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## Nishkama Karma: The Act of Selfless Service and its Signification

The word Nishkama karma is used in various Indian Vedik literatures, as a very significant concept. There is a reference in 'Ishavasyopnida' that adesh, Karma-Yogi must stay aliveupto hundred years by working selflessly. It also declares that one who rightly understand about the supreme soul or absolute as well as mortal body whereas that one discharge one's duty for self-realizing, that Karma-Yogi certainly by attaining transcendental knowledge gets liberation.<sup>1</sup>

The bondage of Karma ends really by doing selfless service, according to this idea various Upnisdasadesh to do action in one's life. It is said in Ishopnida, the work done by dedication does not attach with human being. The ethical working of Karma is the only way which avoids the attachment of Karma.<sup>2</sup> Shevtaskhropanida explains that, the Karma Yogi who does the work with three properties Sattva, Rajas, Tamas as well as without delusion, arrogance, affection he affect by the outcome of Karma due to un-attachment with Karma. 3 selfless, desire-less and constant service in also defined in MarkandeyaPuran In ShrimadBhagvad Gita it is aphorism that, anything whereby god be satisfied is karma, and by which<sup>3</sup> the mind of man inclines with god is education or Vidya.<sup>4</sup>

It's the recognition of Vishnu Purana, Karma is that, which is not cause of bondage whereas Vidya is that which became the medium of salvation.<sup>5</sup> It also refers, Karma Yoga may be the source of knowledge

when it is free from desire as well as result orientation, and without it purification is not possible.<sup>6</sup>

### The Idea of "Work Without motive" in Bhagvad Gita

The narration of Karma Yoga starts from 39th verse of 2nd chapter of Bhagvad Gita. The whole Gita opposes the delusion, affection and attachment, arrogance with the Karma or deeds. Therefore it strictly elucidates that, one is only entitled to performance action and result of your deeds is far from you, so you should free from the attachment of result as well as free from the thought of be action-less.<sup>7</sup> Gita strongly faith that nobody can exist without doing Karma for Even a moment, doing action is man's duty as well as right. It is clear in Gita, noble man does action for the self-realization without attachment Whereas ignorant people do the action to fulfil the desires.<sup>8</sup> Therefore for attaining perfection in action these following Properties may be helpful.<sup>9</sup>

#### 1. Public Welfare

The selfless working is the cause of distortions and adversities. By selfishness, Karma or action becomes petty and deontological, be free from the bondage and attaining salvation, is the supreme goal of every human being. If we discharge our service by our whole intellect, time, capability then such public service would be more advantageously. Noting this issue, the explanation is occurred in Bhagvad Gita. In Gita at the level of practical morality, public service means the welfare of all the omnipresent interest is

regarded as the absolute strength.<sup>10</sup>

It is also a clear recognition of Gita that man can get emancipation by doing public service without the personal attachment.<sup>11</sup> The wellbeing of all is the ideal of Bhagvad Gita.<sup>12</sup> The one who acts for maintain the world order, comes to god,<sup>13</sup> so one should act selflessly for the welfare of mankind. Nonviolence in speech and deeds, free from the attachment of result, full of compassion and kindness, absence of anger towards all creatures are the true divine estates.<sup>14</sup> Therefore by practicing the nature of divinity every human being can obtain the Moksha, the supreme goal of life.

#### 2. Self-righteousness

Bhagvad Gita force on self-motivation or 'Svacharma' for the welfare of whole society and this nature called the supreme strength or Param Parushartha. According to working and property the four 'varnas' are constitute so working for these determined Karma or duty is Svadharm. It is also called Sahaj-Karma, Sva-Karma, Niyat-Karma, Svabhav-Karma etc. It is Karma or deeds as well as duty. In Bhagvad Gita Krishna says

*Shreyansvadharmovigunahpardharmatsva nee shihtat*

Svabhavnifatam Karma Kurvansattetkil-bhison<sup>15</sup>

It means one should do one's own duty that is far better than accepting another's and it is true the one who acts as per one's own nature, never incur sin in his life. Lord further says in next verse

