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Morality of Environment: Ethical Perspective of Buddha Philosophy

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Abstract

Extensive discussion of environmental ethics is found in Buddhist Ethics. The positivist philosopher Goutam Buddha was an ethicist and reformer. Buddhist ethical conduct is sustained by universal empathy for all living beings. The main purpose of his ethical philosophy is to show people the way out of 'Dukkha', that is, to attain 'Nirvāna'. Ahimsā is the main motto of Buddhist philosophy. Lord Buddha said that it is our moral duty and responsibility to protect the lives of others as much as own lives by giving up greed, violence, hatred, animal killing and lying. He spoke of building a moral society based on the creation of a fairly environment. But society as well as the environment today is facing environmental crisis pollution, ecological disorder population, global warming etc. One of the causes of this environmental crisis is 'Abidyā'. The main cause of 'Abidyā' is Dukkha. Buddhist principles of Pratitya – samutpada, Ahimsā, pañchaśīlā etc. Speak of the moral responsibility and duty towards animals as species in the ecology. So, Discussions on the duty towards the environment are very relevant in Buddhist ethics to maintain the balance of the environment.

Keywords

1) Environmental ethics, 2) Nature, 3) Environmental crisis, 4) Abidyā

Forest are delightful – Ramanīyāni araññāni.

Dhammapada, Verse, 99

Introduction

Goutam Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, was an ethicist and reformer. He was born in a royal family of Kapilabastu in the foothills of the Himalays with full embodiment of *prajñā*, *Bīrya*, *prēma* and *Tyāga*. His father was Shuddadana and his mother was Māyādevi. His main goal was to help people through finding the path of 'Nirvāna'. According to him if the person suffering from grief, it is better for him to try to go the path of 'Dhukkha-niroda' because through this path one can get relief from any kind of suffering. The Buddha compares the one who engages in the theoretical discussions without giving priority to duty to the fool who studies the nature of the shape of the arrow without immediately removing the arrow from the body even though it is poisoned. The main principal of Buddhist philosophy is to established peace by binding everyone in the bond of *Ahimsā*, equality, friendship and affection. In Buddhist philosophy, it speaks of the moral duty and duty to protect all souls, even the non-human nature like one's own soul, proper adherence to the five principles of Pañcaśīlā is the Buddhist principle that is the human principle, which characterizes human and society. Just as Buddha spoke of the ideals of humanity and public welfare, he also spoke of building a moral society based on the creation of a fair environment. The only purpose of following the moral path is to attain Nirvana. In Buddhist ethical philosophy, morality has no absolute value, but nirvana or *moksha* has only the moral duty of socialized people and on the other hand about our moral duty towards the non-human environment. Our behavior is the determinant of moral excellence towards all creatures. Lord Buddha says that, "no one has violence or enmity towards one who has friendship with the omnipotent. Even a ferocious animal does him no harm"¹

Buddhist philosophy is a detailed explanation of Gautama Buddha recorded in the Tripitaka and Āgama. Buddha dharma and sangha are the 'three treasures' or 'three refuges' in the Buddhists philosophy as a source of inspiration and guidance. Although the main subject of this philosophy was to express the real form of 'Dhamma', he was a nature lover and charitable. The principle of Ahimsā was his motto. He always advised to refrain from violence, anger, envy, hypocrisy etc. According to Buddhism in conditional love to human beings and non-human beings nature, meaningful understanding and charity which are very important for building an ecologically sustainable society. Lack of non-violence makes cruelty attitude, lack of unconditional love makes illusion, lack of merciful makes heartless, lack of charity makes thirst which are the causes of human beings and non-human beings nature crises. However, during the time of Buddhism or even 1000 years after his death. Today's environmental crises such as waste disposal, lack of clean water, lack of clean air, pollution, ecological disorder, population blast, hole in ozone layer, global warming acid rain etc did not exist. Since these are modern crises which originate from industrialization, deforestation, scientific developments etc, he or his disciples did not think about these crisis. That is not to say that Buddhism was indifferent to environmental thinking. It is known from Buddhist teachings on *dharma*, *samsara*, *Pratitya - Samutpada* and the cosmogony of the Agganna sutta that early Buddhism was aware of environmental virtue ethics. Just as Buddhist environmental ethics was compatible with traditional teachings, it was adaptable and flexible in solving environmental problems.

