but recent researches undoubtedly suggest that the original Buddhism ought to be treated separately and regarded as the common matrix of both Hinayana and Mahayana. By the original Buddhism is meant the teachings of the Master himself, as they can be gleaned from the canonical texts through critical analysis. These teachings have to be distinguished from the elaborations, interpretations, and distortions which they underwent at the hands of the Buddha's followers even while the compilation of the canon was still going on. This early phase was followed by the growth of various sects and schools, some of which in course of time led to the emergence of Mahayana.

THE ORIGINAL STANDPOINT

The Buddha's teachings must not be regarded either as the simple continuation of the Upanisadic ideas, or just as a reaction to them. The Buddha derived his ideas from both the Brahmanical as well as from the Sramanic traditions, and he finally fused them together into an original synthesis through the force of his spiritual experience. Thus the Buddhist philosophy is to be regarded at once as a rational commentary on Buddhist moral and spiritual experience as also a new phase in the development, of the Vedic and non-Vedic traditions of thought.

The account of Buddha's renunciation of home life clearly shows that he was influenced by the prevailing mode of Sramanic thought which held the world to be full of sufferings and encouraged 'men to seek eternal peace beyond the world. There were many groups of wandering ascetics who all believed in the doctrine of \textit{samsara} in one form or another. In contrast with this 'Sramanic' doctrine of \textit{samsara}—ascetic and pessimistic—there was the Vedic tradition of thought which emphasized the point that everything was grounded in Brahman which is of the nature of bliss. Properly viewed, the whole universe is an ocean of bliss, this is the highest Upanisadic vision.

The Buddha began by accepting the doctrine of *samsara* and that implied a belief in the fleeting and unsatisfactory character of the world of human experience. It also implied that the decisive force governing human destiny was that of *karman*. The power and the prestige of gods, quickly paled before this doctrine. In the Buddha's thinking gods play no vital part, where the doctrine of *karman* occupies a central place.

Vedic thought was dominated by the contrast between human mortality and the immortality of the gods. The origin of mortal things was traced back to the will of some primordial deity, sometimes conceived as shaping an original formless substance, ultimately in the Upanishads, the deity was conceived as one and identical with the self and the whole universe as its creative emanation. The real is the immortal, the spiritual, the substantial; the unreal is the ephemeral, the non-spiritual, the modal. Man transcends sorrow by knowing the self, the infinite, where alone happiness is to be found.\(^2\) The infinite and eternal spirit is not only conceived as the foundational reality of the universe and the ultimate goal and bliss for man, but also as knowledge or consciousness which is regarded not as an act, state or relation but rather as the autonomous and real subject or self. The result is that knowing, being and ‘enjoying’ or ‘valuing’ are all fused into one whole, the spirit or Atman.

In contrast with this Upanisadic philosophy was the prevailing outlook of the various wandering groups of ascetics called *sramanas*. They were convinced of the doctrine of Karman which made suffering an inalienable part of natural life and sought its root in the force of past actions. Man is the prisoner of a begin ningless past and he can escape from its chains only by withdrawing from the temporal process into the safe recess of eternity. This was the philosophical basis of the institution of ascetic renunciation. The Buddha grew in the ‘City of the Tawny-clad’ (*Kapilavastu*) disgusted with the natural ills of life, he renounced the world to seek what is good (*kim-kusala-gavesi*), the excellent station of peace (*santivarapadam parivesamano*). He felt dissatisfied with Brahmanical as well as with Sramanic teachers and finally attained enlightenment by discovering the relatedness and contingency of all things and the ineffable peace which lies beyond.\(^3\) These twin principles of *Pratityasamutpada* and *Nirvana* form the core of the Buddha’s philosophy. It is

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\(^2\) Chandogya Upanishad. 7.23.
through their divergent interpretations that subsequent Buddhist philosophical systems have arisen. Pratityasamutpada was also called the ‘Middle Way’ (Madhyam-pratipad). In the famous instruction to Katyayana (Katyayana-vada) the ‘Middle Way’ has been defined as excluding the extremes of eternalism and annihilationism.\(^4\) Upanisadic brahma-vada, Sankhya, Pradhana-purusava and the Jaina jivapadga-vada were the principal instances of the etemalist philosophy. It held that behind all changes lay permanent substances—spiritual or material. Annihilationism, on the other hand seems to have been instanced only by the doctrine which denied a persistent spiritual substance. Since the materialists who are usually put in this category did believe in the persistence of material substances, ucechavadavata therefore, merely refers to the annihilation of consciousness at death and to the absence of any life after death. The denial of the soul was an obvious implication of such a doctrine.

The Buddha's 'Middle-Way' did not affirm either substantial permanence or the absolute end of the life of the soul. It is not that he denied the existence of the soul which the materialistic annihilationist had already done. Such a denial was held by him to be pernicious because by implication it tended to repudiate the serious possibility of spiritual life. The Buddha firmly maintained the continuity of life beyond death and refused to affirm that there was ever a complete cessation of life even in parinirvana. Consciousness may become infinitely luminous,\(^5\) it may be withdrawn from its manifestation and, thus, become quiescent (niruddha)\(^6\) but in some sense or other, it never ceases because it cannot be said that the Tathagata ceases to be after death, though consciousness may be freed from its natural basis or support (pratistha). If the Buddha's attitude towards the soul disagreed with the simple denial of the materialists, it disagreed also with the belief in a changing soul such as was held by Jains. And he repudiated a permanent individual substance outside and behind the changing process of psychic life. These three denials appeared to lead to an impasse. Neither is the soul denied nor accepted, whether as a changing or a permanent entity. This is the famous Buddhist enigma—the enigma of Buddha's silence, the most crucial of all questions. The enigma arises because one does not see that Buddha is rejecting the very logic which the question presupposes. The very concept of the substance as a means of reconciling diversity and unity, change and

\(^4\) Madhyamka Karika, 15.
\(^6\) Ibid.

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duration, accepted by common sense as well as by science and philosophy, is hereby rejected by the Buddha as inadequate. The Buddha rejects not the soul but substance which happily is a logico-metaphysical category rather than a religious one and hence perhaps more dispensable. The Buddha's originality is essentially philosophical. He is not rejecting a perennial spiritual tradition for he claimed only to show anew the pre-existing path which had been submerged by neglect. It was the current dogmatic exposition of spiritual verities which left him cold. The problem of change is unsolvable so long we consider change to belong to what does not change, for that is a patent contradiction. On the other hand, to radically separate the changing from the unchanging again leaves both the ends unconnected and meaningless. Change presupposes what does not change. The trouble lies firmly embedded in the very concept of change. It requires change and the changeless in the same locus and cannot be reconciled. This has led many philosophers to think of change as unreal appearance. Such was the reasoning of Zeno which dialectically supported the Parmenidean principle of 'to on' (=Sat). The Upanisadic affirmation of Sat was, however, based on spiritual experience rather than on dialectical considerations. By the Buddha's time, dialectical argumentation had become common and the Buddha is the first person to clearly perceive the philosophical puzzle implicit in the concepts of change and substance. That is why he refused to categorize the spiritual being in terms of existence and non-existence, permanence and annihilation, change and substance.

It is not insignificant to recall that the greatest saint of recent times, viz. Rama Krishna Paramahansa once stated that the Buddha refused to choose between existence and non existence because they are categories appropriate only to the world of nature. At the level of self-knowledge, they have no application. Thus, both philosophically and spiritually, the principle of Pratyayasamutpada is at once original and profound. It comprehends the contingent transiency of phenomena dialectically, leaving the realm of ultimate spiritual verity unhindered by dogmatic formulations. The characteristics of anitya, duhkha or anatman apply to phenomena. Pratyayasamutpada points out that this phenomena lacks existential as well as conceptual independence. Any attempt to view them philosophically would tend to be

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7 Chandogya Upanisa, 6.13.
8 Ramakrshna Kathamrta, III. 289.
dialectical. The realms of existence and concepts thus come to have a wholly pragmatic and relative status, functioning as a mere ante-chamber of spiritual experience. Pratityasamutpada as the dialectical comprehension of the phenomena clears the ground for that spiritual serenity of which the bourne is Nirvana.