*Sahajam Karma Kaunteyasadosham-pinatpajet*

Sarvamibha hi doshenadhunenagnirnavarthi<sup>16</sup> He preaches to Arjuna that every person should never avoid acting as per own nature whether it may be faulty because every effort done by a man is certainly beset by some evil as is the fire always covered by smoke. Therefore, Gita focused on Nishkama Karma and accepted 'Varma' system based on true nature and duty. ShrimadBhagvad Gita also explore the idea that one who act by one's own true nature without the attachment of result orientation, neither goes to heaven nor hell but obtains a pure transcendental Knowledge.<sup>17</sup>

#### 3. Immovability

Gita Bhagvad gives importance to 'Sithipragha' for the accomplishment or 'Siddhi' of selflessness. 'Sithipragya' is that one whose mind is constant. The mind of commoner draws, towards materialistic desires and remainssatisfied. He remains alike in positive and negative circumstances. Lord Krishna perches himself in Gita.

*Matraparshadantakanyeshohinorshukhahshaha Agamapyino' niyastanustikhshavabharta<sup>18</sup>*

It means, the momentary rising of happiness and sorrow or joy and pain are same as the arrival and departure of cold and hot season, therefore one should endure the contact between the senses and their subjects which gives rise the feeling of pleasure and pain. For instance, as a turtle covers his parts of body in his shield, the same a 'Sithipragya' controls his senses from the contact of his subjects. Lord further explains in next shloka.

*yam hi navyathayamfetyetepurush-ampurushshabha samdulkhakshuchamdhiram so' mrtatvayakalpat<sup>19</sup>*

Means, the one who remains the same in pleasure and pain or happiness and sorrow as well as not torments by these, is definitely eligible for worthy of salvation.

#### 4. Assimilation

This bramhalic stage is a state of supreme peace. In spite of this, it never makes people deactivate. Man also acts in this state but free from attachment. The assimilation is important to reach this state. In Bhagvad Gita this evenness is called Yoga, Krishna preaches in Gita

*yogasthahKurukarmanisangamKarnanivya kvadhananjaya*

Siddhyasiddhiyosmohbhutvasamtva yoga ucchyate<sup>20</sup>

One should work free from the attachment of success and failure or victory and defeat, the balance of mind speech and body, in favourable or disfavoured circumstances is the real form of Yoga that one should practice in one's life. In fact Karma-Yoga is Yoga of achieving perfection in one's action or deeds.

Bhagvad Gita describes that Yoga is skill in Karma, or attaining perfection in action is Yoga.<sup>21</sup> Therefore these is a massage for people, to act these is a massage for people, to act and effort for their duty steadily that can escape them from the bondage of Karma.

#### Reference

1. Shuklayajuh - 40/11
2. Ishopnisa - 2
3. Shvetashvaopnishada - 6/4
4. ShrimadBagvad - 4/29/49
5. Vishnu Purana - 1/19/63 47
6. Ibid - 6/7/28 48
7. Gita - 2/47
8. Ibid - 5/1149
9. Nitishastra - Dr.J.M.Sinha Page - 248
10. Gita - 3/20

#### 5. God devoted gesture

The work dedicating to god free from the ownership never becomes the cause of bondage. This kind of work also be counted in the category of 'Nishkama' Karma, because the motive of these act is not fulfilling selfishness.

11. Gita - 11/55/12/13, 16/2
12. Ibid - 12/4
13. Ibid - 12/4
14. Ibid - 16/2-350
15. Gita - 18/47
16. Ibid - 18/48
17. Shrimad-bhagvad - 11/20/11
18. Gita - 2/14
19. Gita - 2/15
20. Gita - 2/48
21. Ibid - 2/50



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## The Socio-Political Contribution of Buddhism to Modern Indian Nation

The successful spread of Buddhism to most parts of the world and still influencing a large part of mankind shows that Buddha was among the most powerful independent thinkers of his time. Buddha's thoughts are scientific, logical, experimental and based on empirical truth and stand the test of logic. At the same time, Buddha's thoughts are reconciled with sociality, practicality, morality, humanity, mercy and compassion, in which the purpose of not only the welfare of human beings but the welfare of the whole living world is inherent. Illuminated by the light of Lord Buddha's knowledge, today human beings are influenced by the human spirit. It is moving towards public welfare, spreading sociality, practicality, morality, humanity, mercy and compassion throughout humanity in modern times, which can benefit the entire humanity.

