

**Life of the Buddha, Early Buddhism and Indian Society**

**with special reference to**

*Dīgha Nikāya and Majjhima Nikāya*

by

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## Declaration

I declare that the thesis entitled “Life of the Buddha, Early Buddhism and Indian Society with special reference to *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya*” and the research work under the supervision of Prof. Kapila Abhayawansa and thereof represents my own work, except where due acknowledgement is made, and that it has not been previously included in a thesis, dissertation or report submitted to this University or to any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualifications.



Signed \_\_\_\_\_

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Prof. Kapila Abhayawansa

## Abstract

The study of Pāli canon is able to reconstruct the biography of the historical Buddha, its original teaching, early Buddhism and the social life in ancient India. Pāli canon contains *suttas* which are *buddhavacana* or “words spoken by the Buddha”. The *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya* of *Sutta-piṭaka* contain many relevant *suttas* which can be utilised for social reconstructions purpose at the Buddha’s time, period of 7<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE.

At the Buddha’s time, ancient society practised many kinds of asceticism as life goals. The emergence of Buddhism was caused by religious and non-religion factors. The religious factor was the rise of heterodox systems opposing the existing orthodox system, i.e. the *Brāhmaṇa* tradition defending the *status quo* of caste systems. Both systems were well represented by two opposing philosophical thinking dominated Indian continents, *Brāhmaṇa* and *Śramaṇa* movements. The salient features of *Brāhmaṇa* tradition can be found in *Brāhmaṇavagga* and *Śramaṇa* tradition in *Paribbājakavagga* of *Majjhima Nikāya*. Buddha Gotama belonged to *Śramaṇa* tradition and his doctrines refuted the prevalent caste system. He also promoted the law of karma and monastic life.

The main non-religious factor affecting the acceptance of Buddhism was the unification of sixteen tribal countries into greater empire. The greater empire required more skilled people with higher productivity and made the caste system less influential. Buddha Gotama and its monastic institution were able to meet the needs of the society and the greater empire. Buddhism established the new social structure which recognised renunciators as non-productive and householders as productive people. The new social structure placed the *brāhmaṇa* into nowhere since they were householders and non-productive. Both *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya* also outline the political geography of sixteen tribal countries, the concept of early Buddhist kingship and social economic factors in the rise of Buddhism in ancient India.

The biography of historical Buddha can be reconstructed from various *suttas*. The *Mahâpadâna Sutta* of *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Acchariya-abhûta Sutta* of *Majjhima Nikāya* provide the

complete story of the Buddha's birth. The spiritual journey in search of enlightenment may be found in *Ariyapariyesana Sutta*. The *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* records the last days of the Buddha and also provides the concise compilation of his doctrines during his ministry.

The historical Buddha propagated the Dhamma to ancient Indian society in term of ethical, religious and secular discourses. His main teachings during his ministry were: the Middle Way (*majjhima paṭipadā*), the Four Noble Truths (*cattari ariya saccani*), the Noble Eightfold Path (*ariya aṭṭhangika magga*), the thirty-seven aids to enlightenment (*bodhipakkhiyā dhammā*), the three general characteristics (*ti-lakkhaṇa*) and the Dependent Origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*).

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## Abbreviations

- CSCD Vipassana Research Institute. *Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana Tipiṭaka 4.0*. Computer software, 1995.
- D *Dīgha Nikāya*  
Walshe, Maurice. *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya (Translated from the Pāli)*. Boston: Wisdom, 1995. Print.  
E.g. D 16.2.25 refers to *Sutta* 16 (which is *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*), chapter or section 2, verse 25.
- EB *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*. Ed. Malalasekara, G. P. Colombo: Department of Buddhist Affairs, Ministry of Buddhasasana, 2003. 8 vols. Print.
- EBB *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*. Ed. Buswell, Jr. Robert E. New York: Macmillan, 2004. Print.
- M *Majjhima Nikāya*  
Bodhi and Nanamoli. *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya (Translated from the Pāli)*. Boston: Wisdom, 1995. Print.

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## Ch. 1: Introduction

Theravāda Buddhists claim that Pāli canon preserve the complete Buddha's teachings that have survived until today. They believe that Pāli canon contains the authentic teaching of the Buddha. Jonathan S. Walters<sup>1</sup> demonstrated that the *suttas* (and partly overlapping texts of the Vinaya or monastic disciplines) were once thought to be veritable windows into the original Buddhist community. From this perspective, Pāli *suttas* can be used to reconstruct a biography of the “historical Buddha”, a social history of India in the time of the Buddha, and also to clarify an impressive array of contradictory opinions about a supposed “original” Buddhist teaching. However, during the past several decades, Buddhologists and historians of religions have raised serious doubts about this naïve use of the *suttas* as sources for reconstructing Theravāda Buddhist history. They argued that the Pāli *suttas* currently known today to Theravāda Buddhists are the result of grammatical and editorial decisions made in Sri Lanka centuries after the lifetime of the Buddha.

Further, as a general fact known to the public, Buddhist canon were put into writing around five centuries after the Buddha's *parinibbāna*. For lay people, *suttas* written in Pāli canon are *buddhavacana* (discourses spoken by the Buddha) and contain infallible doctrines and facts related to the Indian society and the historical Buddha.

For five centuries after *parinibbāna*, the Buddha's teaching were transmitted by oral tradition within monastic institution. Although the teaching of the Buddha was transmitted and propagated by the venerated disciples or arahant, many scholars and lay people raised doubts about the validity and accuracy of oral tradition. During the actual course of his long ministry, no attempt was made to codify the wealth of material taught to his disciples by the Buddha. Nonetheless, oral collection (*sahita*) of his teachings began to coalesce in his lifetime. There is early evidence that this oral material was studied, committed to memory, recited, and subject to

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<sup>1</sup> Jonathan S. Walters, “Suttas as History: Four Approaches to The ‘Sermon on the Noble Quest’ (Ariyapariyesanasutta)”, *History of Religions* 38.3 (1999) p. 247.

debate.<sup>2</sup> Due to the tradition of *uposatha* ritual (fortnightly assembly) whereby the monastic disciplines (*pātimokka*, short compilation of *Vinaya-piṭaka*) are recited and it happens until present day. Scholars assume that *Vinaya-piṭaka* is more reliable than *Sutta-piṭaka* since the content of *Vinaya-piṭaka* are consistently preserved by monastic members.

Theravāda Buddhism considers that the Tipiṭaka are authoritative because they represent the words of the Buddha (*buddhavacana*). According to the *Mahāpadesa Sutta*, a rule (*vinaya*) or doctrine (*dhamma*) may be considered an authoritative teaching if it fulfils two criteria: (a) it must have been heard directly from one of the four possible sources of authoritative teachings (these are the Buddha himself; a complete order of monks led by venerable elder; a number of learned senior monks fully versed in the *dhamma*, the *vinaya* and the scholastic summaries; and “single elder monk of wide learning, versed in the doctrines, one who knows Dhamma by heart, who knows Vinaya by heart, who knows the Summaries by heart”) and (b) once the teaching has been heard these words lie along with *Sutta* and agree with *Vinaya*, no contradictory found.<sup>3</sup> If the practice of inserting discourses into the Pāli Tipiṭaka has been following this rule from the Buddha’s time to present day, we can assume that the Pāli canon contains the original and genuine teaching of the Buddha and the events and locations mentioned are infallible facts.

Uma Chakravarti<sup>4</sup> demonstrated on how to use Buddhist sources, especially *Sutta-piṭaka* and *Vinaya-piṭaka*, to construct social stratification in ancient India known as a caste system. She claimed that the dominant perception of the system of stratification prevailing in India is based almost exclusively on *brāhmaṇical* sources so the ritual factors predominated in determining social stratification. She pointed out that the Buddhist texts are an extremely valuable source since they are narrative in style and deal with people, events and places. The social stratification as portrayed in the Pāli canon depicts a social reality without religious sanction unlike the

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<sup>2</sup> James P. McDermott, “Scripture as the Word of the Buddha”, *Numen* 31.1 (1984) pp. 22-23.

<sup>3</sup> McDermott, pp. 26-27.

<sup>4</sup> Uma Chakravarti, “Towards a Historical Sociology of Stratification in Ancient India: Evidence from Buddhist Sources”, *Economic and Political Weekly* 20.9 (1985) pp. 356-360.

Brāhmanical conception of hierarchy. These facts are scattered in various *suttas* of Pāli canon, it requires efforts to sort them into meaningful interpretation.

**Methodology.** The research will be based mainly on literature review of *Dīgha Nikāya*, *Majjhima Nikāya*, relevant journal articles and textbooks. The research will involve critical review, contemplation and interpretation of the *suttas* in *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya*. The thesis will explore and interpret the Pāli *suttas* in *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya* as a way to reconstruct the biography of the historical Buddha, early Buddhism, social history of India in the time of the Buddha and the “original” Buddhist teaching. The findings from various *suttas* will be compared, interpreted and complemented by other evidence found in other religious systems and historical records in ancient India.

Two main resources will be used as primary references for the research:

1. Walshe, Maurice. *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya (Translated from the Pāli)*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995. Print.
2. Bodhi and Nanamoli. *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya (Translated from the Pāli)*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995. Print.

Each *sutta* will be analysed, cross-referenced and summarised in the following categories: the life of the Buddha; the Buddha’s teaching; culture, philosophy and customs in Indian society and how the Buddha responded on contemporary issues; and Buddhism and politics. Interpretation and analysis of the discourses, compared against historical evidence and scholarly research, will demonstrate whether *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya* as Buddhist scriptures contain historical facts and not merely the Buddha’s doctrines. The reconstruction will be compared with scholarly journal articles, books and other historical evidence. It is expected that the reconstruction will provide better pictures of the Buddha Gotama, early Buddhist history and society in India within period of 7<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE.

## 1.1 Brief descriptions of *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya*

There are two terms used relating to *Sutta-piṭaka* (Skt. *Sūtrapiṭaka*), *Āgama* and *Nikāya*. *Āgama* has the basic meaning of (received) tradition, canonical text, and (scriptural) authority, while *Nikāya* means both collection and group. According to tradition, the Buddha's discourses were already collected by the time of the First Buddhist Council, held shortly after the Buddha's death in order to establish and confirm the discourses as "authentic" words of the Buddha (*buddhavacana*). For at least the two or three centuries after the Buddha's death, the teachings were passed down solely by word of mouth (oral tradition), and the preservation and intact transmission of steadily growing collections necessitated the introduction of ordering principles. The teachings were collected into three baskets (*tri-piṭaka*) consisting of discipline (*vinaya*), discourses (*sūtras*) and systematised teachings (*abhidharma*).<sup>5</sup>

The Theravāda Buddhism believed that the most authentic and the earliest reference to *Nikāya* as a division of the early Buddhist texts of the *Sutta* collection or *Dhamma* (against the *Vinaya*) occurs in the *Cullavagga* account of the activities of the First Buddhist Council (*pathama-sangīti*) or *Pañcasati-sangīti*. The First Council took place within a few months after the Buddha's *parinibbāna* and followed by the Second Council one hundred year later. It is recognised by the commentators as being canonical (*tantim ārūlhā*). The *Cullavagga* reports that at First Council the Elder Mahā Kassapa questioned Upāli regarding the *Vinaya* (monastic disciplines) and questioned Ānanda on major content of the Buddha's teaching (the Dhamma). At this state Elder Mahā Kassapa is said to have started with the first *sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, namely the *Brahmajāla Sutta* and continued through all the then known as the Dhamma. The proceedings are totalled up as being 'five different groupings' (*ete va upāyena pañca nikāye pucchi*).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Jens-Uwe Hartmann, "Āgama/Nikāya", EBB, pp. 10-12.

<sup>6</sup> Dhammavihari, "Nikaya(2)", EB, Vol. VII, pp. 173-175; Hartmann, pp. 10-12.

After the schism that it is believed took place at the Second Council, some Buddhist schools practised their “own” Buddha’s teaching. However most scholars recognised either four or five Āgamas and Nikāyas considered canonical by the various mainstream Buddhist schools:

1. *Dīghanikāya* (Skt. *Dīrghāgama*; Collection of Long Discourses)
2. *Majjhimanikāya* (Skt. *Madhyamāgama*; Collection of Middle Length Discourses)
3. *Samyuttanikāya* (Skt. *Samyuktāgama*; Connected Discourses)
4. *Aṅguttaranikāya* (Skt. *Ekottar(ik)āgama*; Discourses Increasing by One)
5. *Khuddakanikāya* (Skt. *Kṣudrakāgama*; Collection of Small Texts).

Some schools do not accept a *Kṣudraka* section as part of the *Sūtra-piṭaka*; others classify it as a separate *piṭaka*.<sup>7</sup>

***The Buddha opposed the existing philosophical views in ancient India in Dīgha Nikāya.*** The *Dīgha Nikāya* consists of the thirty-four long (*dīgha*) discourses divided into three parts (*vagga*) namely *Sīlakkhandha-vagga* (thirteen *suttas*, relating to the moralities), *Mahā-vagga* (ten *suttas*, relating to the great discourses) and *Pāṭika-vagga* (eleven *suttas*). The *suttas* are heterogeneous in contents and forms (prose and verse) and not arranged in chronological order. The *Dīgha Nikāya* contains information about the religious, social, economic and political conditions of India prior to and during the time of the Buddha. The Buddha had to envisage the prevalent social and religious views when he propagated his teaching. The oppositions of the Buddha’s teaching were in the forms of existing beliefs: (a) existence of the Supreme Godhead, (b) theory of divine creation, (c) sanctity of the *Veda*, (d) efficacy of the sacrifices and the (e) divinely ordained institution of caste.<sup>8</sup>

***Majjhima Nikāya contains major discourses on monastic life.*** The *Majjhima Nikāya* consists of 152 *suttas*. The greatest numbers of discourses in the *Majjhima Nikāya* are addressed to the monks (*bhikkhus*) and the Buddha acted as the head of the order to clarify and rectify the Dhamma so that the Dhamma and Vinaya were consistently preserved. Further we found on many

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<sup>7</sup> Hartmann, pp. 10-12;

<sup>8</sup> G. K. Wijesekera, “Dīgha-Nikāya”, EB, Vol. IV, pp. 610-613.

discourses that the Buddha was engaged in living dialogue with people from the many strata of ancient Indian society—with kings and princes, with brahmins and ascetics, with simple villagers and erudite philosophers, with earnest seekers and vain disputants.<sup>9</sup>

## 1.2 Buddhavacana and “Thus have I heard” (*evaṃ me sutam*)

Scholars believe on the two theories on *buddhavacana*. Firstly, *buddhavacana ended* after the First Council. When the Buddha and his great disciples passed away, no *sūtras* were produced at later stage. Secondly, *buddhavacana continued* after the First Council in the forms of new *sūtras*. The basic arguments are the Buddha taught *dharma* to both human and heavenly beings. Those *sūtras* may be revealed in the future by Buddhist masters and they are *buddhavacana*. Further the teachings that are widely accepted by most Buddhist sects can be classified as *buddhavacana*.

Theravāda Buddhism holds the belief that after the First Council, there is no additional *buddhavacana*; the genuine Buddha’s teachings have ended. Meanwhile Mahāyāna Buddhism believes that new *sūtras* would be revealed after the First Council. Facts indicated that most of Mahāyāna *sūtras* were written *after* the First Council.

*Evaṃ me sutam* (Skt. *evaṃ mayā śrutam*) is the first famous phrase on the *suttas*. It signifies that the Buddha’s teachings have been heard by the disciples and the disciples transmitted the teachings to lay followers.

Mahāyāna Buddhists believe that Mahāyāna *sūtras* are *buddhavacana* since they meet the Six Requirements in order to be categorised as reliable and valid “words spoken by the Buddha”: belief, hearing, time, host, place, and audience. In Diamond Sūtra, Chapter 1, we can read:

*“Thus I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying in the Jeta Grove of the Garden of the Benefactor of Orphans and the Solitary together with a gathering of great bhiksus, twelve hundred fifty in all.”*

The Six requirements are met: (1) *Thus* is the requirement of belief; (2) *I have heard* is the requirement of hearing; (3) *At one time* is the requirement of time; (4) *The Buddha* is the

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<sup>9</sup> M Introduction, pp. 20-21

requirement of a host; (5) *In Srāvasti in the Jeta Grove of the Garden of the Benefactor of Orphans and the Solitary* is the requirement of place; (6) *Together with a gathering of great bhiksus, twelve hundred fifty in all* is the requirement of an audience. Therefore the six requirements prove that a *sūtra was spoken by the Buddha*. It does not depend on *when* the *sūtra* was produced or written.<sup>10</sup>

Theravāda Buddhism also holds the similar view in order to assume that the *suttas* are “words of the Buddha”. Example drawn from *Brahmajāla Sutta*:

*Evam me sutam – ekam samayaṃ bhagavā antarā ca rājagahaṃ antarā ca nālandam addhānamaggappaṭipanno hoti mahatā bhikkhusaṅghena saddhiṃ pañcamattehi bhikkhusatehi.*

*Suppiyopi kho paribbājako antarā ca rājagahaṃ antarā ca nālandam addhānamaggappaṭipanno hoti saddhiṃ antevāsinaṃ brahmadattena māṇavena.*

*“Thus have I heard. Once the Lord was travelling along the main road between Rājagaha and Nālandā with a large company of some five hundreds monks. And the wanderer Suppiya was also travelling on that road with his pupil the youth Brahmadata.”*

The Theravāda *suttas* fit into Mahāyāna’s Six Requirements so that the *suttas* are *buddhavacanas*.

Most of the Mahāyāna *sūtras* begin with the stock phrase, “thus did I hear,” thereby maintaining the conceit of orality, also did the Theravāda *sūttas* with “Thus have I heard”. One of the great disputes is to identify who “I” is in the phrase. Theravāda Buddhism absolutely believes that Ānanda is the only person who remembered and recited all Buddha’s teaching into *Sutta-piṭaka*. It was a common practice in India that to leave the rapporteur unnamed is to add another voice to one of the most persistent choruses in Indian Mahāyāna literature. To claim that the rapporteur is Ānanda, Vajrapāṇi, Manjusri or Samantabhadra is at stake. At the Buddha’s time, most of the writers of ancient Indian literature were *anonymous*; it was a common cultural phenomenon although some authors were permitted to add their thoughts in writing to the existing scriptures. To mention who heard the Buddha’s teaching directly indicated that the Mahāyāna

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<sup>10</sup> Heng Chih, *The Diamond Sutra: A General Explanation of the Vajra Prajna Paramita Sutra by Dhyana Master Hsuan Hua* (San Francisco: Sino-American Buddhist Assn., 1974) p. 46.

*sūtras* are secret teachings not intended for *śrāvaka*. Meanwhile Mahāyāna movement was intended to save more people in the world. For them, the hearer (“I”) is not important. To leave the rapporteur unnamed is to allow *sūtras* to be heard by anyone with the qualification of faith.<sup>11</sup>

It is believed that the Buddha had ever given his teachings to the *devas* in the Trāyastriṃśa heaven (Pāli, *Tāvatiṃsa*) at night time. In *Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva Sūtra* we can read the prologue of:

“Thus have I heard: At one time the World-Honoured One sojourned at the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven and was preaching on His mother’s behalf...”<sup>12</sup>

Then questions arise: Who accompanied the Buddha when he gave the sermons at heaven? Did the Buddha tell the story to his disciple on earth or did the deities write the *sūtra*? Logically, the Buddha would repeat the same teaching to human beings on different occasions. Some lay-followers believe that the *devas* would transcend to the world to disseminate Buddha’s teaching. That is the reason that *buddhavacana* may be recovered and revealed long time after the Buddha’s *parinirvāṇa*. Some great Mahāyāna masters will reveal the hidden treasures of Buddha’s teaching in the future.

Buddhism, in general, holds the view of certification in determining whether the teachings are *buddhavacana* or not. MacQueen gave strong arguments that after the First Council, *sūtras* production had ended. Theravāda Buddhism agrees upon these arguments that no new Buddha’s teaching was recorded after the First Council. During his life, the Buddha held a position of control over all expression of *dharma*. In brief, utterance or sermons by people other than the Buddha were accepted as the basis of *sūtra* only with his certification. There were three modes of certifications: approval after the event, approval before the event, and authorisation of persons.

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<sup>11</sup> Donald S. Lopez Jr., “Authority and Orality in the Mahāyāna”, *Numen* 42.1 (1995) pp. 21-22.

<sup>12</sup> Pitt Chin Hui, *The Sutra on the Original Vows and the Attainment of Merits of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva* (Singapore: Buddha Dharma Education Assn., 2005) pp. 6-7

The first mode worked as follow. Someone gave a discourses; the hearer of the discourses subsequently repeated its verbatim to the Buddha; the Buddha gave his approval of it. The discourses were *buddhavacana*.

The second mode would work when the Buddha invited someone to give discourses on his behalf. Even where such discourses were not followed by certification after the event (as they frequently were) it was evident that they were to be considered as '*buddhavacana* by permission'.

The third mode would refer to Great Disciples. They had wisdom and ability to deliver discourses and as to be considered authorised by the Buddha to speak *dharma*, their words were certified in advance.

After the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa*, the first two forms of certification become impossible and after the death of the Companion, the Great Disciples who have received personal sanction from the Buddha, there is no possibility of *dharma* being preached under the third mode of certification. *Sūtra* production must here come to end.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> G. MacQueen, "Inspired Speech in Early Mahāyāna Buddhism I", *Religion* 11.4 (1981) pp. 309-310

## Ch. 2: Social structure and ideological backgrounds

Archaeological evidence showed that civilisation appeared in India about 3000 BCE, known as Indus civilisation. Then the Aryan people entered India from the northwest at about the time of the collapse of the Indus civilisation about 1700 BCE. By 1200 BCE, they had settled along the upper reaches of the Ganges river in the Punjab. Their religion, based on *Ṛg Veda*, was a form of polytheism where they deified forces of nature such as sky, rain, wind and thunder. By 1000 BCE, three texts that were successor to the *Ṛg Veda* were compiled, i.e. *Sāma Veda*, *Yajur Veda* and *Atharva Veda*. These Aryans spoke an early form of Sanskrit, called 'Vedic' after the earliest extant Indian text (the Veda) which can at present be read.<sup>14</sup>

Buddhism started to spread out and flourish in India around the 7<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE. Due to its oral tradition and lack of written historical evidence, scholars came to agreement that there is no exact date when the Buddha lived. The study on social structure and ideological backgrounds in India at this period is beneficial in describing how the Buddha interacted with Indian society when he propagated his doctrines.

**Orthodox and heterodox systems.** At the time of the Buddha, there were two dominating philosophical systems in India, orthodox system and heterodox systems. The orthodox system was represented by Brāhmaṇa tradition which maintained the *status quo* of caste systems. The heterodox system, Śramaṇa tradition, started the new movement expecting societal changes especially against Brāhmaṇa tradition.

**Catur āśrama as the accepted norm in India.** The ancient Indian people practised four stages of life (*catur āśrama*) as householder duties. *Catur āśrama* divided individual life into four: as a student (*brahmacārin*) from 8 years old studying the *Veda* and observing strict celibacy; as a householder (*gṛhastha*); as a forest dweller (*vānaprastha*) to devote his life to prayer and sacrifice; and as *sannyāsin* to detach himself from all worldly things and devote himself to a life

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<sup>14</sup> A. K. Warder, *Indian Buddhism*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Revised Ed., (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2000) pp. 15-17; Akira Hirakawa, *A History of Indian Buddhism: From Sakyamuni to Early Mahayana*, Trans. Paul Groner (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1990) pp. 13-14.

of meditation.<sup>15</sup> Unfortunately the ideal *catur āśrama* was for the *brāhmaṇas* only since they had privileges to learn the *Vedas* and to officiate sacrificial rites.

Brāhmaṇism recognised and treated *sannyāsa* or renunciation as a moment in the life of the *brāhmaṇa*. At the time when Buddhism arose, the new movement appeared in the form of heterodox system, and they called themselves as *parivrajāka* (Pāli *paribbājaka*) or the *śramaṇa* (Pāli *samaṇa*). The main characteristic of their tradition was their states of homelessness. In the Pāli text they are described as going from home to homelessness (*agārasmā anāgāriyam*). There were many schools established under Śramaṇa tradition with different doctrinal way of life.<sup>16</sup> The Buddha belonged to the Śramaṇa tradition, however, the Buddha's teachings were different with other śramaṇical schools. *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya* contained many *suttas* in which the Buddha's teachings and his contemporaries, i.e. the six heterodox teachers, were compared and contrasted.