Adopting a current medical formula, the Buddha enunciated the spiritual truth (aryasatya) as four-fold. As the healer of man's spiritual malady, he diagnosed it to the influence of ignorance, craving and will. Spiritual illness is of the nature of inner restlessness and arises ultimately from that transcendental illusion which makes us find ourselves in terms of psycho-physical commotion. This is finding the self where it is not, and it leads to identification with the instincts, experiences and activities that ceaselessly arise within the psychical flux and are really governed by an immanent causal process. This is the “flood” the tree of ignorance, intertwined and overlaid by creepers. To stop the flood, to eradicate the tree, one must begin with the rectification of actions and proceed to the stilling of the psychic processes finally reaching transcendental insight. Illness arises in three basic steps—ignorance, passions and action. Knowledge reverses the process and the steps, and leads to the rectification or renunciation of faction, the stilling of the passions, and the transcendental knowledge.

The Buddha did not announce a categorically defined system. He gave expression to an inspired and inspiring wisdom using similes and parables and adapting his expression to the need of the occasion. As the Mahayanists formulated later, desana lokanathanam sattvasayavasanuga. The Buddha, in fact, allowed his words to be remembered by everyone in his own dialect, the meaning being important not the word (arthah pratisaranam na vyajnanam). The result of this appears to have been that after the passing away of the Buddha, his collected words gave rise to diverse attempts at systematizing them and thus many different schools and sects arose. Traditionally, by the time of Asoka their number had reached eighteen. The doctrines of many of these are known only fragmentarily but of at least two of them, Theravada and Sarvastivada, an extensive literature survives. The Theravada and Sarvastivada Abhidhammas constitute the major sources of our knowledge of Hinayana Buddhist philosophy. The most systematic exposition of the former is to be found in the writings of Buddhagosa (fifth century of the Christian era) and Anuruddhacariya (twelfth century of the Christian era). The locus classicus of Sarvastivada Abhidharmas is the celebrated Abhidharmakosa of Vasubandhu (fourth
or fifth century of the Christian era).\(^9\)

**HINAYANA**

There is a basic similarity between *Theravada* and *Sarvastivada*. Reality is analyzed into a plurality of ultimate constituents called dhamma which are defined as impersonal entities having each its separate character.\(^{10}\) Most of them are transitory and causally functioning sinergies (*samskara*). Only nirvana, nirodha and dksa are held to be eternal. The dharmas are best understood as classes of phenomena rather than as stable universals or tattvas. The starting point of the dharma theory is the flux of experience. The reality which is sought to be analyzed is conceived primarily as experiential. To classify experience and isolate its recurring patterns of causes and conditions so that it may be possible to remould the course of life, this was the prime task of the *Abhidharma*. Dharmas are, thus, constituents of experience. It needs to be remembered that every form of the Buddhist philosophy has a strong disinclination to posit transcendent reals beyond experience. In this sense, its orientation is essentially phenomenalistic. The earliest division made was between consciousness and its objects-*nama* and *rupa*. Then consciousness was subdivided into six types and corresponding to each were posited types of objects. The *Abhidharma*, however, did not succeed in remaining a pure phenomenalism. Its interest in discovering and positing causes always tended to lead it to hypothetical entities which threatened to acquire a transcendent character. Similarly, the very task of classification tended to produce general features and with them entities looking like universals.

Thus the *Abhidharma* was led to postulate material elements as the causal basis of sense-perception and a mental element along with ideal elements to account for mental awareness. They tended to explain the rising of consciousness as the result of pre-conscious elements, objective and subjective, and thus going beyond the strict phenomenality of experience were led to accept not merely the stream of consciousness but also matter and mind and their diverse forms. The forms of matter included the four different types of atoms, complex entities composed of them and


ultimately their subtlest products in the form of ten senses and sense-organs.\textsuperscript{11} The forms of the mind included not merely the mind and mental perception but also the various characteristic modes of mental awareness such as conation, affection, etc. The objects of pure mental awareness had to be accepted as a separate class of entities which could neither be called matter nor mind, and other impersonal immaterial entities had to be invented to account for pure concepts like numbers and universal features like impermanence. Thus the list of conditioned phenomena (\textit{samskrta dharma}) came to include \textit{citta}, \textit{rupa citsamprayukta dharmas} and \textit{citta viprayukta dharmas}. As for the unconditioned real (\textit{asamskrta dharma}), the Theravadins admitted only \textit{Nirvana} in this category. It was admitted to be positive, real, changeless and immortal. On the other hand, the \textit{Sarvastivadins} admitted in this category two cessations \textit{pratisamkhyanirodha} or \textit{Nirvana} and \textit{apratisamkhyanirodha}, the cessation of entities in inattention which precludes the possibility of their ever being experienced.\textsuperscript{12} The third element admitted in this category is akasa which appears very strange indeed in the Buddhist doctrine although there is some evidence for the existence of an ancient Buddhist text where the Buddha appears to have spoken of akasa almost in the Upanisadic manner.\textsuperscript{13} The \textit{Sarvastivadins} also tried to tackle the problem arising from an apparent duality in the nature of dharmas. There is, on the one hand, the dharma in itself (\textit{dharmasvabhva}), on the other hand, its numerous examples (\textit{dharmalaksana}), constantly arise and perish.\textsuperscript{14} Thus the constant passing away of consciousness does not in some sense destroy the very element of consciousness. The mystery of time was thus made the subject of profound reflection.\textsuperscript{15} In some sense even within the process of change, there is a persistence in time. The past and the future are not simply unreal. Vasumittra explained that the present state of the element is defined by actuality or functioning (\textit{karitra}). The past and the future thus have an ideal as well as potential reality.\textsuperscript{16}

Thus the \textit{Vaibhasikas} among the \textit{Sarvastivadins} came very near a fundamental negation of what was central to Buddhism. They not merely admitted a variety of transcendent elements but appeared to compromise with the very doctrine of flux.

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid.p.9.
\textsuperscript{12} Karunadas, Buddhist Analysis of Matter, Delhi, Classics India Publications 1988.p. 172.
\textsuperscript{13} Brhadaranyak Upanisad, 3-6,8.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid pp.295-301.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid p..26.
This naturally produced a reaction and the Sautrantikas championed the real Buddhist emphasis on phenomenal flux. They eliminated the ideal elements as merely symbolic constructions (*Prajapati*). They reduced all the unconditioned reals to mere negations (*abhava*). They described material elements as merely hypothetical since they were at best indirectly inferred from experience. Thus the only positive and indubitable reals left were the various forms of experience or phenomena.  

**MAHAYANA**

The Mahayana makes a fundamental distinction between the ordinary Buddhist who seeks to obtain the state of *arhat* i.e. emancipation from the passions and ills of the world, and the extraordinary individual who follows the career of the *Bodhisattva* in order to attain Buddhahood which implies not merely emancipation but also omniscience, extraordinary powers and the role of the universal teacher. The Hinayanist, thus, strives for his own emancipation, even though he admits that the Bodhisattva strives for the emancipation of all. The Mahayanist seeks to universalize the idea of the Bodhisattva. Every Buddhist must become a Bodhisattva. The difference between Arhattva and Buddhattva is the difference between *klesavarana vimoksa* and *neyavarana vimoksa*.  

Mere freedom from passions does not yet lead to the unveiling of full knowledge. In fact the limited realization of nairatmya in the sense of *pudgalanairatmya* leads to dispassion. On the other hand, nothing short of the full realization of *sarvdharma-nairatmya* can lead to the removal of the veil of objectivity. It is only then that transcendental knowledge or sambodhi can be attained. Thus the religious doctrine of the *Bodhisattva* is inseparable from the profoundly philosophical doctrine of *dharmanairatmya* or *sanyata*. So when Mahayana appears to have emerged in the Andhra region about the first century B.C. from within the *Mahasamghika* circle, it arose with the famous *Prajnasutras* laying the greatest emphasis on the doctrine of sanyata. The Astasahasrika prajnapadamrita opens with the declaration of Subhuti inspired by the Buddha that all the many entities of which the Buddhist dogmatics spoke were really non-entities. Such words did not correspond to anything real. To

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19 Ibid.p.166.
know truly is to know their emptiness. Prajna and sunyata are identical. Prajna is found where the mind transcends itself (taccittamacittam).  