The main goal of Buddhism is 'Bahujan Hitay Bahujan Sukhay'. For this reason, Buddhism has had a multi-dimensional, distinctive and indelible impact on modern Indian civilization and culture. Buddhism has very effectively influenced all those areas such as social, moral, etc. by leaving its indelible mark on every aspect of modern Indian civilization and culture. Religious, philosophical, economic, political, scientific, educational and literary fields etc. In all the above areas, the impact of the welfare concept of Buddhism's 'Bahujan Hitay Bahujan Sukhay' on modern Indian civilization and culture can be seen. Buddhism has had a multi-faceted and distinguished contribution to modern Indian civilization and culture.

Buddhism has incorporated wide and wide areas into itself.

Thus, Buddhism has made its significant contribution to the social, religious and cultural field in modern India. It can be analyzed sequentially as follows.

### Social Contribution

In the social sphere, Lord Buddha established equality, empathy, cooperation, harmony and virtue by removing inequality. Lord Buddha worked to end all the inequalities like high and low class etc. and created a democratic society based on equality, freeing women from exploitation, tyranny and injustice. Thus, in the social sphere, Lord Buddha established the concept of social justice by creating a democratic society which exists directly or indirectly in the society till the present time.

The Constitution of India is an effective document proclaiming social justice, which is realized by its preamble itself. The Preamble of the Constitution describes social justice as the fundamental right of the people. Where it has been clarified that the objective of the Indian Constitution is to develop for all its citizens social, economic and political justice, freedom of expression, belief, religion and worship, equality of prestige and opportunity and fraternity ensuring dignity of the individual and unity and integrity of the nation. Many of the constitutional provisions mentioned in the Preamble of the Indian Constitution are imbued with the basic spirit of Buddhism and

philosophy.

The following are the key provisions relating to social justice in the Indian Constitution:

### (1) Fundamental Rights

Fundamental rights are mentioned in Part-III, Articles 12 to 32 of the Constitution. These rights provide all citizens individually and collectively with the best benefits of democracy and basic freedoms and privileges of life, which make life unique and best. The rights provided in the Constitution as fundamental rights are: - Right to equality under this law (Article 14), there will be no discrimination only on the basis of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth or any of these (Article 15), Equality of Opportunity (Article 16), Abolition of Untouchability (Article 17) and abolition of titles (Article 18) etc. The principle of equality is based on the concept of equality, liberty, fraternity and justice given by Lord Buddha.

Under the Right to Freedom, article 19 provides protection of certain rights relating to freedom of speech, etc., under which all citizens (a) freedom of speech and freedom of expression (b) of peaceful and unanimity convention, (c) of association or association (d) free transmission everywhere in the territory of India, (e) of residence and settlement in any part of the territory of India and (g) any There will be a right to produce, trade or trade. Apart from this, protection of life and personal liberty, protection from exploitation, etc. Along with this, all the above constitutional provisions such as freedom to practice and propagate any religion (Article 25), cultural and educational rights (Article 29-30) etc. are influenced by the basic spirit of Buddhist philosophy.

In addition to fundamental rights, some fundamental duties have also been ensured for every citizen under Article 51 (a) in the Indian Constitution, which has been established through the 42nd Constitutional Amendment 1976.

### (2) Policy-making principles

The Directive Principles of State Policy are contained in Part IV of the Constitution (Articles 36-51). These principles are basically subjects of social justice. Although these are not judgments, the courts

cannot be absolutely indifferent to them. The Constitution (Article 38) states that the state should make all efforts for the welfare of the people through a social system in which social, economic and political justice is ensured to all. Under Article 41, the state has been directed to provide the right to work and education and public assistance to the people in the state of unemployment, old age, illness, disability and other types of disability according to its economic limits and capacity. The above constitutional provision is also influenced by the basic spirit of Buddhism and philosophy.

Article 43 deals with promotion of the interests of workers. Article 45 provides for free and compulsory education for children. Article 46 is very important in relation to the promotion of the interests of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections, under which the State shall promote the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, especially the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation. The above constitutional provision is also based on the public welfare concept of Lord Buddha.