## 2.1 Asceticism, Śramaṇa and Brāhmaṇa movements

Asceticism, renouncer and householder were the common phenomena in ancient India. Individuals might choose their ways of life either as householder or renouncer. Most of renouncers practised some kind of asceticism as part of training to attain spiritual goals and ultimate liberation.

***Renouncer and householder in early Buddhism.*** Buddhism recognised only two types of individuals, a renouncer and a true householder. The renouncers were engaged in non-productive activities with little economic values and the householders were engaged in productive activities with significant economic contributions. The *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunis* abstained from both productive and reproductive activities and so broke effectively the ties that bound them to society.

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<sup>15</sup> S. K. Nanayakkara, "Brāhmaṇism", EB, vol III, pp. 321-329

<sup>16</sup> Uma Chakravarti, "Renouncer and Householder in Early Buddhism", *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Social and Cultural Practices* 13 (1983) pp. 70-72.

The term *gihī* refers to ordinary householders. The ideal householder of the Buddhist texts was the *gahapati* who was associated with economic activities primarily as a controller of a land. The sharp distinction of renouncer and householder put the *brāhmaṇas* in nowhere. The *brāhmaṇas* did not renounce the householder status or the social world. They had deviated from the ideal of the wise (sage) by pursuing materialistic objectives and accumulating wealth, land, and other possessions. The *brāhmaṇas* were non-productive but were close to *gihī* by engaging in family matters. The *brāhmaṇas* were neither renouncer nor householders and they were non-productive.<sup>17</sup> These attributes positioned *brāhmaṇas* as less-effective populations with little contributions, and they got disadvantaged when the unification of the tribal states into growing empire emerged in India.

### **2.1.1 Asceticism and social structure in ancient India.**

The word ‘asceticism’ originates in the Greek word ‘askesi’ (training). It is the principle that human beings can attain spiritual ideal by suppressing bodily and worldly desires. In the period of the Buddha, *tapas* (Pāli, *tapā*) and *yoga* were regarded as the way of religious practices.<sup>18</sup> The term *tapas* occurs rarely in the Vedic and the Brāhmanic literature. The *tapas* in pre-Buddhistic teachings was aimed to the attainment of magical powers. Immediately prior to the Buddha appeared in India, the practice of austerities had assumed real force. The ascetic calling had become obligatory since the four stages of life (*catur āśrama*) took place in the individual life. Its teaching required that after leading a householder’s life (*grhastha*), man should renounce everything and retire in the forest (*vāna-prastha*) to practise austerities. The asceticism included self-inflicted torture as a way of purification.<sup>19</sup>

The information on ascetic sects, especially the *śramaṇas* who did not follow the Vedic tradition, could be found in the Pāli Tipiṭaka, such as Ājivika, Nigaṇṭha and Pāsāṇḍaka. Brahmanical literatures provided further evidence where the names such as Parivrājaka, also

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<sup>17</sup> Chakravarti, “Renouncer”, pp. 78-79.

<sup>18</sup> Yoshiro Tamura, “Asceticism”, EB, vol II, pp.158-161.

<sup>19</sup> A. G. S. Kariyawasam, “Ascetic Practices”, EB, vol II, pp. 161-162.

called Maskarin, Tāpasa and Muṇḍaka were mentioned. Parivrājaka literally means one who goes round and has no permanent domicile. Some of them carried a bamboo staff called *maskara*. The name of Tāpasa suggests a code of discipline based on *tapas* or self-mortification in various forms such as fasting, living on water and coarse food, strict diet and restricting one's movement. Meanwhile the members of Muṇḍaka sect shaved their heads. There were some sects bore names to correspondent with the ways they dressed. Some used white garments (*śvetāmbara*), some coloured (*geruya*), while others went naked.<sup>20</sup>

**Asceticism in a form of self-tormenting.** Ancient Indian asceticism was described, in *Kandaraka Sutta*,<sup>21</sup> as an act of tormenting himself and of pursuing the practice of torturing himself. An ascetic was described as a person “goes naked, rejects conventions, licks his hand, not comes when asked, not stopping when asked; he does not accept food or invitation to a meal; he receives nothing from a pot, from a bowl, across a threshold, across a stick, across a pestle, from two eating together, from a pregnant woman, from a woman giving suck, from a woman in the midst of men, from where food is advertised to be distributed, from where a dog is waiting, from where flies buzzing; he accepts no fish or meat, he drinks no liquor, wine, or fermented brew. He eats less and less frequently.”

In *Kukkuravatika Sutta*,<sup>22</sup> two ascetics imitated the behaviour of a dog and an ox as a path of purification. Many ascetics at the Buddha's time imitated the animal behaviour as a path of liberation. The Buddha gave a discourse on karma and its fruit in this *sutta* and he predicted that these two ascetics would be reborn as a dog and an ox and not in heavenly realms.

**Buddhist asceticism.** Asceticism in Buddhism started with the decision to “go forth from home and homelessness” and to live as an ascetic (*agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajito*). The asceticism was a form of self-discipline and detachment from the world; they gave up sensual enjoyment and

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<sup>20</sup> P. V. Bapat, *2500 Years of Buddhism* (Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Government of India, 1956) pp. 12-13.

<sup>21</sup> M 51.8

<sup>22</sup> M 57

lived with very little needs. The Buddhist ascetics had fundamental duties to keep themselves in health, to follow the Middle Path (*majjhimā paṭipadā*) by avoiding the two extremes: self-indulgence (*kāmasukkhallikānuyoga*) and self-mortification (*attakilamathānuyoga*). Further, asceticism was not the sole means of escaping *samsāra*.<sup>23</sup>

In *Saṅgīti Sutta*, in relation to ascetic practices, individuals might fall into one of the four groups: (i) one who torments himself and is devoted to self-mortification (*attantapa*); (ii) one who torments others (*parantapa*); (iii) one who torments both self and others (*attantapo ca parantapo ca*); and (iv) one who torments neither himself nor others.<sup>24</sup> The majority of ascetic practices in ancient India fell into the first category; they practised severe austerity to their own bodies in order to attain ultimate goals or emancipations.

***Brāhmaṇa and śramaṇa movements.*** In *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya*, the term *samaṇabrāhmaṇa* appears on many discourses. This term has been rendered into English as “recluse (ascetic) and *brāhmaṇa*”. This term indicates that at the time of the Buddha there were two traditions dominating the Indian ways of life. The search on *Sutta-piṭaka* on CSCD computer application resulted that this term were found in 748 occurrences including 225 occurrences in *Dīgha Nikāya* and 245 occurrences in *Majjhima Nikāya*. This fact showed that the two opposing traditions at the Buddha time, *śramaṇa* and *brāhmaṇa*, played an important role in determining the social culture of India.

The word *śramaṇa* (Pāli *samaṇa*) derived from *śram* as well as *śam*. *Śram* gives the meaning of ascetics or religious wanderers, meanwhile *śam* indicates one whose defilements are appeased or calmed. The *śramaṇas* had their origin in pre-Aryan times and its root could be traced to the Indus valley. The *śramaṇas* were distinguished by certain life conducts such as ***they***

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<sup>23</sup> Kariyawasam, “Ascetic Practices”, pp. 162-163.

<sup>24</sup> D 33.1.11(47); Kariyawasam, “Ascetic Practices”, pp. 164-166.

*practised austerities, were celibate, lived on alms and had given up householder life (agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajito).*<sup>25</sup>

For centuries the traditional *brāhmaṇical* thinkers put emphasises on the existence (*sat*) of an eternal reality in the individual as well as the world (*ātman*), but also an equally eternal and incorruptible moral law (*brahman*).<sup>26</sup>

There were many schools established under Śramaṇa tradition with its own philosophical thoughts and doctrines, some held the doctrines similar the *brāhmaṇical* thoughts, the other refuted them. The Buddha belonged to the Śramaṇa tradition practising the belief on non-existence (*asat*) of the eternal reality of the individual as well as the incorruptible moral law, but recognised the reality of the physical world (*loka*). The *śramaṇical* thinkers were also known as “worldly philosophers” (*lokāyatikā*).<sup>27</sup> However, some *śramaṇical* schools held the belief of eternal reality, such as the Jains who believed in the doctrine of permanent soul (*atman*). The schools under Śramaṇa tradition only shared the same ways of life but not in the philosophical thoughts and doctrines.

***Catur āśrama and brāhmaṇa’s privilege.*** The *brāhmaṇas* were followers of Vedic religion who officiated at sacrifices. They also sought the Absolute through the study that identified *ātman* with *brāhman*. A *brāhmaṇa*’s life ideally was divided into four stages (*āśramas*): When he was young, he became a disciple of the teacher and learnt Vedas. When he completed his studies, he returned home to marry and became a householder. When he grew old, he let his son to take over the household and retired to perform religious practices. Finally, he abandoned his abode in the forest to live of wandering and died while wandering. These stages were well known as *catur āśramas*: studentship, married life, retirement, renunciation.<sup>28</sup> However, the ideal *catur āśrama* could be accomplished by the *brāhmaṇas* only. People came from other castes could not experience

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<sup>25</sup> Suvimalee Karunaratna, “Samaṇa”, EB, Vol. VII, pp. 658-661.

<sup>26</sup> David J. Kalupahana, “Madhyamā Pratipat (Pāli Majjhimā Paṭipadā)”, EB, Vol. VI, pp. 366-378.

<sup>27</sup> “Kalupahana, pp. 366-378.

<sup>28</sup> Hirakawa, p. 16; Warder, *Indian*, p. 23.

renunciation under Brāhmaṇa tradition but they found the alternative ways under Śramaṇa tradition.

The *brāhmaṇas* were a hereditary priesthood, and the earlier philosophers and poets whose work is known to us, being preserved in the Brāhmaṇical literature, were either *brāhmaṇa* or men who became brahmanised, at least posthumously, by being accepted into the ranks of the orthodox.<sup>29</sup> The *śramaṇas* or “person who strives” abandoned his home to lead life of wandering and begging. During the time of the Buddha, there were different groups of *śramaṇas* representing their own systems of religious or philosophical thinking. Therefore, unlike the *brāhmaṇa* movement, *śramaṇa* movement did not necessarily refer to one and the same religious practice. They shared the common attribute of homelessness but they might hold different philosophical thinking.

There were many schools founded under the Śramaṇa tradition whose philosophy was based on non-Vedic teaching. However, only six (6) famous *śramaṇas* who lived around the time of the Buddha were written in the Buddhist scriptures.

Buddhism arose in India at a time when a number of non-Vedic ascetic movements were gaining adherents. The schools under Śramaṇa traditions offered a variety of psychosomatic disciplines by which practitioners could experience states transcending those of conditioned existence.<sup>30</sup>

Ascetic Gotama belonged to the new movement called *śramaṇas*. They were men who had contacted out of ordinary society and become wanderer, living either by gleaning what they could in the woods and fields or by begging. The *śramaṇas* rejected the Veda, and the authority of the *brāhmaṇas*, who claimed to be in possession of revealed truth not knowable by any ordinary human means. They disagreed with the complicated rituals, showed the absurdity of the Veda by pointing out contradictions in it. In place of the authoritarian of the Veda, the *śramaṇas* sought to

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<sup>29</sup> Warder, *Indian*, p. 32

<sup>30</sup> Liz Wilson, “Ascetic Practices”, EBB, pp. 32.

find satisfactory explanations of the universe and of life by genuine investigations and by reasoning.<sup>31</sup>

In search of ultimate liberation, Siddhattha Gotama, as a bodhisattva, engaged in ascetic discipline common to many *śramaṇic* groups of his time. The bodhisattva reportedly lived in the wilderness, practised breath-control, gave little care to his manner of dress, and fasted for long periods, strictly controlling his intake of food.<sup>32</sup>

As Buddhism flourished in India, it became important that Buddhists take a stand on asceticism so as to clearly differentiate themselves from other non-Vedic *śramaṇic* groups. Rivalry with Jains was particularly intense, as Buddhists competed for support from more or less the same segment of the lay population that Jain monastics relied upon for their financial support.<sup>33</sup>

Siddhattha Gotama attained enlightenment by avoiding two extremes, self-indulgence and self-mortification. He discovered the Middle Way as a path of liberation. The historical Buddha had shifted early asceticism to be relevant to the doctrine of the Middle Way. Ascetic practices were the central focus of Buddhism in early days, but later were marginalised with the growth of settled monasticism.<sup>34</sup>

***Buddhist ascetic practices (dhutaṅga).*** List of ascetic practices in Buddhism were different from common ascetic practices at that time. In Theravāda context, the classical list of ascetic practices (*dhutaṅga*) includes thirteen items: (1) wearing patchwork robes recycled from cast-off cloth (*paṃsukūlikaṅga*), (2) wearing no more than three robes (*tecīvarikaṅga*), (3) going for alms (*piṇḍapātikaṅga*), (4) not omitting any house while going for alms (*sapadānacārikaṅga*), (5) eating at one sitting (*ekāsanikaṅga*), (6) eating only from the alms bowl (*pattapiṇḍikaṅga*), (7) refusing all further food (*khalupacchābhattikaṅga*), (8) living in the forest (*ārañṇikaṅga*), (9)

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<sup>31</sup> Warder, *Indian*, pp. 32-33

<sup>32</sup> “Ascetic Practices”, EBB, pp. 32-34.

<sup>33</sup> Wilson, p. 33.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

living under a tree (*rukkhamūlikaṅga*), (10) living in the open air (*abhokāsikaṅga*), (11) living in a cemetery (*sosānikaṅga*), (12) being satisfied with any humble dwelling (*yathāsanthatikaṅga*), and (13) sleeping in sitting position (without ever lying down) (*nesajjikaṅga*). The *dhutaṅgas* were not practised as mere external rites but means of purifying the spirit. The Buddha had not made the *dhutaṅgas* compulsory for all Buddhist monks. However, these ascetic practices were evolved and incorporated into monastic disciplines at later date. Mahāyāna texts mention twelve ascetic practices (called *dhūtaguna*). They are the same as Theravāda list but they omit two rules about eating and add a rule about wearing garments of felt or wool.<sup>35</sup>

### 2.1.2 Brāhmaṇa movement in Brāhmaṇavagga

There are ten discourses in Brāhmaṇavagga or “The Division on Brahmins” of *Majjhima Nikāya*. Most of the discourses mention the attributes of the Buddha and the Brāhmaṇas followed by the opposing views of both sides.

The learned Brahmins—teachers with many disciples—were proud of themselves and their disciples praised them, as quoted from *Canki Sutta*,<sup>36</sup> on the following attributes:

“You are well born on both sides, of *pure maternal and paternal descent seven generation back*, unassailable and impeccable in respect of birth. *You are rich with great wealth and great possession*. You are a master of the Three Vedas with their vocabularies, liturgy, phonology, and etymology, and the histories as a fifth; skilled in philology and grammar, you are fully versed in natural philosophy and in the marks of a Great Man. You are handsome, comely, and graceful, possessing supreme beauty of complexion, with sublime beauty and sublime presence, remarkable to behold. You are virtuous, mature in virtue, possessing mature virtue. You are a good speaker with good delivery; you speak words that are courteous, distinct, flawless, and communicate the meaning. You teach the teachers of many; you teach the recitation of hymns to hundred brahmin students. You are honoured, respected, revered, venerated and esteemed by the kings and other learned Brahmins. *You rule over ... a crown property abounding in living beings ... a sacred grant given to you by King ...*”<sup>37</sup>

The influential and learned Brahmins enjoyed material wealth for their household living.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.; Kariyawasam, “Ascetic Practices”, p. 168

<sup>36</sup> M 95

<sup>37</sup> M 95.8

The followers and the disciples of learned Brahmin (they called him as “teacher”) always suggested him not to go and to visit the Buddha but they demanded that the Buddha (they addressed him as “ascetic or recluse Gotama”) visited and paid respect to their teacher.

However, some learned Brahmins insisted that they should pay a visit to the Buddha by praising his noble attributes:

“It is proper for me to go to see Master Gotama since he is well born on both sides, of *pure maternal and paternal descent seven generations back*, unassailable and impeccable in respect of birth. The recluse Gotama went forth from the home life into homelessness while still young though his mother and father wished otherwise and wept with tearful faces. The recluse Gotama went forth from an aristocratic family, from one of the original noble families, from a rich family, from a family of great wealth and great possessions. The recluse Gotama is handsome, comely, and graceful, possessing supreme beauty of complexion, with sublime beauty and sublime presence, remarkable to behold. The recluse Gotama is virtuous, with noble virtue, with wholesome virtue, possessing wholesome virtue. The recluse Gotama is a good speaker with good delivery; he speaks words that are courteous, distinct, flawless, and communicate the meaning. *The recluse Gotama is free from sensual lust and without personal vanity. The recluse Gotama holds the doctrine of the moral efficacy of action, the doctrine of the moral efficacy of deeds; he does not seek any harm for the line of brahmins.* People come from remote kingdoms and remote districts to question the recluse Gotama. Many *thousands of deities* have gone for refuge for life to the recluse Gotama. A good report of the recluse Gotama has been spread to this effect: “ .... [*Buddhānussati*] ... “The recluse Gotama possesses *the thirty-two marks of a Great Man*. Kings and his families have gone for refuge for life to the recluse Gotama, also do Brahmins and his families.”<sup>38</sup>

Based on the praise of the attributes, we can notice that the Buddha was regarded as being higher and nobler than the learned Brahmins. It was a common custom in India that the Brahmins and its followers paid visit to the ascetics or recluses whom they thought wiser, nobler and pursuing higher holy life. The *brāhmaṇas* were engaged in material wealth and worldly desires but the Buddha had already eradicated the sensual pleasures and was not interested in material wealth at all.

### 2.1.3 Śramaṇa movement in Paribbājakavagga

The salient feature of Śramaṇa movement could be found in The Division of Wanderers (*Paribbājakavagga*) of *Majjhima Nikāya*. These features spread over ten discourses from number 71 to 80 of *Majjhima Nikāya*.

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<sup>38</sup> M 95.10; See Ch 3.4 regarding *Buddhānussati*

*The Buddha possessed threefold true knowledge.* When ascetic Gotama had attained the enlightenment as a Buddha, people believed that he had accomplished his ascetic goals. The *brāhmaṇas* also saw themselves as omniscient by stating that they were endowed “with triple knowledge” (*tīhi vijjāhi*) with reference to the Three Vedas, and claimed “proper birth” (*jātima*) meaning one of pure birth through seven generations back (*Aggika Bhāradvāja Sutta*, Saṃyutta Nikāya 1.8). However, the Buddha responded differently in *Tevijjavacchagotta Sutta* as a proof of his omniscience.

In *Tevijjavacchagotta Sutta*,<sup>39</sup> the Buddha claimed that he had acquired threefold true knowledge which were different from other ascetic goals at his time, i.e., (i) He was able to see his former lives: where and how and why he was reborn as he was, (ii) with divine eyes, he was able to see other being born and reborn in different conditions and *why* they were so reborn, he could see the mechanics of *the law of karma*, and (iii) he realised himself with direct knowledge and abided in the deliverance of mind and by wisdom that were taintless with destruction of the taints; he was able to see how to uproot the deepest tendencies (*āsava*) which bind one to continued birth.<sup>40</sup>

Also in this *sutta*, the Buddha declared that “There was no householder who, without abandoning the fetter of householdership, on the dissolution of the body has made an *end of suffering*. However, many householders who practised the Dhamma have gone to the heaven.” It indicated that householders can go to the better realm after death but they cannot make an end of suffering in this life.

*The Buddha did not answer ten speculative views.* The Buddha, as in *Aggivacchagotta Sutta*,<sup>41</sup> did not hold any ten speculative views as questioned by the wanderer Vacchagotta. They were all very much the sorts of questions that were frequently asked to religious teachers and it seemed all

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<sup>39</sup> M 71

<sup>40</sup> M 71; Sue Hamilton, “The 'External World': Its Status and Relevance in the Pali Nikāyas”, *Religion* 29.1 (1999) p. 75.

<sup>41</sup> M 72

religious teachers other than the Buddha seeking answers to these questions. They sought the reasonable explanations of the nature of the self, its relationships with the body, its status after liberation, and the nature of the world.<sup>42</sup>

The Buddha refrained from answering these ten questions on the grounds that to do so would be irrelevant and misleading, and also not-conducive in gaining liberation from *samsāra*. The questions were: (i-iv) the world is eternal, not-eternal, finite or infinite, (v) the soul and the body are the same (vi) the soul is one thing and the body another, (vii-viii) after death a Tathāgata exist or does not exist (ix) after death a Tathāgata both exists and does not exist, and (x) after death a Tathāgata neither exists and nor does not exist.

The Buddha explained in *Mahāvaccchagotta Sutta*<sup>43</sup> that since many individuals were accomplished in the Dhamma thus this holy life was complete in that respect. This included the Buddha, *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs*, men lay-followers clothed in white, both those leading lives of celibacy and those enjoying sensual pleasures, and women lay-followers clothed in white, both those leading lives of celibacy and those enjoying sensual pleasures. *The pursue of holy life in the Dhamma was open for all and it led the right path of liberation.*

**Ten qualities of the Buddha.** In Śramaṇa movement, the Buddha's disciples and lay followers regarded the Buddha, as mentioned in *Mahāsakuludāyi Sutta*,<sup>44</sup> as the head of an order, the head of group, the teacher of a group, the well-known and famous founder of a sect regarded by many as a saint. He was honoured, respected, revered, and venerated by his disciples, and his disciples lived in dependence on him, honouring and respecting him. When the Buddha was teaching the Dhamma to a large audience, on that occasion there was no sound of his disciples' coughing or clearing their throats. His disciples, lay followers and others saw, honoured and respected the Buddha on *five qualities*: (i) ate little, was content with any kind of (ii) robe, (iii) almsfood, (iv) resting place, and (v) was secluded and commended seclusion. However, the Buddha possessed

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<sup>42</sup> Hamilton, p. 77.

<sup>43</sup> M 73

<sup>44</sup> M 77

*ten qualities* which made him nobler and more venerated than any *śramaṇa* movement at his time. He possesses another *five qualities* that made him unique, i.e. (vi) the higher virtue, (vii) knowledge and vision, (viii) the higher wisdom, (ix) the Four Noble Truths, and (x) the way to develop wholesome states. As regard of the tenth qualities, the Buddha had outlined 19 ways to develop wholesome states during his forty-five years of ministry.

## 2.2 Caste and varṇa system

The origin of caste in India could be traced to the racial superiority which the invading Aryans claimed when they first entered India. They treated the conquered native people as inferior mainly on the ground of skin colour (*varṇa*) and they called them as *dasyus* or barbarians. In the process of settling down in India, the Aryans created a division of labour such as priests (*brāhmaṇas*) and warriors (*kṣātriyas*). By the time of the latest period of the evolution of Ṛgvedic society, the division became four castes, i.e. *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣātriya*, *vaiśya* and *śūdra*. This division was codified by the hymn of *Ṛg-Veda* (x, 90, 12) which mentions that when the cosmic man was sacrificed his mouth became the *brāhmaṇa*, his arms the *kṣātriya*, his thighs the *vaiśya* and his feet *śūdra*. By the time Buddhism flourished in India, the caste division had been functional and hereditary.<sup>45</sup>

The Buddha fought against the caste system in India and put his best effort to reform social structure at his time. Some *suttas* from *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya* deal with the fight against caste supremacy ideology which claimed the *brāhmaṇa* was the highest caste in the society and others were inferior. The Buddha acknowledged that the status human beings were not determined by birth (*jāti*) but by conduct (*kamma*). Human beings became noble and superior because they were endowed with true knowledge and practice (*vijjācaraṇa*). From the Buddhist point of view there is no reason whatsoever for one class of to be *hereditary* rulers or masters over another class regarded as slaves and inferiors *by birth*.