Concept of Ethics

Ethics also called moral philosophy. It seeks to resolve questions of human morality by defining concepts such as good and evil, right and wrong, virtue and vice, justice and crime. As a field of intellectual inquiry, moral philosophy also is related to the fields of moral psychology, descriptive ethics and value theory. The term 'Ethics' is derived from Greek word 'Ethos' meaning 'custom' or 'character'. In philosophy ethical behavior is that which is 'Good' and the term 'Moral' comes from the Latin word 'Mores' for habits. Therefore, literally meaning of ethics is concerned with human conduct. It consists in a code of conduct of human beings in a society. Ethics especially wants to know the basic principles of society that we call 'Morality'. Mackenzie said about ethics- "Ethics may be defined as the study of what is right or good in conduct"². The word Morality is very much associated with ethics. The concept of morality becomes meaningful as a result of the interaction of the individual with the individual. In fact, we are not considered to have any moral relationship with the non-human world, the animal world, the plant world or the unconscious world. In the modern age, human-centered moral duty applies not only to man but to the whole of nature that creates our environment. So, the scope of ethics has gradually spread beyond the human world and has spread to the animals, birds and plants as well as the entire world. Standing in the 21st Century, people have faced moral problems due to the environment. In the 21st century, mankind has been confronted with a moral dilemma that cannot be avoided. Because of this, environmental moral problems are associated with the questions of human existence.

Environmental Ethics in Buddhism

Our environment is all about what is around us. Anything for outside of our surrounding is a part of our environment. The word Environment is derived from the French word "Environ" which means "surrounding" and "ment" means achieving. Our surrounding includes both living and non-living things such as soil, light, human beings, air, animals, water, microbes, etc. The literal meaning of Environment is the study of biological, physical, chemical, social and cultural conditions that surround and affect the living organisms externally and internally. Environment is defined as the 'surrounding in which organization operates including air, water, land, natural resources, flora and fauna, humans, and their inter-relations'. The natural environment consists of the atmosphere, the hydrosphere, the lithosphere and the biosphere. Its major components are water, air, land, solar energy and living organisms. Environment can be defined in a number of areas, but common connotation is- "Environment is the sum of all social, economical, biological, physical or chemical factors which constitute the surroundings of men/ living organism, who is both creator and moulder of this environment"³. Like non-living organisms, human being is also affected by environment. Now the question is, why the question of ethics in the field of environment? The subject of ethics is human action. The environment is no longer human beings, it is non-living things. Environment discussions are global crisis. Terrible natural disasters like earthquakes, volcanoes, snowfall, increase of population, use of biocides, deforestation, destruction of the wilderness, cruelty to animals and questions with a more regional focus, like mining in the Kakadu park, in Australia belong among philosophers as to how to prevent this environmental crisis. Environmental policy is the birth of Environmental ethics. So we have some moral responsibilities and duties towards non-

human nature as well, i.e. there is no place for unprincipledness in such nature. Environmental ethics as a branch of applied ethics came into the scene in west during 1970's. Environmental ethics is no longer limited to the western tradition. Environmental ethics is now recognized worldwide. Environmental ethics is defined as the- "Environmental ethics is the discipline that studies the moral relationship of human beings to, and also the value and moral status of, the environment and its non-human contents"⁴. The environment is divided into two parts-one is the nature of physical world and another is the nature of the living beings.

Nature of Physical World

The physical environment of Buddhism refers to all natural elements of the universe created by Rupa-Kkhandha, which are not just physical *rupas* but other physical phenomena. We experience Rupakkhandha when we have pleasant or painful feelings. There is no indifferent physical feeling. According to Buddha Ghosh, the sum of the four primary elements (*būta*) such as earth, water, fire and air is *rūpakkanadha*. There are two types of *rūpakkaṇḍa*- (a) *Būta rūpakkanadha*, (b) Material (*upadanā*) *rūpakkanadha*. When the physical feeling is wholesome it is *kusala-vipaka* and when the physical feeling is unwholesome it is *akusala vipaka*.

Nature of the Living Beings

Living beings means human or non-human. According to Buddhism human beings, the sum of the five *kkhandha* of changing elements. Known as the *pañcakkhandhā*, namely-(1) Form (*Rūpa*) (2) Feelings (*vedanā*) (3) *Sañjñā*, (4) *samśkāras* and (5) consciousness itself (*viññāna*). And non-human beings are made up of *arūpakkaṇḍa*. The *sankhara* *kkhandha*, what is an aggregation of good and bad qualities decided human nature from moral point of view. The *samśkāras* *skhandha* creates a man a sensible animal.

