Chapter - II

PLACE OF THERAVADA BUDDHISM IN THE
EVOLUTION OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHTS
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II.1. Early Buddhism i.e. Theravada Buddhism originated in the sixth century
B.C. as the most developed principle in the evolution of Indian Philoso-
phical thoughts. It did not come down from the sky having no bearing
with the thoughts and principles that were grown and developed in
India prior to its origin. Its founder was neither a God nor a son
of God. He was a human being with flesh and blood as we are and
he did not preach anything called 'Apauruseya' (i.e. not coming from
man/men) like the Vedas. From his biography we come to know that
he got the opportunity to deeply study and personally experience
all the existing philosophical theories and principles of his time;
but none of them could satisfy him, and show him the Path leading
to the cessation of worldly suffering. He, therefore, went alone in
search of the Truth, in quest of the Noble Path which could liberate
him and others from Dukkha. And finally he was successful in disco-
vering the Noble Path whereby he himself became emanciated. He
became Buddha, the Enlightened One, and preached the Noble Path
for the good and welfare of the many. From his discourses we learn
that the great thinkers of India, starting from the Rg-Vedic period
down to his time, devoted themselves in solving the mysteries of
the universe, origin of man and his destiny. In the successive periods, new and new thoughts and ideas developed. But they could not lead man to reach the final goal. Nevertheless Buddha had every respect for the ideas developed so far prior to him. What was lacking in those systems was fulfilled by him by his Buddha-knowledge. Thus in the philosophy of the Buddha we find that the Indian Philosophy reached its maturity and could claim to be the best of all existing philosophical systems of the world. It would, therefore, not be an exaggeration if we state that the seed of Indian Philosophical Thought sown during the time of the Rg-Veda was found to be a fully grown up healthy tree fully bloomed and heavily burdened with ambrosia-like fruits during the time of Buddha.

112. Now, let us discuss the matter in detail to some extent. Indian Philosophical system started from the Rg-Vedic period and it has been developed in the successive periods down to the time of the Buddha and Mahavira. From the minute study of the philosophical systems of India developed so far, we may come to the conclusion that though the basic problems of philosophy have been the same in the East as in the West, the speciality of Indian philosophy lies in its synthetic outlook, wherein every problem has been discussed by the respective philosopher from all possible approaches, metaphysical, ethical, logical, psychological and epistemological.

113. The schools or systems of Indian philosophy may be broadly divided
into two classes, namely, orthodox (=āstika) and heterodox (=nāstika). The major six philosophical systems, viz. Mīmāṃsā, Vedānta, Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika come to the first group as they accept the authority of the Vedas. To this group may be included some other minor orthodox schools, viz. the Grammarian school, the Medical school, etc. The Cārvākas, the Bauddhas and the Jainas - these three chief schools come to the second group i.e. Nāstika as they do not believe in the authority of the Vedas.

The six major Āstika schools may again be divided into two groups, viz. (1) schools directly based on Vedic texts; they are two : the Mīmāṃsā, an atheistic system which emphasises the ritualistic aspect of the Vedas; and the Vedānta which emphasises the speculative aspect of the Vedas; and (2) schools based on independent grounds; they are four : the Sāṅkhya, an atheistic system, which does not believe in the existence of God as the creator and admits two ultimate realities of the world, namely, Puruṣa and Prakṛti which are independent of each other in respect of their existence; the Yoga, a theistic system believing in the existence of God and emphasising on the practice of Yoga (=a kind of meditation) as the means to the attainment of discriminative knowledge (=viveka-jñāna) to be the essential condition of liberation; the Nyāya, based mainly on logical grounds and giving several logical arguments to prove the existence of God as the creator of the world; and the Vaiśeṣika, a theistic system, emphasising on 'particularity' (=viśeṣa) standing for the peculiarity
or individuality of the eternal entities of the world.