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<sup>45</sup> A. G. S. Kariyawasam, "Caste", EB, vol III, pp. 691-694

***Sociological aspect of the caste problem.*** The *Ambaṭṭha Sutta*<sup>46</sup> of the *Dīgha Nikāya* deals with sociological aspect of the caste problem. Ambaṭṭha, a pupil of Brahmin Pokkharasāti and came from Kaṇhāyan clan, had acquired the knowledge and skills at same level of his teacher in the Three Vedas, the mantras, the rules and the rituals, the lore of sounds and meanings, oral tradition, complete in philosophy and in the marks of a Great Man. He was proud of his caste status and his acquired knowledge as a Brahmin.

He visited the Buddha and challenged him that the Brahmin was the best caste and other castes were subservient to the Brahmins. The Buddha, with his true knowledge, doubted his claim and showed him that in the past the Sakyans were the masters of Kaṇhayans since they were born from slave-girls. Although Ambaṭṭha was a learned Brahmin, he was ill-born. The Buddha negated the contemporary belief that a Brahmin status was hereditary.

Further the Buddha gave undisputed facts that the Khattiyas would not sprinkle the child born from Khattiya youth and a Brahmin maiden because the child was not well-born from mother's side. It also applied to the child from Brahmin youth and Khattiya maiden because the child was not well-born from father's side. However, the child would receive the seat and water from the Brahmins. This indicated that the Khattiyas were superior to the Brahmins.

The Buddha gave another example that the Brahmin ascetic (had his head shaved by the Brahmins) who were punished with a bag of ashes and banished from the country or the city would not receive a seat and water from the Brahmins. However, it did not apply to the Khattiya ascetic (had his head shaved by the Brahmins), he received a seat and water from the Brahmins. This also indicated that the Khattiyas were superior to the Brahmins.

At the end of the *sutta*, the Buddha convinced Ambaṭṭha and his teacher that man became noble and respected because they excelled in the Dhamma and perfected his conduct (morality). This *sutta* refuted the claim that the Brahmins were superior to other castes. The Buddha treated all the castes were the same and only the good conduct would make them nobler than others.

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<sup>46</sup> D 3

***Monastic life did not carry the status of caste system.*** In *Aggañña Sutta*, two converts from Brahmin families, Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja, got reviled and abused by other Brahmins. The Brahmins said that the Brahmin caste was the highest caste and the true children of Brahmā, born from his mouth, born of Brahmā, created by Brahmā, heirs of Brahmā. However the Buddha argued that these Brahmins misrepresented Brahmā, told lies and earned much demerit. There were four castes known India, i.e. the Khattiyas, the Brahmins, the merchants and the artisans. The Buddha showed them that anyone from any caste could do wholesome and unwholesome deed. The wise did not recognise the claim that the Brahmin caste being the highest. The Buddha asked his disciples from various backgrounds that they were ascetics, followers of the Sakyan, true son of the Blessed Lord, born of his mouth, born of Dhamma, created by Dhamma, and heir of Dhamma.<sup>47</sup> The monks or nuns who went forth from the householder life into homelessness did not carry statuses (castes) and privileges.

***Economic superiority could defeat caste superiority by birth.*** In *Madhurā Sutta*, King Avantiputta of Madhurā questioned Mahā Kaccāna, the Buddha's disciple, about the status of brahmins (*brāhmaṇas*). They claimed that brahmins were the highest caste, those of any other caste are inferior; brahmins were the fairest caste, those of any other caste were dark; only brahmins were purified, not non-brahmins; brahmins alone were the sons of Brahmā, the offspring of Brahmā, born of his mouth, born of Brahmā, created by Brahmā, heirs of Brahmā. Mahā Kaccāna demonstrated that economic prosperity of any class (brahmins, merchants, workers) would determine their statuses, others would speak friendly to them, and they would have workers who were eager to serve them without disputing their caste background.

Through a few dialogues Mahā Kaccāna convinced the King that *the four castes were the same and only karma would determine their own rebirths*. People regardless of caste, who were abstain from killing living beings, from taking what was not given, from misconduct in sensual

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<sup>47</sup> D 27

pleasures, from false speech, and had a mind without ill will, and held right view, would be likely to reappear in a happy destination, even in heavenly world.<sup>48</sup>

*Some arguments against the social attitudes of the brāhmaṇas.* The *Assalāyana Sutta* of *Majjhima Nikāya* contains some arguments against the social attitudes of the *brāhmaṇas*.<sup>49</sup> As requested by five hundred brahmins staying at Sāvatti, Brahmin Assalāyana visited the Buddha in order to dispute the Buddha's claim on purification for all the four castes. Brahmin Assalāyana as a learned brahmin had to defend the argument that "Brahmins are the highest caste, those of any other caste are inferior; brahmins are the fairest caste, those of any other caste are dark; only brahmins are purified, not non-brahmins; brahmins alone are the sons of Brahmā, the offspring of Brahmā, born of his mouth, born of Brahmā, created by Brahmā, heirs of Brahmā."

Through some arguments, the Buddha took a stand that purification was valid for four castes by negating the Brahmin's claim on their superiority:

- (a) The brahmin women were seen having their periods, becoming pregnant, giving birth and giving suck (milking the baby). The Brahmins were born from the womb and not from the Brahmā's mouth or created by the Brahmā.
- (b) In Yona and Kamboja countries, there were two castes only, masters and slaves.
- (c) Whether it be a Khattiya, or a Brahmin, or a Vessa, or a Suddha—those of all four caste who abstain from unwholesome deed and held right view, on the dissolution of the body, after death, were likely to reappear in a happy destination, even in the heavenly world.
- (d) Those of all four castes were capable of developing a mind of loving-kindness, without hostility and without ill-will.
- (e) Those of all four castes were capable of taking loofah and bath powder, going to the river, and washing off dust and dirt. At the Buddha's time, this might refer to the customs of self-

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<sup>48</sup> M 84

<sup>49</sup> M 93

purification from personal guilts and sins. Every people practised this custom in ancient India regardless of their castes.

- (f) The fact that a child could be called both as a Khattiya and a Brahmin when s/he was born from a Khattiya father and a Brahmin mother or vice versa. The status of the parents attached to the baby who had just been born.
- (g) At funeral feast, or at a ceremonial milk-rice offering, or at a sacrificial feast, or at a feast for guests, brahmins would feed first the one who was virtuous and of good character since it would bring great merit. This fact supported the claim that morality would determine people status and not inherited caste.

The Buddha's declaration on purification for all four castes was based on the above mentioned reasons. At the end of the *sutta*, Brahmin Assalāyana became a lay-follower of the Buddha and took a refuge for life in Triple Gems.

*Brāhmaṇas were the major converts into Buddhist monastic life.* The Buddha's teaching attracted many followers from all castes. The commentary to the *Thera-gāthā* and *Therī-gāthā* describes the background of 328 monks and nuns and indicates that over two-thirds came from urban areas. It also indicates that, as to their social backgrounds, 41 per cent were *Brāhmaṇa*, 23 per cent *Kṣatriya*, 30 per cent *Vaiśya*, 3 per cent *Śūdra* and 3 per cent 'outcaste' (below the *Śūdras* in the Brāhmaṇical hierarchy).<sup>50</sup> This figure demonstrated that the *brāhmaṇas* were the major converts after they discovered that the Buddha's teaching was better than Vedic religion and they realised that the status as the priests did not guarantee ultimate liberation after-life.

### **2.3 Early Buddhism and Early Brāhmaṇism**

*Early Brāhmaṇism at the Buddha's time.* At the time when Buddhism flourished in India, Brāhmaṇism was the major religion who adored Brahmā as their supreme God. At this time the term 'Hinduism' has not been known and used yet. The salient features of Brāhmaṇism were:

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<sup>50</sup> Peter Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History and Practices* (Delhi: Cambridge UP, 2004) p. 24.

- a) The earliest traces of the origin of Brāhmanism were found in the systematic arrangement of hymns of the *R̥g-veda*. They believed on the *Brahman*, the cosmic principle which was regarded as being infinite, unchangeable, eternal, absolute reality on which all that exists depends.
- b) Brāhmanism emphasised its belief on sacrifice (*yajña, karma*) whereas one's whole life was regarded as a sacrifice. Sacrifice was the means for obtaining power over this and other worlds. Sacrifice existed from eternity and proceeded from the Supreme Being (*Prajāpati* or *Brahmā*) along with the *Traividya* (three-fold sacred science), i.e., the *Rik* or verses, the *Sāmans* or chants and the *Yajus* or sacrificial formulas)
- c) The cosmological and cosmogonical theories found in Brāhmanism were also found in the *Vedas, Brāhmaṇas* and *Upaniṣads*. They believed that the world was created by the gods. During the period of the *Brāhmaṇas* the idea of the divine creation gained its ground and *Prajāpati* was regarded as the supreme creator. The *Upaniṣads* recognised *Brahman* or *Ātman* as the first principle from which everything else originated.
- d) The *R̥g-veda* did not develop the doctrine about life after death. It was believed that after death one dwelt in heaven with *Yama*. Meanwhile the *brāhmaṇas* believed that the dead would take the path of returning to the earth (*pitṛ-yāna*) or of going to the heaven (*deva-yāna*).
- e) Besides sacrifices, Brāhmanism performed various forms of religious worships known as *pūjā*. They worshipped deities, sacred objects, trees, holy places, serpents (*nāgas*) and other supernatural beings.
- f) Ethics and morality did not find an important place in Brāhmanism.
- g) The *varnāśrama-dharma* was an essential feature of Brāhmanism. They believed that the life span of individual was divided into four stages (*catur-āśrama*).

***The ideal in Buddhism, Brāhmanism and Upaniṣad.*** The Buddhist ideal was the attainment of tranquillity (*upasama*), the deathless state (*amata*) state of peace (*santi*) and supreme bliss (*parama-sukha*) by the extinction of defilement (*āsava*) such as desire, ignorance and craving.

Early Brāhmanism aimed at obtaining material gain through sacrifice, while the *Upaniṣadic* doctrine aimed at the attainment of liberation through realisation of the identity of *Ātman* and *Brahman*. Asceticism was considered to be of great importance to attain this ideal.<sup>51</sup>

***The Buddha lived in the society where Brāhmanism dominated in India.*** Richard Gombrich believed that the Buddha lived at about the end of what is called the Vedic period of Indian history.<sup>52</sup> He explained the Vedic civilisation as follows: The word ‘Vedic’ derives from Sanskrit *veda*, meaning ‘knowledge’ and refers to this case to sacred knowledge, knowledge about ultimate matter. In fact the Sanskrit term for Vedic literature is *śruti*, what has been ‘heard’. The texts have been ‘heard’ by inspired sages. Ultimately they are not composed, by gods or human beings, but exist eternally, whether anyone is aware of them or not. *Śruti* is eternally true and infallible, it tells men what to do. In early Vedic society there were four main social statuses: priests, rulers, ordinary free people and slaves. *Later, most social status in India became ascribed by birth.* The priests mostly represented by the Brahmins (*Brāhmaṇas*) are the class of men whose duty and function it is to preserve *śruti*. Since it was the prerogative of *brāhmaṇas* to learn and interpret, all authority (on ultimate matters) rested with them. In early Indian history the measure of orthodoxy was whether one accepted *śruti* and whether one accepted the authority (in ideological matters) of the *brāhmaṇas*. Heterodox thinkers like the Buddha were rejecting both the Vedas as the depository of final truth and the position of the *brāhmaṇas* as arbiters of truth.

***The Buddha criticised the concept of Brahmā-world.*** In *Brahmanimantanika Sutta*,<sup>53</sup> Baka the Brahmā claimed that Brahmā-world was permanent, everlasting and eternal; this was total and was not subject to pass away. Brahmā-world was where one was neither born nor ages nor dies nor passes away nor reappears, and beyond this there was no escape. Brāhmanism treated Baka the Brahmā as the Great Brahmā, the Overlord, the Untranscended, of Infallible Vision, Wielder

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<sup>51</sup> Nanayakkara, “Brāhmanism”, pp. 321-329.

<sup>52</sup> Richard F. Gombrich, *Theravāda Buddhism: A Social History from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo* (London: Routledge, 1988) pp. 32-37.

<sup>53</sup> M 49

of Mastery, Lord Maker and Creator, Most High Providence, Master and Father of those that are and ever can be.

The Buddha criticised Baka the Brahmā that he held a wrong view and lapsed into ignorance in that he said of the impermanent that it was permanent, of the transient that it was everlasting, of the non-eternal that it was eternal, of the incomplete that it was total. Brahmā realms pertained only to the first *jhāna*. The Buddha showed that Baka the Brahmā had never seen three other bodies in Brahmā world: the body called [the god of] Streaming Radiance (pertaining in second *jhāna*); Refulgent Glory (third *jhāna*) and Great Fruit (fourth *jhāna*).

This *sutta* demonstrated that the goal of Brāhmanism, that was the union with the Brahmā, was surrounded by the ignorance since it pertained to first *jhāna* only. The final liberation according to the Buddha was only able to be achieved at the fourth *jhāna*.

***Differences between early Buddhism and early Brāhmanism.*** The term ‘Hinduism’ is not known at the time of the Buddha but many people practised some kind of what is called Brāhmanism. Lal Mani Joshi has written two excellent essays comparing the ideological struggle between Brāhmanism and Buddhism in the early days in India.<sup>54</sup> He defined that early Brāhmanism was the Vedic religion and thoughts as a whole and not just Upaniṣadic Brāhmanism. His papers identified some main differences between early Buddhism and early Brāhmanism. The differences became intensified as Buddhism started to flourish and to attract many local people.

- a) Brāhmanism was a theistic system of faith while Buddhism was a non-theistic tradition.
- b) Brāhmanism was a form of *ātmavāda* holding the eternal existence of the self (*ātman*), meanwhile Buddhism expounded a kind of *anātmavāda* or the doctrine that there is nothing lasting which one could call one’s own.

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<sup>54</sup> Lal Mani Joshi, *Brāhmanism, Buddhism, and Hinduism: An Essay on Their Origins and Interaction*, Wheel 150-151 (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1970) pp. 17-24; Lal Mani Joshi, *Aspects of Buddhism in Indian History*, Wheel 195-196 (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1973) pp. 8-13.

- c) Brāhmaṇism sought the attainment of happiness (*ānanda*) in this present life and in an afterlife; meanwhile Buddhist monks pursued the ideal of *nirvāṇa* on the basis of world renunciation.
- d) The institutional characters of an ascetic community (*bhikkhusaṃgha*) with its monastic codes (*pātimokkha* or Vinaya code) are unknown to Vedic text.
- e) The ideal of practising and perfecting the four “holy abiding” (*brahmavihāras*) or immeasurable social emotions, did not appear in the Brāhmaṇa tradition till the Yogasūtra of Patañjali (ca. 300 CE) was written.
- f) Early Buddhism was in contrast with Vedic Brāhmaṇism. It did not recognise the religious authority of the Vedas and rejected their sacrificial ritualism. Vedic ceremonialism (*karmakanda*) was matched by Buddhist meditation (*jhāna*) and ascesis (*yoga*).
- g) The Buddha’s teachings sought to liberate human beings not only from the self-system (*ātmanvāda*) but also paved the way for social emancipation of men and women.
- h) Buddhism demonstrated its universality. Meanwhile Vedic *brāhmaṇas* guarded their scriptures and defended that sacrificial ritual techniques were the special crafts of priests.

***The learned Brahmins (brāhmaṇas) enjoyed luxurious and privileged life at the Buddha’s time.***

The *brāhmaṇas*, the seers (*ṛsīs*) and sages of the Vedic tradition lived a householder’s life and sought health, wealth, longevity and offspring through sacrifices and singing hymns. The Buddhist ascetics (*munis, śramaṇas*) renounced the household life with all its perils and pleasures sought transcendental peace and spiritual liberation (*vimutti*) through meditation (*jhāna*) and inner awakening (*pañña*).<sup>55</sup>

It was a common practice that kings and princess donated abodes to influential learned *brāhmaṇas* as royal gifts with royal powers. Consequently, the learned Brahmins competed for recruiting many good disciples. They put great efforts to be famous and spread their thoughts and influences to public so that they got attention and became closer with royal palace as a way to

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<sup>55</sup> Joshi, *Aspects*, p. 12.

receive royal gifts. The abodes located in crowded areas so that they could play important roles in society and also they accessed easily to grass, timber, water and corn for their living. Some *suttas* in *Dīgha Nikāya* showed how the learned Brahmins obtained privileges and wealth:

- a) *Ambaṭṭha Sutta*: Brahmin Pokkharasāti was living at Ukkhaṭṭha, a populous place, full of grass, timber, water and corn, which had been given to him by King Pasenadi of Kosala as a royal gift and with royal powers.<sup>56</sup>
- b) *Soṇadaṇḍa Sutta*: Brahmin Soṇadaṇḍa was living at Campā, a populous place, full of grass, timber, water and corn, which had been given to him by King Seniya Bimbisara of Magadha as a royal gift and with royal powers.<sup>57</sup>
- c) *Kūṭadanta Sutta*: Brahmin Kūṭadanta was living at Khānumata, a populous place, full of grass, timber, water and corn, which had been given to him by King Seniya Bimbisara of Magadha as a royal gift and with royal powers.<sup>58</sup>
- d) *Lohicca Sutta*: Brahmin Lohicca was living at Salavatika, a populous place, full of grass, timber, water and corn, which had been given to him by King Pasenadi of Kosala as a royal gift and with royal powers.<sup>59</sup>

***The Buddha criticised the Brāhmaṇa tradition in Tevijja Sutta.*** The Brāhmaṇa tradition of three knowledges (*veda-trayi*), i.e. the knowledge of the first three Veda (*R̥g*, *Yajur*, *Sāma*), was matched in the Buddhist tradition by three kinds of super-knowledge (*abhiññā*) called “threefold insight” (*tevijjā*), i.e. knowledge of former lives, clairvoyance, and the destruction of the four *āsavas* (sensuality, the desire to be something, wrong views and spiritual blindness).<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> D 3.1.1

<sup>57</sup> D 4.1.1

<sup>58</sup> D 5.1

<sup>59</sup> D 12.1

<sup>60</sup> Joshi, *Aspects*, p. 12.

In *Tevijja Sutta* of *Dīgha Nikāya*,<sup>61</sup> some Brahmins quarrelled each other on the path of salvation leading to the union with the Brahmā. They claimed that their own teachers showing the right path to the Brahmā and not other teachers. They came to the Buddha for the advice. The Buddha pointed out that their teachers, learned in the Three Vedas, had never seen Brahmā face to face. The Brahmins learned in the Three Vedas were encumbered with *wives and health*, and Brahmā was *unencumbered*. There would be no communion between encumbered Brahmins and unencumbered Brahmā. The Buddha explained to them that he knew Brahmā and the world of Brahmā, and the way to the world of Brahmā, and the path of practice whereby the world of Brahmā might be gained. The Buddha claimed that monastic life was the right path leading to Brahmā world by showing the differences between the Brahmins learned in the Three Vedas and the monks.

In *Tevijjavacchagotta Sutta* of *Majjhima Nikāya*,<sup>62</sup> the wanderer Vacchagotta questioned the Buddha's claim on being omniscient and having complete knowledge and vision. The Buddha explained to him that he possessed the threefold true knowledge: (i) he recollected his manifold past lives, (ii) With the divine eyes, he saw beings passing away and reappearing according to their actions, and (iii) he realised for himself with direct knowledge, he entered upon and abide in the deliverance of mind and deliverance by wisdom that were taintless with the destruction of the taints.

***The Buddha established the new social order.*** After having delivered the Dharma and converted many lay people, the Buddha established the new social order in India. It was called the four groups of social structure (*catuparisa*, Skt. *catus pariṣad*). The society was not divided by the castes which inherited by birth but divided by the social life paths. The four groups of Buddhists were the monks (*bhikṣu*), nuns (*bhikṣuṇī*), laymen (*upāsaka*) and laywomen (*upāsikā*). The mendicants (monks and nuns) instructed the lay followers about how to practise Buddhism while living as lay devotees. A lay person became an *upāsaka* or *upāsikā* by placing his faith in the

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<sup>61</sup> D 13

<sup>62</sup> M 71

Three Jewels (*Triratna*, i.e. the Buddha, the Dharma and the Saṅgha) and also practises five precepts (*pañcasila*). The monks and the nuns after receiving the full ordination (*upasampadā*) had to practise a certain number of monastic disciplines around more than 200 precepts depending on the Buddhist streams they followed.<sup>63</sup>

## 2.4 Six contemporary teachers and their teaching

Doctrinal analysis of the non-Vedic sects revealed that the number of orthodox-teachers was very large. The Jaina *sūtras* mention as many as 363, and the schools were broadly divided into four, namely the Kriyāvāda, the Akriyāvada, the Ajñānavāda and the Vinayavāda. According to the Kriyāvāda school, misery is the result of one's own acts and is not caused by anything else. Mahāvīra was a famous teacher of the Kriyāvāda school. Meanwhile Ajita Keśakambala was the master of the Akriyāvada which roughly similar to the Lokāyatika or the Cārvāka school, whose doctrine stated that there is no sin in killing and there is nothing wrong in enjoying sensual pleasure. The master of Ajñānavāda may be Sañjaya whom the Buddhists called Vikṣepavādin, or one who did not adhere to any view categorically. No teachers of Vinayavāda were mentioned in Jaina sources. Buddhist sources condemn this doctrine (called *Silabbataparāmasa*) that emphasises the liberation through monastic vow and conduct.<sup>64</sup>

Buddha Gotama followed the *śramaṇa* movement. At the same time in India there were six famous *śramaṇas* who lived around the time of the Buddha are mentioned in Buddhist scriptures. They were well known as six heterodox teachers, each was the leader (*gaṇin*) of a group of disciples. They were Pūrana Kassapa (Pūraṇa Kāśyapa), Makkhali Gosāla (Maskarin Gośālīputra), Ajita Kesakambalī (Ajita Keśakambala), Pakudha Kaccāyana (Kakuda Kātyāyana), Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta (Sañjayin Vairatṭīputra), and Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta (Nirgrantha Jñātīputra).

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<sup>63</sup> Hirakawa, pp. 61-62.

<sup>64</sup> Bapat, pp. 13-15.

One of the primary concerns of these *śramaṇas* was whether moral actions would have any effects on the person who performed them.<sup>65</sup>

These six contemporary teachers possessed the good personal attributes as written in the *Samaññaphala Sutta*: the teacher of a group of religious mendicants (*sanghigaṇī, gaṇācariyo*); well-known (*ñāto*); with a good reputation (*yasassī*); recognised as a virtuous teacher by many (*sādhusammato bahujanassa*); who had renounced worldly pleasure a long time ago (*cirapabbajito*); and advanced in age (*addhagato vayo anuppatto*).<sup>66</sup>

At this time, there were four major false views that the Buddha rejected and its proponents:

- |                                     |                   |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| (a) Materialism and annihilationism | Ajita Kesakambālī |
| (b) Amoralism                       | Pūrana Kassapa    |
| (c) Non-conditionality              | Makkhali Gosāla   |
| (d) Determinism                     | Pakudha Kaccāyana |

These four kinds of religions are clearly false as they (a) are materialistic, (b) deny moral values, (c) deny moral responsibility, and (4) deny free will.<sup>67</sup>

In *Sandaka Sutta*,<sup>68</sup> Ānanda explained to the wanderer Sandaka most of the doctrines held by these contemporary teachers. In this *sutta*, Ānanda negated their doctrines since they were in contradiction with benefits of holy life (being a monastic). This *sutta* also touches on the nature of omniscience.

The heterodox teachings and their teachers' lives can be found in many *suttas* in *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya*. Below are the reconstructions of their teachings, its teachers' lives and the reasons why the Buddha negated their doctrines:

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<sup>65</sup> D 2; Hirakawa, pp. 16-17

<sup>66</sup> D 2; W. G. Weeraratne, "Pūrana Kassapa", EB, Vol. VII, pp. 475-476.

<sup>67</sup> Piya Tan, "Sandaka Sutta: The Discourse to Sandaka", *Sutta Discovery* 35.7 (2010) p. 173.