Following to Buddhist philosophy all living beings are included of *rūpa* and *arūpa* *dhatu*. Although their basic features i.e. warmth, form and consciousness is the same, non-human beings such as animals, insects, plants, trees etc but do not belong to *pañcakkhandha*. They cannot pass on their knowledge to the next generation and are incapable of creating any culture and its environment because they are deprived of *sañña* and *sankhāra* *kkhandha*. Although there are differences between human and non-human beings in terms of physico-psychological formation, they are interdependent. This is how Buddhist philosophy finds similarities between the environment and people. So they think that people have a moral responsibility and duty towards the environment. The nature and description of an environmental ethics in early Buddhism is a complicated subject. Buddhists generally speak of a simple non-violent gentle life. All animals and humans are spiritual beings. Lord Buddha used to say to refrain from doing such things which are detrimental to the natural world. According to Buddhism the main cause of the world is 'Dukkha'. Lord Buddha declined to question-answer which did not directly or indirectly support on the main problem of human suffering and its ending. He spoke of 'Nirvāna' as the cause of liberation from 'Dukkha' (sorrow). According to Buddhism everything in the world belongs to nature which is not organized and created by Man.

Environmental ethics is a relatively new area. The rapid depletion of various environmental crisis and environment resources has increase our awareness of the environmental and the need to environmental ethics. However, early Buddhist philosophy did not address the concerns of the natural world and the environmental crisis. Therefore, it cannot be said that there is no mention of environmental ethics in Buddhist philosophy. Surprisingly, there are some concepts in Buddhism which are strongly similar to contemporary environmental ethics. Buddhists believe that Buddhist literature contains the seeds of environmental ethics. Although he did not teach his followers directly about the environment, they were influenced by various behaviors. For example, he set rules that monks and nuns should never relieve themselves our near running water. i.e. were people would want to wash or drink. Similarly, he also ruled that monks and nuns should not disrupt, the established habitat of any other creature, nor kill other living creatures, for example when building new quarters. The environment will lot of benefit if we live simply in harmony with the environment.

According to Buddhism variability is one of the perennial principals of nature. Nothing in nature is fixed, everything is changeable. According to the trend of world evolution, primitive barbarians have become civilized people today. Without the protection of the earth's water, Soil, air, and temperature, the true canopy cannot be protected; if the tree canopy is not protected; animals and birds are endangered; if animals and birds are endangered, human existence is endangered just as human beings depend on the environment for their survival, the environment also depends on human beings. As part of the ecosystem, on inseparable relationship exists between man and his environment. So, it can be said without any doubt that the environment is terribly affected by the good-evil, moral-immorality of human work. Buddhists have come to worship nature with the love of reverence and devotion. They realized that everyone in nature is dependent on each other. To dominate nature, Man should no act. Nature's generosity can be enjoyed by giving up greed. As Buddhist environmental ethics, the activities of world nature are affected by the morality or immorality of human behavior. So the moral responsibility and duty of man towards the natural world cannot be denied. If we can properly adhere to the Buddha's ideals, it seems that the environmental crisis; even the current situation that was faced a crisis like COVID-19, can cope a lot.

As Buddhism, man and environment are closely related on the Buddhist ecological ethics, point of view, if we want to obtain peace fullness, friendly social relationship and harmony in environment are should follow exacter rules. If we violate their rules, we are bound to suffer as a terrible natural disasters, Buddhist concept of **Pratitya-Samutpada** is so related these rules. Although Lord Buddha denies the uninterrupted flow of causation, he acknowledges that 'when this happens, that happens'. 'Asmin Sati Īdam bhabati'⁵. That is, the origin of one after the destruction of another, this rule is know as Buddha '**Pratitya – Samutpada**'. 'pratitya' means 'to under something' and 'Samutpada' 'orgin'. Thus, the etymological meaning of the word 'pratitya-samutpada' is the origin of something else by getting or adopting something'. According to this rule, the action is generated by following the cause, conditionally. '**Pratitya – Samutpada**' is not an uninterrupted flow of causation rules, only discontinuous continuity. This relation of Causation is called 'Aulomta', 'Anusarita' or 'Dharmata'. This doctrine is the in middle view of 'Eternalism' and 'Nihilism'. This doctrine of Buddha indicates the way to solve the problem of Dukkha on the '**Pratitya – Samutpada**' theory point of

view. Buddhism establishes that, interdependence relationship exists in all things in the world. It can be clearly said that the 'Pratitya – Samutpada' theory is the closest similar Buddhist sources to our term nature.