In the Mahayana sutras an early form of Sunyavada and Vijnanavada has often been expressed in close union. In fact in the Prajnaparamita sutras or the Lankavatara one can hardly make any firm distinction between the doctrine of consciousness only, and 'emptiness'. All things are insubstantial appearances. They are just like a mirage, an illusion, a dream. The mind projects the diverse forms when subject to ignorance. The world is nothing but the externalization of the latent desires and biases of the psyche which functions as a quasi-individual subject and object only within the condition of ignorance. In 'truth', the mind is wholly free from all trace of subjectivity and the whole world of individuals, subjects and objects is wholly imaginary. Of the mind and its purity, it is hard to ever distinguish any definite nature. It is hard to distinguish it from pure emptiness or sunyata except by saying that it is not a mere negativity and that it contains within it the possibility of unreal or delusive manifestation. But then sunyata too is not a pure negativity and is also regarded as immanent in all things- sunyata rupam rupam sunyata.

It is the admission of an imaginary unreality superimposed on the transcendent mind which became the radical principle of Yogacara. One may regard the whole world as unreal but then line has to admit an unreal imagination (abhataparikalpa) even though in the natural and ultimate state of the mind no trace of it can be discovered in the matrix of the world. It was tempting to consider the mind as illusion and seek to work out the various stages through which experience unfolds itself. Thus developed the concepts of Alayavijana and Tathagata-garbha. But the notion of a mind in which the world may be really grounded tends to assimilate it to some kind of a divine mind. This implicit resemblance to theistic ideas was quickly perceived and this dangerous tendency towards a psychic cosmology was finally abandoned. Nevertheless, from a practical point of view the mind seems to require a process of earnest purification and the Yogacara developed an elaborate account of the stages and psychology of spiritual evolution. In the Abhisamayalankara and the Yogacarabhumiṣastra one can discover virtually a new Abhidharma, a whole new

20 Ibid.  
22 Ibid.
classification of elements and psychic states.\textsuperscript{23} Thus, beginning with a sweeping denial of the reality of things and admitting the-mind alone, the \textit{Yogacarins} were still led by practical exigency to create a new theoretical elaboration which despite its psychological orientation came dangerously near to the reassertion of quite a host of reals.

**NON-VIOLENCE AS CENTRAL THEME**

Buddhism represents a universal culture. It is free from the tendencies of inferiority and superiority based on language, religion, nation or political order.

The basic conception of a sound political order pointed out by Buddhism consists in a world State under a virtuous ruler, both having strength and purity, called \textit{chakravartin} or sovereign of the world.\textsuperscript{24} He protects all beings of the world in virtue of his office in accordance with dharma. This word has no exact English equivalent; it connotes justice, moral merit, good deeds, virtue, law and duty, etc. It is a symbolic expression of karuna or compassion and ahimsa or non-violence. The Buddhist teacher Aryadeva summarizes the doctrine of Lord Buddha only in one word, that is, non-violence.\textsuperscript{25} The word dharma in its ethical sense is both compassion, and non-violence and it is a positive principle to guide a sovereign of the world.

A compassionate and non-violent sovereign of the world protects the people of the world and leads them to material prosperity and intellectual development. A \textit{chakravarlin} does not use arms, he does not punish. He conquers the world not by force, but by means of dharma (righteousness) only.

The universal ruler rules his vast empire through his governors (\textit{mandalins}). These governors also rule by means of righteousness. The code of morals for everyone is the same. The four rules of morality obligatory on all are:

1. One should not kill
2. One should not steal
3. One should not be sexually sinful

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid.
4. One should not speak a lie.\textsuperscript{26}

This idea of a central world government and conquest of the world by means of righteousness implies a transformation of the present conditions of our social life divided by various national and political ideologies. It implies a struggle of a compassionate human force which does not take a military form but attacks the very idea of militarism. This force does not admit of any exploitative philosophy of the social order. Under this compassionate world State, every small unit (mandala) is free to engage itself in doing good actions. In this world State, moral values are cherished with a view to attaining peace, and power is wielded for safeguarding moral values. The natural variety of human beings does not prevent the emergence of a world culture, for the spirit of life becomes constructive under a benevolent State.

The ideal of universal order of State with internal unity of its constituent parts, based on compassion and non-violence, is the best way of human life suggested by Buddhism. Without it the noble aim of world-peace is impossible. A chakravartin or sovereign of the world, possessing a large well equipped army, is responsible to construct a world order based on compassion and non-violence. However, he and his people require moral and intellectual guidance. Such guidance comes from a Buddha, for he enlightens ignorant beings.

The historical Buddha belongs to a particular time and space. The Buddha as a perfect symbol of mahakaruna (great compassion) and mahaprajna (great wisdom) is valid everywhere and forever. The dharma or word of the historical Buddha contained in the canonical works of the Buddhist sects. But the Buddha, the embodiment of great compassion and wisdom, is beyond the pale of sectarianism. He is the very essence of truth and goodness, and every good word is the word of the Buddha.\textsuperscript{27}

The samgha or Buddhist community divided into two groups, i.e. the Monks and the laity, found in various countries, is historically one. There might be faults in the historical samgha; but the idea of community (samgha) practicing the compassion of the Lord is pure and noble.

Man has an innate leaning towards good deeds, for he protects his fellow

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid.

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beings from danger, and sacrifices himself in order to save the helpless, the poor and the weak. But this innate quality of man is not apparent at all times. The tempter or an army of tempters force a man to do what is against his own will. Under temptation, a man leaves his fellow beings and runs away, he abandons the poor and the weak. He also indulges in murder, war and other violent deeds. He suppresses others and seeks tyrannical power. He is entirely selfish and has no interest in others. One who is free from selfishness and is interested in the welfare of other beings is a real teacher. This is the ethical atmatmavada or the doctrine of the negation of self-interest. In other words, the atmatmavada is taken in Buddhism as a system of self-interest, and anatmavada is taken as a system of altruistic ethics. All the vices of the world spring from selfishness, says Nagarjuna, for it brings up a notion of para or the other and, thus, gives rise to the feelings of like and dislike, love and hatred, etc.28

The tempter (mara) is the personification of egoism and selfishness and the Buddha is the principle of universal goodness, free from self-interest. The historical Buddha is an embodiment of this universal principle. Lord Buddha is called Marajit or 'the conqueror of the tempter. Ethically, it means the conquest of the idea of universal interest over the idea of self-interest. The story of Maravijaya (conquest over the tempter), a great event in the life of the Buddha, is to be interpreted accordingly. The Buddha, as the world-teacher, is to be conceived as an idea of universal good revealed to us through the life and acts as Sakyamuni. In Buddhist scriptures, this idea of universal goodness is expressed by the term Dharmakaya (the body of virtues).

THE BUDDHIST ETHICS

The members of the Buddhist community, both laymen and mendicants, observe many ethical rules to conquer temptations. Among these, the practice of chastity (brahmacarya), non-possession (anupadana), and non-violence (ahimsa), are the three main rules of Buddhist life. For the laity, chastity consists in being faithful to one's own spouse. For the mendicants it means complete abstinence from sex. Non-possession for the mendicants means not to have any personal belongings other than those permitted in the Vinaya. For the laity, non-possession means to live a simple life, to help the poor and to earn as well as to protect wealth for the sake of

community. The practice of chastity and non-possession aims at the removal of craving for sense gratification (kamatrsna).

A longing for a future life (bhavatrsna) is universally prevalent. A happy person desires it, for he thinks, he will be happier there; an unhappy person wishes it, for he believes, he will have no suffering there. To be reborn here or elsewhere in order to enjoy more happiness is a type of longing. Many perform good deeds to obtain a happy life here or hereafter. Buddhism, while welcoming the idea of good deeds, warns that one should not long for, for every longing is a bond of suffering. The longing for worldly pleasures (and possession is not very different from longing for similar things in heaven. Both are remediable by practicing chastity and non-possession.

The human longing for the satisfaction of desires, here and thereafter, is very strong. On account of dissatisfaction and frustration in life, sometimes one wishes not only to destroy oneself but others also. This is also a type of longing, a longing for annihilation (vibhavatrsna). One can remove it by practicing non-violence; for a Buddhist, both the self destruction and the destruction of others are two forms of the same idea, that is, violence.

On the foundation of these principles, a Buddhist builds himself up and his society, causing them to develop ultimately into an order of universal community. In this society, he lives a life free from suffering caused by narrow outlook on life which is determined by the ideas of nation, tribe, religion, caste or colour.

At the time of initiation, a lay-member of the Buddhist community learns five precepts, viz.:

1. Abstinence from taking life
2. Abstinence from theft
3. Abstinence from adultery
4. Abstinence from telling lies
5. Abstinence from taking intoxicants.