### (3) Reservation

Keeping in view the economic condition of social Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, seats have been reserved for these castes in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies respectively under Article 330 and Article 332. Further, as per Article 335 of the Constitution, an assurance has been given to give due representation to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the services under the Central and State Governments. The main concessions that have been provided to these castes for representation in government services are:- Relaxation in age limits, their selection on completion of low level of efficiency, special arrangements for their appointment and promotion in the lower categories

### (4) Special Officer for Scheduled Castes and Tribes

Article 338 of the Constitution provides that the President shall appoint an officer for the Scheduled

Castes and Scheduled Tribes who shall have the duty to study all matters relating to the safeguards provided by the Constitution for these classes and to report at such intervals as the President may specify the activities of those safeguards. The President shall cause all such reports to be laid before both Houses of Parliament.

### (5) Constitution of Backward Classes Commission

Article 340 of the Constitution provides that the President may constitute a Commission with a view to studying the problems of the socially and educationally backward classes and suggesting necessary measures to improve their condition.

There are many weaker sections in Indian society, especially scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and women, etc., who have suffered for centuries. To ensure the emancipation of these sections.

In addition to the constitutional provisions, it was necessary to formulate and effectively implement the comprehensive legislations. This context

The main legislations relating to social justice in the Offences Act 1955

Social legislation relating to women and children  
Legislation relating to protection of interest of workers' Welfare Programs and social justice

'Social Justice' was dr. B.R. Ambedkar's first objective for building an egalitarian society. That is, the interests of the exploited class have been considered as the most important for achieving the goal of 'social justice'. In modern India, after independence, multifaceted efforts have been made to provide social justice to the weaker sections. The root cause of these efforts is the Indian Constitution because the creation of a new society on the basis of social justice has been shown as the basic goal of the Constitution. To achieve this objective, while the Constitution provides liberty and equality of opportunity and equality before the law to all citizens, whether strong or weak, it makes certain provisions for the purpose of giving priority to the weaker sections in many cases.

Comprehensive measures have been taken to provide social justice to the weaker sections in India.

All these measures are within the constitutional ambit and are liberal. Whatever traditional objections were there of the weaker sections in India, they have been removed and special provisions have also been made in the Indian Constitution to provide reservation and facilities to them. Along with this, provision has been made to make useful legislations in addition to the provision of necessary safeguards to protect them from exploitation and harassment and the state has been clearly directed to implement various schemes and programs for their educational and economic development

A proper analysis of all the above facts makes it clear that the various aspects of the social order which promote sociality, pragmatism, morality, humanity and virtue and are based on Buddhism's concept of Bahujan Hitay Bahujan Sukhay are legitimized in the Indian Constitution. In modern India, due to the legality of the above subjects, human and welfare elements have been strengthened, thus it can be said that Buddhism has made its significant contribution in the social sector.

### Religious contribution

From a religious point of view, Buddhism emphasizes religious tolerance and generosity; religious fanaticism and inertia have no place in Buddhism. Buddhism was never forcibly proscribed. Bigotry, religious bigotry and ferocity have no place in Buddhism. Buddhism is based on the concept of religious tolerance. It is the greatest contribution of Buddhism and philosophy that India is a secular nation. In the Indian Constitution (articles 25-28), religious freedom has been placed in the category of fundamental rights of the person Subject to the freedom of conscience, practice and propagate religion under Article 25 of the Constitution of India, subject to public order, virtue and health and other provisions of this Part, all persons shall have the freedom of conscience and freely professing, practising religion.

and will have an equal right to preach The above constitutional provisions are inspired by Buddhism and philosophy.