<sup>68</sup> M 76

### 2.4.1 Pūraṇa Kassapa (Pūraṇa Kāśyapa)

**His teaching.** Pūraṇa Kassapa taught the doctrine of inaction (*akiriyavāda*) that denied the validity of moral distinctions. He argued that good and bad actions had no particular effect on the person who performed them.<sup>69</sup>

In *Sandaka Sutta*, his doctrine on rejecting the law of karma can be described as:

“When one acts or makes others act, when one mutilates or make others mutilate, when one tortures or makes others inflict torture, when one inflicts sorrow or makes others inflict sorrow, when one oppresses or makes others inflict oppression, when one intimidates or makes others inflict intimidation, when one kills living beings, takes what is not given, breaks into houses, plunders wealth, commits burglary, ambushes highways, seduces another’s wife, utters falsehood—no evil is done by the doer.”<sup>70</sup>

**Buddha’s critics.** Ānanda told Sandaka that Pūraṇa’s doctrines made no differences between he who had not practised this teaching and he who had practised it; and he who had not lived the holy life here and he who had lived it.<sup>71</sup> The Buddha refuted this teaching since it did not lead to liberation and it denied the universal doctrine of karma.

### 2.4.2 Makkhali Gosāla (Maskarin Gośālīputra)

Makkhali was his personal name, means one who stumbled in the mud. He was also called Gosāla because he was born in a cow-shed (*Makkhalīti tassa nāmam, gosālāya jātattā Gosāloti dutiyam namam*). However, due to his appearance, the true name might be Maskarin (Jaina-Prakrit *Mañkhali*, Pāli *Makkhali*), one who carried a bamboo-staff (*mascara*). His followers were called the Ājīvakas (Ājīvikas). Ājīvakas could not be identified with the Acelakas (naked ascetics) since many schools with different teachings belonged to the Acelakas. Makkhali Gosāla held the theory of purification through transmigration (*saṃsāra-suddhi*). He also formulated the *brāhmaṇical āśrama*-theory into eight human development stages, which might be a physical antecedent of the Buddha’s doctrine eight spiritual achievement (*aṭṭha purisapuggalā*). He identified the eight human biological stages as: (i) babyhood, (ii) play time, (iii) attempt to walk, (iv) able to walk, (v)

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<sup>69</sup> M Intro pp. 50-51; Weeraratne, pp. 475-476.

<sup>70</sup> M 76.10

<sup>71</sup> M 76.10

learn under a teacher, (vi) renounce the world, (vii) master all the teachers know, (viii) realise that it was nothing (*na kiñci āha*).<sup>72</sup> His development stages did not encourage the householder life meanwhile the *brāhmaṇical catur-āśrama* included the householder life before its renunciation.

**The Ājīvika ascetic order.** Makkhali Gosāla established Ājīvika ascetic order in 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE. After a period of popularisation, the order lost ground in northern India, but survived in the south until the 14<sup>th</sup> century CE or later. Makkhali Gosāla and Mahāvīra knew each other. They wandered over the Ganges valley and spent seven year together in search of enlightenment. After their separation, Makkhali Gosāla practised severe penance for six months before he proclaimed himself a ‘conqueror’ (*jina*, a title also given to Mahāvīra). The naked ascetics who joined this order appeared to have subjected themselves to rigorously and painful penances. The initiation involved pulling out the hair by the roots and grasping a heated lump, presumably of metal. Its followers established regular meeting places (*sabhā*) in various towns of Ganges valley. Similar to Buddhists and Jains, the Ājīvikas relied its ascetic order by the supports of wealthy merchants and families. The Ājīvika ascetics often ended their lives voluntarily with penance lasting six months, during which their intake of food and drink was gradually reduced until they died of hunger and thirst. Ājīvika ascetic order played an important role in ancient India, as described in Aśoka’s Seventh Pillar Edict, which ranked them third after the Buddhists and the Brāhmaṇas.<sup>73</sup>

**His teaching.** Makkhali Gosāla denied causality and held the belief that a person’s rise or fall in the world was determined by fate, not by his actions. He taught a doctrine of fatalism that denied causality (*ahetukavāda*) and claimed that the entire cosmic process is firmly controlled by the principle of fate or destiny (*niyati*). Human beings do not have volitional control over their actions but will live helplessly in the grip of fate.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> M. Karaluvinna, “Makkhalīgosāla”, EB, Vol. VI, pp. 579-581; Benimadhab Barua, *A History of Pre-Buddhist Indian Philosophy* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1998) pp. 297-318.

<sup>73</sup> A. L. Basham, “Ājīvika”, *Encyclopedia of Religion*, Ed. Jones, Lindsay, Vol. 1, 15 vols (Farmington Hills: Macmillan, 1987) pp. 211-214.

<sup>74</sup> M Intro pp. 50-51.

In *Samaññaphala Sutta* of *Dīgha Nikāya*, Makkhali Gosāla’s doctrine can be summarised as follows:

“All beings are powerless and are developed by destiny, chance and nature; they will experience joy and sorrow in the six class of existence .... The fool and the wise [the bad and good people] will experience life, death and rebirth for 8,400,000 *kalpa* before they make an end of sorrow. There are no questions of bringing unripe *karma* to fruition, nor of exhausting *karma* already ripened, by virtuous conduct, by vows, by penance, or by chastity. That cannot be done.”<sup>75</sup>

Makkhali Gosāla’s view on non-conditionality is mentioned in *Sandaka Sutta* as:

“There is no cause or condition for the defilement of beings; beings are defiled without cause and condition. There is no cause or condition for the purification of beings; beings are purified without cause and conditions. There is no power, no energy, no manly strength, and no manly endurance. All beings, all living things, all creatures, all souls are without mastery, power, and energy; moulded by destiny, circumstance, and nature, they experience pleasure and pain in the six classes.”<sup>76</sup>

**Buddha’s critics.** Makkhali Gosāla’s view placed human being into absolute pessimism and without free-will. All beings had to accept their lives as fates since they did not possess mastery, power, and energy in their souls. Ānanda, as in *Sandaka Sutta*, negated this doctrine since there was no different between who pursued the holy life and who did not; also, there were no benefits to lead holy life under this teacher.<sup>77</sup>

Makkhali Gosāla’s teachings did not favour the fruit of homeless life since everybody was able to end the *samsāra* after certain numbers of rebirths. The fool and the wise alike [the bad and the good] would have the same end and their personal efforts on religious life did not give any effects at all. The Buddha rejected his teachings on the ground that his teachings were in contradiction of the universal law of karma.

The Buddha with His true knowledge, in *Tevijjavacchagotta Sutta*,<sup>78</sup> recollected the past ninety-one aeons (*kalpa*) that **there were no Ājīvakas**, on the dissolution of the body, **went to**

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<sup>75</sup> D 2.20

<sup>76</sup> M 76.13

<sup>77</sup> M 76.13

<sup>78</sup> M 71.13-14

*heaven*. This indicated that the doctrine taught by Makkhali Gosāla did not lead to ultimate liberation. They would go to heaven when they held the doctrine of the moral efficacy of action and the doctrine of the moral efficacy of deeds.

The first encounter between the Buddha and Ājīvaka took place after his enlightenment. Between Gayā and the place of enlightenment, Upaka saw the Buddha and praised him on his clear faculties and pure and bright skin. The Buddha said that he was a victor, the Accomplished One, who had destructed all taints and evil states. He went to the city of Kāsi to set in motion the Wheel of Dhamma. However, Upaka was not interested in and decided not to take a refuge in the Buddha and the Dhamma.<sup>79</sup>

### 2.4.3 Ajita Kesakambalī (Ajita Keśakambala)

*His teaching.* Ajita Kesakambalī took a materialist position and argued that everything was composed of only four elements: earth, water, fire and wind. He taught a doctrine of moral nihilism (*natthikavāda*) that believed on materialist philosophy and refuted the existence of an afterlife and karmic retribution.<sup>80</sup>

In *Sandaka Sutta*, his view was described as this:

“There is nothing given, nothing offered, nothing sacrificed; *no fruit or result of good and bad actions*; no this world, no other world; no mother, no father; no beings who are reborn spontaneously; no good and virtuous recluses and brahmins in the world who have themselves realised by direct knowledge and declare this world and the other world. A person consists of the four great elements only. When a person dies, earth returns and goes back to the body of earth, water returns and goes back to the body of water, fire returns and goes back to the body of fire, air returns and goes back to the body of air; the faculties pass over to space.”<sup>81</sup>

*Buddha’s critics.* In *Sandaka Sutta*, Ānanda refuted the wanderer Sandaka, if after death, both did not exist all and reap exactly the same destination, there was no point to pursue holy life. This view made everybody be equal, pupils were equal to teachers, householders were equal to recluses.

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<sup>79</sup> M 26.25

<sup>80</sup> M Intro p. 51.

<sup>81</sup> M 76.7

#### 2.4.4 Pakudha Kaccāyana (Kakuda Kātyāyana)

**His teaching.** Pakudha Kaccāyana advocated an atomism on the basis of which he repudiated the basic principle of morality.<sup>82</sup> He only recognised seven elements: earth, water, fire, wind, pain, pleasure, and life.

These seven elements are described in full in *Sandaka Sutta* as:

“There are these seven bodies that are unmade, not brought forth, uncreated, without a creator, barren, standing like mountain peaks, standing like pillars. They do not move or change or obstruct each other. None is able to arouse pleasure or pain or please-and-pain in another. What are the seven? They are the earth-body, the water-body, the fire-body, the air-body, pleasure, pain and the soul as the seventh. These seven bodies are unmade... Herein, there is no killer, no slaughterer, no hearer, no speaker, no cognise, no intimate. Even those who cut of someone’s head with a sharp sword do not deprive anyone life; the sword merely passes through the space between the seven bodies... [list of kinds of generations, actions, livelihood, abodes and dreams held by Pakudha Kaccāyana] ...; and there are 84 hundred thousand great aeons wherein, by running and wandering through the round of rebirths, fools and the wise both will make an end of suffering... The round of rebirths is limited; there is no shortening or extending it, no increasing or decreasing it.”<sup>83</sup>

**Buddha’s critics.** Buddhism rejects Pakudha Kaccāyana’s view with the following reasons: (a) by pursuing holy life, beings can escape from *samsāra* cycle; the wise and the fools will end the round of rebirths in different conditions, (b) the elements of the human being are not independent, (c) the life human beings follow universal law of karma and morality, (d) Buddhists believe the holy life will lead to ultimate liberation as the saying “By virtue or observance or asceticism or holy life I shall make unripened action ripen or annihilate ripened action as it comes.”

#### 2.4.5 Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta (Sañjayin Vairaṭṭiputra)

**His teaching.** Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta was a skeptic. He refused to take a stand on the crucial moral and philosophical issues of the day. He claimed that the issues were beyond human knowledge and it was difficult to verify them.<sup>84</sup> He was categorised as a teacher of foolish religion.

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<sup>82</sup> M Intro p. 51

<sup>83</sup> M 76.16

<sup>84</sup> M Intro p. 51

In *Sandaka Sutta*, this teacher was dull and confused. Because he was dull and confused, when he was asked such and such question, he engaged in verbal wriggling, in eel-wriggling (*amarāvikkhepa*): “I don’t say it is like this. And I don’t say it is like that. And I don’t say it is otherwise. And I don’t say it is not so. And I don’t say it is not not so.”<sup>85</sup>

In *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*, King Ajātasattu described Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta’s attitude as foolish and confusing as he replied by evasion. Of all the heterodox teachers, Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta’s was the most stupid and confused.<sup>86</sup>

**Buddha’s critics.** The Buddha said in *Sandaka Sutta* that when Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta found out that the holy life was without consolation, he turned away from it and left it.<sup>87</sup> Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta did not believe that holy life pursued by the Buddha would lead him to happiness.

#### **2.4.6 Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta (Nirgrantha Jñātīputra)**

Nirgrantha Jñātīputra was also known as Mahāvīra (ca. 599-527 BCE but more likely 561-489 BCE), one of the founders of Jainism, or the 24<sup>th</sup> Jina or Tirthaṅkaras. The term “Jainism” is derived from “Jina” meaning conqueror, an honorific, similar to Buddha, by which its multiple founders are known. Jainism recognised 23 Jinas or Tirthaṅkaras prior to Vardhamāna Mahāvīra or Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta. His followers are called Nigaṇṭhas (Pāli) or Nirgranthas (Skt). Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta (Nāthaputta) meant the bondless son of Nāta (Nātha) or Nāya or Jnāṭr clan of Vaiśāli. Mahāvīra was well known by his personal attributes as *gatāta* (one whose heart has been in the attainment of aim), *yatatta* (one whose heart is restrained) and *ṭhittata* (one whose heart is steadfast). According to Jaina sources, Mahāvīra was born (ca. 599 BCE) at Kuṇḍragrāma of the kingdom of Vaiśāli (near modern Patna). His father, Siddhārtha, was a *kṣatriya* leader of the Jnāṭr clan, and his mother was Triśālā, a sister of Vaiśāli ruler, Cetaka. Mahāvīra’s life shared some parts of similarity with the Buddha’s. Mahāvīra grew up in luxurious life until the age of 30 when he decided to renunciate his householder life. He was leaving his wife, Princess Yasodā and his

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<sup>85</sup> M 76.30

<sup>86</sup> D 2.31-32

<sup>87</sup> M 76.31

daughter named Priyadarśanā. Mahāvīra had practised various form of severe asceticism for twelve years, six months and fifteen days before he claimed to attain enlightenment. He reached the highest *jñāna* (knowledge) and *darśana* (intuition) called *kevala* which is infinite, supreme, unobstructed, unimpeded, complete and full.<sup>88</sup>

**Jainas' way of life.** Jainism was well known of stricter code of conduct including severe austerities in the Buddha's time. Jainism co-existed with Buddhism and its interaction can be found in the literature of both religions. Both Jainism and Buddhism belonged to the Śramaṇa tradition. *Acelakatā* or nakedness was a requisite characteristic of the Jain ascetics.<sup>89</sup>

**His teaching.** Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta taught a doctrine that there were nomadic souls entrapped in matter by the bond of past karma and that the soul was to be liberated by exhausting its karmic bonds through the practice of severe self-mortification.<sup>90</sup>

The term "Nirgrantha" refers to being freed of fetters. The followers attempted to free themselves of physical and mental fetters through the practice of austerities. After his death, his school called itself as the Jaina order. The goal of Jainas was to free the soul by overcoming the instincts and desires that arose from the physical body.<sup>91</sup> They believed that what they experienced at the moment was due to past karma.

As a master of the Kriyāvāda school, Mahāvīra emphasised his doctrine that to release from *samsāra* could be achieved by knowledge of the highest truth and by good conduct. The doctrine admitted the existence of soul or self, this world and the next, the eternal and non-eternal elements in the constituents of the physical world, birth, death, heavens and hells.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Ananda W. P. Guruge, "Mahāvīra", EB, Vol VI, pp. 511-516.

<sup>89</sup> Guruge, "Mahāvīra", pp. 511-516; Bhag Chandra Jain and Ananda W. P. Guruge, "Jainism", EB, vol. V, pp. 609-619; In *Majjhima Nikāya* and *Dīgha Nikāya*, the term "naked ascetics" are found in many places in the *suttas*, we can be sure that the "naked ascetics" were Jains. In later development, schism occurred in an attitude to the traditional norms of conduct, the naked ascetics became *Śvetāmbara* (the white-robed) or the *Dirgambara* (sky-robed).

<sup>90</sup> M Intro p. 51

<sup>91</sup> Hirakawa, p. 17-18

<sup>92</sup> Bapat, p. 14

In *Cūḷasakuludāyi Sutta*, Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta claimed to be omniscient and all-seeing, to have complete knowledge and vision. However, when he was asked about the past, prevaricated, let the talk aside, and showed anger, hate and bitterness.<sup>93</sup> The Buddha said that Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta was not omniscient since he was unable to recollect his past life and unable to answer other people's question satisfactorily.

***Buddha's critics on soul and God.*** According to Jaina philosophy soul is eternal, uncreated and beginningless. Soul has life, consciousness, *upayoga* (knowledge and perception) and is potent. A fundamental doctrinal difference of both religions is Jainism believed in the doctrine of permanent soul (*atman*) as contrasted with the doctrine of *anatta* (no permanent soul) in Buddhism.

The other difference was that Buddhism rejected the theory of God as creator, supporter or destroyer of the world; meanwhile Jainism believed in God-hood, the *Paramātman* stage of soul itself and in innumerable gods.<sup>94</sup>

***Buddha's critics on severe asceticism.*** Jainism applied stringent discipline called *Catuyāmasaṃvara* or the fourfold discipline of restraints, the four ritualistic approaches to the use of water. The Jains were curbed by all curbs, enclosed by all curbs, cleared by all curbs, and claimed by all curbs.<sup>95</sup> The Jain texts mentioned these restraints as: non-injury, truthfulness, non-theft, non-possession (leading to ascetic practice). Mahāvīra added the fifth restraints as celibacy.

The Jain ascetics or mendicants practised a stricter code of conduct, called *samācāra* (right conduct). They controlled the threefold activity of body, speech and mind. They took every care in walking, speaking, eating, lifting and lying down and depositing waste products for avoiding injury to organism. One extreme practice was to use the mask for preventing the death of

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<sup>93</sup> M 79.6

<sup>94</sup> Jain and Guruge, pp. 609-619.

<sup>95</sup> D 2.29. In the Samaññaphala Sutta, these restraints were described as *sabba-vāri-vārito*, *sabba-vāri-yuto*, *sabba-vāri-dhuto*, *sabba-vāri-phuṭṭo*. The word *vāri* has a meaning of 'water', 'restraint', or possibly 'sin'.

micro-organism normally entering the mouth (*mukhavastrikā*), or a piece of cloth (*avamacela*) etc.<sup>96</sup>

In *Cūladukkhandha Sutta*<sup>97</sup> or “A Shorter Discourse on Mass Suffering” we can see on how Nigaṇṭhas lived on self-mortification as a ways of liberation. They practised continuous standing, rejecting seats, and experienced painful, racking, piercing feelings due to exertion. They expected that there would be no consequences in the futures because their severe asceticism would annihilate past actions. Also by doing no fresh actions, they expected no consequences in the future.

The Jains held the view that whatever a person experienced was caused by past karma. However in this *sutta*, the Buddha argued that severe pains arose from their extreme ascetic practice would have to be rooted in grave actions of their previous lives, alternatively, severe pains were caused by bad past karma.

In *Devadaha Sutta*,<sup>98</sup> the Buddha examined the Jain thesis that liberation was to be attained by self-mortification and he proposed a different account of how striving or holy life became more fruitful than self-tormenting activities.

In *Cūlasaccaka Sutta*,<sup>99</sup> Saccaka the Nigaṇṭha’s son (a Jain) was a good debater and a clever speaker. He wanted to discredit the Buddha’s teaching by refuting his doctrines. He came with five hundred Licchavis to the Buddha. The Buddha taught his disciples the doctrine of impermanence and no-self: “Material form is impermanent, feeling is impermanent, perception is impermanent, formations are impermanent, consciousness is impermanent. Material form is not self, feeling is not self, perception is not self, formations are not self, consciousness is not self. All formations are impermanent; all things are not self.” However Saccaka held the opposite views.

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<sup>96</sup> Jain and Guruge, pp. 609-619.

<sup>97</sup> M 14.15-17

<sup>98</sup> M 101

<sup>99</sup> M 35

The Buddha asked the question whether the king—for example, King Pasenadi of Kosala or King Ajātasattu Vedehiputta of Magadha—exercised the power in his own realm to execute those who should be executed, to fine those who should be fined and to banish those who should be banished. Saccaka said “yes” to the Buddha’s question. If ‘material form is my self’ why could not he exercise such power on it? At the end, he admitted that material forms are not self. Although he did not take refuge in Three Jewels, the Buddha foresaw that he was reborn in Sri Lanka after Buddhism was established there. He would attain arahantship and well known as Kāḷa Buddharakkhita Thera.

***Buddha’s critics on bodily punishment as a way of purification.*** In *Upāli Sutta*,<sup>100</sup> Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta had a disciple, the householder named Upāli. They held the belief that the bodily rod (*daṇḍa*, stick as instrument for punishment) were the most reprehensible for the performance of evil action, for the perpetration of evil actions. They called “rod” for “action”. The verbal rod and mental rod were less reprehensible. However, the Buddha demonstrated that mental action was the most reprehensible compared with bodily action and verbal action. The Buddha had successfully convinced Upāli so he took refuge in and became the Buddha’s disciple. Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta got very disappointed because of the loss of one of his best lay supporters, and this caused a bodily disorder that resulted in his vomiting hot blood. Thus his supporters brought him to Pāvā on a litter, and shortly thereafter he passed away.

***Dissensions in Jainas order after Mahāvīra’s death.*** After 42-year career of promoting and reforming Jainism, Mahāvīra died at Pāpā or Pāvā at the age of 72. He was described in Jain text as entering “into *nirvāṇa* and becoming a *siddha*, one who is fully liberated and forever free of embodiment”. The Jaina community at his time had the following figures: 14,000 *śramaṇas*, 36,000 nuns, 159,000 male lay-followers and 318,000 female lay-followers. The Jain order

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<sup>100</sup> M 58

experienced dissensions after Mahāvīra's death.<sup>101</sup> The Buddha told Ānanda how to handle similar dissensions if they occurred among his disciple as written in *Sāmāgāma Sutta*.<sup>102</sup>

## 2.5 Monastic institution and education

At the Buddha's time, the formation of religious institution or sect was fulfilled by three constituting elements: (i) a Master, called by his disciples as *Satthā* or instructor and called by others as *saṅghīgaṇi ganācariyo* or 'sect-leader'; (ii) common bond of faith in the Master's teaching (*dhamma*), and (iii) discipleship (*uddesa*). Historically, the Buddhist Order or *Saṅgha* was one of several existing Orders in the community of religious wanderers (*paribbājakas*) in Northern Indian at the time of the Buddha. The Buddhist Order was known by collective name as Sakyaputtiyā Samaṇā (religious wanderer who followed the Sakyaputta, the son of Sakya). Non-Buddhist Orders preserved the traditional pattern of a sect: it relied on the relationships and personal bond between the Master (*guru*) and his disciples. Buddhist Order was more advanced since it grew up as monastic institution with a body of its own regulations.<sup>103</sup>

The *brāhmaṇical* system run its educational systems called as the *gurugṛha* (the Teacher's House). The education took place between individual teacher with his small group of disciples and pupils. Meanwhile, the tradition of Buddhist system was *monastic* since it functioned within the regimen of monastic life. Monasteries were not just a place for meditation but also a seat of culture and learning. It reflected the process of inner intellectual life of the monasteries. At the time of Buddha, royal patronage and merchants support were the main sources for funding the monasteries.

Education under *brāhmaṇical* system did not favour the expansion of the small school under individual teacher into a large educational institution, controlled by a collective body of teachers. However, *Buddhist education system enabled to accommodate a large number of the*

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<sup>101</sup> Guruge, "Mahāvīra", pp. 511-516.

<sup>102</sup> M 104

<sup>103</sup> S. Dutt, "Saṅghakamma", Vol VIII, pp. 704-711.

*students into large-scale monastic universities*. Throughout the history over a millennium and a half, people might go the famous Buddhist universities like Nalanda, Valabhī, Vikramaśīla, Jagaddala and Odantapurī.<sup>104</sup> Records from Chinese pilgrims on 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> century CE showed that although many student-monks from different sects attended these universities, they could live harmoniously and no monastic rule breaches were reported.<sup>105</sup> This also demonstrated that monastic institution grew up well, the monastic disciplines as part of monastic life worked very well and *saṅgha* carried out the precepts (*sila*) as the Buddha taught.

The initial Buddhist education system was known as *nissaya* meaning ‘dependence on a teacher’. Lay followers who joined the *saṅgha* would have *upajjhāya* (spiritual guide) and *ācārya* (regular instructor, at least ten years’ standing). The Buddha’s teaching was imparted by word of mouth and retained in the memory. The *acarya* took his small class informally. The teaching material covered the following: monastic rules (*vinaya*), holy legends, Buddhist moral fables (*Jataka*), hymnology and fundamental doctrines. The purpose of the class teaching was to fix the texts of the Canon in the memory by means of recitation. This is the main reason why we can find a huge amount of repetitions of the discourses on Pāli Tipiṭaka since it makes the memorisation becomes easier.

In monasteries there were the unrestricted freedoms to argue, to dispute and to debate the Buddhist doctrines. Each was expected to think, reason and decide for himself in all matters relating to both the Dhamma and the Vinaya. Debates and dialogues on the Buddha’s teachings were encouraged until the Buddhist doctrines had been fully understood. However, some points of controversy that could not be solved by the *saṅgha* might lead to the sectarianism or schisms at later stage.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Bapat, pp. 176-194.

