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Concept Of Nirvāna In Buddhist Philosophy

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Abstract

Suffering is puzzling problem of human beings. How suffering can be root outed? It has and has been a problem to all the philosophers. Exponents of both theistic and aesthetic philosophical systems advocated various theories for the annihilation of sufferings. What Buddha searched was the root cause of suffering and the found of way to root out it. Buddhist theory has established a concept called Nirvana. Nirvana is the summum bonum of Buddhism and the ultimate of all that Buddha taught to the world. Nirvana is the essence of all the teachings of Buddha. The word generally used in connection with the burning of a lamp. Where it meant extinction.

Keywords

Buddhism, Nirvana, Liberation, Samsara, Anatman, Dependent

Introduction

India gave birth to three heterodox philosophical system and six orthodox philosophical systems. Among the three heterodox system. Buddhism is the most important one. Buddhism is a religion as well as a philosophy. Buddhism is meant as a distinct body of culture, or a distinct movement of civilization. Its historical background in the literature, religion and philosophies, as well as in the social educational and other institution of India.¹

Nirvāna is the most important principle of Buddhism. The third noble truth is the extinction of suffering. The method of the extinction of suffering is called Nirvāna. The word Nirvāna means 'cooled' or 'extinguished'. Nirvāna is the extinction of greed, hate, anger and delusions. The Nirvāna is the extinction of suffering. But it is not an extinction or annihilation. Nirvāna can be attained in this life. The Nirvāna is not heavenly feeling or a holy place, like vikanda to be realised after death.

Nirvāna is not renunciation of action, but the purification of all actions. It provides an active life. Buddha led an active life after Nirvāna. It is the renunciation of the base of re birth destruction of thirst, will to live and becoming. Through attaining Nirvāna one can broke the chain causation and re-birth. Nirvāna is a state of enlightenment which removes all ignorance. The Nirvāna is an attractive way which provide joy fullness.

Buddhistic origin of the concept Nirvāna

The word Nirvāna is a distinct term is in Indian religions thoughts. The greatest importance attached to this word is in early Buddhism by the Buddha himself and his disciples. Jainakalpasutra denotes the word Nirvāna as the final liberation. Majjima nikaya indicates the Buddhist prevalent attitude. There are two different mode of thinking The both brahmanical idea Nirvāna, was elaborated and symptomize both there thinking.

Three aspects of Nirvāna

Early Buddhist concept of Nirvāna has three aspects (1) Ethical (2) psychical (3) metaphysical.

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1.Ethical

Nikayas describes Nirvāna as the destruction of Raga, Dvesa and Moha.² It is also the destruction of carving of impression or impurities. By considering positively the Nirvāna state is very happy. This state is imperishable, steady, tranquil and free from fear. It is a state of Bliss.

2.Physical

The bring out the psychological aspect of Nirvāna. They meant for to rise the man to a level above empirical pleasure and sanāvedyitanmirodha the detachment is fully achieved. This is identical with arhat the Nirvāna.

3.Metaphysical

The greatest metaphysical significance occurs is the udana and the itivuttaka.³ It is a state to be realized with in ones own self. It is homogeneous and devoid individuality.

4.Way to Nirvāna

The Ārya astangikomarga⁴ leads to the extinctions of suffering. The ultimate cause of life and suffering is avidya. The way to destrunct avidya is eight fold path. An aspirant treading the eight fold path reaches the goal of Nirvāna. such kind of as aspirant is called 'arhat' or candidate for Nirvāna. Buddhistic arhat ship is the crown of mortal life in Buddhism. The forth noble truth or eight fold path is called the way of 'arhat'. The way of Arhat leads to Nirvāna.

Arhat ship means became free from the five samyojanas.⁵ These five samyojanas are the barriers in the eight fold path. Among then avidya is the root cause of suffering and difficult to root out. The candidate of Nirvāna (arhat) would observe Dhrutas.⁶ After the successful observance of Dhrutes. . To concentrate in samadhi is the aim of Buddhist disciple, because samadhi will destroy to trisna. The base of samadhi is four fold meditation Anusati or Anusmriti is one of the important parts of samadhi. Observance of meditation give rises to the knowledge that the suffering is root outed. Such a stage will leads the candidate to the goal Nirvāna.