Of the three major Nāstika schools, the Carvākas or the Materislists do not believe in anything except what is immediately known through perception; according to them there is no God and no life after death. The Jainas form their view of the universe on the basis of three kinds of knowledge, viz. perception, inference and valid testimony. The Jaina system asserts the reality of the external world, believes in many ultimate realities and rejects the existence of God. The Bauddha system of philosophy arose out of the early teachings of Gotama Buddha. This system is known as Theravāda Buddhism. It asserts the following theories: (i) all things are conditional; there is nothing that exists by itself, (ii) All things are subject to change and nothing is permanent, (iii) There is neither any soul nor God nor any other permanent substance, (iv) There is continuity of the present life which generates another life, by the law of Karma, (v) The current of Samsāra i.e. repeated existences can be stopped if the Noble Eight-fold Path prescribed by the Buddha is followed seriously and sincerely. If it is done the individual may put an end to his own misery and attain Nibbāna, the state of perfect bliss.
II.4. A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE MAJOR PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEMS OF INDIA

A. THE SIX ĀSTIKA SCHOOLS

1. THE MĪMĀṂSAKA SYSTEM - The Mīmāṃsā or Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā school has defended Vedic ritualism and given a philosophical justification of the beliefs on which ritualism depends. According to this system the Vedas are not the works of any human author; the Vedas are eternal and self-existing; and the Vedas available to us are only their temporary manifestations through particular seers (=ṛṣi). The validity of Vedic knowledge is self-evident like that of every other knowledge. The Mīmāṃsakas assert that if the Vedic rituals are performed without desiring any reward in return, they may bring about liberation after death i.e. a pure bliss or heaven.

The Mīmāṃsakas believe in the reality of the SOUL as an immortal eternal substance, but they do not believe in the existence of God as the creator and destructor of the world. Further they are of opinion that the world has always been as it is; it has neither a beginning nor an end. The law of Karma guides the formation of objects constituting the world. According to the Mīmāṃsakas, the world is composed of (i) living bodies wherein the souls reap the consequences of their past deeds (=bhogāyatana), (ii) the sensory and motor organs, i.e. the indriyas which are instruments for suffering or enjoying those consequences (bhoga-sādhana), and (iii) the objects which constitute the fruits to be suffered or enjoyed (=bhogya-visaya).
The unique theory of potential energy (=sakti) has been formulated by the Mīmāṃsakas in connection with the question of causation. By this theory they could solve the problem how an action like a sacrifice performed now bears fruit after a long time when the action has ceased. They believe that the ritual performed here generates in the soul of the performer an unperceived potency (called apūrva) which remains in the soul and bears fruit when circumstances are favourable.\(^{(1)}\)

The ultimate aim of the early Mīmāṃsakas was the attainment of Heaven, a state of perfect and pure bliss ("svargakāmo yajeta") and this could be achieved through the performance of rituals with a disinterested motive. They conceived the idea of "Duty for duty's sake" i.e. the rituals should be performed just because they are enjoined by the Vedas and not because they will benefit the performers. At the same time they preached the universal law of Karma that "the performer of Vedic rituals does not ultimately go unrewarded". But the later Mīmāṃsakas went a step further. They conceive that the attainment of Heaven cannot give perfect liberation. Perfect liberation is possible through the cessation of births i.e. through the cessation of sufferings.

2. THE VEDĀNTA SYSTEM - The Vedānta, meaning 'the end of the Vedas', especially arising out of the Upanishads, marks the culmination of the Vedic speculations. The Upanishads are called the Vedānta (=the end of the Vedas) firstly because they were the last literary
products of the Vedic period— in the first stage there were the Śāṃhitās (i.e. Ṛk, Sāma, Yajus and Atharva), in the second stage the Brāhma-ṇās (guiding and encouraging the Vedic rituals) and in the final stage the Upanishads (discussing philosophical problems as regards the origin and end of this universe, origin and end of man etc.). Secondly, the Upanishads mark the culmination of the Vedic speculations.

In the Vedānta system we find the conception of One Reality i.e. One Supreme Person (=puruṣa) who pervades the whole universe and yet remains beyond it. Soul and Brahman are the synonyms of that One Supreme Person. The Vedantins assert: All is God; the Soul is God. There is no multiplicity here.

"Sarvaḥ khalu idaṁ Brahma, Ayam eva Ātmā Brahma. Neha nānāsti kiñcana." But if the Reality is One, why do we perceive many objects. The Vedantins reply: It is on account of our ignorance (=avidyā) which conceals the real Brahman from us and makes it appear as the many objects. Or, we can say that this manifold appearances are due to the magical power of Māyā in God. (3) Māyā is also of the nature of ignorance. So, to have real understanding of the reality that there is no difference between an object, an individual and the Supreme Brahman, what is most essential is the complete removal of ignorance (=avidyā).