<sup>105</sup> Kanai Lal Hazra, *Buddhism in India as Described by the Chinese Pilgrims (AD 399-689)* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1995) pp. 44

<sup>106</sup> Bapat, pp. 176-194.

***Buddhist saṅgha founded based on the practice of tribal organisation.*** Scholars believed that *saṅgha* as monastic institution was established based on the practice of tribal organisation. In *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* the conditions for the prosperity of the Vajjian tribal confederacy were taken as a model of *saṅgha*. The Buddha modified the seven Vajjian practices to prosperity into seven factors that were conducive to welfare of monastic institution, i.e. (i) to hold regular and frequent assembly (this may refer to *uposatha* and *patimokha* recitation); (ii) to meet in harmony, break up in harmony, and to carry on their business in harmony; (iii) not to authorise what has not been authorised, not to abolish what has been authorised, but proceed according to what has been authorised by the rules of training; (iv) to honour, respect, revere and salute the elders of longstanding who are long ordained, fathers and leaders of the orders; (v) not to fall into desires which arise in themselves and lead to rebirth; (vi) be devoted forest-lodgings (simple accommodation); and (vii) to preserve their personal mindfulness. The Buddha also expanded these factors into further detailed instructions.<sup>107</sup>

***No mentions on monastic education in Dīgha Nikāya and Majjhima Nikāya.*** *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya* do not provide a clear instruction on how to run monastic education. The Buddha put emphasis on the Dhamma, taught the doctrines to the monks, the nuns and lay followers. The Buddha corrected all wrong views held by his disciples and lay followers. The Buddha laid down solid foundation on monastic discipline for monks and nuns. The Buddha advised the disciples to refer back to the Dhamma and the Vinaya when they found difficult situation or unsettling disputes.

In *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya* we can find the vast amount of repetition in the *suttas*. The repetitions were required as a way to memorise the Buddha's teachings. Since the monks recited the *suttas* regularly in an assembly and all errors during recitation were immediately corrected, the *suttas* were properly preserved to its early original content.

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<sup>107</sup> Etienne Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism: From the Origins to the Saka Era* (Louvain-Paris: Peeters, 1988) p. 10; A. K. Warder, "On the Relationships between Early Buddhism and Other Contemporary Systems", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 18.1 (1956) p. 45; D 16 Mahāparinibbāna Sutta

**Compilation of disciplinary codes.** The original regulations (disciplinary codes) were unknown. The compilation of disciplinary codes originated from the Buddha's discourses to his disciples. These codes could be found on various *suttas* where the Buddha's gave instructions to the monks relating to precepts (*sila*). At early stage, the disciplinary codes focused on transgression committed by the monks. It was called *Pāṭimokkha* or 'something that prevents scattering'. Disciplinary codes, initially of 150 'clauses to be learnt' (*sikkhāpadāni*), then after long history of oral tradition, it became 227 precepts as practised by Theravāda monks at present day. Further, the *Pāṭimokkha* was retained only for liturgical recitation at fortnightly *Uposatha* service.<sup>108</sup>

**Monastic institution was not hereditary.** The Jain monastic institution experienced unexpected dissensions after Mahāvīra died since he did not appoint the new leader from his disciples. The Buddha had prevented the monastic institution from unexpected dissensions before his *parinirvāṇa*. Ānanda had memorised the Buddha's discourses on different occasions on how to prevent the dissensions in monastic institution.

In *Gopakamoggallāna Sutta*, not long after the Buddha passed away, Ānanda told the brahmin Gopaka Moggallāna that the Buddha did not appoint any successor to be a leader of the monastic institution. There was not any single *bhikkhu* who possessed the same qualities as the Buddha did. The Buddha's disciples had the Dhamma as their refuge. The Buddha outlined the ten qualities of the *bhikkhus* that were worthy of being honoured, respected, revered and venerated. The Buddha did not encourage the seniority in the monastic institution but he preferred the religious achievements as a base for respect and veneration. These ten qualities that the Buddha praised were: (i) the *bhikkhu* is virtuous, perfect in conduct and practises the *Pāṭimokkha* in a strict disciplines; (ii) he learns much and remembers what he has learned; (iii) he is content with his robes, almsfood, resting place, and medicinal requisites; (iv) he attains fourth *jhāna* without difficulty; (v) he attains the various kinds of supernormal power; (vi) with his divine ears, he hears both kind of sounds, the divine and the human; (vii) he understands the minds of other

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<sup>108</sup> Dutt, pp. 704-711.

beings; (viii) he recollects his manifold past lives; (ix) with his divine eyes, he sees the beings passing away and reappearing with different karmic results; (x) by realising for himself with direct knowledge, he enters and abides in the deliverance of mind and deliverance by wisdom that are taintless with the destruction of the taints.<sup>109</sup>

In *Sāmagāma Sutta*<sup>110</sup> of *Majjhima Nikāya*, the Buddha laid down disciplinary procedures for the guidance of the monastic institution to ensure its harmonious functioning after his *parinirvāṇa*. The Buddha demonstrated that no *bhikkhus* had different perceptions on thirty-seven (37) factors leading to enlightenment called *Bodhipakkhiyā Dhammā*. Then the Buddha explained the six roots of disputes in the *saṅgha*, four kinds of litigation and seven kinds of settlement of litigation. These explanations can prevent the *saṅgha* from dissensions in the future.

In *Kinti Sutta*<sup>111</sup> of *Majjhima Nikāya*, the Buddha provided the guidance on how the monks could resolve disagreement about the Dhamma. The Buddha emphasised on the meaning and the phrasing of the Dhamma and the monks should not fall into dispute but verify the teaching so that the monks would be ‘bearing in mind what has been rightly grasped as rightly grasped, and bearing in mind what has been wrongly grasped as wrongly grasped, what is Dhamma and what is Discipline should be expounded’.<sup>112</sup> This *sutta* showed one way of preserving the Dhamma and the Vinaya since the Buddha advised the monks to refer both the Dhamma and the Vinaya whenever any doctrinal disputes arose in the *saṅgha*.

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<sup>109</sup> M 108

<sup>110</sup> M 104

<sup>111</sup> M 103

<sup>112</sup> M 103.7

## Ch. 3: The historical Buddha

To reconstruct the biography of historical Buddha is a difficult task since it involves a various kinds of evidence such as *suttas*, fables, legends, stories, archaeological evidence. The scholars have to sort out the existing evidence and to determine which ones are factual records and which one are fictitious and not-historical records. Buddhist followers believe that the canon provides a factual biography of the historical Buddha. Further, the concept of Buddha as an enlightened being has been known from different aeons (*kalpa*). Buddhism recognised twenty-five ever-known Buddhas with Buddha Gotama as the last Buddha.

### 3.1 The Buddha's Life in *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya*

*Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya* contain the *suttas* that can be used to construct the biography of the historical Buddha. The pieces of the Buddha's life are scattered in Pāli Tipiṭaka, however, *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya* are able to portray the Buddha's life.

In *Mahâpadâna Sutta* of *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Acchariya-abhūta Sutta* of *Majjhima Nikāya*,<sup>113</sup> we can find the complete story of the Buddha's birth. Before he was born, he was a Bodhisatta remaining in the Tusita heaven for the whole of his life-span.

Siddhattha Gotama (Skt. Siddhārtha Gautama) was born of Khattiya race and arose in a Khattiya family.<sup>114</sup> His father was King Suddhodana and his mother was Queen Māyā, and the royal capital was Kapilavatthu.<sup>115</sup>

The birth of the Buddha would obey certain the Bodhisatta rules. When a Bodhisatta (the Buddha to-be) descended from the Tusita heaven into his mother's womb, this ten-thousandfold world-system trembled and quaked and was convulsed. And the immeasurable light shone forth. When a Bodhisatta had entered his mother's womb, four devas come to protect him from four

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<sup>113</sup> See D 14 and M 123

<sup>114</sup> D 14.1.5

<sup>115</sup> D 14.1.12

quarters, saying “Let no man, no non-human being, no thing whatever harm this Bodhisatta or this Bodhisatta’s mother.”<sup>116</sup> She saw the Bodhisatta within her womb with all his limbs, lacking no faculty.<sup>117</sup>

Bodhisatta’s mother became by nature virtuous, practising five precepts, having no sensual thoughts connected with a man.<sup>118</sup> She had no sickness of any kind; she could see the Bodhisatta inside her womb, complete with his members and faculties.<sup>119</sup> The Bodhisatta’s mother died seven days after his birth and was reborn in the Tusita heaven. The Bodhisatta’s mother carried him in their womb exactly ten months before giving birth.<sup>120</sup> The Bodhisatta’s mother gave birth to him standing up. When the Bodhisatta came forth from his mother’s womb, first gods received him, then human beings.<sup>121</sup> When the Bodhisatta came forth from his mother’s womb, two stream of water appeared to pour from the sky, one cool and one warm, for bathing the Bodhisatta and his mother.<sup>122</sup>

As soon as the Bodhisatta was born, he stood firmly and took seven steps facing north, and uttered the words, “I am the highest in the world; I am the best in the world; I am the foremost in the world. This is my last birth; now there is no renewal of being for me (no more rebirths).”<sup>123</sup>

During Bodhisatta’s boyhood as a prince, on one occasion his father led a ceremonial ploughing at traditional festivals of the Sakyans. When the attendants left the prince, he sat down and meditated in the cool shade of a rose-apple tree and entered upon and abided in the first *jhāna*

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<sup>116</sup> M 123.7-8 and D 14.1.17; From CSCD ‘*Dhammatā esā, bhikkhave, yadā bodhisatto mātukucchiṃ okkanto hoti, cattāro naṃ devaputtā catuddisaṃ [cātuddisaṃ (syā.)] rakkhāya upagacchanti – ‘mā naṃ bodhisattaṃ vā bodhisattamātaraṃ vā manusso vā amanusso vā koci vā viheṭhesī’ ti. Ayamettha dhammatā*

<sup>117</sup> M 123.12

<sup>118</sup> D 2.1.18-19

<sup>119</sup> D 14.1.21

<sup>120</sup> D 14.1.22-23; M 123.13

<sup>121</sup> M 123.15-16

<sup>122</sup> M 123.19

<sup>123</sup> M 123.20

through mindfulness of breathing. The attendants reported the event to the king; the king came and bowed down in veneration to his son.<sup>124</sup>

Prince Siddhattha lived in the home life and enjoyed himself with five cords of sensual pleasure. He had three palaces, one for the rainy season, one for the winter, and one for the summer. He lived in the rains' palace for the four months of the rainy season, enjoying himself with musician, none of whom were men, and he did not go down to the lower palace.<sup>125</sup>

In *Ariyapariyesanā Sutta*, the Buddha told the monks his own spiritual journey as an illustration of the progression from the ignoble to the Noble Quest. Ignoble (*anariya*) and noble (*ariya*) forms of questing (*pariyesana*) involved any forms of attachment to the world. A person who is attached to things of the world clings to things of the world therefore he cannot escape from the perpetual cycle of *samsāra*. The person will be experiencing to be reborn, to grow old, to die and to grieve.<sup>126</sup>

Realising the danger (*ādinavaṃ*) of worldly things, Prince Siddhattha renounced householder life in search of “the unborn (unageing, undying, ungrieving, undefiled) unexcelled Nibbāna, which is bound up with peacefulness”.<sup>127</sup>

Prince Siddhattha shaved off his hair and beard, put on the yellow robe, and went forth from the home life into homelessness when he was still young, a black-haired young man endowed with the blessing of youth, in the prime of life. His parents wished otherwise and wept with tearful faces.<sup>128</sup>

Ascetic Gotama then went to Āḷāra Kālāma and learnt to lead the holy life in this Dhamma and Discipline. After having mastered all his teaching and being equal with his teacher,

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<sup>124</sup> M 36.31

<sup>125</sup> M 75.10

<sup>126</sup> Walters, p. 250; M 26.

<sup>127</sup> M 26.12

<sup>128</sup> M 26.14

ascetic Gotama was not satisfied because it led to reappearance in the base of nothingness. Then he left his teacher.<sup>129</sup>

Ascetic Gotama then learnt the Dhamma under Uddaka Rāmaputta who declared his doctrine as the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. Ascetic Gotama soon quickly entered upon and abided in that Dhamma by realising for himself with direct knowledge. However, ascetic Gotama was not satisfied with what he had acquired since it did not lead to enlightenment, then he left his teacher.<sup>130</sup>

In search of the supreme state of sublime peace, ascetic Gotama wandered through the Magadhan countries and arrived at Uruvelā, at Senānigama. He found an agreeable ground suitable for the striving of a clansman intent on striving. Finally he attained the supreme security of bondage, Nibbāna, which was unborn, unageing, unailing, deathless, sorrowless, undefiled. He declared that his deliverance was unshakeable and this was his last birth, no rebirths anymore.<sup>131</sup>

Before enlightenment, he practised severe asceticism. He practised to cut off food so he looked like dying with deterioration on skin colour. However, the deities came and would infuse heavenly food into the pores of his skin. He remembered on how he attained first *jhāna* when he was a boy under a rose-apple tree. This was indeed the path of enlightenment. He was not afraid of that pleasure since it had nothing to do with sensual pleasures and unwholesome states. He started eating some solid food. The five *bhikkhus* thought he lived luxuriously and left him alone. He entered upon and abided in the first *jhāna* by secluding from sensual pleasures and unwholesome states; in the second *jhāna* with the stilling of applied and sustained thought; in the third *jhāna* with the fading away as well of rapture of sensual pleasures and unwholesome states; and in the fourth *jhāna* by abandoning of pleasure and pain. When his mind was purified, he attained the first knowledge of recollection of past lives; the second knowledge, with divine eyes he could see beings passing away and reappearing. Then he realised the Four Noble Truths as

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<sup>129</sup> M 26.15

<sup>130</sup> M 26.16

<sup>131</sup> M 26.18-19.

knowledge of the destruction of the taints: This is suffering; this is the origin of suffering; this is the cessation of suffering; and this is the way leading to the cessation of suffering. The Bodhisatta attained the final liberation: “Birth is destroyed, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no more coming to any state of being.”<sup>132</sup>

After having attained enlightenment, the Buddha (was ascetic Gotama) found this Dhamma was profound, hard to see and to understand. His mind inclined to inaction rather than teaching the Dhamma. Having known the Buddha’s intention not to teach the Dhamma, Brahmā Sahampati vanished in the Brahma-world and appeared before him, and requested him to teach the Dhamma to the world. The Buddha agreed to teach the Dhamma to human beings who had different level of defilements and attachments. The Buddha intended to teach his achievement to his first teacher, Ālāra Kālāma, unfortunately his teacher had died seven days before. The second teacher, Uddaka Rāmaputta, had died the night before he attained enlightenment. On the way to the city of Kāsi, he met Upaka, an Ājīvaka, who praising his appearance after the enlightenment. However, he did not take a refuge in the Buddha.

He taught the Dhamma to a group of five monks (*pañcavaggiyabhikkū*) who strived together in search of enlightenment. He taught them at Benares in the Deer Park at Isipatana. This event was well known as the first time that the Buddha set in motion the Wheel of Dhamma.<sup>133</sup>

The rest of the Buddha’s life approaching to the final liberation, Nibbāna can be found in *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*.<sup>134</sup> This *sutta* is one of the most important *suttas* in Sutta-piṭaka, some scholars asserted that: (i) the memory of the Buddha has been preserved and handed down with fidelity and devotion, (ii) it is not just a single *sutta* but a unified compendium of life and teachings of the Buddha, and (iii) that only one third of the *sutta* is original, while the rest of passage are found identical or almost identical words elsewhere in the Pāli canon.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> M 36.26-44.

<sup>133</sup> M 26.19-25.

<sup>134</sup> D 16

<sup>135</sup> Pategama Gnanarama, “Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (1)”, EB, Vol VI, pp. 461-462.

The *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* records the Buddha's last days at the age of 80 after having done ceaseless missionary activity since his enlightenment. The *sutta* details his journey with a group of monks from Rājagaha to his final resting place, Kusinārā, where at the Upavattana sāla grove of the Mallas, he laid himself down on a prepared couch and attained Parinibbāna.<sup>136</sup>

In this *sutta*, the Buddha and his group of monks made a journey from one place to another place. Whenever they stayed at one place, the Buddha gave the teachings or summary of the previous teaching to the monks and lay-followers. The brief records of his last visits in chronological orders:

- (a) In Rājagaha, on the mountain called Vultures' Peak (Gijjhakūta). King Ajātasattu intended to attack the Vajjians and sent a messenger to see the Buddha for the advice. Since the Vajjians practised the seven principles for preventing decline, the Vajjians would not be conquered by force of arm but only by means of propaganda. The Buddha then explained seven things conducive to welfare for the monks community. He also gave comprehensive teaching on morality, concentration and wisdom (*sīlam-samādhi-paññā*).
- (b) At Ambalaṭṭhika. The Buddha gave teaching on morality, concentration and wisdom.
- (c) In Nāḷandā, at Pāvārika's mango-grove. He explained the monks the comprehensive discourse on morality, concentration and wisdom.
- (d) In Pāṭaligama. They stayed at the lay-followers' rest-house. The Buddha taught five perils to one of bad morality and five advantageous to one of good morality. At this time, Sunidha and Vassakārā, the Magadhan ministers, were building fortress at Pāṭaligama as a defence against the Vajjians. The Buddha forecasted that Pāṭaliputta would be the chief city in the future and be facing three perils: from fire, from water and from internal dissensions.
- (e) In Koṭigāma. The Buddha taught the monks on the Four Noble Truths and on morality, concentration and wisdom. Then the Buddha and his group of monks stayed at Brick House at

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<sup>136</sup> Suvimalee Karunaratna, "Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (2), EB, Vol VI, pp. 462-466.

Nādikā. The Buddha taught on rebirth and destruction of fetters and its relationships with individual perfections (Once-Returner, Stream-Winner and Nibbāna).

- (f) In Vesālī, at Ambapālī's grove. The Buddha asked the monks to be mindful all the time. The Buddha agreed to receive a meal from Ambapālī the courtesan and refused the Licchavis' invitation. Ambapālī donated the park to the order of monks with the Buddha as its head. He also taught on morality, concentration and wisdom.
- (g) The village of Beluva. The Buddha spent the Rains (*vassa*) there and he was attacked by severe sickness. Since he wanted to make some statement about the order of monks later, he recovered and continued his journey.
- (h) In Vesālī, at Cāpāla shrine. The Buddha gave hints three times to Ānanda that he would pass away and attained Nibbāna soon. However, Ānanda did not realise it and did not ask the Buddha to live longer so the Buddha decided that the time was approaching. Then the Buddha told Ānanda on eight causes for the appearance of great earthquake, eight kind of assemblies, eight stages of mastery (*abhibhū-ayatanāni*) and eight liberations.
- (i) At Bhaṇḍagāma ... Hatthigāma .... Ambagāma .... Jambugāma. The Buddha taught morality, concentration and wisdom.
- (j) At Bhoganagara, at Ānanda Shrine. The Buddha gave criteria on how to accept and refute the Dhamma taught by others. After having compared and reviewed the doctrines and they were conformed to the *Sutta* and discipline (the *Vinaya*), it was certain that the doctrines came out of the Buddha's mouth.
- (k) In Pāvā, at mango-grove of Cunda the smith. The Buddha received the meal of "pig's delight" (*sūkara-maddava*) and he was attacked by a severe sickness with bloody diarrhoea and with sharp pains as if he were to die. The Buddha asked the left over of the meal had to be buried in a pit since none in this world with its *devas*, *māras* and *Brahmās*, in this generation with its ascetics and Brahmins, princes and people were able to eat and digest thoroughly except the Buddha himself.

(1) In Kusinārā, at sāl-grove. The Buddha realised that his life time was due for final liberation. The Mallas of Kusinārā came and paid homage to the Buddha. Subhadda the wanderer became the last personal disciple of the Buddha and received the going forth and its ordination. The Buddha also reminded his disciples to remember the four holy places when the Buddha was born (Lumbini), got enlightenment (Uruvelā, Buddha Gayā), set motion the Wheel of Dhamma (the deer-park at Isipatana near Vārāṇasī) and attained Nibbāna-element without remainder (Kusinārā). The Buddha laid down on the twin sāl-tree with the head to the north. The Buddha's last words were “*Vayadhammā sankhāra. Appamādena sampādettha*” meaning “All conditioned things are of a nature to the decay—strive on untiringly”. The Buddha's passing away was followed by a great earthquake, terrible and hair-raising and accompanied by thunder. His relics (*sarīra*) were divided into his followers, eight stupas were built for the relics, a ninth for the urn and a tenth for the embers.

The *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya* can provide a vivid biography of the Buddha with *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* depicting the Buddha's last days and repeating his unique doctrines propagated through his 45 years of ministry.

### 3.2 Lineages

In *Mahāpadāna Sutta*,<sup>137</sup> the Buddha provided comprehensive details of the past Buddhas. The explanation of the lineages might serve as a counter-attack against the *brāhmaṇas* who were proud of their pure lineages in Indian society. The Buddha showed that the Buddhist asceticism in a form of monastic life was more superior to the *brāhmaṇas* as householder life.

There were many Buddhas before the Buddha Gotama. In this *sutta*, the story of seven Buddhas were recorded starting with Buddha Vipassī, Buddha Sikhī, Buddha Vessabū, Buddha Kakusandha, Buddha Konagamana, Buddha Kassapa and Buddha Gotama.

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<sup>137</sup> D 14

The word “seven” in the Buddha lineages seems to be as a counter-attack to the *brāhmaṇas* who were proud of their pure lineages back to “seven” generations. Buddha Gotama was able to recollect his previous life up to “seven” generation back as a Buddha.

Buddha Vipassī arose in the world 91 aeons ago. He was born of Khattiya race and of the Kondañña clan. In the meantime of the Buddha Vipassī the life-span was 80,000 years. He gained his full enlightenment at the foot of a trumpet-flower tree. He had the pair of noble disciples Khaṇḍa and Tissa. He had three assemblies of disciples, one of 6,800,000, one of 100,000 and one of 80,000 monks, all were Arahants. His personal attendant was the monk Asoka. His parents were King Bandhumā and Queen Bandhumatī. Its royal capital was Bandhumatī. See Appendix-1 for the lineages of all the past Buddhas. The previous Buddhas came from noble families, either from *royal* families or *brahmin* families. All the Buddhas experienced the rules of Bodhisatta life.

### 3.3 Salutation

N. K. Wagle<sup>138</sup> examined the interpersonal relationships found in the oldest strata of the Pāli canonical texts in which the personality of the Buddha figures prominently. The way of the people addressing one another, by his salutation, demonstrated the status of the speakers. Some *suttas* in *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya* proved this interpersonal relationships based on the salutation they used in the dialogues. The formalisation indicates the specific nature of the relationship existing between the persons involved. Such relationship might be characterised as either that between equals or that between an inferior and a superior.<sup>139</sup>

The commonest mode of address used by the *brāhmaṇas* while addressed their equals was *bho*. In addressing the Buddha they invariably used the term *bho Gotama*. The term *bho Gotama* denied the special status of the Buddha in that *bho*, which is used among the *brāhmaṇas* when addressing each other, denotes *equality*, whereas *Gotama* refers to the Buddha’s *gotta*

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<sup>138</sup> See the analysis of the research from: N. K. Wagle, “Social Groups and Ranking: An Aspect of Ancient Indian Social Life Derived from the Pāli Canonical Texts” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 10.2/3 (1967) pp. 278-316

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 278-279.

affiliation and not to his unique personality. When a *brāhmaṇa* addressed the Buddha in anger, he would call him as *samaṇa Gotama*.<sup>140</sup>

Being the head of the Buddhist hierarchical system, the Buddha was always addressed as *bhante* by the monks. The monks referred to the Buddha by a special term *Bhagavā*, which they reserved for him to the exclusion of all other human and non-human beings. They saluted (*abhivādeti*) the Buddha on meeting him and usually at the end of the conversation saluted (*abhivādeti*) him, circumambulated him, and took his leave.<sup>141</sup>

The Buddha addressed the monks as *bhikkhave*, when they were in groups, and individual monks by their personal name or *gotta* name. The Pāli canon refers to some monks by their ethnic affiliations, such as Viśākha Pañcalaputta, Sakyaputta Upananda etc. Meanwhile Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja, Mahāmoggallāna and Kaccāyanagotta are mentioned by their *gotta* affiliations.<sup>142</sup>

Wagle's study of terms of address, reference and modes of salutation revealed that there were three functional groups at the time of the Buddha: Social, Religious and Political. The Social groups were (i) the Buddha, (ii) the *brāhmaṇas*, (iii) the *gahapatis*, (iv) the persons belonging to the extended kin-groups and (v) the others. The Religious group included (i) the Buddha, (ii) the *brāhmaṇas*, (iii) the *upāsakas*, (iv) the person belonging to the extended kin-group, (v) the *paribbājakas*, (vi) the Jains, and (vii) the others. In the last category, the Political groups, there were (i) the Buddha, (ii) the kings and princes, (iii) the *gāmaṇis* and (iv) the *gahapatis*.<sup>143</sup> It is worth noted that the Buddha was mentioned in all functional groups. ***The Buddha played significant roles in social, religious and political life in India around 7<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE.***

In *Cūlasaccaka Sutta*<sup>144</sup> of *Majjhima Nikāya*, A Nigaṇṭhaputta Saccaka had talks with the Buddha and he addressed the Buddha as *bho Gotamo*. However, the Buddha called Saccaka by

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid., pp. 279-280.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., p. 286.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., pp. 287-288.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., pp. 305-306.