Paragraph. Subject to freedom of management of religious functions under Section 26, public order,

virtue and health, every religious denomination or any section thereof shall be

- (a) the establishment and maintenance of institutions for religious and charitable purposes;
- (b) to manage his religious functions
- (c) acquisition and ownership of movable and immovable property and

- (d) shall have the right to administer such property in accordance with law provides for freedom in respect of payment of taxes for promotion of a particular religion. Article 28 provides freedom in certain educational institutions to attend religious education or religious worship. In the field of ethics, Gautam Buddha has given the principle of Panchsheel for moral life. Morality, rules of virtue, Panchsheel etc. are the discoveries and experiments of the great man Gautam Buddha, which has been provided not only for Indian culture and society but for the entire human society to live a happy, respected and beautiful life. It is not necessary to follow Panchsheel for character building. Panchsheel is the right education for life. For a beautiful, pleasant, dignified life, Buddha gave Panchsheel the form of moral education. Lord Buddha gave man the path (eightfold path) to make him happy in this life, which is considered to be the result of a scientific thinking.

Lord Buddha freed the person, society and country from the religion based on hell, heaven, soul, God and fate and gave the person, society and country an egalitarian religion based on truth, non-violence, friendship, compassion, love and peace, whose basis is love and the axis is humanity. This is the greatest discovery of Buddha in the moral and religious field, which is absolutely relevant for Bahujan Hitay Bahujan Sukhay in modern times.

#### Cultural contribution

From a cultural point of view, Buddhism has embodied the dictum of Sarvebhavantu Sukhinah Sarve Santu Niramaya. Buddhism is credited with spreading Indian civilization and culture outside India. From the 3rd century BC, Indian culture was indirectly transmitted to Central Asia, China, Japan, Korea, Khotan, Tibet, Nepal, Varma to Cambodia, Java, Sumatra, Malaya etc. There were trade and cultural

exchanges between these countries.

Even in modern times, measures are being taken to further develop this trade and cultural exchange. Buddhism has introduced religious tolerance. As a result, many foreign devotees of Buddhism started coming to visit Buddhist religious places in India. Many foreign devotees started living in the study of Buddhist viharas of India and to get knowledge of Buddhism and philosophy. In this way, cultural coordination was established between Indians and foreigners and paved the way for the promotion of Indian culture and civilization. As a result, Indian religion and culture had an indelible imprint on the lives of many countries of Central Asia and South-East Asia. That is why it is often said that Buddhism was the foremost messenger of Indian culture abroad.

In modern India, cultural and educational rights have been included in the fundamental rights of the person in the Indian Constitution.

Article 29 of the Indian Constitution provides for "protection of interests of minorities". Under this, any section of citizens resident in the territory of India or any part thereof, having its own particular language, script or culture, shall have the right to retain.

No citizen shall be denied admission to any state-funded educational institution merely on the basis of religion, race, caste, language or any of the [Article 30 provides for the rights of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions 246, under which:

1. All minorities based on religion or language shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their interest.
2. In aiding educational institutions, the State shall not discriminate against any educational institution on the ground of religion.
3. Thus, after a proper analysis of all the above facts, it can be said that from a cultural point of view, Buddhism has emphasized on the concept of "Sarvebhavantu Sukhinah Sarvesantu Niramaya and Live and Let Live" is absolutely relevant for the welfare of the entire humanity even in modern India.

#### Conclusion

In modern times, the socialist theory was

established by Lord Buddha long before the advent of political Socialism. He had taken the path of equality in the consumption of property and provided a democratic system while laying the foundation of administrative procedures for the Union. The members of bhikkhu sangha could keep only three chevar, astura, needle thread, water, six, beggar etc. personally, the rest of the property was considered to be of the union. Tathagata Buddha started a movement against social inequality and injustice, that is, tried to establish the equality of human beings and the prestige of the individual. Buddhism and its philosophy symbolize social, economic, political, justice, which emphasizes equality, freedom, beauty and justice. Following in the footsteps of Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar, especially after his initiation into Buddhism in 1956, there has been an increased eagerness among Dalit castes to embrace Buddhism. This is in a way the golden age of revival and social transformation of Buddhism. Along with the spirit of world peace, non-violence, co-existence, dignity of the individual, national unity, integrity, equality and fraternity, there has been a huge interest among crores of Dalits towards Buddhism, the exponent of modesty and virtue, which has attracted the attention of sociologists of Europe and America etc. This explains the impact of Buddhism on the masses. In modern India, democratic/ democratic by the Indian

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Constitution. A republican system has been put in place. Under which socialist, secular, democratic republic has been established in India. social, economic and political justice to the people in the Indian Constitution, ideas.