Although the Upanishads mark the culmination of the Vedic speculations, yet they declare that one cannot achieve the highest goal of immortality only with the Vedic rituals. The rituals can at best
secure a temporary place in Heaven; but when the merits earned here are exhausted in Heaven, there is no other alternative but to take birth again in this world. The Upanishads, however, teach that sacrifice to the Self or Brahman should be regarded as superior to sacrifice to gods. It is only through the realization of the Self or Brahman that rebirth can be stopped and the worldly sufferings can be put to an end. One who truly realizes one's unity with the Immortal Brahman, realizes immortality. This can be done by controlling the senses, including the mind, by giving up attachment to objects, by realizing the transitoriness of all constituted things and by having an earnest desire for achieving the highest goal of immortality.

3. THE SĀMKHYA SYSTEM - The Sāmkhya system admits two ultimate realities, viz. PURUṢA and PRAKRITI which are independent of each other in respect of their existence. Prakriti is the uncaused cause of all objects of the world, while the Puruṣa or the Self is neither the cause nor the effect of anything. The puruṣa or the self is quite distinct from the body, the senses and the mind. It is in itself free and immortal, but due to the influence of Avidyā (=ignorance) that we confuse the self with the body, the senses and the mind. This ignorance as regards the distinction between the self and the not-self is responsible for all our sorrows and sufferings. Once we realize the distinction, our self ceases to be affected by the joys and sorrows, the ups and downs of our life. It remains in itself as the dispassionate observer of the constant changes and activities.
going on in the world. It does not itself act and change in any way. This is the state of liberation from suffering which has been variously described as Mukti, Apavarga, Kaivalya etc. (i.e. liberation). It is possible in this life or in the life hereafter.

The Sāṁkhya system does not admit the existence of God to explain the mysteries of the universe, for according to them, Prakriti is the adequate cause of the universe as a whole. Of course, according to Vijnānabhikṣu and some modern writers, although the existence of God as possessed of creative activity cannot be admitted, yet the existence of God as the eternally perfect spirit who is the witness of the world and whose mere presence moves Prakriti to act and to create, as the magnet moves a piece of iron, cannot be denied.

The Sāṁkhya Theory regarding Self

According to the Sāṁkhya, the self is pure, eternal and all-pervading consciousness. It is different from the body and the senses, the manas and the intellect. It is sheer ignorance to think that the self is something of the world of objects, the body or the senses or the mind or the intellect. The self is not the brain, nor the nervous system, nor the aggregate of conscious states. It is not a substance with the attribute of consciousness, but it is a pure consciousness as such. Consciousness is its very essence and not a mere quality of it. It is also not a blissful consciousness (=ānandasvarūpa), as the Advaita Vedantins think. Because, bliss and consciousness being different things cannot be the essence of the same reality.
The existence of the self is proved by them by the following arguments:

1) Objects of the world like tables, chairs, etc. which are composed of parts are means to the ends of other beings, not ends in themselves. They must be conscious selves, to whose ends all physical objects are the means.

2) There must be some selves who guide the operations of Prakriti and all her products, because Prakriti herself is blind, unconscious and unintelligent.

3) There must be some conscious selves who enjoy pleasure and suffer pain. Had there been no experiencer, pleasure, pain etc. would be meaningless.

4) There must be some immaterial substances or selves transcending the physical order. Otherwise, the concept or liberation or salvation and the will to liberate or to be liberated would be meaningless altogether.

Evolution of the Universe according to the Sāṅkhya system

According to the Sāṅkhya system, the evolution of the universe is possible only through the contact of Purusa or the Self and the Prakriti or Primal Matter; but here by contact does not mean any kind of ordinary conjunction, rather it is a sort of effective relation through which Prakriti (which is active and everchanging, but blind and unintelligent) is influenced by the presence of Purusa (which is conscious and intelligent, but inactive and unchanging) in the same way in which our
body is sometimes moved by the presence of a thought. It is only when Puruṣa and Prakriti co-operate then there is the creation of a world of objects. But the question is: How can two such different and opposed principles like Puruṣa and Prakriti co-operate? What brings the one in contact with the other? The answer given by the Sāṃkhya is this:

Just as a blind man and a lame man can co-operate in order to get out of a forest, so the blind and unintelligent Prakriti and the lame but conscious and intelligent Puruṣa combine and co-operate to serve their respective interests.