These are called the 'five precepts'. The first precept inculcates the virtue of non-violence, the second teaches non-possession and third prescribes chastity. The last two precepts stress the speaking of truth and abstinence from intoxicants.
respectively and help the practice of the first three rules.

The Dhammapada says:

\[\text{Yo panam atipciteti, musavadam ca bhasati} \]
\[\text{loke adinnam adiyati, paradaram ca gacchati} \]
\[\text{Sura-meraya-panam ca yo narvanayunjati} \]
\[\text{Idh, evah eso lokasnim malam kha'ini attano} \]

"Whoever in the world takes life, speaks untruth, takes that is not given to him, and commits adultery, and a man who is addicted to intoxicating drinks, digs up his own roots in this very world."^{29}

A mendicant member of Buddhism in initiated with ten percents, viz.:

Abstinence from taking life.

1. An insect can rise to the position of Buddha after may aeons. Prince Kunala became blind for he had inflicted the same calamity on some animals in his former life. This feeling of sympathy also led to the condemnation of hunting.

2. *Abstention from theft* also helps in not harming others, A Buddhist follower does not steal even a leaf or a blade of grass.

3. *Abstention from unchastity* is a help in the practice of harmlessness towards others. Adultery is like poison that marks and destroys human life even if it is committed in secret.

4. *Abstention from telling lies*—A Buddhist follower speaks only truth. His actions are in accordance with his words. His words will never deceive a person and nobody shall be put to harm by his words.

5. *Abstention from slander*—A Buddhist follower does not utter such words that will cause strifes and discunity in the society. He does not find any delight in causing disunion among people by his words.

6. *Abstention from harsh speech*—A Bodhisattva does not indulge in harsh speech that will wound others feelings. His speech is pleasant to his own heart and pleasant to others ears. He may speak harsh words only to restrain foolish persons from evil actions. His harsh words with such motive are meant only for the welfare of others and not for any selfish motive.

7. *Abstention from frivolons and senseless talk*—A Bodhisattva does not speak

^{29} Dhammapada Gatha, 246-247.
uselessly. He does not indulge in light talk. He is not interested in aimless gossips. He speaks little. His speech aims at pleasantness, truthfulness and goodness. He wishes good of others and is indifferent to the wicked.

8. **Abstention from using unguents and ornaments**—A Buddhist follower does not covet the wealth of others. He is not tempted by others property. His heart is not impurified by avarice.

9. **Abstention from malevolence**—A Bodhisattva’s heart is free from malice. He is friendly to all. He is compassionate towards the less fortunate ones. He is kind-hearted to those who seek his help. Anger, enmity, ill-will and hatred find no place in his life. He cultivates love towards all creatures and wishes them happiness, peace and prosperity.

10. **Abstention from wrong views**—A follower of Buddha has firm faith in him, in his principles and is his true followers. He does not think of evil and misleading pursuits and actions. He is straightforward, honest and sincere.

The above ten kinds of action evidently help practising ahimsa. Sila, as such is the root and body of ahimsa.

**Ksanti Paramita** (Forbearance and Endurance)—A Buddhist follower is to forbear and to endure. The word ‘ksanti’ is used for several meanings. It is opposit of Krodha (anger), dvesa (hatred), pratigha (repugnance) and vyapada (malice). Ksanti means to win over anger and excitement and possess a balanced mind. It means to forgive and forget the injuries and insult of others. It also means to endure pain patiently to accept the ideals and doctrines of the religion with faith and develop the capacity to help others. Thus dukhadhivasana ksanti, dharma nidhyasana ksanti and paropakara dharma ksanti are the three types of ksanti.

**A Bodhisattva is an abode of forbearance**

A Bodhisattva is an ocean of forbearance. He forgives others for all kinds of injury, insult, abuse and censure. He forgives them with his body as he never strikes them with his hand, stone or stick. He forgives them with his mind as he never wishes them ill. Even if his body is cut into pieces, he does not conceive any ill thought

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31 Ibid.
against his enemy. Being reviled he does not revils in return. When beaten, he does not beat in return. He does not show anger towards anyone.

A Bodhisattva’s forgiveness in unfailing is unfailing

His forgiveness is unfailing universal and absolute like that mother-earth that suffers in silence all that may be done to her.

Why the wicked should be forgiven

The reason why others should be forgiven is an object of thought. One should think that these enemies are not free agents. Their wicked deeds are produced by causes over which they have no control. A Bodhisattva cannot really blame others for the injuries, others inflict upon him. He suffers on account of his own misdeeds in his past existence. He should thank them that they enable him to practise the virtue of forbearance which leads to heaven and also to enlightenment. They do him much good but they ruin their own chances of happy future existence.  

Forbearance and law of karma

On the other hand, if one is swayed by anger, he destroys the merit that has been acquired in many lives. He who kills anger, is happy here and hereafter. However, forbearance cannot really be reconciled with the law of karma for in that way one may submit passively to the enemy, but we cannot forget mercy and love that also are the causes of forbearance. One forgives more by heart and he is less moved by head.

Virya Paramita (Energy)—Virya means vigour, strength, power, heroism prowess, valour, fortitude, courage, firmness and virility. The conventional meaning of this word is ‘energy’. Energy helps in resolutely combating all the great and small sins and vices that may drag a man down. His effort to think about every dangerous fault and weakness is suitable. He becomes cautious and restrains his senses. He dispels hatred by the cultivation of love combats sensuality by meditating on impurity. He leaves, no stone unturned to exert himself. There is no true merit without virya, just as there is no motion without air.

\[\text{Padmapurana Srstikanda, 1410,1357}\]
Energy enables one to gain true knowledge

He who is energetic in studying scriptures, can have true knowledge and understand the significance of the doctrines like ahimsa. Besides having other types of knowledge like knowledge on medicine and the like he develops the chances of serving the people and helping them in adversity. This is the way to cultivate the tendency towards the development of positive ahimsa. A Buddhist follower is well-versed in all such arts and sciences that are necessary to help the maintenance and progress of life.

Energy helps one to complete a work successfully

A Buddhist follower thinks carefully before he undertakes a work and whatever he undertakes, he carries that to a successful end. He does not leave it half-done and he is not daunted and discouraged by difficulties and dangers. He maintains the same energy and resolution under all circumstances. He does not lose hope on account of the stupidity or wickedness of the people. He does his daily task like the sun. He has got self-confidence enough to undertake the most difficult tasks. The same self-confidence gives him the strength to overcome all passions and endure all trials.

Self-Confidence is to be distinguished from pride

This self-confidence must however, be distinguished from that over-confidence or pride that stimulates arrogance and ruins the soul. True self-confidence makes one the very embodiment of virtue and wisdom so that he feels that perfections (paramitas) do not make him, it is he who makes the perfections.

Thus a Bodhisattva is to acquire enough energy to root out the passions, as a lion slays the deer. All these virtues of perfection help and parity the principle of ahimsa and simplify its practice.

Good conduct is the best protection

Ahimsa aims at the welfare and prosperity of all. He who protect all-living beings, is a person of good conduct. He who is in possessions of good conduct, is in

Ibid. 119
possession of the highest and the noblest refuge, is possession of true friend and a relative. He has got the best protection, is wealthy and powerful. In other words good conduct is the refuge friend, relative, protection, wealth and power.

_Ahimsa means true justice and mercy_

Ahimsa means true and just mercy. Merit comes to the door of a compassionate and merciful one. Bodhisattva may be known as another name for an ahimsaka, for Bodhisattva cultivates his mind in ten ways— mind of friendship, happiness, justice, teacher’s mind, instructor’s mind of pity, affection, kindness, forgiveness and purity.

_Service to the sick is a part of ahimsa_

Kindness, service and help to the needy are other forms of ahimsa and form the life-breath of Buddhism. Lord Buddha himself helped in washing the dirty clothes of a sick monk and there through set an example before his disciples of finding joy in serving the sick and helping the needy. So those who serve the sick, serve Buddha, the Enlightened one.

To be venerable refuge to friends is the dignity of Buddha, Merciful heart is the abode of all that is good and great and is incomparable with infinite worship done in thousand millions of temples.

_Ahimsa is the chief quality of Bodhisattva_

To abstain himself from killing any living being, to give security to all beings, causing no fear, agitation and excitement is the chief quality of a Bhodhisattva. Whatever he has done, caused to be done or consented to be done in word, deed or thought, is free from the taint of harming others. Compassion is thought to be the highest virtue. A compassionate man has heart-felt love for all people just like that father who has heart-felt love for his only and virtuous son.