Buddha's Ethical Philosophy

The Positivist philosopher Goutama Buddha was the greatest moral philosopher in the world. In fact, there were no such things as a Buddha's philosophy after the Mahaparinibbana of the Buddha, his discourses were in book. The Buddhist scriptures Tripitaka i.e. Binaya Pitaka, Sutra Pitaka and Abhidharmma Pitaka contain a theoretical discussion of moral behavior and various immoral problems, He considered ethics as a way of life. From a practical point of view, Buddha considered life-like Dukkha as practical. Nirvāna from Dukkha is just a moral way. In Buddhist philosophy, liberation from Dukkha is more important than Metaphysics. The essence of Buddhist philosophy is that " Mere discussion of theory does not alleviate Dukkha in human life, it is possible to alleviate Dukkha only through the formation of moral character"⁶. In Buddhist philosophy, Karmabāda. Janmāntarabāda and Mōksa etc are part of metaphysics, but Buddhist ethics is based on all these theories. Karmabada is the most relevant of these.

Buddhist ethical conduct is sustained by universal empathy for all living beings. The Buddhist ethics there is a strong linkage between psychology and ethics. There recent trends in moral philosophy in the west place the strong linkage between ethics and psychology in Buddhism in a new light, and will also be integrated into the subsequent discussion on ethical theory, as well as environmental ethics. Buddhist virtues have an interesting variety and richness, in fact, they include the virtues of conscientiousness, like veracity and truthfulness, virtues of benevolence like loving. Kindness and compassion, unities of self restraint like Self control, abstinence and charity.

Buddha who was primly an ethical teacher and reformat, not a Metaphysician and who pre ached only orally. He always avoided the Metaphysical questions. More important to him than the discussion of theory was the attainment of Nirvāna by suffering people. Buddhist ethical philosophy has a special social significance. This ethical philosophy characterizes people are not only a part of society. This society is made up of animals, all the animals world, the plant world. The moral responsibility and duty of socialzed people has been mentioned in the philosophy of social ethics. Our behavior fixes the moral excellence of our behavior towards all animals and plants. Attempts have also been made to create a ethical environment in Buddhist ethics with the promotion of the ideals of humanity and public Welfare.

On the basis of which a moral society can be formed. According to Buddhism, this morality is the path to 'Nirvāna'. The world and life are fleeting; happiness is the result of Dukkha. So, it is our duty to give up addiction and purse non-addiction. Lord Buddha says that bidyā is the root cause of Dukkha. He spoke of enlightenment for the attainment through deep meditation and realized Four Nobel Truths. Which is known

as the catvari āryasatyāni of Buddhist philosophy. These Four Noble Truths are the mainstay of Buddhist Philosophy. So, four-noble-Truths Buddhist world thought in the foundation of Buddhist ethical philosophy. These Four noble truths are the essence of Buddhist philosophy. There are-

1. There is suffering (Dukkha).
2. There is a cause of suffering (Dukkha Samudaya)
3. There is a cessation of suffering. (Dukkha Nirodha)
4. There is a way leading to this cessation of suffering (Dukkha – nirodha – gamini - pratipat)

Needless to say, the four Noble truths of Buddhism are relevant to the various environmental crisis faced by today's deviant world. Relevance of Buddhist four Noble truths; The inhibitory practice is presented for the general responsible person of the society. The attitude of asceticism that arose in Buddha's mind when he saw the old, the sick and the dead person, shows how much he was tormented by the misery of society as well as living world. Excessive greed (lobha), lust, delusion (Moha), guilt (dosa), anger-envy, pleasure in the enjoyment of things i.e- ignorance of the four-noble truths is responsible for the first Noble truth 'Dukkha'. This is the exactly the reason why we are facing a deep environmental crisis today. The environmental crisis is the struggle for the existence of all living things. The condition of Dukkha as unsatisfactoriness that is deeper and broader than the ecological crisis. Nirvana is the path to liberation (Mukti) from Dukkha. The Noble eight – fold path this path can be achieved through practice.