When there is a contact between Puruṣa and Prakriti, there is a disturbance of the equilibrium in which the Guṇas (i.e. sattva, rajas and tamas - the elements of the ultimate substance by which Prakriti is constituted) were held before creation. One of the Guṇas, namely, Rajas, which is naturally active, is disturbed first, and then, through Rajas, the other two Guṇas (i.e. Sattva and Tamas) begin to vibrate. This produces a tremendous commotion in the infinite bosom of Prakriti and each of the Guṇas tries to preponderate over the rest. There is a gradual differentiation and integration of the three Guṇas, and as a result of their combination in different proportions, the various objects of the world originate. The course of evolution is as follows:  

From prakriti arises the great germ of this vast universe which is called Mahat (=the great). It is also called Buddhi (=intellect) as it is the creative thought of the world to be evolved. By a further transformation
of Buddhi arises Ahaṅkāra, the second product. The function of Ahaṅkāra or the ego is the feeling of 'I and mine'. It is on account of Ahaṅkāra that the self wrongly considers itself to be an agent (=karta), or a cause of action, a desirer of and striver for ends, and an owner of properties. From Ahaṅkāra, with an excess of the element of sattva, arises five organs of knowledge (i.e. the senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch), the five organs of action which are located in the mouth, hands, feet, anus and the sex organ, and the mind. With an increase of the element of tamas, Ahaṅkāra produces, the five subtle elements (=tanmātra) which are the potentialities of sound, touch, colour, taste and smell. From the five subtle elements come the five gross elements of ākāśa (=ether), air, fire, water and earth. Thus including Puruṣa, we have altogether twenty-five principles in the Sāṅkhya.

4. THE YOGA SYSTEM - The Yoga system is closely allied to the Sāṅkhya system. It mostly accepts the epistemology and the metaphysics of the Sāṅkhya system with its twenty-five principles. The difference between the two systems lies in the fact that the Sāṅkhya does not admit the existence of God, while the Yoga admits the existence of God. According to the Sāṅkhya, the association of Puruṣa with Prakriti is what initiates the evolution of the world, and the cessation of this leads to dissolution. And neither the association nor the dissolution is natural to Prakriti and Puruṣa. The Yoga system, therefore, argues that there must be a supreme being who is able
to bring about these relations between Prakriti and Puruṣa according to the moral deserts of individual souls. So, God, the supreme being who is eternal, all-pervading, omniscient, and completely free from all defects, is responsible for maintaining the relations.

The special interest of the Yoga System is in the practice of Yoga (=mental culture) as the means to the attainment of discriminative knowledge which is the essential condition of liberation.

There are eight steps in the practice of Yoga. These are: yama or restraint (consisting in abstaining from injury to any life, from falsehood, theft, avarice and incontinence), niyama or moral culture (e.g. cultivation of good habits like purification, contentment, penance, study of the Vedas, contemplation of God etc.), āsana or posture (i.e. adoption of steady and comfortable posture), prānāyāma or breath-control (i.e. regulated inhalation and exhalation and also retention of breath), pratyāhāra or withdrawal of the senses (i.e. withdrawing the sense-organs from their respective objects), dhārana or attention (i.e. to fix the mind on some intra-organic or extra-organic objects like the nose-tip or the moon), dhyāna or meditation (i.e. steady contemplation of the object without any break) and samādhi or concentration (i.e. the state in which the contemplative consciousness is lost in the contemplated object and has no awareness of itself).

The practice of Yoga in accordance with the eight steps mentioned above is the best way of self-purification, self-understanding and realizing the ultimate Truth. Hence almost all the systems of Indian
philosophy insist on the practice of Yoga as the necessary practical side of a philosophy of life.

5. THE NYĀYA SYSTEM - The Nyāya system is a realistic philosophy based mainly on logical grounds. It admits four separate sources of true knowledge, viz. pratyakṣa or perception (i.e. direct knowledge of objects, external or internal, produced by their relation to our senses), anumāna or influence (i.e. knowledge of objects through the apprehension of some mark (=liṅga) which is invariably related to the inferred objects (=sādhya); e.g. the hill is fiery, because it smokes; and whatever smokes is fiery (parvato vahnimān, dhūmāt), upamāna or comparison (i.e. the knowledge of the relation between a name and things so named on the basis of a given description of their similarity to some familiar object; e.g. gavaya) and śabda or testimony (i.e. verbal testimony or the knowledge about anything derived from the statements of authoritative persons, e.g. the statements of a reliable farmer about plants). (7)