_Buddhism includes all moral Virtues_

Buddhism is an institution for all moral principles that aim at perfecting and purifying ahimsa by being a means to subjugate the senses and mind. Buddhism makes us realize that, man’s action in thought, word and deed is responsible for his
destiny. Character is destiny according to Buddhism.

All virtues are part and parcel of Ahimsa

A man of ahimsa is in possession of undisturbed calm even in the midst of wrath, hatred and anger, is harmless in the midst of harmful atmosphere, selfless in the midst of selfishness, desireless in the midst of all sorts of temptations, co-operative in the midst of trivial differences, commitment of himsa in any form is far from such a controlled one. His desires are scanty and his wants limited. He is always at the disposal of the unprotected, the needy, the lowliest and the lost. Compassion and forgiveness are his main weapons to fight the battle of life. He finds unity in diversity one life working in different bodies. With this knowledge, he bears equal and true love for friends foes, strangers, kiths and kins—in short for all alike.

Do unto others what you want them to do unto you

Buddhism teaches one to behave with others as one would like others to behave with oneself. When and if this teaching is executed into practice, man finds oneness with all, takes others, sufferings for his own, tries to help them in putting an end to their troubles and thus works for their peace and prosperity. This in one word is termed Ahimsa.

The mendicant in Buddhism is an embodiment of chastity, non-violence and non-possession; hence he is adorable. A mere caste brahmin is not an object of adoration. The mendicant is a Brahmin of the Buddhists and everyone may attain this Brahman hood by purifying himself. Thus Buddhism opens the door for all people to obtain the true Brahmanic condition. “Him I do not call a Brahmin,” declares Lord Buddha, “who is born from the womb of a mother. He may be addressed merely as sir, if he is well-to-do. He who is free from any possession and is not grasping him I call a Brahmin.”

The first five precepts of a mendicant member of Buddhism and all of the five precepts of Buddhist laymen are called panca sila or fivefold integrity.

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^4 Dhammapada, Verse 396.
There are other six precepts to complete the Buddhist code of morality, viz.:

1. Abstinence from slander
2. Abstinence from impolite speech
3. Abstinence from talking senselessly
4. Abstinence from covetousness
5. Abstinence from malevolence
6. Abstinence from false views.

These six rules together with the first four rules of Buddhist laymen and mendicants are called dasasila or tenfold integrity. They are found in Hinduism, too.\(^{35}\)

In the list of dasasila or tenfold integrity, the first three refer to physical actions, the next four to verbal actions and the last three to mental actions. Besides, there are other actions, too. Before performing any action, physical, verbal or mental, one has to be careful and must think of the result. An action is good, if it leads to happiness and results in happiness. It is bad, if it leads to suffering and results in suffering.\(^{36}\) To consider every act in this manner before its performance is the way that leads to non-violence towards oneself and others. The ethical ideology of Buddhism mainly consists in the practice of non-violence in action: physical, verbal and mental.

A lip-homage to non-violence is not unknown. Lord Buddha, therefore, has advised in the Cakkavatt sihanadasutta that a king should rule with justice and remove poverty, to eradicate theft and violence. In the Kutadantasutta he prohibited the killing of animals for sacrificial purposes. Killing in any form, and for any purpose is against the teachings of the Buddha. Individuals and people who are not in line with non-violence are held to be dangerous in Buddhism. In the strife-torn world of today where nations are competing with one another in military armament, the gospel of love and compassion taught by the Buddha brings light and hope to the distressed mankind.

\(^{35}\) Manusmriti. XII. 5-8.
\(^{36}\) Majjhima Nikaya, Rahulovada.
The idea of nobility in Buddhism

Na tena arivo hoti, vena punani himsati
Ahimsa sabbapananam, arivo’ ti pavuccati.  

One does not become a noble (Arya) because one kills living beings. By non-violence towards all living beings one becomes noble.

Nobility is attained by perfect non-violence. All wealthy persons constantly offering sacrifices for attaining heavenly life and enjoying here the boons of prosperity are ordinary beings, for they have not cultivated non-violence physically, verbally and mentally. The perfection in non-violence implies the purification of the instinctive life of man and a transformation of his inner life.

The path of purification implies a passage from a condition of disturbance to a condition of peace. He who is free from the delusion of eternity of the self, the idea of the efficacy of ritualistic actions as well as of austerities, and is free from doubts is called a srotapanna; he has left the mundane life leading to disturbance and has entered the stream of life leading to peace. A person who attains this condition is a noble one (arya); his position is higher than any highest worldly position. Lord Buddha says:

Pathavya eka rajjena, saggassa gamanena va
Sabbalokadhipaccena, sotapattiphalam varani

“The reward of the first step in holiness is better than the sole sovereignty over the earth, better than going to heaven, and better than lordship over all worlds.”

A noble person, who has got into the stream of peace, step by step, overcomes sensuality, malice, and delusion of mind which prevent the discernment of truth. He reaches a condition of saintliness where worldly lust becomes weak; yet it has power to force him to take one more birth. He is called once-returner (sakrdagamin).

A noble person, fully free from sensuality and malice, is called non-returner (anagamin). He does not come back to the world of men again. In this stage, he is not entirely free from the craving for the worlds with form and without form, pride, mental instability, and ignorance of the true nature of things; yet there is no chance of

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37 Dhammapada Gatha, 270.
38 Ibid. 178.
his falling backward. When finally these mental fetters, are annihilated, he becomes a
worthy saint, an arhat. Arhat means a worthy being who has conquered the enemy
residing in the mind. This is the highest stage of non-violence.

Thus a unique path to attain nobility is opened to everyone among. The
disciples of Lord Buddha, Citra and Visakha, though belonging to the laity, were
Anagamins. Ksema and Utpalavarna were Arhat ladies. Everyone was free to tread in
the path of nobility. There was no restriction on the ground of sex or stage of life.

Arhataood is attained by the annihilation of these ten fetters:

1. **Satkaya-drsti** (the idea of self-eternity)
2. **Silavratapardmarṣa** (the idea of efficacy of purineation by ritualistic acts as
   well as by austerity)
3. **Vicikitsa** (doubts about the Triple-Gem).
4. **Pratigha** (malice).
5. **Kama-raga** (sensuality).
6. **Rupa-rdga** (lust of heaven, having form)
7. **Arupvardga** (lust of heaven, having no form)
8. **Mana** (pride)
9. **Auddhatya** (in stability of mind) and
10. **Aviḍya** (ignorance).

The freedom from these fetters is nirvana; because all burning passions are
extinguished here. One can experience this condition in this life and in this body. The
Buddha’s dharma is *ehipasyika*; it invites everyone to come and see. It is *pratydma-
vedatya*, ‘to be personally realized’. In Buddhism, there is no sacramental mystery,
there is no priest-craft; there is no myth, there is only truth and the way to the
realization of truth.

**THE IDEA OF ‘BUDDHA-TO-BE’**

A disciple of the Buddha, though pure in life and noble among men, is not
identical with the Buddha. When a diversion of individual desire for purification
becomes socially oriented, then his every action answers the needs of society. Such a
one is not an ordinary disciple of the Buddha; he is a seed of the Buddha. He is a
Buddha-to-be. He called Bodhisattva for he is one who is destined for enlightenment
and would one day become the Buddha (the enlightened one).

The concept of Bodhisattva is ethical as well as scientific. The material world is governed by the law of dependent origination (*pratitya-samutpada*). It explains all phenomena of nature of the moral world as well as their causes; A Bodhisattva thinks that the cause of suffering is in the sufferer and in his surroundings. In the Buddhist view, there is no original sin. By nature, no man is sinful or virtuous. He is free from both sin and virtue like a child just born. The philosophy of rebirth is not responsible for social inequalities such as being rich, poor, noble, lowly, etc. No remedy for suffering is possible if the cause of the suffering is no here. Free from dogmatism, a Bodhisattva directly or indirectly works for the good of beings and obtains the self to perfection wisdom. The perfection of wisdom (*prajna-paramita*) and great compassion (*Karuna*) are the two main virtues of a Bodhisattva.