The conception of Nirvāna

A monk is said to be reached to Nirvāna through an eight fold path and arhat-ship. In a way arhatship is Nirvāna. Various Schools of Buddhism had interpreted Nirvāna differently. This shows the vividity in defining the term. But it is difficult to assume a Buddhistic school with out the concept of Nirvāna. There are some divisions in the concept of Nirvāna. Such as sopadhises Nirvāna, nirupadhisesa Nirvāna and Parinirvana

Theravada School

In the second Buddhistic council of vaisali, Buddhist monks become two groups. One group stood for the liberalization of the Buddhistic laws and the other opposed

it. The latter group who opposed the liberalization is called staviravadins or thēravadin.

In Theravada concept suffering is opposite means the state of rest. The state of Nirvana is coming to rest of the flow the word Nirvana. It movement of the outer world and mental world. The Theravada view of Nirvana is not very clear or definite. The Theravada doctrines are mutually contradictory.⁷ The pitakas gave many different views in this subject.

The following are the main views stated about that doctrine.

1.Nirvāna is a place like heaven pleasure and enjoyment exists.

2.Nirvāna is eternal and pure. It is a super nature pleasure, which differs from that of the world and heaven

3.Dhamma including consciousness come to an end in Nirvana. It is a particular state comparable with eternal death. It is not the end of dharmas. It is a state which is positive and real.

4.Nirvāna is only a state of destruction where nothing is left.

Vaibhāsika School

Hiñayāna and Mahāyāna are the two major divisions of Buddhism Vaibhāsika school is a subdivision of Hiñayāna Buddhism. The Vaibhāsika concept of Nirvāna is covered by a samskrita dharma. It has been called as pratisamkhyā Nirodha. There are two categories according to the vaibhashika school. (1) Samskritha dharma (2) Asamskritha dharma. The Samskritha dharma are seen in the phenomenal world. They are four in numbers. (1) rupa (2) citta (3) Caitta (4) Viparaya. Stacherbatsky classify them into three. (a) matter (b) mind (c) force.⁸

Asamskritha dharma are different from Samskrita dharmas Le worldly elements and eternal element. They are three kind. (1) Pratisamkhyānirodha (2) Apratisamkhyā Nirodha. (3) Akasha. They are eternal. Akasa means the eternal vacuum space Asamskritha dharma are different from Samskrita dharmas i.e worldly elements and eternal element. Pratisamkhyā Nirodha is a nature of Nirvāna. The word Pratisamkhyā Nirodha is a nature of Nirvana. Pratisamkhyā nirodha means the destruction of worldly life of suffering through attaining knowledge. The removal of the cause of suffering is Apratisamkhyā nirodha. Or the destruction of suffering is not through pratisamkhyānirodha. In pratisamkhyānirodha there is only the absence of the state of suffering. It is contradictory to destruction. It leads to apratisam dictory to destruction. It leads to apratisam khyānirodha. There is not cause of destruction. The Nirvana is Pratisamkhyā nirodha.

Madhyamika School

Madhyamika sutra⁹ describes Nirvana neither in the nature of destruction of something as desire, nor in the nature of obtainment of a new thing. Nirvana is a word refers to renunciation; that which is neither destroyed, as five skandhas; nor is eternal as sūya; that which is neither obstructed, nor originated.¹⁰ The nature of Nirvāna is not of destruction. The madhyamikas don't maintain Nirvana to be the nature of annihilation or affliction and skandhas.

Nirvāna is always attained and it will be a misconception to attain Nirvāna is a state which is obtained. Madhyamika believe that there is no difference between the world and Nirvāna. It is not distractible and eternal. Nirvāna is the state of ultimate reality. There is no question of its being destructible. In other way if it is Nirvāna is not obstructed or originated.

Yogachara School

Yogachara school of Buddhism is a subdivision of mahayana. The followers of this school probably practical yoga and hence the name Yogachara. Yogachara school argues that there is no real bondage in life. In the absence of bondage Nirvāna is not possible. Nirvāna also exists in the form of absolute equality. There also exists in the form of absolute facility. There is no difference between Nirvāna and bondage. Eternity and transitory are applicable to phenomenal objects. No eternal category is possible with regard to Nirvāna.¹¹ Nirvāna has no existence or absence. It is beyond the power of thinking and indescribable. Trimsika¹² gives such an idea about this concept. Nirvāna is an absolute reality unchangeable external. It is free from all attachments and completely pure. Nirvāna is beyond our thoughts and words. It is the highest good and infinite bliss. In Nirvāna the intellect which imagines is eliminated. Nirvana is not the various forms of existence. There is only the transformation of pravriti and vijñāna of the mind.

Sautrantika School

The Sautrantika School is the connecting link between two the major divisions of Buddhism, i.e, Mahayana and Hinayana. The very name sautrantika obviously connected with the sutra parts of Tripitaka.