PANCHASILA

Buddhist environmental ethics evidently points out that an implicit ethics or moral conduct, Morality or immorality, has specially influenced the courses of nature. Buddhism believes that changeable natural processes are influenced by the morals of humanity. If we want to maintain our moral responsibility and duty towards the natural world, to our fellow human beings and to future generations, then we must give the gift of a beautiful and suitable moral environment. Buddha's words inspire to protect even the smallest creatures from the largest of the natural world. He did not ignore the untouchables in the society, but spoke of establishing self-respect, Buddha spoke of protecting the most tiny creatures of the environment and even the branches of a tree with dignity. Buddha, in his ethical philosophy, strongly condemned and opposed the killing of any animal in the animal kingdom. Just as he was always in favor of building empathy and affection for all sentient beings, so he was strongly opposed for all sentient beings, so he was strongly opposed to the infliction of pain and suffering to all beings. Buddhism acknowledges an inherent moral relationship between human morality and the natural environment. As a humanist philosopher, Buddha's principle of panchasila has been greatly employed in detailed description.

In Buddhist philosophy, the eight fold path of the path of attainment is divided into three stages. The first is Sila (moral conduct), Samadhi (meditation and mental discipline) is the second and third is paññā (wisdom). In the Samyutta Nikāya, Lord Buddha says that Nirvana is attained after purification of the mind by sila,

Samadhi and Paññā. The paññā belongs to the Right faith (Samyag drsti) and right thought (smrti) of the Buddhist eight – fold – path. Right concentration (Samadhi) includes meditation and mental discipline sila i.e. Moral conduct includes right resolve (sankalpa), right speech (vāk), right action (Karmānta), right living (ājīva) and right effort (vyayana). In Buddhist ethics ‘sila’ means ethical or moral conduct. ‘Sila’ is to abstain from all kinds of sinful deeds. There are various type of ‘sila’ in Buddhist philosophy. Baritry sila i.e Buddha forbade to do all there actions. All the actions that he has instructed us to follow are charitryasila , in the Aryasatya that is, in the eight fold path, there are references to these three types of sila; right speech (vāk), right action (Karmānta), right living (ājīva). In addition to these, Buddha advised the devotees to observe ‘Dasa-sila’, And for the house holder, Buddha has instructed to observe ‘Pañca-sīla’. – Pañca-sīla are:

1. Panatipata vermani –sikhpada samadayami; I will stay away from killing any living creature.
2. Adinnadana vermani – sikhpada samadayami: I will stay away from stealing.
3. Kamesu Mitchha chara vermani – sikhpadam samadayami: I will stay away from all sexual activity.
4. Musavada vermani – sikhpand samadayami : I will abstain from lying.
5. Sura marya majj pamadatthana vermani - sikhpadam samadayami : I will abstain from all intoxication through alcohol, drugs or other means. Silas are not just about controlling one’s behavior; the purpose of sīlas is to prevent others from doing the some action. The essence of sīla is to prevent human beings from killing animals. But at the same time it is said that killing animals by mating is just as unnecessary as killing by others is not necessary. In Buddhist philosophy, Pañca-sīla and eight – fold-path can be considered as the ideal philosophy of environmental ethics. So the five precepts clearly states that human beings should live in a way that does not harm anyone else that is, any living creatures in the environment. A healthy normal society can be formed by following the eight-fold-path properly. In the ecological points of view all these points suggest that Buddhist philosophy is an environmental ethics which has deep concern from natural environment and which stands for a harmonious relation between human beings and nature. Lord Buddha says that the person who observes sila becomes energetic and abstains from all kinds of sinful deeds. In this context, the story of Buddha’s childhood is very relevant. In childhood, Goutam was playing in the garden. When he saw a beautiful swan fell to the ground from the sky. He picked it up and saw that the swan had been hit by an arrow. He took care of the swan, Just then, his cousin comes in and says that this swan is mine because I shot it. He thought for a moment and replied that you wanted to kill the swan, that means you are its enemy. How can I give him to his enemy? I love this swan and I healed him by taking care of the nursing. I want to keep him alive. So, this swan in mine.