According to the Naiyāyikas, the objects of knowledge are the self, the body, the senses and their objects, cognition, mind activity, mental defects, rebirth, the feelings of pleasure and pain, suffering and freedom from suffering. Like many other systems of Indian philosophy, the Naiyāyikas seek to deliver the individual Self from its bondage to the body, the senses and their objects. According to them it is ignorance of the truth (=mithyā-jñāna) and the consequent faults of Rāga.
(=desire), Dveṣa (=aversion) and Moha (=infatuation) that impel the Self to act for good and bad ends and plunge it into the world of sin and suffering, birth and death. So, the absolute cessation of all pain and suffering may be brought about only by the right knowledge of reality (=tattva-jñāna). The Naiyāyikas believe in the existence of God who is the ultimate cause of the creation, maintenance and destruction of the world. They are also of opinion that under the loving care and wise guidance of God, all individuals can sooner or later attain right knowledge about themselves and the world, and thereby final release from all suffering.

6. THE VAIŚEŞIKA SYSTEM - This system is allied to the Nyāya system and has the same end in view, namely, the liberation of the individual self. It brings all objects of knowledge, i.e. the whole world, under the seven categories, viz. Dravya (=substance), Guna (=quality), Karma (=action), Sāmānyā (=generality), Viśeṣa (=particularity), Saṁvāya (=the relation of inherence) and Abhāva (=non-existence). The Vaišeṣika is a realistic philosophy which combines pluralism with theism. According to them the world is created and destroyed by God according to the moral deserts of individual souls and for the proper realization of their moral destiny.  

According to the Vaiśeṣikas, the Ātman is an eternal and all-pervading substance. There are two kinds of Ātmans, namely, the individual Ātman (=jīvātmā) and the supreme Ātman (=paramātmā or Iśvara). The individual Ātman is not one but many, being different in different
bodies. Manas is the internal sense for the perception of the individual Atman and its qualities, like pleasure and pain. The supreme Atman is one, and is inferred as the creator and destructor of the world.

B. THE THREE NĀŚTIKA SCHOOLS

1. THE CĀRVĀKA SYSTEM - The Cārvākas or the Materialists hold that perception is the only valid source of knowledge. Perception reveals to us only the material world, composed of the four great elements of matter, viz. earth, water, fire and air. There is no evidence that there is anything like an immaterial soul in man. Man is wholly made of matter. So when man dies nothing is left of him to enjoy or suffer the consequences of his actions hereafter. The existence of God is also a myth, because God cannot be perceived. It is, therefore, foolish to perform any religious rite either for enjoying happiness after this life in heaven or for pleasing God. The end of life should be the enjoyment of the greatest amount of pleasure here in this life, at the cost of anything.

2. THE JAINA SYSTEM - The Jainas admit perception, inference and authoritative testimony as sources of valid knowledge. On the basis of these three kinds of knowledge, the Jainas form their view of the universe. According to them, perception reveals the reality of material substances, composed of the four great elements (i.e. earth, water, fire and air); inference yields valid knowledge when it obeys the logical rules of correctness - for example, by inference
they come to believe in space (=ākāśa), because material substances must exist somewhere; and we can have unerring knowledge about spiritual matters, which our limited sense-perception and reasoning cannot reveal to us, on the authority of the teachings of the Jinas or Tīrthaṅkaras.

The Jainas believe that there are as many souls as there are living beings. There are souls not only in animals, but also in plants and even in particles of dust. Of course all souls are not equally conscious. Every conscious soul is capable of attaining infinite consciousness, power and happiness which are inherent in the very nature of the soul. But they are obstructed by Karmas which lead to the bondage of the soul by matter. By removing Karmas only that a soul can remove bondage and regain its natural perfections. They are of opinion that by the joint culture of Right Faith (in the teachings of the Jaina Tīrthaṅkaras), Right Knowledge (of the said teachings) and Right Conduct (i.e. the practice of abstinence for all injury to life, from falsehood, from stealing, from sensuality and from attachment to sense objects) the passions are controlled and the Karmas that fetter the soul to matter are removed. The obstacles being removed, the soul attains its natural perfection - infinite faith, infinite knowledge, infinite power and infinite bliss. This is the state of liberation.

The Jainas do not believe in God, but their Tīrthaṅkaras take the place of God. Their philosophy is a kind of realism, because it asserts the reality of the external world, and it is pluralism, because it
asserts the reality of the external world, and it is pluralism, because
it believes in many ultimate realities.