For the perfection of knowledge, one has to study the experiences of mankind handed down orally or in writing. Their truth is to be examined by the law of dependent origination (*Pratitya-samutpada*). They are to be considered good, if they lead to peace and non-violence. Every good word is the word of the Buddha. The words of the Buddha help mankind to cultivate morality leading to peace and non-violence. On the other hand, violent words breed violence, wicked words breed wickedness. Behind these unhealthy words, there is a lack of love for mankind. Good words originating in healthy thinking are needed for self-culture. The Buddha thinks only of the good of mankind. A Bodhisattva, therefore, depends on the words of the Buddha. The word of the Buddha has the following characteristics: It is meaningful, it is holy, it is capable of removing impurities of the three worlds, and it leads to peace and bliss. The words which have contrary characteristics are not the words of the Buddha. Even the words of the Buddha collected in the Tripitaka are to be accepted as authentic only after due examination. Lord Buddha says: As the wise test gold by burning, cutting and rubbing it (on a piece of touchstone), so are you to accept my words after examining them and not merely out of regard for me, Buddhism leaves men free to act for the removal of social evils, for the cultivation of good conduct and for the service of mankind.

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A Bodhisattva, thus, well equipped with wisdom and compassion, well versed in worldly lores, moves in society to remove the clouds of darkness from the hearts of the people. He protects himself from all evils. In doing everything, he acts with mindfulness and full consciousness. He speaks slowly and softly. His kinds, clear and meaningful words please the ears and give satisfaction to everyone. He never speaks in a confused language. He does not yearn for chattering. He applauds whenever one utters good words. He commends whenever he beholds a virtuous one. He does not abandon a good friend (kalyānāmitra) even for the sake of his life and does not mind sacrificing his life for a noble cause. He works to attain perfections (paramitas) viz. liberality (Dāna), morality (siла), forbearance (ksantī), energy (vīrya), meditation (dhyāna) and wisdom (prajñā). His Self-denying acts and wisdom lead him to enlightenment and he becomes a Buddha.\footnote{Bodhicaryavatara, Chapter 5, Verse, 45, 75,78,83,87,101.}

THE PRINCIPLES OF ENLIGHTENMENT

A Bodhisattva having developed a thought of enlightenment (Bodhicitta) has to practice great kindness (mahākārūna) leading non-violence. Such a person must cultivate mindfulness, engage himself in right exertions, possess four bases of psychic abundance, develop moral faculties and powers, be equipped with the limbs of enlightenment, and move on the noble path.

1. Mindfulness (smṛtyupāsthana). One having mindfulness of the body (kayanumārtī) beholds impurities which form the body. For him who is mindful of sensation (vedanānumārtī), every feeling is mixed with sorrow. The self-delusive and fickle nature of mind becomes clear to him who has awareness of mind (cittānumārtī). The transitory character of mental and material world is known to him, who has awareness of the state of existence (dharmanumārtī).

2. Right exertion (samyak-praṇa). One should rightly exert to wipe out all present evils (akusala-dharma) and to prevent all new evils from arising. One should make a start to perform meritorious deed (kusala-dharma) and exert to increase and develop them.

3. Bases of psychic abundance (rūḍhipada). One should cultivate the habit of determining things through the fourfold basis of psychic abundance of will
(chanda), energy (virya), thought (citta) and investigation (Mimamsa).

4. Faculties (indriya)

5. Powers (bala). One should derive all merit by means of five faculties called faith (Sraddha), energy (virya), awareness (smrti), concentration (Samadhi) and knowledge (prajna). They are the chief organs of and means for doing meritorious acts. Hence they are called faculties (indriya). Their impact on life is enduring. Therefore they are called powers (bala).

6. Limbs of enlightenment (Bodhyanga). By means of moral faculties and powers one attains the limbs of enlightenment, namely awareness (smrti), investigation of the Law (dharmavicaya) energy (bala), Joy (priti), serenity (prasrabdhi), concentration (samadhi) and indifference (upeksa).

7. The Noble Path (Arya-mmarga). Thus, well equipped with the limbs of enlightenment, one moves on the path of the arhats. This noble eightfold path forms the keynote of the Buddha's teachings for emancipating oneself from the ills of life. It consists of eight constituents, namely right view (samvak-drsti), right aspiration (samvak-samkalpa), right speech (samvak-vaca) right action (samvak-karman), right livelihood (samvak-ajlva), right effort (samvak-vyayama), right mindfulness (samvak-smrti), and right concentration (samvak-samadhi).

a. Right View

The correct understanding of suffering (dukha), the cause of suffering (duhkha-samudaya), the cessation of suffering (duhkha-nirodha) and the path leading to the cessation of suffering (duhkha-nirodha-gamini-pratipada) is called the right view.

The primary cause of all existence is ignorance (avidva). This produces predispositions (samskaras). They in their turn, give rise to consciousness (vijnana). Then follow in succession mind and matter (Nama-rupa) consisting of individuality, six organs of senses, namely eye (caksus), ear (srotra), nose (ghrana), tongue (jihava), body (kaya) and mind (citta), contact (sparsa), feeling (vedana), thirst or craving (trnsha), attachment (upadana), desire for the renewal of existence (bhava) and birth (jati). Birth is necessarily followed by old age (jara) and death (marana). He leads a life of tribulation (soka), grief (parideva), suffering (duhkha), distress
(daurmanasya) and despair (upayasa) between birth and death. The craving for self-enjoyment in life here and hereafter, even at the expense of other’s lives, labour and property, is the cause of suffering. The removal of craving is the cessation of suffering. This is attainable by following the path pointed out by the Buddha.

b. **Right aspiration**

The thought of renunciation of craving (naiskrmya) is the right aspiration. The unmalicious thinking (avyapada) is right aspiration. The idea of non-violence (avihimsa) is also a right aspiration.

c. **Right speech**

A speech free from falsehood, backbiting (paisunya), confusion and senseless words (sambhinnapralpa) is called the right speech.

d. **Right action**

Abstinence, from killing (Prdnatipata-virati) is a right action. Abstinence from stealing (adattadanavirati) is a right action; Abstinence from adultery (kamamnhyacara-virati) is a right action. In other word the practice of chastity, abstention from theft and non-violence constitute right actions.

c. **Right livelihood**

The right livelihood is attainable when one gives up all impure means of earning a living, for example, hypocrisy (kuhana), boasting (lapana), indirect asking (naimittikata) and threat (naispesikara). Besides, it is the adoption of an impure way if a monk tries to extract a profitable gift by referring to a gift received from others (labhena labhonispadana). A layman has to examine his livelihood. His livelihood is right if it is free From violence and deceit.

e. **Right effort**

One’s effort to wipe out all present evils (akusala-dharma), to prevent new evils from arising, to start meritorious deeds (kusala-dharma) and to increase them gradually is the right effort. Lord Buddha says: let one make haste in doing good, let one check-one's mind from evil, for if one is slow in doing good, one's mind delights in evil. Let one avoid evil as a merchant possessing great wealth, having few caravan
followers avoids a way full of danger. One desirous to live, avoids poison.\textsuperscript{42}

g. Right mindfulness

A constant vigilance with special reference to the slates of mind and body in order to perform good deeds and to avoid bad deeds is the right mindfulness.\textsuperscript{43} The teaching of the Buddha includes abstinence from all evil, the fulfillment of all that is good, and the purification of the mind. One who is not mindful forgets whatever he hears, thinks, or cultivates by thought and meditation.

h. Right concentration

Right concentration consists of four stages of meditation. In the first stage, one experiences reflection (vitarka), investigation (vicara), delight (priti), bliss (sukha) and tranquillity (ekagrata). In the second stage, both reflection and investigation disappear. In the third delight also disappears. In the fourth stage bliss also passes away and one experiences only tranquillity and equanimity.

One starts concentration by meditating upon an object. The fourfold truth is an object of meditation for an arhat.\textsuperscript{44}

The first noble truth is suffering (duhkha). When one realizes with wisdom that all conditioned things (samskara) are impermanent and painful, that all things (dharmas) are not-self (anatman), one becomes disgusted and meditates on suffering which is the first step on the path of purity.