<sup>144</sup> M 35

his *gotta*, Aggivessana. Saccaka's mode of address was coupled with the usual exchange of greeting (*saddhiṃ sammodi*).<sup>145</sup>

In *Abhayarājakumāra Sutta*<sup>146</sup> of *Majjhima Nikāya*, Prince Abhaya's behaviour towards two religious heads, the Buddha and Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta, suggested that he gave equal respect to both of them. He saluted (*abhivādeti*) Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta, sat down and addressed him as *bhante*. At the end of conversation, he saluted him again, circumambulated him and went to the Buddha. He repeated the same procedure when he approached and took leave of the Buddha. The Buddha and Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta addressed him as *rājakumāra*.<sup>147</sup>

Some examples drawn from *Dīgha Nikāya* relating the change of salutation of the Buddha by others:

In *Ambaṭṭha Sutta*:<sup>148</sup>

*Assosi kho brāhmaṇo pokkharasāti – “samaṇo khalu, **bho, gotamo** sakyaputto sakyakulā pabbajito kosalesu cārikaṃ caramāno mahatā bhikkhusaṅghena saddhiṃ pañcamattehi bhikkhusatehi icchānaṅgalaṃ anuppatto icchānaṅgale viharati icchānaṅgalavanasaṅḍe.*

(And Pokkharasāti heard say: “The ascetic Gotama, son of Sakyans, who has gone forth from the Sakya clan, ... is staying in the dense jungle of Icchānankala.”)

Brahmin Pokkharasāti addressed the Buddha as *bho Gotamo* showing the equality between the ascetic and the Brahmin.

In *Soṇadaṇḍa Sutta*:<sup>149</sup>

*Assosum kho campeyyakā brāhmaṇagahapatikā – “samaṇo khalu **bho gotamo** sakyaputto sakyakulā pabbajito aṅgesu cārikaṃ caramāno mahatā bhikkhusaṅghena saddhiṃ pañcamattehi bhikkhusatehi campāṃ anuppatto campāyaṃ viharati gaggarāya pokkharāṇiyā tīre.*

(And the Brahmins and householders of Campā heard say: “The ascetic Gotama of the Sakyans, who has gone forth from the Sakya clan is travelling among the Angas ... and is staying by the Gaggarā's lotus-pool.”)

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<sup>145</sup> Wagle, p. 283.

<sup>146</sup> M 58

<sup>147</sup> Wagle, p. 283.

<sup>148</sup> D 3.1.2. Pāli verses from CSCD.

<sup>149</sup> D 4.2. Pāli verses from CSCD.

In *Mahāsīhanāda Sutta*, the naked ascetic Kassapa called the Buddha as *bho gotamo* as he saw the Buddha as an ordinary ascetic. After having heard the Dhamma, he became the follower of the Buddha, then he called the Buddha as *bhante*.<sup>150</sup> The change in salutation indicated that the social status of asceticism had happened, one became the disciple or the lay-follower of the other. The Buddha enjoyed the higher rank in the pursuit of the holy life in *śramaṇa* movement.

### 3.4 Attributes

*Buddhānussati* is “reflection on the attributes of the Buddha”. Theravādins chant these attributes in *Buddhānussati* as a way of venerating the omniscient Buddha (*Bhagavā*). In most of *suttas* in *Dīgha Nikāya*, the lay-followers and the disciples called the Buddha by praising his nine attributes in the same way as we chant *Buddhānussati*:

“Blessed Lord, (1) the arahant, (2) the fully-enlightened Buddha, (3) endowed with wisdom and conduct, (4) the Well-Farer, (5) Knower of the worlds, (6) incomparable Trainer of men to be tamed, (7) teacher of gods and humans, (8) a Buddha, (9) a Blessed Lord.”<sup>151</sup>

In Pāli:

*Itipi so Bhagavā: (1) Arahaṃ, (2) Saṃmāsambuddho, (3) Vijjācaraṇa Saṃpanno, (4) Sugato, (5) Lokavidū, (6) Anuttaro Purisa Dammaśārathi, (7) Satthādeva Manussānaṃ, (8) Buddhho, (9) Bhagavā.*

The lay-followers mentioned the nine noble attributes when they described the Buddha to non-Buddhists such as the Brahmins, ascetics and ordinary people. By mentioning the Buddha’s nine noble attributes, the lay-followers expected that others would be coming to the Buddha and listened to his discourses and became the followers of the Buddha. It was a common practice in India that people sought the good teachers as spiritual advisors or as a way to discover higher truths and wisdoms.

<sup>150</sup> See D 8 and Pāli verses from CSCD.

<sup>151</sup> These nine noble attributes were mentioned in: D 2.8; D 3.1.2; D 4.23; D 5.2 and more *suttas*.

In *Mahāsihanāda Sutta* or “The Greater Discourses on the Lion’s Roar”,<sup>152</sup> the Buddha expounded the ten powers of a Tathāgata, his four kinds of intrepidity, and other superior qualities, which entitled him to “roar his lion’s roar in the assemblies”. These attributes are far superior to any other human beings’ qualities so that the lay followers have to praise and to recollect the Buddha’s attributes in regular chanting at present day.

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<sup>152</sup> M 12

## Ch. 4: The Dhamma

The Buddha's teaching is called the Dhamma. The term *Dhamma* refers to the truth transmitted by the teaching and signifies the conceptual-verbal medium by which the truth is expressed so that it can be communicated and made comprehensible.<sup>153</sup> Initially, Sanskrit used the term *dharma* in a variety of contexts requiring a variety of translation. The common contexts are of "that which is established" coming to such translation as law, duty, justice, religion, nature, and essential quality. Meanwhile, the Buddhists interpreted *dharma* as uniform norm, universal and moral order, or natural law; it also included one's social duty and proper conduct. The Buddha understood this universal order in terms of *Pratītyasamutpāda* (dependent origination).<sup>154</sup>

### 4.1 Definitions and Characteristics

*The main characteristic of the Buddha's teaching is analysis.* The main principle behind Buddhist analysis is to reject the view of the existence of permanent entity. At the time of the Buddha, Upaniṣadic and other systems of Indian thought believed on the soul (*ātman*) as permanent entity for the whole existence including human beings. Meanwhile, the Buddha, as demonstrated in the *suttas*, analysed existence from a variety of perspectives. The existence of beings were analysed into what were called mind-and-matter or mentality-materiality (*nāmarūpa*), five aggregates (*khandha*) and other definitions. The word *dhamma* carries the generic term in the method of analysis adopted in the scholastic systematisation of early Buddhism. In the context of analysis, the plural form has been widely used, *dhammā* (Skt. *dharmāḥ*). *Dhammā* in the *suttas* refer to the component element in the universe, the elements into which the whole existence can be analysed. In the contrary, the *dhammas* are units as opposed to aggregates or groups, units which refuse any further analysis.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> M Introduction, p. 24.

<sup>154</sup> See Charles Willemsen, "Dharma and Dharmas", EBB, pp. 217-224.

<sup>155</sup> Upali Karunaratne, "Dhamma (2)", EB, Vol. IV, pp. 453-469.

**“Dhamma” in the suttas.** The term *dhamma* found in the *suttas* refers to “things” which arise and vanish depending in causes. This term may be replaced by *saṅkhara* or *saṅkhata* which cover both physical and psychological phenomena. The phenomena share the common characteristics, i.e. appearance (*uppāda*), disappearance (*vaya*) and becoming (*thitassa aññathata*). In the *suttas* of Pāli canon, *dhammas* are impermanent (*anicca*), a source of misery (*dukkha*) and unsubstantial (*anatta*).<sup>156</sup>

## 4.2 The Middle Way

The Middle Way or the Middle Path (*majjhima paṭipadā*, Skt. *madhyamā pratipat*) is a genuine and simple doctrine in Buddhism. The Buddha taught his disciples and lay-followers to avoid the extremes. At his time, the Buddha criticised the two extreme lifestyles, i.e. (i) pure hedonism amounting to self-indulgence in sensual pleasures (*kāmasukhallikānuyoga*), and (ii) self-mortification in severe ascetic practices (*attakilamathānuyoga*). Both extremes did not lead to better life or final liberation. Self-indulgence is characterised as low (*hino*), vulgar (*gammo*) and desired by ordinary worldlings (*pothujjaniko*), ignoble (*anariyo*), and useless (*anattasaṃhito*). Meanwhile the Buddha avoided strict asceticism leading to self-mortification as painful (*dukkho*), ignoble (*anariyo*) and useless (*anattasaṃhito*).<sup>157</sup> Alternatively, the Buddha taught the Middle Way to his followers to avoid both eternalism and nihilism.<sup>158</sup>

The encyclopaedic entry of “Middle Way” explained this doctrine with its application in other areas:<sup>159</sup>

- a) In the **logical thinking**, the Buddha applied a Middle Way to avoid the extremes of the true and the false.

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<sup>156</sup> Karunaratne, pp. 453-469.

<sup>157</sup> Pategama Gnanarama, *Aspects of Early Buddhist Sociological Thought* (Singapore: Ti-Sarana Buddhist Assn., 1998) p. 19.

<sup>158</sup> Chandradhar Sharma, *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2003) p. 73.

<sup>159</sup> Kalupahana, pp. 366-378.

In the Indian context, as it was in the West, the true is understood as existence (*satya*) and the false meant non-existence (*asatya*). This position can be upheld only through a principle of exclusion (*apoha*); in Western word, the purity of two valued logic was preserved by the excluded middle. In Indian context, the two-valued logic contributed to four alternative that included the assertion of both and the negation of both:

1. A is B (true)
2. A is not-B (false)
3. A is both B and not-B (contradiction)
4. A is neither B and not-B (unspeakable).

The Buddha never used the term *sacca* and *asacca* at the the same time to refer to the true and the false. The Buddha invented a new dichotomy, truth (*sacca*) and confusion (*musā*), a distinction that was to eliminate the absolute dichotomy of existence and non-existence.

1. I know p (truth, *sacca*)
2. I do not know p (confusion, *musā*)
3. [It is both that] I know p and do not know p (confusion, *musā*)
4. [It is both that] I neither know p nor do not know p (sin, *kali*)

The characterisation enabled him to keep both proposition 2 and 3, open with the possibility of their becoming true. Confusion (*musā*) thus becomes a synonym for *abhūta*, 'not yet become'. This is the Middle Way between truth as existence and false as non-existence.

b) **Ethics** in ancient Indian society. The Brāhmaṇa tradition practised deontological ethics reflecting in caste system and its alienable duties (*varṇa-dharma*). The Śramaṇa tradition emphasised on utilitarian ethics by practising the utility values of life (*āśrama-dharma*). The Buddha's teaching on the Noble Eightfold Path (*aṭṭaṅgika-magga*) is a Middle Way between deontology and utilitarianism. The former calling for self-sacrifice, the latter underscoring self-aggrandisement.

c) **Nibbāna** is also a Middle Way in the Indian context. The Brāhmaṇa tradition put emphasis on the attainment of a permanent and eternal blissful state (*brahman*); the materialists denied any possibility of freedom except death; the Ajīvakas sought for freedom without human

initiative; and the Jains suggested a state of inaction leading to an end of life. Meanwhile the Buddha presented freedom as the capacity to lead a life free from ideological constraints. The Buddha taught his followers to be free from craving for sensual pleasure (*kāmatanḥā*), for becoming (*bhavatanḥā*) and for becoming something different (*vibhavatanḥā*). Nibbāna is the avoidance of suffering in the future by not becoming (*apunnabbhava*).

d) The Buddha practised the Middle Way in the *treatment of language*. The traditional *brāhmaṇical* system claimed language to have only two aspects, namely, etymology (*nirukti*) and grammar (*vyākaraṇa*), both supported strongly their philosophical thoughts, the unitary self (*ātman*) and the universal self (*brahman*). The Buddha added three more terms to refer a language: (i) ‘convention’ (*sammuti*) meaning getting together and agreeing, (ii) ‘current usage’ (*vohāra, vyavahāra*), the Buddha did not adopt an official language of the Brāhmaṇa tradition, Sanskrit, instead he recognised the validity of local dialects for propagating his doctrines, and (iii) a language of becoming (*bhava*) reflecting the Buddha’s wisdom; the Buddha refuted the language of existence (*sat*) of Brāhmaṇa tradition.

### 4.3 Bodhipakkhiyā Dhammā

The Buddha did not teach its doctrines collectively under one name since his doctrines were scattered in a vast amount of his discourses. His teachings could be categorised into seven groups consisting of the thirty-seven aids to enlightenment called *bodhipakkhiyā dhammā*. This was mentioned in two *suttas* of *Majjhima Nikāya*, *Kinti Sutta*<sup>160</sup> and *Sāmagāma Sutta*.<sup>161</sup> The thirty-seven (37) factors leading to enlightenment were:

- (i) The four foundations of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*)
- (ii) The four right of striving (*samappadhāna*)
- (iii) The four bases of spiritual power (*iddhipāda*)
- (iv) The five faculties (*indriya*)

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<sup>160</sup> M 103.3

<sup>161</sup> M 104.5

- (v) The five powers (*bala*)
- (vi) The seven enlightenment factors (*bojjhanga*)
- (vii) The Noble Eightfold Path (*ariya aṭṭhangika magga*)<sup>162</sup>

The *bodhipakkhiyā dhammā* are also found in other Buddhist traditions so that Buddhists believe that these doctrines are *buddhavacana*, the genuine teaching spoken by the Buddha.

#### 4.4 Three General Characteristics (*ti-lakkhaṇa*)

*Ti-lakkhaṇa* means the three characteristics or general characteristics (*sāmañña-lakkhaṇa*) of the universe and everything in it. Like the teaching of the Four Noble Truths, *Ti-lakkhaṇa* is the teaching peculiar to Buddhas (*buddhānaṃ sāmukkaṃsika dhamma-desanā*). *Ti-lakkhaṇa* consists of the three universal attributes, *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anattā*.<sup>163</sup>

***Anicca (impermanence)***. In *Ariyapariyesanā Sutta*, the impermanence is described by the ignoble search. Here someone being himself subject to birth seeks what is also subject to *birth*; ... and applies also to other human intrinsic nature such as *ageing, sickness, death, sorrow and defilement*.<sup>164</sup> The Buddha advised his disciples and lay-followers to apply the Dhamma in order to avoid six subjects of impermanence. In *Dīghanikaya Sutta*, the Buddha explained that the human body made of material form, consisting of the four great elements (earth, water, fire and air), procreated by a mother and father, and built up out of boiled rice and porridge, is subject to impermanence, to being worn and rubbed away, to dissolution and disintegration.<sup>165</sup>

The Buddha stated in *Cūlasaccaka Sutta* that all conditioned formations are impermanent. In a broad sense this refers that material form, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness

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<sup>162</sup> M Introduction p. 33-34

<sup>163</sup> Nyanamoli, “Anicca”, EB, Vol. I, pp. 657-663; S. K. Nanayakkara, “Dukkha”, EB, Vol. IV, pp. 696-702; G. P. Malalasekara, “Anattā”, EB, Vol. I, pp. 567-576

<sup>164</sup> M 26.5

<sup>165</sup> M 74.9

are impermanent.<sup>166</sup> The Buddha added in *Upāli Sutta* that all that is subject to arising (*samudaya*) is subject to cessation (*nirodha*).<sup>167</sup>

***Dukkha (suffering)***. The basic translation of *dukkha* (Skt. *duḥkha*) is suffering. However, *dukkha* contains deeper ideas such as ‘imperfection’, ‘impermanence’, ‘emptiness, and ‘insubstantiality’. The Buddha treated *dukkha* as the unpleasant conditions of all unenlightened beings (*anabhisambuddha*). The first part of the definition of *dukkha* in the First Noble Truth always begins with ‘birth’ (*jāti*) and ends in ‘not obtaining what one desires’ (*yaṃ pi icchaṃ na labhati taṃ*). The implication of this fact that human beings will experience *dukkha* in this world without exceptions. They have to cut of the chain of rebirths or *samsāra* in order to remove the *dukkha* completely. The short definition for the cause of *dukkha* as follows, “The five aggregates affected by clinging are suffering (*saṃkhittena pañcupādānakkhandhāpi dukkhā*).”<sup>168</sup>

***Anattā (non-self)***. *Anattā* is a third principle intrinsic to all phenomena of existence and is generally explained together with impermanence and suffering. The Buddha taught that human beings—five aggregates—cannot be identified as self or as a ground for personal identity.<sup>169</sup> Buddhism maintained that since everything is conditioned and thus subject to impermanence (*anicca*, Skt. *anitya*), the question of *ātman* as a self-subsisting entity does not arise.<sup>170</sup>

The teaching of *anattā* was in contradiction with the concept of soul in Indian society at the Buddha’s time. The old Indian religion was a kind of pantheism with Brahman (eternal, absolute) as the first cause of universe. Every human being possessed a part of Brahman, called *ātman* or ‘the little self’. Brahman and *ātman* were one, and of the same ‘substance’. The *ātman* had intrinsic nature that it was permanent, unchanging and possessed of bliss and autonomous.<sup>171</sup> From *brāhmaṇical* literature, the Chāndogya Upaniṣad stated that the *ātman* is “without decay,

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<sup>166</sup> M 35.9

<sup>167</sup> M 56.17

<sup>168</sup> M Introduction, p. 26; Nanayakkara, “Dukkha”, pp. 696-702

<sup>169</sup> M Introduction, pp. 27-28.

<sup>170</sup> K. T. S. Sarao, “Anātman/Ātman (No-self/Self)”, EBB, p. 18-19.

<sup>171</sup> Malalasekara, pp. 567-576.

death, grief”; and the Bhagavadgītā mentions the *ātman* as “eternal, unborn, undying, immutable, primordial, all-pervading”. The Brāhmaṇa tradition believed that the *ātman* could be separated from the body.<sup>172</sup>

#### 4.5 The Four Noble Truths

The Four Noble Truths (*cattari ariya saccani*)<sup>173</sup> is one of the core Buddhist teaching since it defines the universal truths of the following human existence in the world:

- The noble truth of suffering (*dukkha*, Skt. *duḥkha*)
- The noble truth of the origin of suffering (*dukkhasamudaya*, Skt. *duḥkha-samudaya*)
- The noble truth of the cessation of suffering (*dukkhanirodha*, Skt. *duḥkha-nirodha*)
- The noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering (*dukkha-nirodha-gāmini-paṭipadā*, Skt. *duḥkha-nirodha-gāminī pratipat*). To eradicate the suffering, the Buddha outlined the paths leading to final liberation called the Noble Eightfold Path.

The Buddha discovered and realised the Four Noble Truths on the night of his enlightenment. On that night, his concentrated mind was purified, he directed his true knowledge to the destruction of the taints. He directly knew as it actually was, the Four Noble Truths as stated above.<sup>174</sup>

The Buddha, as stated in *Saccavibhanga Sutta*, taught for the first time the Four Noble Truths at Benares and it is well known as an event that the Buddha turned the Wheel of the Dhamma. It was said that the Dhamma could not be stopped by any recluse or brahmin or god or Māra or Brahmā or anyone in the world.<sup>175</sup> The Four Noble Truths was a unique doctrine taught by the Buddha during 45 years of his ministry.

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<sup>172</sup> Sarao, p. 18-19.

<sup>173</sup> The word *ariyasacca* (Skt. *ārya-satya*) means Noble Truth.

<sup>174</sup> M 4.31 *Bhayabherava Sutta* and M 36.42 *Mahāsaccaka Sutta*; Sharma, pp. 71-72.

<sup>175</sup> M 141.2

The Buddha, as narrated in *Upāli Sutta*, taught the Four Noble Truths to the householder Upāli when Upāli's mind was free of hindrance and the spotless immaculate vision of the Dhamma arose in him.<sup>176</sup> To enter the noble path, the right timing of the recipients and the Four Noble Truths were required. The Buddha's main disciples fulfilled the first pre-requisites since they have little taints of their eyes and the Dhamma vision arouse in them.

#### 4.6 The Noble Eightfold Path

The fourth Noble Truth signified the importance of the Noble Eightfold Path (*ariya aṭṭhangika magga*) as the means for to eliminate craving and to bring an end to suffering. The Noble Eightfold Path consists of the teaching of:

- (i) Right view (*sammā diṭṭhi*, Skt. *samyag dṛṣṭi*)
- (ii) Right intention (*sammā sankappa*, Skt. *samyag saṅkalpa*)
- (iii) Right speech (*sammā vācā*, Skt. *samyag vāk*)
- (iv) Right action (*sammā kammanta*, Skt. *samyag karmānta*)
- (v) Right livelihood (*sammā ājīva*, Skt. *samyag ājīva*)
- (vi) Right effort (*sammā vāyāma*, Skt. *samyag vyāyāma*)
- (vii) Right mindfulness (*sammā sati*, Skt. *samyag smṛti*)
- (viii) Right concentration (*sammā samādhi*, Skt. *samyag samādhi*).<sup>177</sup>

#### 4.7 Dependent Origination

Dependent Origination or Co-arising (*paṭicca samuppāda*, Skt. *pratītyasamutpāda*) describes the twelve links of the causal wheel of dependent origination. This doctrine is also known as the law of causality or cause-and-effect. Every event in human life has a cause and creates future implications. The Buddha, in *Mahānidāna Sutta*,<sup>178</sup> stated the importance of dependent origination to his attendant disciple, Ānanda. He stressed out that dependent origination was

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<sup>176</sup> M 56.18

<sup>177</sup> M Introduction, pp. 32-33; Sharma, p. 74.

<sup>178</sup> D 15.1

profound. Human being who did not understand and penetrate this doctrine would become like a tangled ball of string, covered as with a blight, tangled like coarse grass, unable to pass beyond states of woe, the ill destiny, ruin and the round of birth-and-death. To escape from *samsāra*, human beings have to understand the Dependent Origination and to cut off the causal wheel leading to mass suffering.

The doctrine of Dependent Origination was explained in detail in *Sammādiṭṭhi Sutta*<sup>179</sup> and *Mahātaṇhāsankhaya Sutta*<sup>180</sup> and in its condensed form in *Mūlapariyāya Sutta*,<sup>181</sup> *Cūlasīhanāda Sutta*,<sup>182</sup> and *Māgandiya Sutta*.<sup>183</sup> In *Mahāhatthipadopama Sutta*,<sup>184</sup> Sāriputta said one sentence with similar analogy of the Buddha's words: "One who sees Dependent Origination sees the Dhamma and one who sees the Dhamma sees Dependent Origination." This proved that Dependent Origination was one of the main Buddha's teachings.