3. THE BAUDDHA SYSTEM - The Bauddha system of philosophy
arose out of the teachings of the Gotama Buddha. The basic conception
of the teachings of the Buddha lies in the Four Noble Truths (=cattāri
ariyasaccāni) - the truth that there is misery, the truth that there
is a cause of misery, the truth that there is cessation of misery
and the truth that there is a path leading to the cessation of misery.
About the first truth i.e. the existence of misery all the systems
of Indian philosophy form the same opinion. But the Buddha said
something new. According to him, misery is not simply casual; it
is ordinarily present in all forms of existence and in all kinds of
experience. Even what appears as pleasant is really a source of misery
at bottom. Regarding the second truth he said that our miseries
are caused by some conditions. What are the conditions? They are
desires (=Tanha) which can be traced ultimately to our ignorance.
So if the conditions like desires and ignorance are removed, misery
must cease. This is the third truth about the cessation of misery.
The fourth is the Path that leads to the cessation of misery. This
is known as the Noble Eight-fold Path as it consists of eight steps,
namely, Right views, Right determination, Right speech, Right conduct,
Right livelihood, Right endeavour, Right mindfulness and Right concen-
tration. These eight steps remove ignorance and desires, enlighten
the mind and bring about perfect equanimity and tranquillity. Thus
misery ceases completely and the chance of rebirth also is stopped. The attainment of this state of perfection is called Nibbāna.

From the teachings and discourses of the Buddha one thing is clear at least that he regarded it as a waste of time to discuss metaphysical problems like the existence of God, Soul, etc., origin of the Universe, transmigration of Soul, and the like. He was rather concerned so much with the practical problem how human misery could be removed and how man could be liberated. \(^{(9)}\)

II.5. SCHOOLS OF THE SIX HERETICAL TEACHERS

In the Jaina and Buddhist texts there are frequent references to the six non-Buddhist teachers who were respected by the wise, nobles and kings. They were well-known throughout the country as founders of different schools of thought having a good number of followers. They were either contemporaneous with or anterior to the Buddha. Below are given the doctrines they preached.\(^{(10)}\)

1) Pūraṇa Kassapa - This teacher taught Akiriya-vāda (i.e. theory of non-action or passivity of soul) having the view that a person earns neither merit by pious acts, nor demerit by impious acts. According to him, soul is inactive, hence it remains unaffected by the results of good or bad deeds. The teaching of Pūraṇa Kassapa may be classified as Adhicca-samuppannika-vāda i.e. things happen fortuitously without any cause or condition, and have nothing to do with 'soul'. 
2) Makkhali Gosāla - This teacher upheld the doctrine of fatalism (=niyati-sangati-bhāva) i.e. a being's suffering or happiness does not depend upon any cause or condition. A being is helpless and is regulated by destiny. He cannot attain perfection by exertion.

3) Ajita Kesakambali - Ajita was a materialist. He denied the effects of Karma. According to him there is no further life after death. Everything ends in death. A human being is composed of four elements. After death each of them returns to the corresponding elements, and the sense-faculties into Ākāśa. This doctrine is similar to the Cārvāka school. It is classified as Ucchedavāda or the doctrine of annihilation after death or Taṁ jīva taṁ śārīravāda or the doctrine of identity of the soul and body.

4) Pakudha Kaccāyana - According to this teacher a being is composed of seven elements which are everlasting and immutable by nature. They are: Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Pleasure, Pain and Soul. They are uncreated and produce nothing new. Hence any action, good or bad, is ineffective, e.g. cutting of a man in two pieces means nothing more than passing a sword through some elements. This teaching is classified as Sassatavāda or eternalism, which maintains that the soul and the world are eternal.

5) Saṅjaya Belatthiputta - This teacher advocated Ajñaṇavāda (=agnosticism). He refused to give a definite answer to questions dealing with ultimate problems. He was, therefore, criticized as an Amarāvik-khepika (=Eel-wriggler).
6) Nigantha Nātaputta - He was better known as Mahāvīra, founder of Jainism. (For his teachings section on 'Jainism' is to be consulted).

