Chapter VII

CONCLUSION

"Buddhism, at least in its earliest and truest form, is no religion at all, but a mere system of morality and philosophy founded on pessimistic theory of life."¹ This criticism of Buddhism exposes its fundamental character of being a philosophical and ethical doctrine not simply a religion in its so-called theistic formula. It is also true that Buddhism has its basis on a pessimistic view of life. But Sir Williams' definition remains incomplete as it fails to recognize that Buddhism is a religion, of course not in the traditional meaning, but a religion in the true sense. It is the religion of self-control and universal brotherhood, to love everybody, to hold the universe together. It is also the philosophy founded on a pessimistic view of life, but it does not end there. It is the most optimistic conclusion of Buddhism that suffering is not the end. 'Suffering can be removed' and it can be removed by our own effort. Man has the power to overcome suffering within himself, in his own mind.

So Buddhism is not only a religion, an ethics, a philosophy but also a psychology, embodied in the teaching of Prince Gautama turned Buddha. As the Buddha he had successfully established himself through a scientific, coherent and
logical body of psychological discipline.

So Buddhism may be treated as a psychology more than a philosophy. Its main lookout is upon the mind of man which makes him happy or unhappy. The fundamental fact of suffering is not a question to be solved by philosophical speculation or by worldly achievement of science, medicine and money. Suffering is not related with poverty only. It is not the problem only of unhealthy or uneducated. It is the universal problem related with life and consciousness. The living is suffering. But death is not its remedy. The dead cannot escape misery but he is the victimised target of misery. The Buddha did not surrender to this evil. Like the Mahavira, he also conquered the enemy. The Buddha is the Jina. Suffering, though big, universal and overwhelming, vanished from the Buddha, fled away from him. The Buddha gave assurance to the people that everybody, like himself, can drive suffering out by his own effort. And this strength is not the strength of the body, neither of money nor of brain. Only it is the strength of mind which can fight with misery and can suppress it, remove it away. So mind is the stronghold of the system. Mental faculties and their functions are responsible for the occurrence of life and consequent suffering. On the other hand it is the mind, the bodhi which can lead to nirvana, removal of all suffering.
The Buddhist philosophy reduced all existing things into an aggregate of subtle energies or 'samskāra samuha'. Everything exists means that the twelve 'āyatanas' exist. Consciousness is pure sensation and it never arises alone. It is always introduced by two elements - a cognitive faculty and a corresponding objective element. That which cannot be viewed as a separate object of cognition or a separate faculty of cognition is unreal.

Corresponding to the twelve bases of cognition there are twelve Dhātus, i.e., components in the stream of existence. Buddhist philosophy is an analysis of separate elements in the production of one stream of events. Of the twelve āyatanas or bases of cognition six are external bases 'bahya āyatana' and other six are internal bases or 'adhyātma āyatana'. The former six are receptive faculties or indriyas, i.e., sense of vision, audition, smelling, taste, touch and intellect. The six objects or visaya are colour, sound, odour, taste, tangible and non-sensuous objects. The eleven bases correspond to eleven elements. The twelfth item contains all the sixty-four mental elements. The 'dhātus' or elements include six faculties, six kinds of objective elements and six kinds of consciousness beginning with visual consciousness and ending with purely mental or non-sensuous consciousness.
All elements of existence are simply divided into five groups - matter, feeling, ideas, volitions and other faculties and pure sensation. Matter represents sense-data and self is replaced by feeling, ideas, volition and pure sensation. Dhārma is an ultimate entity. Matter includes ten different varieties of sense-data or ten dharmas. Feelings, ideas and pure sensations contain one element each. Volition includes fifty eight elements. The physical elements of a personality including the external objects are matter represented by the term 'Rūpa'. The other four groups of mental elements are called 'Nāma', consciousness which is but one dharma is split into seven dhatus as six different kinds of sensation and a faculty. All these 79 varieties of consciousness exist only in the ordinary plane of existence, i.e., Kāma dhātu. In higher plane or Rūpa dhātu, sense-consciousness gradually disappears. In the immaterial world, Arūpa dhātu, only non-sensuous consciousness is left.

As a discourse of psychology the analysis of mind in Buddhism is more modern than any other Indian system. Mind is split into two parts. In subjective part mind is viewed as a receptive faculty. It represents pure sensation without any content. The objective part contains the definite sensations, feelings, ideas, volitions and other phenomena. Mind as pure sensation is called citta or vijñāna and the other faculties
are divided into the four groups of sparśa, vedanā, sanjñā and cetanā.

If an apprehension contains some indefinite visual sensation, it will then represent a real sensation. The definite perception of a colour is an idea, and consciousness as the perceptive faculty is pure sensation. Although quite indiffereniated in itself this pure sensation is distinguished from the standpoint of its origin or its environment. Again the difference between consciousness as a receptive faculty and the same consciousness accompanying an abstract object is only a difference of time.

As religion, Buddhism is not the religion of God worshipping. It is the religion of self-help which teaches one to be strong enough to prepare one's own destiny. It is a practical science most useful to life. Enlightenment of mind is the goal. Tranquility and equanimity of the mind are its offerings. These blessings are again possible only by wisdom, knowledge, right mindfulness and concentration. Cessation of misery is not possible in the palace upon the throne. It is possible only by one's own activity as an intelligent being with right views, right determinations, right endeavour, right thinking and right concentration with corresponding speech, deed and means. It gives us the benefits of purity, good-will, self-possession, courage,
imperplexed mind and unruffled temper.

We are no longer to depend upon Destiny or Fate. Fate is nothing but the collective force of one's own actions, i.e., the samskāras. Evil is the consequence of our own evil action. It can be overcome by effort of this life. Future can be made better by one's own endeavour.