Freedom of expression, belief, religion and worship, equality of prestige and opportunity and all of them talk about increasing the dignity of the individual and the brotherhood that ensures the unity and integrity of the nation.

Thus, on a proper analysis of the above facts, it is clear that the democratic/ democratic aspects of the Republic of India are not allowed. Republican/ The democratic system is based on public welfare, the basic source of which can be seen in the world famous public welfare concept of Buddhism's 'Bahujan Hitay Bahujan Sukhay'. The principles and ideals that Lord Buddha propounded centuries ago continue to hold their own recognition even in today's scientific era. All these principles and ideals are universally relevant and timeless. In the modern struggling era, if we follow the principles of Lord Buddha, then undoubtedly peace and harmony can be established and the welfare of the entire humanity can be possible.

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## Resurgence of Buddhism in Modern India

Buddhism is a great religious and philosophical tradition of India. This great tradition was started in ancient India by Great master mahatma buddha. The ideas of his philosophy have inspired many people not only in this world but to the entire world. This popular tradition got growth and decline on this land in 8<sup>th</sup> century .For various reasons this religious traditions went to the sleeping mode, Because of its decline. Revival of sleeping Buddhism in Indian sub-continent was a result of the combined attempt of the British Administration in Colonial Era, the Europeans and Americans, the Orientalists, Researchers from Bengal in collection of literature, the Dalit movements, the Indology and Archaeological Survey of India, which we shall discuss below.

### •Role of the Europeans and Americans

The non-Indians, specially the Europeans and Americans, played an important role in revival of Buddhism. Their involvement helped to provide legitimacy to Buddhism. Europeans' interest and their researches on Buddhism made Buddhist texts available in India and to the East. Colonel H.S. Olcott and H.P. Blavatsky from Russia founded "the Theosophical Society" in New York in 1875 with a intend to contact Asian Buddhists. Olcott toured the Ceylon countryside with Hewavitane. Buddhism had been under attack in countries like Ceylon.

The earliest and one of the major positive outcomes of the British Administration in India was the recovery of Indian History in a modern frame.

The British scholars of colonial India have done fabulous job in this direction. They worked too long to reveal the trails of Indian ancient religion and cultural Heritage. They discovered and revealed the forgotten Historical scriptures, Art and Architecture of each Indigenous religious tradition as Hindu, Buddhist and Jain. The Orientalist or the Ideologist led this movement from the study of literature inscriptions, coins and then through the monuments and sculptures.

Hewavitane became one of the most important leaders of revivalist and nationalist Buddhism in Sri Lanka as "Anagarika Dharmapala". 'Dharmapāla' means 'protector of the dharma'. 'Anagārika' in Pali means "homeless one". Dharmapala visited the places of Buddhist pilgrimage in India in 1891. He performed the work of restoring Bodh Gaya, the Enlightenment site of Buddha. He attended the historic 'Parliament of World Religions' held in Chicago among others like Vivekananda in 1893.

This provided an opportunity for an exchange of ideas and helped to bring the ideas of Buddhism to a world forum, as well as promote it in India itself. Mahabodhi Society was founded in Colombo by Anagarika Dharmapala in 1891, its offices were moved to Calcutta. The goal of the society was the restoration of the Mahabodhi temple at Bodh Gaya (Bihar State, India), the site of the Buddha's enlightenment.

Still, there were other scholars like Max Muller, a German-born philologist and Orientalist and founder of the western academic disciplines of Indian studies

and religious studies, who studied Buddhism and praised the "Vedas" under Hinduism. While David Hewavitarne joined a debate on Christian missionaries in Ceylon in 1886.

The role of British scholar Thomas William Rhys David was of immense importance in making Buddhist literature widely available and in terms of scholarship. He was founder of "Pali Text Society" in 1881, under whose leadership about 25,000 pages of the canons of Buddhism were translated from Pali language. He married Caroline Augusta Foley (C.A.F. Rhys Davids), who was known as an editor, translator, and interpreter of Buddhist texts in the Pali language. She was honorary secretary of the Pali Text Society from 1907, and its president from 1923 to 1942.