II.6. GENERAL TREND OF THE INDIAN PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEMS

In the foregoing pages we have given a bird's-eye-view of all the philosophical systems of India starting from the Rg-Vedic period down to Buddha. What we have noticed in the systems is that there is a unity of moral and spiritual outlook in the diverse systems of Indian philosophy. In almost all the systems, with the exception of the solitary Cārvāka system, we find a common trend of thought and speculations about the origin, existence and destiny of the world and of life as a whole. Of course, in every age there have been sceptics and agnostics differing from time to time in regard to the subject of speculation and the mode of expression. For example, in the Vedic mythological poetry we would find the Vedic Rṣis doubting even the existence of Indra. In the Philosophical Vedic hymns we would find doubt with regard to the knowledge of the single, the first case of the Universe, and the knowledge of the genesis of the cosmos. In a subsequent age represented by the upanishads we would find doubt with regard to the cognisability of mental events and the future existence of man. But in any case, the general movement of thought was continuous. Every period has contributed to the multiplication of philosophic thought, and the older ones exist side by side with newer offshoots and modifications. In the words of Dr. B.M. Barua (11) : "The whole process, viewed in one way, would seem to
be a gradual unfolding of philosophic consciousness of a certain section of humanity, and viewed in another, it would appear to be a process of supersession and supplementation."

The Pali Brahmajālasūtra enumerates a list of sixty-two forms of philosophical speculations about the origin, existence and the destiny of the world and man at the time of the appearance of Buddhism. They are traditionally known as the sixty-two heresies (= micchādīththiyo or wrong beliefs). They are called heresies as they cannot lead man to the realization of the ultimate truth and liberation. The sixty-two heresies may broadly be divided under the following heads:

1) Four kinds of Sāsātavāda (those who held that the self or soul and the universe are eternal).

2) Four kinds of Ekacca-sāsātavāda (those who held that the soul and the universe are eternal in some respects and in some not).

3) Four kinds of Antānāntika (those who held that the universe is finite as well as infinite).

4) Four kinds of Amarāvikkhepi (those who equivocate about good and evil).

5) Two kinds of Adhicca-samuppannika (those who held that the soul and the world originate without a cause).

6) Sixteen kinds of Uddhamāghātanika-sāmīvāda (those who held that the soul is conscious after death).
7) Eight kinds of Uddhamāghataniaka-asānānivāda (those who held that the soul is unconscious after death).

8) Eight kinds of Uddhamāghataniika-neva-saṁññi-nāsaṁññivāda (those who held that the soul is neither conscious nor unconscious after death).

9) Seven kinds of Ucchedavāda (those who held that the soul is extinct after death).

10) Five kinds of Ditthadhamma-nibbānavāda [those who held that Nibbāna (not the Nibbāna realised by the Buddha) can be attained in this life].

II.7. CONTRIBUTION OF THE BUDDHA

Buddha had to handle all these diverse issues and very boldly declared that none of the sixty-two views prevalent in India during his time was conducive to attaining perfect liberation from the sufferings of the repeated existences. He personally did not go against the well established doctrines of a permanent soul which maintains transmigration and the existence of God as the creator and destructor of this universe. Whenever he was asked about these problems he kept silent. He rather insisted the inquisitive inquirer to follow the analytic method of enquiry (=vibhajjavāda) and have true valuation of concepts and things in the light of his theory of causal genesis i.e. the law of Dependent Origination (=paṭiccasamuppāda-nīti). Buddha’s analytic method of enquiry imparted a great synthetic landmark to the history
of Indian philosophy. This synthetic development presupposes a large number of philosophical thoughts that constituted its immediate background - negative and positive. Buddha has very wisely grouped the current philosophical notions as mentioned above, under four pairs and extremes (=anta) comprising thesis and antithesis and has also endeavoured by his system of the Middle Path (=majjhima-paṭipadā) to avoid as well as reconcile them without jeopardising his own position. The four pairs of extremes are as follows (12):

1. a) Eternalist thesis - that everything exists. This is one extreme.
   b) Annihilationist antithesis - that nothing exists. This is another extreme. Between these two extremes lay whole centuries of metaphysical evolution.

2. a) Determinist thesis - that everything is pre-determined. This is one extreme.
   b) Fortuitist antithesis - that nothing is caused and conditioned. This is another extreme. Between these two extremes lay whole centuries of logical evolution.

3. a) Individualist thesis - that weal and woe are caused by the moral agent of an act. This is one extreme.
   b) Fatalist antithesis - that weal and woe are caused by agents other than self. This is another extreme. Between these two extremes lay whole centuries of ethical evolution.
4. a) Hedonist and Utilitarian thesis - that adherence to pleasures of the senses constitutes the path to the goal. This is one extreme.

b) Ascetic antithesis - that self-mortification constitutes the path to final release. This is another extreme. Between these two extremes lay whole centuries of socio-religious evolution.