So as religion Buddhism is practical and logical and as psychology we may call it practical. It has psychological impact upon its devoted followers.

According to the Census Report-1971, there are 61400 Buddhist people in Arunachal Pradesh, which is 13.13% of the total population of the State. But these Buddhists have diverse beliefs and rites although they have some common grounds to be united.

Broadly, they belong to two main schools Mahayana and Hinayana or Theravāda. The Monpas and the Sherdukpens of Kameng District are the chief tribes who practise Mahayana Buddhism. According to D.K. Baruah, the Monbas and the Khambas of the Siang and the Zakhings and Meyors in the Lohit District also belong to the Mahayana or properly to Vajrayana form of Buddhism.2
The ideas of Hinayana school are found to be prevalent among the Khantis, the Singphos and the Chakma settlers of Lohit-Tirap belt. During the 5th century A.D. the Buddhist monks from the eastern coast of India took Theravada Buddhism to Burma. But in the 18th century, the Khantis and the Singphos brought it back to India.

As said by many scholars over and again, Buddhism is not a religion in the traditional use of the term. It is more ethical than ritualistic. Moral principles constitute the basis of this religion. Theravada or Hinayana Buddhism is more radical than the other schools of the religion. The Theravadins give much importance on the conditional existence of everything, and this appears to be a realistic pluralism. They believe in individual independent existence and individual liberation. So one must try for oneself. If thirst or desire, i.e., attachment to the world can be eradicated by disciplines of mind and body, ignorance will be abolished and enlightenment will be made possible. The most important and basic principle for Theravadins is Detachment. The version of anicca, anatta and dukha, constantly reminds them of the vanity of the worldly objects of greed. This helps in arousing the spirit of detachment in their mind which helps in the direction of liberation or Nirvana. This is a coherent principle of emotional and intellectual forces in their
religion.

The principle of detachment is very familiar to all forms of Hinduism. In the Bhagavadgītā also this is repeated again and again 'to do actions without attachment'. In Dīghanikāya, the character of a Bhiksu is described as follows: "That the Bhiksu, when perceiving thing with the eyes, does not become inclined to it ....... Getting the sounds by two ears, taking the smell by the nose, making taste by the tongue and feeling touch by the body, but knowing the Dharma by the mind, he remains away from its cause and its influence."\(^3\) The same account is found in the fifth chapter of the Bhagavadgītā:

"Naiva kiñcit karomiti yukto manyet tattavid,

pāśyān, ātmaśān, sprśān, jighrāpaṃ ganan gachan,

śvapam śavahan."\(^4\)

Again in another sloka, detachment is emphasized like this -

Kāyena manasā bodhāyakevalai indriyair api

Yogirāh karma kuruanti sangam tuktātmasūdhaye.\(^5\)

Similar description is found of the Bhiksu that he attains supramundane pure happiness because of Indriyasambara. Endowed with Smṛiti-sam-prajñāna, he attains noble peace or Āryya santuṣṭi. He becomes kind and sympathetic to everyone. This type of preaching is found in many religious scriptures.
The Vedanta philosophy and Vaisnavait religion also preached again and again to give up attachment to this world of delusion. But these accounts are purely religious preaching. The Buddha gave this theory of detachment a logical and psychological background. It is the psychology of detachment which brings happiness to the minds of its followers.

The Buddha believed in the complete freedom of human personality. He directly identified action with willing - "Willing, ye disciples, I call acting (Kamma), for if will is there, then one acts, either in deeds, in words or in thought."  

Progress of science and technology, now-a-days, is devaluating human personality day-by-day. It has made man a slave to machines, to wealth and to money. On the other side, want, greed and lust are increasingly growing in human mind.

So "Theoretical or scientific knowledge by itself cannot make man really free. This sort of knowledge at best can make him controller of the forces around and without him. Unless the forces of willing and feeling within him are also somehow controlled, he can hardly enjoy true and uninvaded freedom."  

As Hume also observed, "It is within our power to will and to attain complete self-hood, as it is also our
privilege, if we do desire, to suppress the unifying and orienting impulses that reside in the forebrain and to sink back to the biological level."8

The burning question of modern time, for many psychologists and philosophers and also other intellectuals, is how to solve this problem, to raise man from biological level, to his higher level of personality. Existential philosophers are mainly fighting for human valuation. They have realized that man should be educated to know his own limitations and imperfections, so that he may try to be more complete, more perfect. The great analytic psychologist Jung also holds that "to perceive the self is the main aim of life for it is necessary to differentiate the various factors of personality. It gives unity, balance and stability."9

It is Buddhism, which embraces these profound ideas of human life before two thousand years of human history. Even now it is throwing its blessings upon its devotees. A glaring example is the psychology of the Khamtis and the Singphos. The Khamtis and the Singphos want less, and are happy with whatever they get. They respect man, their fellow-beings and love all because they believe in the individual power of human being to acquire happiness and liberation by his own effort. So Buddhism is a religion in its true sense. It is Dharma, depending less on Artha and
Kama, and thereby leading to Moksa. It is a religion of self-help and universal brother-hood, forged by love and honesty, and based on ethico-psychical principles.
REFERENCES


2. Dipak Kr. Barua, Buddhist and Buddhism in Arunachal Pradesh

3. Digha Nikaya, trans. into Bengali from Pali by Bhikkhu Seelabhadra, Mahabodhi Society, Calcutta, 1947, p. 77

4. Bhagavadgita, Chapter 5, Sloka - 8

5. Ibid., Sloka - 11

6. Anguttara Nikaya, Book VI