#### • Role of Orientalist of Bengal in Collection of Buddhist Literatures and getting them translated

The revival of Buddhism in India started in Bengal. The earliest scholars working on Buddhism were Bengalis, including Rajendralal Mitra (1824–1891) and Hari Prasad Shastri, whose book *Discovery of Living Buddhism in Bengal* appeared in 1897. Sarat Chandra Das, a Bengali Theosophist was a scholar-explorer who travelled in Tibet and studied Tibetan Buddhism. He remained in Tibet for six months, and returned with a large collection of Tibetan and Sanskrit texts which would become the basis for his later scholarship. He published over 50 articles and books, including an edition of the *Dhammapada*. In 1882 Das founded a journal for the *Buddhist Text Society*, and in 1893 he was entrusted by Anagarika Dharmapala with the editorship of the *Maha Bodhi Journal* when Dharmapala went to Chicago. While the earliest work of Bengali intellectuals on Buddhism was on Sanskrit texts, Pali was instituted at the University of Calcutta around the turn of the century, and the first M.A. was awarded in 1901 (Zelliot 1979: 390).

R.G. Bhandarkar included Buddhism in his Ideological interests from 1978 onwards, while among was, Krishnarao Arjun Keluskar, the non-Brahman reformer was among popular writers on Buddhism who published a life of the Buddha in 1898. However, the early scholars were not formal

Buddhists.

Dharmarand Kosambi, was the second Indian to take diksha. He worked in Kushinara, and his Burmese associate lived to become the man who ordained Ambedkar in 1956, as the oldest living Buddhist in India. Kosambi left home, for Nepal, to trace out the Buddha's birthplace. A long pilgrimage resulted in his ordination in 1902. He made tours to Buddhist sites of northern India and published a book titled "Bhagwan Buddha" in 1940. Kosambi also made an effort to popularise Buddhism, and spent some time trying to start a Vihara in Bombay, the Bahujan Vihara, which was designed to appeal to the Bombay working class (ibid.: 389–399).

#### • Role of Dalit Movement in Revival of Buddhism

Jyotiba Phule (1827–1890) also known as Phule was a critic of orthodoxy in the social system after Buddha and a revolutionary, yet had only a bare knowledge of the role of Buddhism in Indian history. During his lifetime, a significant interest was taking place in revival in Buddhism among Indian and European intellectuals which made this religion accessible to the anxious social framework. It was in Tamil Nadu where a major breakthrough in the mass revival of Buddhism took place. The credit for this goes to a remarkable Dalit leader, Pandit Jyothee Thass who took to the revival of Buddhism and carried on Phule's search for religious identity. With Jyothee Thass, the Buddhist revival jumped over the boundaries of the Indian sub-continent, crossing the existing Brahmanic supremacy and established Buddhism among the Dalit masses in the context of the assertion of a Tamil, non-Hindu identity.

#### • "Nehruvian Buddhism" (1947–56)

India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru played a vital role in the promotion of Buddhism and India's Buddhist past under the Mauryan Emperor Asoka. The ethical guidelines inscribed on the Asokan pillar were spread across the globe during his regime which reads as below:

"Tell all the people," Buddha says in Nehru's voice, "the poor and the lowly, the rich and the high

are all one, and that all castes unite in this religion as do rivers in the sea."<sup>14</sup> Within this familiar, yet distant Nehru, Nehru lingered, until (as Basso explains), "it started to fade, as every place-world must.

#### • Ambedkar's Buddhist Renaissance

Ambedkar's Buddhist renaissance had concern for the development of India as a whole. Arguing the basic conflict between 'Buddhism and Brahmanism', Buddhism protested against the ritualism and violence of Vedic sacrifices, opposed Brahmanic superiority and caste hierarchy and the rigidities of the caste system. Buddhism was not essentially different; many argued in particular that the Mahayana concept of *sanyata* (no essential nature) was practically identical with the Vedantic 'brahma'. Brahmanism emphasized magic and ritual, while Buddhism emphasized rationality and ethics. The conflict between Brahmanism and Buddhism was seen as of the utmost interest to Dalits in particular because it was in the soil of defeating Buddhism that the caste system solidified, and certain specific groups were particularly degraded and classed as 'untouchable'. Ambedkar's argument for Dalits being originally Buddhists who were deprived of access to resources was part of the ongoing civilizational conflict. Half a million Dalits 'untouchables' were converted to Buddhism in October 1956, and the year celebrated honoring of Buddhism in India with the logo "2500 Years of Buddhism".