The law of dependent origination is an object of meditation an individual Buddha (Pratyeka-Buddha) alone. Pratyeka Buddha is different from Samyak Buddha. He neither become a pupil nor a teacher of any one else. He obtains Nirvana by himself. On the other hand, Samyak Buddha is a teacher and shows way to Nirvana to all beings.\textsuperscript{45}

A Bodhisattva meditates upon the sublime Brahmic states (Brahmavihara), love (maitri), compassion (karuna), joy (mudita) and equanimity (upeksa). He desires to see all people happy. He has compassion for the suffering people. He delights in

\textsuperscript{42} Dhammapada, Verse 116,123.
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid, Verse 183.
\textsuperscript{44} Bodhicaryavatara, V.25.
\textsuperscript{45} Dhammapada, Verse 277-279.
seeing meritorious people. He remains indifferent when he comes across wicked people. As compared to Buddhism, Jainism remained a sect limit in its area of influence and spread. Buddhism on the other hand traveled far and wide and developed a broad superstructure of religious organization. It started as an ethical-movement, a practical and simple approach to the problem of salvation and deliverance from the sufferings of life but ended up as a complex form of ritualistic cult. Like Jainism, Buddhism too was started by the Ksatriya princes and contains many anti-Brahmanical references in its gospels and preachings. The chief issue that confronts Buddhism is redemption of man and his liberation from the chain of rebirths. The Buddha preached a middle path for this liberation thus avoiding the course of extreme asceticism (of the Brahmanic and the Jaina systems) or of the complete abandonment of sensuous pleasures of everyday life. In this way Buddhism departs from the position of the Sankhya and Jaina theories of asceticism. The middle path for such deliverance is the path of inner freedom from the bondage of life, worldly desires and illusion of pleasure.

The Buddha in his preachings rejected the Brahmanical concepts of the Universal Soul, the individual soul and the theory of their submergence in the state of final deliverance. His objection to the Brahmanical and the Jain philosophies was based on the fact that these did not explain properly the phenomena of reincarnation and redemption. The Buddhist preaching takes an atheistic standpoint as it does not believe in the existence of the supreme Brahman. The Buddha also rejected the authority of the Vedas and the Upanishads. He included in his monistic order all members without any distinction of caste or varna. However, in the ordinary life he did tolerate the distinctions in social status based upon caste. From a sociological point of view Buddhism has thus been a more radical religious movement as compared to the traditions of the Hinduism and Jainism. Even earlier, some philosophical schools had rejected the idea for God, but they claimed the authority for their sayings from the Vedas and thus they indirectly accepted the main tenets of the Vedic tradition, Buddhism on the other hand completely dissociates itself from the Vedic religion.

Buddhism believes that "will to live" is the source of all suffering which out of ignorance people mistake as pleasure. This results in the incarnation and re-incarnation of beings. The salvation, therefore, lies in freedom from desire, the
complete extinction of this desire is Nirvana. Nirvana, here unlike in the Sankhya or the Jain theory, is not only the liberation of soul from the world of senses but its complete extinction. This aspect of the teaching of the Buddha is based upon a new theory of knowledge and human nature. The Buddha considers the universe to be governed by laws concomitant to its necessity. In human life this element of universal law is karma. The-psychic ego of man which is influenced by karma is not a stable reality but constantly changes with changes in the will to live. In fact the whole phenomenology of Buddhism is based on the conception of reality in a state of constant flux. Every thing is conceived of being in process, nothing exists in stable form. This has been illustrated by the Buddha through the analogy of a flame which goes on changing yet gives the outward appearance of a stable form. Like the flame, the ego is constantly being changed and formed by the deeds of men. Thus, through emphasis on right deeds the Buddha introduced a system of ethics which had deep commitment to the tradition of nonviolence.

The Buddha treated all worldly life to be full of suffering and, therefore, according to him the emancipation of soul would lie in the establishment of a proper balance in the activities of the world. This could be done by following in action the sacred eight-fold paths, e.g., paths of right knowledge, right feeling, right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right insight and right meditation. These taken together establish an integral ethic of compassion. Compassion is not merely a negative action of not killing but a mental projection of the self into the suffering and misery of others. However, this sympathy or mental participation still remains devoid of the orientation towards active service and love for mankind. The Buddha's teaching of non-violence rests upon three cardinal premises—first, that emancipation or redemption can be only personal and individual; secondly, that the feeling of compassion is the source of spiritual transcendence which means sympathetic participation in the sufferings of others; thirdly, that any active interest even in ethical actions would lead to formation of the “will to Live”, and thereby multiply misery and suffering. Therefore, the principle of life-negation should be the guiding ethics of life. The emphasis in Buddhism is thus on a subjective recognition of the ethics of non-violence which could lead to an inner transcendence of human beings and their final deliverance.

Nevertheless, Buddhism preaches positive concept of non-violence. Whereas
in Jainism the monk is required to shun away from the emotions of hatred and envy, in Buddhism he is taught to look at the whole universe with a feeling of kindness. Irradiation of love, friendliness and sympathy are the chief virtues to be cultivated by the Buddhist monk. The Buddha in his teachings thus brought about a radical change in the meaning of the ethical action. Its objective is not merely a better reincarnation as propounded in the Sankhya or the purity of soul as in Jainism, but a true spiritual self-submergence. This is to be attained by right ethical conduct and meditation. Through meditation imbued with the sense of general compassion for all beings one could reach the stage of spiritual ecstasy leading to the state of Nirvana, after which there is no more reincarnation. By meditation one could also recollect one's past incarnation, and the temporal cycle of universe. The latter, according to the Buddhism is of course the highest stage of meditative self-realization so far only attained by the Buddha.

Apart from the rules for monks, the Buddha laid down various ethical rules for the householders also in which nonviolence, chastity and righteous calling-are most significant ones. Non-killing also occupies an important place. For men engaged in the ordinary business of life, ahimsa is declared to be obligatory. In domestic obligations mutual love and gratitude are treated as the highest moral virtues. For children, to show gratitude towards parents is also considered obligatory. Gratitude is further treated as a general attitude which must be present in all forms of social behaviour. The Buddha had prohibited the killing of animals for meat. Some scholars have exaggerated the degree of permissiveness allowed by the Buddha in regarded to meat-eating and killing of animals. The Buddha allowed meat-eating provided the person did not become the cause of the killing of animals. For the monk, it was prohibited to go for alms to a house where he knew that meat was being cooked. Thus it is evident that the early form of Buddhism in India had a well established tradition of non-violence. The value system propagated by this sect led to the enunciation of a general attitude of compassion towards the suffering of all beings. The ethics thus laid down did not, however, imply a concrete plan of action for the reduction of the suffering of others but it merely amounted to the cultivation of a

47 Suttanipate, 355. 404.
48 Anguttara-Nikaya, ii.4.1.
mental attitude of identity and sympathy with the suffering of others, resulting from the bondage of worldly existence. Thus, the Buddha preached an ethics of inner perfection governed by the principle of love. This preaching had a tremendous significance for opening up of a new perspective in the ethical consciousness which changed the focus from the traditional form of morality as consisting of mere duties and obligation to a compassionate participation in the suffering of others, and through this process to the emancipation of the self.

In course of time Buddhism underwent many transformations. Its nature changed as its appeal became wide-spread. The earlier tradition of Buddhism which is known as the Hinayana (small vessel) sect of the doctrine had thought of salvation as purely an individual phenomenon which must be attained by one's own efforts without any spiritual guidance from others. The Mahayana (big vessel) sect, on the other hand, recognized the possibility of guidance and help from the virtuous persons for the deliverance of the common man. The birth of the historical Buddha was also transformed by this sect into a mystical theory of repeated incarnations of a series of Buddhas, from the eternal forms of the self-created Buddha, (adi-Buddha).

It was also believed that among the eternal Buddha's the nearest traceable prototype was that of the Buddha of the immeasurable light (Buddha-Amitabh) who is the protector of the present world and dwells in a paradise called Sukhavati. In this way, the Mahayana sect not only deified the Buddha but went back to the belief in a self-created eternal Buddha resembling the Brahma of the Hindu traditions. Buddhism thus changed from a purely subjective-ethical, and individual-ascetic form of cult -to a systematic religion. It was this form of Buddhism which appealed to the popular mind and was accepted in Korea, Japan and China. The older form of Buddhism now is being practiced only in Burma, Ceylon and Thailand.

The movement towards the Mahayana conception of Buddhism meant a greater dissociation from a purely alienative and ascetic-mental attitude towards the ethical norms held by the older form of Buddhism. The Mahayana doctrine of Buddhism was closer to daily life, more theistic, ritualistic and also predominantly ethical. The earlier Buddhism had primarily a subjective and intellectual orientation towards ethics but the Mahayana sect emphasized the practical aspects of doing good.

to others and sharing in others’ spiritual achievements. The Hinayana Buddhism did not conceive of universal salvation, whereas the Mahayana sect emphasized it. In fact, it developed a new belief that the historical Buddha did not enter into Nirvana (state of salvation), rather He was still striving from the heavenly region for the salvation of all mankind. It also held belief in the existence of a new land of Buddhahood (Bodhisattva) for spiritually developed personalities who voluntarily accept reincarnation for the deliverance of mankind: a conception which came very close to the reincarnation theory of Brahmanism, In Buddhism, however, reincarnation of the Buddha has primarily a benevolent and ethical purpose, e.g., deliverance of mankind, whereas in Brahmanism it has not only ethical but also punitive purpose, i.e., to suppress adharma (non-righteousness).