Sautrantika opposes the vaibhasika doctrine of Nirvāna. It says that Nirvana is only an annihilation of life-process. It maintains that world is real but Nirvana is unreal. Sautrantika's concept about Nirvana is skandhas of the worldly state which is an end in the state of Nirvana. Skandhas is in the forms of subtle consciousness which survives in the state of Nirvana. The worldly skandhas are only the manifestation of the subtle consciousness. Sautrantikas argues that Nirvana is the absence of passion, as one of the non produced entities, it must share the

common characteristic of unreality. The form of Nirvāna is the dharmakaya of Buddha. It is called vimukti or Nirvāna.¹³

Concept of Nirvāna in Pallet

Tripitakās are in pali language. They philosophical aspects of Buddhism. These presto trace the nature of Buddhist concept of Nirvāna. In Samyuktha Nikaya Buddha says, "there is no place for death and birth in the state of Nirvana. There is no degeneration and personality. It is not a distant place which wants to travel too much to reach there. There is no substances in this state."¹⁴ There is no Mahabhutas, sun and moon in the state of Nirvana. It is a reality which is different from space and time. It is not a state like heaven. Nobody can go to nirvana or return from it. There is no 15 state and degradation.¹⁵ Dikkha Nikaya refer the state Nirvana as a town all those criminals have been killed.¹⁶

The Milindapancha considers Nirvana to akāsa or samudra implying that it exists, but that its form location age or measures are not important. It is like fire with out a continued objective existence until called forth in to being when necessary conditions are put together. This description of the doctrine of the pali text will reveal more about the nature of Nirvāna.

Two divisions of Nirvāna

There are two kinds of Nirvana (1) Sopadhisēsha Nirvāna (2) Nirupadhisēsha Nirvāna. The sopadhisēsha Nirvāna denotes the condition of a perfect saint where the five skandas present, things the desire which binds one to life in extinct. In Nirupadhisēsha Nirvāna there take place the cessation of all beings consequent on the death of a saint. The Nirupadhisēsha Nirvana is called parinirvana. Buddha attained parinirvana, In ordinary language we may say that he is died

Nagarjuna's view on Nirvana

Nagarjuna says that Nirvana is not a particular kind of existence. Every existence is invariably connected with decay and death. If Nirvana is an existence it will also be subject to death and decay. All existing entities are produced. If Nirvana is abhava that will also be produced. So all agrees that Nirvana is not a particular kind of production. If Nirvāna is the absence of defiling elements and individual existence then the impermanence of defiling elements and personal existence will attach to Nirvāna. It would follow the impermanence of Nirvāna.

Sarvastivādin's view on Nirvana

Sarvastivādin argues that in the universe, there is no abiding central principle, that the world process consists in the procession of co-ordinated energies. When all energies are extinct there will be Nirvāna.

Conclusion

As like every other Schools of thought Buddhism also has an ultimate goal. Which is called Nirvana. It is very much different from other doctrines like liberation. It is the purity of a personality. In a way it is total purification of Body, mind and personality. It is not a heavenly place, but it may be possible to attain in this life itself. After the attainment of Nirvana one can lead a happy and active life. There will not be a room for suffering and cause of suffering in the state of Nirvana. What Buddha found about the existence of suffering is a kind of ambrosia, which each and every person can enjoy by walking through the eight - fold path.

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Footnote

- ¹ Radhakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, The Cultural heritage of India, 1958, P. 442
- ² Passion, Hatred, delusion
- ³ Aspects of Mahayana Buddhism, P. 107
- ⁴ Eight, Fold, Path
- ⁵ Ruparaga, Aruparaga, mana, uddharsha, avidya
- ⁶ Dharmas are 12 laws which contains, wear only formed cloth or gave uped cloths rest only in the shadow of trees etc. It will help to distract Moha and Lobha.
- ⁷ Adeltron text mutual introduction
- ⁸ Classified elementary matter and force for the phenomenal part, stcerbutsky, p.27
- ⁹ Muramadhya mukavika
- ¹⁰ Madhyamikasutra XXV, 3 (50) conception of Buddhist Nirvanas, p. 228
- ¹¹ Lankavathara sutra, 2.202
- ¹² Primsika in work composed by vasubandhu
- ¹³ The conception of liberation in Indian philosophy, P. 80
- ¹⁴ Quoted by A.G. Krishna variar, Buddhamatham
- ¹⁵ Ibid
- ¹⁶ Dikkha Nikaya II, P. 157, Chi. Vo. 533