Buddhists believe two aspects of reality and they are the same, i.e. suffering is *samsāra* and cessation of suffering is *nirvāna*. The doctrine of Dependent Origination viewed from relativity perspective is *samsāra*, from reality perspective is *nirvāna*.<sup>185</sup>

The theory of Dependent Origination is usually divided into twelve links (*nidāna*), each of which conditions the following link. Causal wheel of dependent origination can be outlined as follows:<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> M 9.21-66

<sup>180</sup> M 38.26-40

<sup>181</sup> M 1.171

<sup>182</sup> M 11.16

<sup>183</sup> M 75.24-25

<sup>184</sup> M 28.28

<sup>185</sup> Sharma, pp. 73-74.

<sup>186</sup> Sharma, p. 74; Willemen, p. 218; Mathieu Boisvert, "Pratītyasamutpāda (Dependent Origination)", EBB, pp. 670; Kalupahana, pp. 366-378; Piyadassi Thera. "Dependent Origination (Paṭicca Samuppāda)", *Collected Wheel Publication Vol. 1* (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1998) pp. 357-391.

(i)	Ignorance	( <i>avijjā</i> , Skt. <i>avidyā</i> )	<b>PAST</b>
(ii)	Karmic activities, volitional formations	( <i>saṅkhārā</i> )	
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(iii)	Consciousness	( <i>viññāṇa</i> )	
(iv)	Mind-and-matter, mentality-materiality	( <i>nāma-rūpa</i> )	
(v)	Six sense-doors, sixfold base	( <i>saḷāyatana</i> )	
(vi)	Contact	( <i>phassa</i> )	<b>PRESENT</b>
(vii)	Sensation, feeling	( <i>vedanā</i> )	
(viii)	Craving	( <i>taṇhā</i> )	
(ix)	Attachment, clinging	( <i>upādāna</i> )	
(x)	Becoming	( <i>bhava</i> )	
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(xi)	Birth, rebirth	( <i>jāti</i> )	<b>FUTURE</b>
(xii)	Old age, death	( <i>jarāmaraṇa</i> )	

The twelve links as above are traditionally referred to as the normal order (*anuloma*) which illustrates the process of the development of *saṃsāra*. Further, the *pratīyasamutpāda* is often presented soteriologically in reverse order (*pratiloma*) which demonstrated the significant indication that once one link is eradicated, the next is also eradicated. For example, by eradicating the craving, human beings will destroy all attachment and will avoid becoming.

In *Mahātaṇhāsankhaya Sutta*<sup>187</sup> or ‘the greater discourse on the destruction of craving’, the Buddha emphasised strongly that craving was a principle cause of mass suffering, a cause that makes human beings trapped in *saṃsāra*. In this *sutta* the Buddha firstly explained the conditionality of consciousness: consciousness was dependently arisen, since without condition there was no origination of consciousness. Then the Buddha showed that there were four kinds of nutriment for the maintenance of beings and being-to-be, those were physical food, contact, mental volition and consciousness. These four nutriments had craving as their source, craving as their origin; they were born and produced from **craving**. The causal wheel continued in reverse order as: ‘craving has feeling as source; feeling has contact as source; contact has sixfold base as its source; sixfold base has mentality-materiality as its source; mentality-materiality has

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<sup>187</sup> M 38

consciousness as its source; consciousness has formations as its source; formations has ignorance as its source; ignorance as their origin; they are born and produced from *ignorance*'.

**Recapitulation on arising.** The Dependent Origination can start with the proposition 'When this exists, that comes to be; with the arising of this, that arises'. That is: with ignorance as condition, formations [come to be]; with formations as condition, consciousness; with consciousness as condition, mentality-materiality; with mentality-materiality as condition, the sixfold base; with sixfold base as condition, contact; with contact as condition, feeling; with feeling as condition, craving; craving as condition, clinging; with clinging as condition, being; with being as condition, birth; with birth as condition, ageing and death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair come to be. Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering.<sup>188</sup>

**Recapitulation on cessation.** The Dependent Origination can start with the proposition 'When this does not exist, that does not come to be; with the cessation of this, that ceases'. That is: with the cessation of ignorance comes cessation of formations; with the cessation of formations, cessation of consciousness; with the cessation of consciousness, cessation of mentality-materiality; with cessation of mentality-materiality, cessation of the sixfold base; with the cessation of the sixfold base, cessation of contact; with the cessation of contact, cessation of feeling; with the cessation of feeling, cessation of craving; with the cessation of craving, cessation of clinging; with the cessation of clinging, cessation of being; with the cessation of being, cessation of birth; with the cessation of birth, ageing and death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair cease. Such is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering.<sup>189</sup>

The Dependent Origination connects the life in the past, the present and the future. Due to ignorance in the past life, human beings are reborn at present. And due to craving in the present life, human beings will be reborn in the future based on its karma. The Buddha advised his lay-followers to eradicate *craving* in this life as a prerequisite to escape from *samsāra*, i.e. from

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<sup>188</sup> M 38.19

<sup>189</sup> M 38.22

*bhava*, *jāti* and *jarāmaṇa*. Ignorance and craving cannot be separated completely, since ignorance will lead to craving and vice versa in the causal wheel. Further, to eliminate ignorance in this life, human beings have to understand the natural process of Dependent Origination and the Four Noble Truths.

#### 4.8 Categorisation of the Buddha's teaching

Buddhism is primarily a monastic religion and encourages the ordinary householders (*gahapatis*) to renounce the mundane life and to adopt the life of a recluse, as a monk (*bhikkhu*) or a nun (*bhikkhuni*). Although householders will be experiencing worldly difficulties to attain liberation as the Buddha did, they can take refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha and became male lay-followers (*upāsakas*) or female lay-followers (*upāsikas*).<sup>190</sup> From the *sutta*-analysis, the Buddha's discourses to the lay-followers can be categorised into three: ethical, religious and secular.<sup>191</sup>

**Ethical discourses.** The lay-followers should have a simple mode of good life and conduct as outlined in *Sigālaka Sutta*.<sup>192</sup> The Buddha gave the guidance to householders according to the Ariyan discipline: (i) to abandon the four defilement of action: taking life, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct and lying speech, (ii) not to follow the six ways of wasting one's substance or wealth : addiction to strong drink and drugs, haunting the streets at unfitting times, attending fairs, being addicted to gambling, keeping bad company and having habitual idleness.

The wrong doers, as the Buddha explained in *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*,<sup>193</sup> would be reborn in unhappy states and a well-doers would be reborn in heavenly states. Bad morality person would experience five perils: he suffers great loss of property through neglecting his affairs; he gets a bad reputation for immorality and misconduct; he does so diffidently and shyly to whatever

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<sup>190</sup> Dipak Kumar Barua, *An Analytical Study of Four Nikāya* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 2010), pp.64-65.

<sup>191</sup> Barua, p. 74.

<sup>192</sup> D 31

<sup>193</sup> D 16.1.23-24

assembly he approaches; he dies confused; after death, he arises in an evil state. On the other hand, good morality person will reap benefits: he gains wealth; he gets a good reputation for morality and good conduct; he does with confidence and assurance to whatever assembly he approaches; he dies unconfused; after death, he arises in a good place, a heavenly world.

**Religious discourses.** The Buddha delivered religious discourses to the public by describing the strengths and weaknesses of living as a laity. In *Kevaddha Sutta*<sup>194</sup> the Buddha refused Kevaddha's request to teach the Dhamma by performing superhuman power. The Buddha then declared that he had realised three kinds of miracle: the miracle of psychic power (*iddhi-pāṭihāriya*), the miracle of telepathy (*ādesanā-pāṭihāriya*) and the miracle of instruction (*anusāsani-pāṭihāriya*). A monk can display various psychic powers in different ways: being one he becomes many, being many he becomes one; he can travel in the body as far as the Brahma world. By miracle of telepathy, a monk can read the minds of other beings, of other people and can also read their mental states and their thoughts. By miracle of instructions, a monk can give instructions to the laity that will lead a wonderful results in life.

In *Jivaka Sutta*<sup>195</sup> the Buddha explained Jivaka Komārabhacca that he and monks sustained themselves with permissible food in order to maintain strict precepts of not-killing living beings. Lay followers should avoid five instances of slaughtering living beings for the monks. This accrued demerit in their life: (i) if they went and fetched the living beings, (ii) the living beings experienced pain and grief on being fetched; and (iii) if they went and slaughtered the living beings, (iv) the living beings experienced pain and grief on being slaughtered, and (v) if they provided the monks with food is not permissible.

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<sup>194</sup> D 11

<sup>195</sup> D 55

In *Abhayarājajakumarā Sutta*<sup>196</sup> the Buddha told Prince Abhaya that he had never uttered the speech which was untrue, incorrect, and unbeneficial, and which was also unwelcome and disagreeable to other. The monks did take the example of him of not uttering such the speech.

The monks had understood about the absolute Dhamma, as in *Apaṇṇaka Sutta*,<sup>197</sup> they would stand against wrong views such as (i) the doctrine of nihilism, (ii) the doctrine of non-doing, (iii) the doctrine of non-causality, (iv) there are no immaterial realms, and (v) there is no cessation of beings.

***Secular discourses.*** The Buddha had experienced both householder and homelessness life. He grew up in royal families inside the imperial palaces. Based on his background, the Buddha could deliver many discourses on secular life such as social harmony, family obligation, livelihood and human relationships.

In *Sigālaka Sutta*,<sup>198</sup> the Buddha outlined on how to pay homage according to Ariyan disciplines. The *sutta* is also known as “advice to lay people” and will serve as common guides for householders. The *sutta* advises the householders to abandon four defilements of action, not to do evil from four causes, to abandon wasting one’s substance in six ways.

The householders have to refrain themselves from four defilements, i.e. taking life, stealing, lying and adultery. Evil actions came from four causes, i.e. attachment, ill-will, folly and fear. The Buddha also advised householder from six ways of wasting one’s substance: addiction to drink and drugs, haunting in the streets at unfitting times, attending fairs, being addicted to gambling, keeping bad company and being habitual idleness. The Buddha also detailed the dangers and consequences of these six ways.

The Buddha also identified true and false friends. He also gave an advice on how mutual relationships should take place between a child with the parents, pupils with their teacher,

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<sup>196</sup> M 58

<sup>197</sup> M 60

<sup>198</sup> D 31

husband with wife, masters with servants, laity with ascetics and Brahmins. The *sutta* demonstrated that the Buddha understood secular life for human relationships.

#### 4.9 Buddhist cosmology and cosmogony

*Aggañña Sutta* provides descriptive picture on how the world began and started to grow.<sup>199</sup> This *sutta* describes the Buddhist theory on cosmology and cosmogony.<sup>200</sup> In brief, the beginning of the universe based on Buddhist doctrine as follows:

“There came a time after a long period of time, this world contracted. At the time of contraction, beings were mostly born in the Ābhassara Brahmā world. After a long period of time, this world started to expand again, so beings from the Ābhassara Brahmā world passed away and were mostly reborn in this world. Here they dwelled, mind-made, feeding on delight, self-luminous, moving through the air, glorious; they stayed like this for a very long time. The world was dark, blinding dark, and had just one mass of water. After a long period of time, savoury earth spread itself over the waters where those beings were. Then some being of a **greedy** nature (*lola-jātiko*) tasted the savoury earth on its finger, it became taken with the flavour, and **craving** (*taṇhā*) arose in it. Consequently, their self-luminance disappeared, the world then re-evolved. The moon and the sun appeared, night and day were distinguished followed by its seasons.

And as they did feed the savoury earth for a very long time, their bodies became coarser, and a difference in looks developed among them. Some became good-looking, others ugly, then the good-looking ones despised the other. Because of their arrogance, the savoury earth disappeared. A fungus cropped up, in the manner of a mushroom, and it was a good colour, smell and taste. They ate the fungus. Their bodies became still coarser. After the sweet fungus disappeared, creeper (*badālatā*) appeared. After the creeper disappeared, the rice appeared in open space. And what they had taken in the evening for supper had grown again and was ripe in the morning. Their bodies became coarser and the difference in their looks became greater. Females developed female sex-organs and male developed male sex-organs. The passion therefore aroused and they indulged in sexual activity in open space. Since village and town did not allow them for having sexual activity in open space, they started to build themselves the dwellings so as to indulge under cover.

Some beings were lazy and greedy on the rice consumption, they took and stored the rice more than they needed. Then rice did not grow after it was reaped, it grew in separate clusters. Disharmonious relationships began, the evil things arose: taking what was not given, censuring, lying and punishment.

Then some being had an idea to choose one leader who could restore and maintain the harmonious order. They granted a share of rice for this role. The first leader was called Mahā-

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<sup>199</sup> See D 27

<sup>200</sup> Cosmology: the scientific study of the universe and its origin and development; Cosmogony: the part of science that deals with how the universe and solar system began (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary).

Sammata or “The People’s Choice”. This was the first regular title introduced in the society. Other titles followed based on what people did in the society: *Khattiya* “Lord Of The Fields”, *Rājā* “He Gladdens Others With Dhamma”, *Brahmin* “They Put Aside Evil and Unwholesome Things”, *Jhāyaka* “They Meditate”, *Ajhāyaka* “Now These Do Not Meditate”, *Vessa* “Various”, *Sudda* “They Are Base Who Live By The Chase”.

In *Aggañña Sutta* the Buddha mentioned that the class of ascetics came into existence from these four classes, *Khattiya*, *Brahmin*, *Vessa* and *Sudda*. The rise and the downfall of people did not depend on the class they belonged to, but depended on what they had done or *karma*. In Buddhism, the origin of stratification in the society was different from the theory of caste in India. The Buddha explained the reason why the people lived in misery and pain was due to craving and greediness.

There is no doubt that the Buddha, as in *Aggañña Sutta*, narrated the genesis of the universe as a way to correct wrong view held by Indian society and to refute the view that the world was a creation of God-Creator or Brahmā. Metaphysically, the theory of God-Creator implied, for the Buddha, that all pain in the world was caused by the God-Creator, who then had to be logically the Evil One.<sup>201</sup>

The Buddha refuted to answer the four first of the ten speculative questions (*avyākata*) relating to the phenomenal world: (i) *sassato loko* (the world is eternal), (ii) *asassato loko* (the world is not eternal), (iii) *antavā loko* (the world is finite), and (iv) *anantavā loko* (the world is infinite). The Buddha taught that the world (*loka*) was transient and impermanent. In *Aggañña Sutta*, the world was formed as the result of a process of evolution. The duration of single evolutionary process is an aeon or a world cycle, *kappa* (Skt. *kalpa*), and is divided into four: a dissolving phase (*saṃvaṭṭa kappa*), a static phase after dissolution before the beginning of the next evolving phase (*saṃvaṭṭo tiṭṭahati*). The social anthropologists believed that the evolution of human society as depicted in *Aggañña Sutta* is more scientific and supported by the modern

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<sup>201</sup> Bandula Jayawardhana, “Creation, Theory of”, EB, Vol. IV, pp. 262-263.

knowledge and factual evidence compared to the cosmological views held by the Jains and Brāhmaṇa tradition. The *Aggañña Sutta* provided the description of the evolution of human society because of the degradation of human desires, needs and surrounding. It also portrayed the evolution of human beings from the pre-food-gathering phase to the next food-gathering phase to the next food-producing phase with the evolution of corresponding social institution.<sup>202</sup>

In *Cakkavattisīhanāda Sutta*,<sup>203</sup> the decline and near total loss of social harmony was due to the gradual deterioration of moral standards in the world. Then it will be followed by gradual improvement of human beings bring in more harmonious social conditions.<sup>204</sup>

In *Kevaddha Sutta*,<sup>205</sup> the Buddha criticised the views of a God-Creator. In this *sutta*, a monk went from the lowest to the highest of (Buddhist) heaven, seeking an explanation for the question on where the four elements ceased, and finally met the Brahmā who unfortunately could not answer the question due to his own ignorance. In this *sutta*, the Buddha refuted the omniscience of Brahmā and the doctrine of creation belonged to the *Brāhmaṇa*.<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> M. M. J. Marasinghe, “Loka”, EB, Vol. VI, pp. 340-345.

<sup>203</sup> D 26

<sup>204</sup> Marasinghe, pp. 340-345.

<sup>205</sup> D 11

<sup>206</sup> Jayawardhana, pp. 262-263.

## Ch. 5: Buddhism and Politics

Buddhism is well known as a religion of compassion. The lay followers practise the Buddha's teaching as a means of attaining ultimate liberation, called as *nibbāna*. The Pāli canon, however, contain various teaching from human relationships into politics. The Buddha, was a prince with royal power, delivered certain sermons and advices to royal families on how to conduct good government.

### 5.1 Political Geography

The Pāli canon mentions many uncommon names describing the places at the Buddha's time. The names refer to the factual locations and not fictional names. Many scholars attempted to make relationships between the locations mentioned in the canon with the modern locations. The canon is different from ancient Indian literature which told the story with mythical names and locations.

*The canon should be free from any fictional or mythical concepts.*

In the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE India was divided into a large number of independent states known as *janapadas* or *mahājanapadas*. The Buddhist, Jaina and epic sources have the records of the sixteen great countries (*ṣoḍaśa mahājanapada*). They were Aṅga, Magadha, Kāśī, Kosala, Vṛji, Malla, Ceḍi, Vatsa, Kuru, Pañcāla, Matsya, Śūrasena, Aśmaka, Avanti, Gandhāra and Kamboja.<sup>207</sup> The list of these countries, its main towns and the locations in modern India can be found at Appendix-B.

These sixteen countries were inhabited by population of autochthonous origin and still not completely brahmanised. Among all these countries, the Buddhists distinguished between two kinds of territories: the Middle Region (*madhyadeśa*) where the Buddhist discipline was rigorously applied, and the Frontier Regions (*pratyantajanapada*) which benefited from some indulgence. The Middle Region consisted of 14 *mahājanapada* measuring 300 leagues in length, according to the ancient estimates, 250 in width and 900 in perimeter. They were occupied by

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<sup>207</sup> Kanai Lal Hazra, *The Rise and Decline of Buddhism in India* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1995), p. 3; Lamotte, p. 7-8; T. W. Rhys Davids, *Early Buddhism* (Delhi: Bharatiya, 1976), pp. 23-29

noble persons including the Buddha who willingly chose it as their cradle. It included seven principal towns: Śrāvastī, Sāketa, Campā, Vārāṇasī, Vaiśālī, Rājagṛha and Kauśāmbī.<sup>208</sup>

***The Janavasabha Sutta and Mahāgovinda Sutta mention about independent states at the time of the Buddha.*** The *Janavasabha Sutta* mentions ten countries in pairs. The *sutta* describes that once the Buddha was staying at Nādikā at the Brick House, he explained the rebirths of various devotees up and down the country who had died and passed away: Kāsis and Kosalans, Vajjians and Mallas, Cedis and Vamsas, Kurus and Pañcālas, Macchas and Sūrasenas.<sup>209</sup> The *sutta* gives a list of the *janapadas* in pairs: Kāśī-Kosalā, Vṛjī-Malla, Ceti-Vamśa, Kuru-Pañcala and Maccha-Śūrasena.<sup>210</sup>

The *Mahāgovinda Sutta* tells about a past life of Gotama as a Great Steward who conducted the affairs of seven kings and then retired into the homeless life. The seven Bhārat kings were Sattabhū, Brahmadata, Vessabhū and Bharata, Reṇu and two Dhataratthas. The Great Steward advised the country be divided into seven: Dantapura to the Kālingas, Potaka to the Assakas, Mahissati to the Avantis, Roruka to the Sovīras, Mithilā to the Videhas, Campā to the Angas, and Benares to the Kāśī.<sup>211</sup> The *sutta* describes that ancient India was divided into seven dominions (*Satta Bhārata*), they were Kāliṅga (Dantapura as its capital), Assaka (Potana), Avantī (Mahissati), Sovīra (Roruka), Videha (Mithilā), Aṅga (Campā) and Kāśī (Vārāṇasī).<sup>212</sup>

***The Republican States and the Four Kingdoms.*** At the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century BCE, part of the population which inhabited the sixteen regions was organised into republics (*gaga*): they had no monarchs and the affairs of the state were settled by a council of elders and popular assemblies.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>208</sup> Lamotte, pp. 8-9

<sup>209</sup> D 18.1

<sup>210</sup> Hazra, *Rise*, p. 3

<sup>211</sup> D 19.36

<sup>212</sup> Hazra, *Rise*, p. 4

<sup>213</sup> Lamotte, p. 10

The republic of the Vrijis (Vajjis), built on the ruins of the ancient kingdom of Videha, consisted of a confederacy of eight clans. The principal clans were the Licchavis and the Videhas. A wise administration had made it a happy and prosperous state. It also fulfilled the conditions of progress defined by the Buddha, and the latter drew his inspiration from it in the organisation of his order.<sup>214</sup> The Ugras along with the Bhogas, Aikṣvākas and Kauravas were associated with the Jñātr̥s and Licchavis as subjects of the ruler of Vajji and members of the Vajjian clan.<sup>215</sup> The confederacy of eight clans consisted of the following clans: Licchavi, Videha, Moriyā, Ugra, Bhoga, Aikṣvāka, Kaurava and Jñātr̥s. They were called as Vajjian clans or known as Vajjis.

In *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*, King Ajātasattu of Magadha planned to attack the Vajjians and sent a messenger to ask the advice of the Buddha. The Buddha said that the Vajjians would never be conquered by King Ajātasattu by force of arms but only by means of propaganda and setting them against one another. In brief the Buddha taught the people on how to carry on the good government by regular assemblies, living in harmony, practising good act of ancient tradition, protecting women (the weaker), honouring the elders and the places for worship, and welcoming the wise to come, live and teach *dhamma*.<sup>216</sup>

At the same period, four great kingdoms, which never ceased growing to the detriment of the neighbouring republics, were preparing to face each other before being united by the most powerful among them. These were kingdoms of Avanti, Vatsa, Kosala and Magadha.<sup>217</sup>

***The unification and centralisation of power of the expanding empires required the people with commercial sense.*** In the early historical India around 7<sup>th</sup> century BCE, the 16 small states in Ganges Valley were reduced into four within period of 150 years. Then over the period of 550-350 BCE, the Magadhan empire emerged as a dominating power in Indian continent a result of unification and consolidation these four kingdoms under the famous rulers, Bimbisara and

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<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> B. C. Law, "Some Ancient Indian Tribes." *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute* 22 1/2 (1941) p. 96

<sup>216</sup> D 16.1.4-5

<sup>217</sup> Lamotte, p. 10

Ajatasatru. From the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE, the commercial trade started to flourish from the Magadhan capital at Rajagṛha. The city was well-known to have 36,000 merchants, half of them belonged to Buddhists, the other half to Jains who were skilled in business activities such as banking. The Bimbisara dynasty lasted for 200 years (ca. 550-350 BCE). The capital city moved to Pataliputra in 457 BCE. By the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE, the accepted metal currency was introduced to cope with the growing exchange of goods although the barter system was still in place.<sup>218</sup>

## 5.2 Early Buddhist Kingship

Buddhism played a significant role in sharpening Indian way of life in ancient time. Many people sought liberation and refuge under the Buddha. Since monarchy was the dominant political institution of the Buddha's time, there was the main reason that in many *suttas* the Buddha met and advised the royal families and the nobles. The Buddha played an important role as an adviser since many kings and royal families visited him to consult the royal affairs, i.e. political matters.

The early Buddhist philosophy of kingship is a compound of three distinct attitudes: (i) kingship possessed its overwhelming power to bring society into destruction, (ii) kingship as an institution was considered absolutely essential to orderly human life, and (iii) although the first king was elected on the basis of a specific agreement, its image changed in the course of time—the power of kingship rested on the possession of certain tangibles and intangibles. The king possessed a full treasury (*paripuṇṇakoṭṭhāgāra*) and large, strong and well-equipped army. He controlled over territory comprising of the capital (*rājadhani*), towns (*nigama*), villages (*gāma*), countryside (*janapada*) and border areas (*paccanta*). The king had the right to tax the people under his territory. His army was generally described as four-fold (*caturangiṇī*) consisting of the elephant corps, cavalry, the chariot corps and infantry.<sup>219</sup>

The theories of Buddhist kingship, or its reformulation on political matters, may be found in two *suttas* of *Dīgha Nikāya*: *Cakkavatti-Sīhanāda Sutta* and *Aggañña Sutta*.