From the Hinayana to the Mahayana forms of Buddhism, the ethical commitment to non-violence goes on increasing. The idea of compassion finally reaches a stage of protection and of fullest development. In the Mahayana sect compassion means not only sympathy with others sufferings and pains as an intellectual and subjective experience but also as an active response to minimize the suffering of the whole of mankind through spiritual guidance and love. The idea of compassion itself becomes more of an activistic and altruistic principle and discards its earlier quietistic and subjective form. Yet, the Mahayana Buddhism too could not develop a life-affirming philosophy like that of the Kural. Both the Hinayana and the Mahayana sects do not lead to the formulation of a systematic action program for mitigating sufferings. It continues to believe that salvation can be achieved only by diffusion of knowledge that suffering lies in the “will to live.” However, the adherents of the Mahayana faith unlike those of Hinayana, pray for the salvation of all mankind and the element of humanistic altruism in this faith is definitely remarkable. The Mahayana conception of compassion and altruism thus assumes an activistic character. Love for others no longer remains confined to an abstract idea, or a mental state, but amounts to the alleviation of the suffering of others by deeds of mercy, help and consolation. The growth of the element of “other orientation” or “collectivity orientation” in the motivational structure of religious action is thus completed. Prayers do not express wishes only for the Nirvana of the self but also for the humanity as a

51 Ibid p. 129.
whole; all personal merits are to be dedicated to the cause of others and the faith in the Bodhisattva reigns supreme. Thus, a complete ethics of non-violence is developed both as a philosophy of religious beliefs and rituals and of social action.

The Mahayana Buddhism denies the existence of ego. The belief in the existence of the ego indicated the continuance of the basis of individualism. This, according to the Mahayana philosophy, restricted the sphere of compassion and universal love. The denial of the existence of the ego thus facilitates the growth of the norm of diffused altruism as a cardinal aspect of this sect. It is different from similar ethical values found in the Hindu tradition. The Brahmanic distinction of the \textit{atman} (ego) and the \textit{Paramatman} (the supreme ego or Brahman) is denied in the Mahayana doctrine. The Upanishads, sure of the identity of the atman and the Brahman, explained all love for others as "self-love". Living beings were not dear as living beings per se but dear for the sake of the self.\textsuperscript{52} On the contrary, the Mahayana belief is that all love is love for others. One of the Mahayana texts expresses it in" the following words. "From habit we connect the conception of the self with our own-body, which, nevertheless, has no self. Why does not the idea of the self as referring to others similarly arise also from habit? No man exists whose suffering is really his own. Of whom then can it be said, that it is his sufferings? All sufferings without distinction are ownerless. Because they are sufferings, therefore, we must keep them off. What sense has any limitation in this (that is to say, that one keeps off only sufferings that one regards as one’s own)? If fear and pain are as much hated by my neighbour as by himself, what then distinguishes myself that I should protect it more than I protect him.\textsuperscript{53}

In the philosophy of compassion the Mahayana Buddhism reaches a supreme height and thus enriches and enlivens the tradition of non-violence. Its rejection of the existence of the ego implies that all feelings have an integral and collective character and therefore cannot be individualized. This leads to the view about the identity of the experience of all men. In the early Buddhism, the ego was recognized because the Buddha thought that the world did not have a substantive reality, it only excised in the false consciousness, that we carry within ourselves which could be transcended to reach the plane of real ecstasy through meditation which liberates man from this delu-

\textsuperscript{52} Brahad- Aranyaka Upanisad,2-4.
one section of the Mahayana Buddhism, however, led by Nagarjuna has rejected the viewpoint. It claims that neither the material nor the spiritual realities exist, there is neither existence of being nor non-being but of an emptiness (sunyata). Both the outer world and man's feelings about it result from an illusion. The question may arise: Does such a theory not reject the basis of all compassion and, therefore, also ethics? On the contrary, ethical values are safeguarded by the conception of reality of the phenomenal existence. As the world of existence communicates suffering the Mahayana religion lays down that it is one's duty to minimize it and get deliverance from it.

In general, therefore Buddhism supported the ethics of non-violence not only in the form of negative restrictions and ascetic rules but also by giving it a positive meaning in the terms of altruistic love, compassion and amelioration of human misery. Though the Mahayana sects denied reality to the ego yet, both the Mahayana and the Hinayana sects emphasized about only the sublimation of worldly desire and not its complete repression, leading to the path of salvation. It is here, that lies the middle path of Buddhism. Buddhism lays great emphasis on the sense of universal sympathy and treats nonviolence as composite ethics consisting of moral restraint, shila (right behaviour) compassion and friendliness. Non-violence is equated to "right will" which itself is devoid of selfhood and consists in the sublimation of self and cultivation of moral virtues by treading on the path of righteousness.54 All these go to explain the positive conception of non-violence, as maintained and developed in the Buddhistic tradition.

Thus both forms of Buddhism, the Hinayana and the Mahayana emphasized the ethics of non-violence as the core value of religious belief and rituals. Buddhism with the help of the state support led to introduction of non-violence also in the actual social and cultural life of the society and state policies in India. The name of Ashoka (273-232 B-C) in this connection is well known; as a king he raised the ethics of non-violence to the state policy level. In spite of the fact that his policy does not give evidence of complete or absolute adherence to the ethics of non-violence, Ashoka no doubt systematically propagated the doctrine of non-violence far and wide. He wanted

to make Buddhism a state philosophy; he partly succeeded\textsuperscript{55} in the efforts. It is said that Ashoka followed the ethics of non-violence only in the external policy matters of the state, e.g., he renounced war as a means of settlement of political issues and substituted dharma vijaya (victory through morality) for shastravijaya (victory through arms).\textsuperscript{56} Yet he did not completely prohibit the killing of animals; capital punishment existed in his time. He, of course, prohibited animals sacrifices and appointed special officers called “morality officers” for the enforcement of non-violence.\textsuperscript{57}

The Ashoka edicts give ample testimony to the emphasis on non-violence during this king's rule. They indicate prohibition of animal slaughter,\textsuperscript{58} only allowing some forms of killing for food and other purposes. Some scholars find similarity between the ethical codes regarding the killing of animals as revealed by the edicts of Ashoka and as laid down in the dharma sastras.\textsuperscript{59} However, emphasis on ahimsa appears to be more marked during Ashoka's reign than before. Among the later rulers of India, Harsha (606-647 A.D.) who was formally converted to Buddhism also followed the doctrine of non-violence as official policy of the state. Both Ashok and Harsha accepted non-violence out of conviction about the futility of violence, by their experiences in war. During the reign of Harsha also the killing of animals was prohibited. After a period of initial military conquests, Harsha settled down to a policy of peace and non-violence.

Gradually, Buddhism began to lose its appeal in the wake of the challenges of the Brahmanic renaissance and the reinterpretations of the earlier religious scriptures. Its decline began near about A.D. 800, and as Schweitzer says by A.D. 1600 it almost ceased to exist in India.\textsuperscript{60} It had never quite succeeded in completely disassociating its philosophy of life and ethics from the Brahmanic mysticism. Its monastic life had no appeal for the householders and later involved all kinds of difficulties. Moreover, Brahmanism had never completely been replaced by Buddhism in India, it had a solid indigenous foundation and a flexible theological and ethical structure which could be adopted to all kinds of circumstances. The reformers of Hinduism especially Samkara

\textsuperscript{57} Pillar Edict VII.
\textsuperscript{58} Rock Edict, I.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid.
and his Vedantic philosophy gave a death blow to Buddhism in India. Moreover, Buddhism always thrived on state patronage in India and declined when it was withdrawn. For some time it had succeeded due to the strong reaction, against the formalism and dogmatism of the early Hinduism. This reaction soon became irrelevant as Buddhism itself became prey to these evils. Also Buddhism could never develop a complete world view as that of Hinduism and, therefore, its religious foundation had always been weaker in India; it later toppled due to the push from the Hindu reformers.