#### • Britishers Role in Bringing Out Buddhism to Revival

The earliest and one of the major positive outcomes of the British Administration in India was the recovery of Indian History in a modern frame. The British scholars of colonial India have done a fabulous job in this direction. They worked too long to reveal the trails of Indian ancient religion and cultural Heritage. They discovered and revealed the forgotten historical Scriptures, Art and Architecture of each Indigenous religious tradition as Hindu, Buddhist and Jain. The orientalist or the Ideologist led this movement from the study of literature inscriptions, coins and then through the monuments and sculptures.

The contemporary revival of Buddhism begins with the efforts of colonial administration, as they were very interested in Indian culture and civilization, and later on, they proclaimed themselves saviour of Buddhism in modern India.

The foundation of Asiatic society provided a major impetus for the investigation of a wide range of subjects and aspects concerned to antiquarian remains. Initially, the main function of this society was to translate ancient Indian literature into the English language and had been engaged in extensive research on various issues of this heritage.

The colonial scholars like William Jones, Charler Wilkins, H.T. Colebrooke and HH Wilson created a base for the revival act. They led a vast exploration of Buddhist heritage, with the study of its chronicle. Buddhist temple architectures, Stupa, Chaitya, monasteries, cave shrines were discovered and revealed across India.

J.H. Harrington was associated with the discovery of "Nagarjuni caves". Two other prominent discoveries were made during this period. The Stupa at Sarnath, published by Jonathan Duncan and another was Sanchi Stupa by captain E. fell. The extensive cave shrines of Maharashtra like Ellora caves were explored and a systematic publication was done by Charles Warren Malet in 1794, he too prepared a document of Kanheri caves. In the annals of South India surveye colo. Colin Mackenzie was a very profound figure, who with innumerable contributions surveyed and documented the remains of Buddhist Stupa in Amravati.

#### • Study of "Brahmi Script" and Buddhist Literature

The two most prominent historic colonial officers cum scholars were James Prinsep and Alexander Cunningham who made an unparalleled contribution to the Buddhist world. The most significant work of James Prinsep was the decipherment of "Brahmi" and "Kharoshthi" Script between 1834-1837. The decipherment of Brahmi Script was found on the railing stone of Sanchi Stupa. He also discovered the 'Ashoka' the great patron of Buddhism.

### • Archaeological Survey of India' in Rival of Ancient Buddhist Sites

Alexander Cunningham, the foremost scholar among the Britishers, who not only dedicated to Buddhist archaeology but for the entire Architectural heritage of ancient India. He was the founder of 'Archaeological Survey of India'. He started his work on the three aspects: a survey of literature, exploration, documentation and conservation of archaeological records and Sites. Cunningham read many Buddhist chronicles and specifically travelogue of Fahien; Xuanchang. He surveyed an extensive area in the east to Gaya, Indus-river in North West, from Kalsi in North to Dhammar Caves in the South. In this phase the work of James Fergusson is also praiseworthy, which is contained in his record 'Illustration of Rock-cut temples of India'. His monumental work for Buddhist cave Shrines is very commendable.

Next to the Cunningham was John Marshall, who assumed the charge of the Director General of ASI in 1902. He worked for the revelation and conservation

of Buddhist Archaeological heritage. He explored and surveyed Buddhist sites like Nalanda, Vaishali, Patliputra, Taxila and many other sites. After the period of John Marshall, there were other British as well as indigenous scholars who continuously worked for the research and development in this field.

Thus it was the colonial period since the initiation took place with the discovery, exploration, deification, revelation of literary and archaeological heritage in the 18th century. The British Administration established different foundations to explore and reconstruct the Indian Archaeological heritage of every region across the Indian sub-continent. The entire journey of orientalism and cultural explorations of the British Administration during the colonial period reorganized the modern Buddhist world.

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