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<sup>218</sup> Jean C. Darian, "Social and Economic Factors in the Rise of Buddhism" *Sociological Analysis* 38.3 (1977) p. 227-228

<sup>219</sup> Balkrishna G. Gokhale, "Early Buddhist Kingship" *The Journal of Asian Studies* 26.1 (1966) pp.15-17

The Buddha explained the ideal government in *Cakkavatti-Sīhanāda Sutta* or “The Lion’s Roar on the Turning of the Wheel”.<sup>220</sup> He told the story of a wheel-turning monarch named Dalhanemi who possessed the seven treasures: the Wheel Treasure, the Elephant Treasure, the Horse Treasure, the Jewel Treasure, the Woman Treasure, the Householder Treasure and the Counsellor Treasure. He dwelled having conquered the vast amount of land without stick or sword, but by the law.<sup>221</sup> When the Wheel-Treasure slipped from its position, he handed over his kingdom to his son and he went forth from the household life into homelessness. When the king did not rule according to the Dharma, the Wheel Treasure would disappear. This event indicates that the Wheel Treasure is not inherited from the previous ruler but it exists naturally when the king rules and administers his kingdom by the law or the Dhamma.

The interpretation of Wheel Treasure in relationship with people and ruler:<sup>222</sup>

- (a) The celestial wheel is the symbol of public opinion and people’s will.
- (b) When the government or the ruling party disregard or stay away from public opinion and people’s will, the will automatically moves away—thus symbolising the absence of people’s support for government.
- (c) The government or the ruler was able to make honoured exit when the people did not support them anymore.

The *sutta* provides the detailed duty of an Ariyan wheel-turning monarch that the ruler or the king (i) to depend himself on the Dhamma, (ii) to establish guard, ward and protection according to Dhamma for his own household, troops, nobles and vassals, for Brahmins and householders, town and country folk, ascetics and Brahmins, for beasts and birds, (iii) not to let crime prevail in his

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<sup>220</sup> See D 26

<sup>221</sup> See CSCD: Dalhanemicakkavattirājā .... *Bhūtapubbaṃ, bhikkhave, rājā dalhanemi nāma ahosi cakkavattī dhammiko dhammarājā caturanto vijitāvī janapadatthāvariappatto sattaratanasamannāgato. Tassimāni satta ratanāni ahesuṃ seyyathidaṃ – cakkaratanaṃ hatthiratanam assaratanaṃ maṇiratanam itthiratanam gahapatiratanam pariṇāyakaratanameva sattamaṃ. Parosahassaṃ kho panassa puttā ahesuṃ sūrā vīraṅgarūpā parasenappamaddanā. So imaṃ pathaviṃ sāgarapariyantam adaṇḍena asatthena dhammena abhivijīya ajjhāvasi.*”

<sup>222</sup> Nandasena Ratnapala, *Buddhist Sociology* (Delhi: Sri Satguru, 1993), pp. 75-76.

kingdom, and (iv) to consult regularly with ascetics and Brahmins as to what is wholesome and unwholesome; also what is blameworthy and blameless.

In *Aggañña Sutta* or “On Knowledge of Beginnings”, the Buddha outlined the birth of the first ruler, *mahasammata* or “acclaimed by the many”. The *sutta* explains in detail that the origin of the earth and human beings was caused by cravings. The Great Elected King needed to be appointed to rule the monarch in order to stabilise the orders between the good and evil doers. In return of his labors toward the establishment of law and order, justice and harmony, the king was paid *one-sixth* of the produce of each of the subjects.<sup>223</sup> The *sutta* refers implicitly on what is call the taxation in modern society. Taxation is required by the ruler to administer its government and to maintain stabilisation in the society. The figure of *one-sixth* or 17% for the taxation seems to be relevant in modern society although some countries apply progressive taxation scheme.

***King Aśoka as a good example of ideal Buddhist Kingship.*** Historian agreed that Aśoka changed and converted himself into Buddhist after he had conquered the country of Kalinga, eight year after coronation. One hundred and fifty thousands men and animals were carried away captive from that country; as many as one hundred thousands were killed there in action and many times that number perished.<sup>224</sup>

Most of all Aśoka’s inscriptions are about Dhamma especially Major Rock Edicts and Pillar Edicts. Aśoka declared to support all religions under his empire. Gombrich and Thapar noted Aśoka’s acts were in harmony with the Dhamma:<sup>225</sup>

- 1) He dedicated caves to non-Buddhist ascetics. Brahmins and renouncers (*śramaṇa*) deserved respects. Tolerance of all sects (Rock Edicts 6, 7, 12).
- 2) He abolished the death penalty.

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<sup>223</sup> See D 27; Gokhale, p. 16.

<sup>224</sup> Ananda W. P. Guruge, “Emperor Asoka and Buddhism: Unresolved Discrepancies between Buddhist Tradition and Asokan Inscriptions” in *King Asoka and Buddhism: Historical and Literary Studies*, Ed. Seneviratna (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1994), pp. 27-28.

<sup>225</sup> Richard Gombrich, “Asoka - the Great Upasaka” in *King Asoka and Buddhism: Historical and Literary Studies*, Ed. Seneviratna (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1994), pp. 1-10; Romila Thapar, “Asoka and Buddhism” *Past and Present* 18 (1960) pp. 43-51.

- 3) He declared many animal species as protected species.
- 4) Fewer animals were killed for royal kitchen, only two peacocks and a deer per day.
- 5) He had wells dug and shade trees planted along the roads for the use of men and beasts, and medicinal; plants grown for both as well.
- 6) He ordered to exempt the village from *bali*, the land tax. However he did not free all taxes as he needed money to run the government.
- 7) Those who observe the precepts of Dhamma are said to be people of few faults, many good deeds, mercy, charity, truth and purity (Pillar Edicts 2, 7).
- 8) The behaviours required of those who observe the Dhamma, consist of obedience to parents, elders and teachers; concern for friends and relatives; gifts to brahmins and *śramaṇa*; abstention from killing; good treatment toward slaves, servants and the poor; and moderation in attachment to possession (Rock Edicts 3, 9, 1).
- 9) His negative attitudes to rituals, ceremonies and assemblies (Rock Edicts 1, 9). Behaviour in accordance with Dhamma was preferable to the performance of ceremonies.

The ideal of good government has been comprehensively demonstrated by king Aśoka and this evidence has also highlighted that the Buddha's teachings are internalised not only into personal life but also into public sphere in politics and government.

### **5.3 The Buddha's attitude on wars**

Even though the Buddha was a wandering ascetic living outside the normal social and political atmosphere of his times, he did come into touch from time to time with contemporary political events such as wars and conflicts. According to an account recorded in *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*, king Ajātasattu of Māgadha sent a royal minister named Vassakarā to meet and inform the Buddha about the king's plan to subdue the Vajjīs. After hearing Vassakarā, the Buddha spoke on

seven conditions of welfare (*satta aparihāniyā dhammā*), which would ensure the prosperity of the Vajjīs as long as its citizens observed them.<sup>226</sup>

The Vajjians practised seven principles for preventing decline and making a prosperous state: (i) They held regular and frequent assemblies; (ii) They met in harmony, broke up in harmony and carried on their business in harmony; (iii) They proceeded according to what had been authorised by their ancient tradition; (iv) They honoured, respected, revered and saluted the elders among them and considered them worth listening to; (v) They protected women by means of not forcibly abducting others' wives and daughters and compelling them to live with them; (vi) They honoured and supported the Vajjians shrines at home and abroad; and (vii) Proper provision was made for the safety of arahants to come in the future to live there and those already there might dwell in comfort.<sup>227</sup>

The *sutta* shows the Buddha acting in accord with the traditional view that ***he did not justify violence in any context***. King Ajātasattu chose to consult the Buddha because he probably believed that he could use to his advantage whatever the Buddha said. His instruction to Vassakarā was: “And whatever the Lord declares to you, report that faithfully back to me, for Tathāgatas never lie.”<sup>228</sup>

Other translation, as cited by Ven. Pandita, stated: “And bear carefully in mind whatever the Blessed One may predict, and repeat it to me. For the Buddhas speak nothing untrue!” “*Buddhas speak nothing untrue!*” can mean either that they do not deliberately tell lies or whatever they state is factually true and accordingly reliable.<sup>229</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> Pandita, “The Buddha and the Māgadha-Vajjī War” *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 11 (2011) pp. 125-126.

<sup>227</sup> D 1.1, 1.4 and 1.5.

<sup>228</sup> D 16.1.2

<sup>229</sup> Pandita, p. 129.

#### 5.4 Social economic factors in the rise of Buddhism

In the period of 7<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE, India experienced the rapid change in politics and philosophical life. The unification and consolidation of smaller tribal states into greater empire caused the collapse of existing social structure favouring to *status quo*, the *brāhmaṇical* social structure. Further, the struggle in the Buddha's time was a contest in economic power, political craft and administrative efficiency, in which the Brāhmaṇa tradition had little to offer either to the ruler or to the people. Both its ritual and its philosophy seemed irrelevant.<sup>230</sup>

*The political and economic needs of the rulers.* The rulers of the expanding empire required greater political and economic needs to hold the governmental matters. The empire required large revenues to support their military, public, works and administrative expenses. Consequently, they introduced the policies to prevent the accumulation of wealth and power in the hands of potentially rival group. They initiated to free various social and economic resources from control by traditional status groups, especially the *brāhmaṇas* and *kṣatriya* upper class—who owned a greater portion of land but did not pay taxes.<sup>231</sup>

*The Buddhists and Vaiśyas were in favour of the expanding empire.* The kings of expanding empire were interested in Buddhism since this religion recognised two classes only, the monkhood and the laity. Buddhism offered no class to compete for power. The monks and nuns renounced the world, while the laity had no claims to spiritual authority. On the other hand, the *brāhmaṇas*, the priestly caste,—who claimed as the highest caste did not renounce the householder life, accumulated the wealth and claimed spiritual authority—threatened the development of market-type economy since they discouraged the mercantile or trade activities, promoted costly sacrifices and were not productive workers. The facts demonstrated that the Buddhists and the *Vaiśyas* did not carry the *brāhmaṇical* ideas of ritual pollution that condemned certain mercantile activities as impure.

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<sup>230</sup> Warder, *Indian*, p. 28.

<sup>231</sup> Darian, pp. 229-230

The expanding empire required many workers with specialisation to grow together to build the strong societal infrastructure. The *Vaiśyas*, as the merchant class, gained in political and economic power. Previously the *Vaiśyas* were treated as lower caste and had the duties to serve higher caste, i.e. the *Brāhmaṇas* and the *Kṣatriyas*. They were recruited by the *Brāhmaṇas* to do the farming and cattle-rising. However, the growing empire recognised the *Vaiśyas*' skills through the guilds and merchant association including craft and vocational organisation. The *Vaiśyas* were viewed as ones who succeeded without the sanction of religious-traditional values. The *Brāhmaṇas* were left behind the growth of the empire since they contributed very little to an urban-oriented, market-type economy which put emphasises on achieved rather than ascribed values.<sup>232</sup>

***Buddhism, Jainism and Ajivakas were well prepared to the needs of growing states.*** India continent experienced political evolution around 7<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE. At this period, the local and tribal autonomy started to disappear and the centralisation of power in large autocratic states emerged and reached the culmination in the Mauryan Empire. The large centralised autocratic states did not favour local and individual freedom as practised in the primitive democracy tribes, confederacies and city states in ancient India. In term of actions, religious aspirations practised by individuals or groups were ineffective in the rapidly growing empires.<sup>233</sup>

There was no evidence that any organised school, based on an agreed canon of doctrine and discipline and having centres in various parts of the country, existed before the time of Makkhali Gosāla, Mahāvīra and the Buddha. In the early history of India, *śramaṇa* movement was represented by ascetics or wanderers, known as *Ājīvakas*—those who had chosen the way of life, the *ājīva*, different from normal householder life. The great social changes during the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE in Indian continents whereas the centralised autocratic states emerged to power. The *śramaṇic* followers had to convince the kings of the newly centralised states that the *śramaṇas* were useful for their government. Makkhali Gosāla was one of religious leader of the unification

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<sup>232</sup> Darian, pp. 231-234

<sup>233</sup> Warder, "Relationships", pp. 43-46.

of all wanderers, the Ājīvakas, into single organisation and he compiled the Ājīvaka Canon in consultation with the 'Six Disācaras'. Mahāvīra united and led the Jains and compiled the canon called Pūrvas, and the Buddha established the monastic institution and preached the Dharma.<sup>234</sup> The *Brāhmaṇas* who insisted the existence of their inherited status and power were unable to cope with the needs of the growing states. The *śramaṇa* movement was well accepted and gained better places in the newly centralised states.

**Occupation in the suttas.** At the time of the Buddha, King Ajātasattu mentioned a number of occupations or various craftsmen employed in order to administer and protect his monarch. These are: (i) elephant-riders, (ii) horse-drivers or cavalry, (iii) chariot fighters or charioteers, (iv) archers, (v-xiii) nine different grades of army folk: standard-bearers, adjutants, army caterers, champions and senior officers, scouts, heroes, brave fighters, cuirassiers, (xiv) slaves, (xv) cooks, (xvi) barbers, (xvii) bath-attendants or bathmen, (xviii) confectioners or bakers, (xix) garland-makers, (xx) washermen or bleachers, (xxi) weavers, (xxii) basket-makers, (xxiii) potters, (xxiv) clerks or calculators, and (xxv) accountants.<sup>235</sup> The fact illustrated that ancient India had recognised certain skills that suited the needs of government. These craftsmen looked common in the monarchical institution based on the agriculture. The growing states required many skilled persons to run the government in which the Brāhmaṇa tradition could not offer better solution than the Śramaṇa tradition.

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<sup>234</sup> Warder, "Relationships", pp. 46-48.

<sup>235</sup> D 2.14; Davids, p. 88.

## Ch. 6: Conclusion

The paper attempts to demonstrate whether the *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya* can be used as valid sources to reconstruct the biography of the Buddha, his teaching and the social history of ancient India during 7<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE. Although only two of five *Nikāyas* from Pāli canon were used for this study, the research proved that the social structure of ancient India, early Buddhism, the Buddha's life and his peculiar teachings are able to be well reconstructed into a meaningful understanding and interpretation.

The biography of the historical Buddha can be reconstructed from various *suttas* in *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya*. In *Mahâpadâna Sutta* and *Acchariya-abhuta Sutta*, the complete stories of the Buddha's birth are told. His youth, renunciation and search of enlightenment are described in various *suttas* in *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya*. The *Mahaparinibbâna Sutta* provides the last days of the Buddha and outlines the concise doctrines he taught during his 45 years of ministry.

Buddhism started to flourish in India around 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE. There were religious and non-religious factors affecting the acceptance of Buddhism in Indian society. The rise of heterodox system as an opposing philosophical thinking against orthodox systems provided clear indications that Indian society started to question the *status quo* of Brâhmana tradition and *brâhmaṇa* supremacy over other caste. The new movement in heterodox system, called Śramaṇa tradition, grew up and attracted many followers. Schools under Śramaṇa tradition were characterised by the state of homelessness or renunciation of householder life and each school held its own doctrinal teachings which were different one to another. The practice of asceticism both in Brâhmana and Śramaṇa traditions dominated the ways of life in ancient India.

The Buddha and his followers belonged to Śramaṇa tradition and propagated the unique doctrines to Indian society. The Buddha started his great contemplation by recognising the general attributes of everything in *Ti-lakkhaṇa*, those are impermanence, suffering and non-self. He suggested his followers to practise the Middle Way as a path of avoiding two extremes in life. He

outlined the Four Noble Truths and the Dependent Origination as a way to escape from *saṃsāra*. The Noble Eightfold Path served as a simple means to eliminate craving and ignorance in this life. The universal Law of Karma and the *Bodhipakkhiyā Dhammā* supported other Buddha's teaching leading to human liberation and enlightenment.

The *Dīgha Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya* contain many discourses where the Buddha criticised the Brāhmaṇa tradition on the caste supremacy of the *brāhmaṇas*. The Brāhmaṇa tradition is well described in Brāhmaṇavagga, the Śramaṇa tradition is well explained in Paribbājakavagga of *Majjhima Nikāya*. The *brāhmaṇas* were proud of being praised to have noble lineages back to seven generations, skilled in Three Vedas, enjoyed material wealth and respected by many. The Buddha criticised them by demonstrating that he possessed threefold true knowledge which were nobler than the *brāhmaṇas* had, i.e. he was able to see his former life; he was able the mechanics of the law of karma, how and where human beings were born and reborn; he realised himself with direct knowledge the destruction of four *āsavas* (sensuality, the desire to be something, wrong views and spiritual blindness) which bind human beings to *saṃsāra*. As a counter attack on the *brāhmaṇa's* claim on pure descent, Buddha Gotama was able to recollect his former lives as Buddhas, seven generation back. Further, the Buddha established new social order in ancient India, called *catuparisa*, consisting of monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen. The new social order was a strong response to the existing caste system with *Brāhmaṇas* as the highest caste in society.

The Buddha also criticised the six contemporaries, heterodox teachers, on their teachings which undermined the law of karma and the goals of holy life. The compilation of both various *suttas* and historical evidence gave clearer pictures of these six heterodox teachers at the time of the Buddha. Pūraṇa Kassapa was amoralist since he denied the law of karma and taught the doctrine of inaction. Makkhali Gosāla taught the doctrine of non-conditionality and fatalism since human beings were destined by fate and had no free-will in *saṃsāra*. Ajīta Kesakambalī held the doctrines of materialism and annihilationism which refuted the existence of afterlife and karmic retribution. Pakudha Kaccāyana was determinist and repudiated the basic principle of morality.

Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta was a skeptic and refused to take a stand on moral and philosophical issues. Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta taught a doctrine that eternal nomadic souls trapped in the bodies were to be liberated by exhausting its karmic bond through the practice of severe self-mortification.

The Buddha also outlined disciplinary rules to the monks that can be found in various *suttas*. These *suttas* showed the guidance to the monks both implicitly and explicitly on how to run monastic institutions if the disagreement and the dissensions would take place in the future.

At the time of the Buddha, there were sixteen (16) tribal states in ancient India where Brāhmanism was prevalent and influential. These tribal states were governed by a council of elders and popular assemblies. The Buddha lived in the areas where Brāhmanism was not very influential. The tribal states commenced to unify to become greater empires; those were Avanti, Vatsa, Kosala and Magadha. The rise of Buddhism in Indian continent was empowered by the growing of greater empire due to its unifications or annexation of smaller states. The needs of growing empire did not favour the Brāhmaṇa tradition that emphasised its power and caste supremacy. The *brāhmaṇical* caste systems did not accommodate the needs of growing empire. They required more resources to run its government in both political and commercial affairs. The Brāhmaṇa traditions were left behind due its resistance to change. The status of *brāhmaṇa* was alienated since they contributed very little to the government affairs. The class of merchants and workers (*vaiśya* and *śūdra*) experienced significant change in hierarchical status since their skills were fully utilised to contribute the empire growth in urban-oriented and market-type economy.

Buddhism, Jainism and Ajivakas were well prepared to the needs of greater empire. These schools shared similar characteristics that they were not involved in state affairs. They built religious institutions at various places and compiled its canons. However, the schools competed for obtaining higher government support and attracting more lay-supporters.

Buddhist lay-followers learn the *suttas* by reading and interpreting directly from the Pāli canon in isolation and they concentrate on doctrinal teaching only. However, there will be alternative approach of *sutta* studies, lay-followers learn the social history of the Buddha's time

including the ancient Indian philosophical thoughts and social culture *before* they learn doctrinal teaching from various *suttas*. The understanding of social history and structure of ancient India at the Buddha's time will provide greater benefits of *sutta* studies. Lay-followers and monastic members will have better and deeper understanding on Buddha's teaching since they can relate the *suttas* with relevant social issues and problems at the time of the Buddha and make interrelationships between the issues and the problems in the past and at present.

The reconstruction of Buddha's time social history and culture can be expanded further by using five *Nikāyas* in the Pāli canon and supported by other written sources preserved in classical Buddhist languages such as in Sanskrit, Tibetan and Chinese. The comprehensive research is required for reconstructing better and clearer pictures on how the Buddha, his teachings and its monastic institution flourished and sharpened the philosophical thoughts and ways of life in ancient India.

## Appendices

### Appendix-1: The lineages of the Buddhas

Sources: *Mahâpadâna Sutta (Dîgha Nikâya 14)*

	Vipassî	Sikhî	Vessabhû	Kakusandha	Konâgamana	Kassapa	Gotama
<b>Time</b>	91 aeons ago	31 aeons ago	31 aeons ago	This aeon	This aeon	This aeon	This aeon
<b>Race</b>	Khattiya	Khattiya	Khattiya	Brahmin	Brahmin	Brahmin	Khattiya
<b>Clan</b>	Kondañña	Kondañña	Kondañña	Kassapa	Kassapa	Kassapa	Gotama
<b>Life-span</b>	80,000 years	70,000 years	60,000 years	40,000 years	30,000 years	20,000 years	100 years
<b>Enlightenment</b>	At the foot of a trumpet-flower tree	Under a white mango tree	Under a sâl-tree	Under acacia-tree	Under fig-tree	Under a banyan-tree	At the foot of an assatha-tree
<b>Noble disciples</b>	Khaṇḍa and Tissa	Abhibhû and Sambhava	Soṇa and Uttara	Vidhûra and Sañjîva	Bhiyyosa and Uttara	Tissa and Bhâradvâja	Sâriputta and Moggallâna
<b>Assembly of disciples (Arahants)</b>	Three: one of 6,800,000; one of 100,000 and one of 80,000	Three: one of 100,000; one of 80,000; one of 70,000	Three: one of 80,000; one of 70,000; one of 60,000	One of 40,000	One of 30,000	One of 20,000	One of 1,250
<b>Personal attendant</b>	Asoka	Khemankara	Upasannaka	Vuḍḍhija	Sotthija	Sabbamitta	Ānanda
<b>Parent</b>	King Bandhumâ and Queen Bandhumatî	King Aruṇa and Queen Pabhâvati	King Suppatita and Queen Yasavatî	Brahmin Aggidatta and Brahmin lady Visâkhâ	Brahmin Yaññadatta and Brahmin lady Uttarâ	Brahmin Brahmadatta and Brahmin lady Dhavatî	King Suddhodhana and Queen Mâyâ
<b>Royal capital</b>	Bandhumatî	Aruṇavatî	Anopama	The king was Khema, its capital was Khemavatî	The king was Sobha, its capital Sobhavatî.	The king was Kikî, its capital was Vârâṇasi	Kapilavatthu

## Appendix-2: Sixteen Great Countries (*ṣoḍaśa mahājanapada*)

Sources: Etienne Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism: From the Origins to the Saka Era*; Kanai Lal Hazra, *The Rise and Decline of Buddhism in India*; T.W. Rhys Davids, *Early Buddhism*

	Janapada	Modern districts	Towns
1	Aṅga	Bengal	Campā (Bhagalpur) Bhaddiya Assapura
2	Magadha	Southern Bihār	Rājagṛha or Girivraja (Rajgir) Pāṭaliputra (Patna)
3	Kāśī	Banaras / Vārāṇasī	Vārāṇasī (Banaras)
4	Kosala	Oudh	Śrāvasti (Sāheth-Māheth) Sāketa (Ayodhyā)
5	Vṛjī	Northern Bihār	Vaiśālī (Besarh) of the Licchavis Mithilā (Janakpur) of the Videhas
6	Malla	Gorakhpur	Pāpā (Padaraona) Kuśīnagarī (Kasia)
7	Ceḍī	Bundelkhand	Śuktimatī Sahajāti Tripurī
8	Vatsa / Vaṃśa	Allahābād	Kauśāmbī (Kosam)
9	Kuru	District of Thānesar, Delhi and Meerut	Indraprastha (Delhi) Hastināpura
10	Pañcāla	Rohilkhand Central Doāb	North Ahicchatra (Rāmnaḡar) South Kāmpilya (Kampil)
11	Matsya	Jaipur	Virāṭa (Bairāt)
12	Śūrasena	Mathurā	Mathurā (Muttra)
13	Aśmaka	Nizam	Potana (Bodhan)
14	Avanti	Mālwā and Nimār	Ujjayinī (Ujjain) Māhiṣmatī
15	Gandhāra	District of Peshāwār and Rawalpiṇḍī	Takṣaśilā
16	Kamboja	Southwest Kaśmīr and Kāfiristān	

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