Buddha has repeatedly pointed out to avoid such speculations on the Soul and the world as they do not take man nearer to his goal, i.e. freedom from all suffering. On the contrary, if a man indulges in such speculations, remains all the more entangled in the net of theories he himself has woven. Such a man behaves like the foolish man, with a poisonous arrow plunged into his flank, wasting his time on idle speculation regarding the origin, the maker and the thrower of the arrow, instead of trying to pull it out immediately. (M. Sutta 63). Buddha, therefore, very compassionately gives his sermon for the real good of the mankind. He says: "You are fortunate that you have been born as a human being. So make the best use of it. Is it not true that you are suffering from many kinds of worldly dukkha? You are the creator of yourself and your own dukkha. There is no other creator and no other person who can release you from your dukkha. You have to exert yourself to come out of your own dukkha. The Tathāgatas have prescribed for you the noble dhamma-medicine, the Middle Path, the noble Eight-fold Path. You just come forward, taste yourself and verify by your own experience this noble path.
You will come out successful. You will be liberated. Abide with yourself as an island, with yourself as a Refuge. Abide with the Dhamma (i.e. the Eight-fold Path) as an island, with the Dhamma as a Refuge. Seek no external Refuge.

This is Buddhism where there is least scope of any blind faith, of running after speculation and heresies. Buddhism directs people to be practical and follow the right path after proper scrutiny and verification, although the path has been prescribed by the Enlightened One. Buddhism is neither a metaphysical path nor a ritualistic path. It is neither sceptical nor dogmatic. It is neither self-mortification nor self-indulgence. It is neither pessimism nor optimism. It is neither eternalism nor nihilism. It is neither absolutely this-worldly nor other-worldly. It is a unique path of enlightenment. It is the doctrine of Reality. It is a means of Deliverance from suffering, and Deliverance itself. Whether the Buddhas arise or not, the Dhamma exists. It lies hidden from the ignorant eyes of men, till a Buddha, an Enlightened One, realizes and compassionately reveals it to the world.

To the seekers of truth the Buddha says:

"Do not accept anything on mere hearsay - (i.e. thinking that thus have we heard it from a long time). Do not accept anything by mere tradition - (i.e. thinking that it has thus been handed down through many generations). Do not accept anything on account of mere rumours- (i.e. by believing what others say without any investigation). Do
not accept anything just because it accords with your scripture. Do not accept anything by mere supposition. Do not accept anything by mere inference. Do not accept anything by merely considering the reasons. Do not accept anything merely because it agrees with your pre-conceived notions. Do not accept anything merely because it seems acceptable - (i.e. thinking that as the speaker seems to be a good person his word should be accepted). do not accept anything thinking that the ascetic is respected by all (therefore it is right to accept his word).

"But when you know for yourselves - these things are moral, these things are blameless, these things are praised by the wise, these things, when performed and undertaken, conduce to well-being and happiness - then do you accept and do you live acting accordingly". These inspiring words of the Buddha still retain their original force and freshness, and they will remain as such till the end of the world.

We may, therefore, come to the conclusion that Buddhism especially Theravada Buddhism or Early Buddhism occupies a pre-eminent place in the evolution of Indian philosophical thought. Indian philosophical thought found its fulfilment in Buddhism, as it could solve all the intricate problems of life and the problems regarding the origin, existence and the destiny of the universe, and also as it could, for the first time in the world, show the straight path to liberation, to supreme bliss and emancipation. Had there been no advent of the Buddha, Indian philosophy would have remained incomplete.
REFERENCES AND NOTES:

1. Vide Śāstra-dīpikā, p.89; Prakaraṇa-pañcikā, pp.184-95; Sabara-bhāṣya, 2.1.5.


4. Chatterjee and Datta, An Introduction to Indian Philosophy, pp.265-266.

5. The Sāṃkhya Kārikā and Tattva-Kaumudī, 21-41; Pravacana-Bhāṣya and Vṛtti, 1.64-74, 2.10-32.

6. Yoga-Sūtra and Bhāṣya, II.2.8-55; III.1-4.


8. Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra, 1.1.15-17.

9. We have discussed in detail about the Bauddha System, especially the Theravada or Original Buddhist system in Chapter-I.

10. D I pp.47 ff; Mil., p.4; B.M. Barua, A History of Pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy, pp.277 ff; Rockhill, Life of Buddha, pp.96 ff.

11. A History of Pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy, p.409

11(a) Dīghanikāya (Sutta No.1)


13. M.I.429-30