Ahimsa

In Buddhist ethical tradition, the first sila of panca sila is panatipata vermani-sikhpada samadayami or Ahimsa (non-killing to life). Ahimsa or nonviolence is the general feature of all Indian religious traditions. Both Jainism and Buddhism force the concept of Ahimsa (Non-lence) in a deeper lave. Although the preservation of different animals is the main theme of Ahimsa in both Buddhist and Jain philosophy, in the practical sense, the use of Ahimsa is different in both religious. Jainism was very strict discipline in applying their rules to the society and Buddhism prefers mediocre in practical moral conduct. Again, Ahimsa is the motto in the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi as a contemporary philosopher. Gandhiji's non-violant path has been analyzed both positively and negatively. But Buddhist Ahimsa theory speaks of the positive side with the negative side, but the emphasis is on the negative side, that is, killing animals, especially religion. Buddhism and Jainism long ago practiced Ahimsā in India, but they did not apply the in principles to social, political, economic and sectarian issues. However Gandhiji applied his policy of non-violence to solve issues. Gandhi says: "My contribution to the great problem lies in my presenting for acceptance truth and Ahimsa in every walk of life, whether for individual or nations."⁷

In Sutta Nipata, The Buddha says that. "It is not only obligatory for beginners for beggars or householders to kill animals; Animal killing cannot be allowed under any circumstances. Again killing animals is not just violence. It is violence to hurt any animal, strong or weak. So violence is also the cause of animal Slaughter or animal suffering"⁸. In addition to animals, Buddha also advised Ahimsā against small animals so he who is truly non-violent does not trample on small, tree, slaves etc. Every butterfly or human being is sacred to him. It is as immoral to kill a human being as it is to kill a butterfly. Violence pollutes people lives. That is why he has always spoken of being non-violent. A non-violent person free from enmity never envies another. Buddhist philosophy believes that, the practice of Ahimsa Strengthens one's future life. If a person is preoccupied with the harm of others, then he has to go through such a hostile environment in the future No one should hurt or kill Another for the good of himself and the world. So Buddha strictly instructs that we should not harm any animal. Being sympathetic to all creatures is the hallmark of a non-violent mind.

Emperor Ashoka, the victor of the Kalinga war, had a remorse for winning the war and it was his remorse that led him, to win the hearts and minds of the people with the help of non-violence, (Ahimsa), love and friendship instead of temporary conquest. The horrors of war afflicted him so much that he converted to Buddhism and full implemental the Buddhist principle of Ahimsā. Emperor Ashoka instructed moral conduct in his religion, He Spoke of following the principle of Ahimsā by spreading the massage of equality and compassion with all creatures. He applied strict rules to obey the sacred instructions to preserve the environment and to protect biodiversity. He banned the slaughter of being in his kingdom and slaughter of animals for the yajña and the royal feast. He set up a veterinary clinic to alleviate the physical suffering of the animals. It was forbidden to cut down trees without permission. Cruel play with innocent animals was also prohibited, Inspired by Buddhism, the populist emperor Ashoka Built highways for the happiness of the people and travel facilities. Planted shady trees to alleviate the fatigue of the travelers, dug wells and built restaurants along the way.

Metta, karuna, Mudita and uppeksha concentration of these four principle is called Brahmaviharas in Buddhist philosophy. The positive aspect of the concept of Ahimsa as a mental analyst is the practice of Brahmaviharas. Violence towards all creatures is alleviated by the shelter of the heart of metta, karuna, etc. By practicing Brahmavihara shots, the enemy is eliminated from the human mind. Buddha says that just as envy is eroded by the practice of Metta, it also creates a positive relationship of a peaceful mind with peaceful world. “It simply means directing love towards all living creatures. It helps ones own self because it minimizes hatred; it helps others on whom it is bestowed because he gets something what he lacks”⁹. Karuna means ending violence and building compassion for all souls. Katuna, as the foundation of morality, seeks to alleviate the suffering of others as much as it does itself. The medical treatment of the sick person belongs to Karuna. The third level of Brahmavihara is Mudita. Selfless love for all creatures is the another name of Mudita. This puts an end to hostility and creates a peaceful loving atmosphere. Revenge is destroyed by the fourth level of Upeksha. According to the Buddha, are should be friendly without hatred towards everyone. No one of jealous of a person who is friendly to the universe, even animals do him no harm. While standing, sitting, lying down as long as you are awake, it is your duty to remain in this friendly manner, the name of staying in this way is Brahmaviharas.

In modern western philosophy, environmental ethics speaks of ethical behavior towards the environment and protection of the environment. The principle of environmental ethics is the principle of friendship by eliminating violence. But the question is, if we have a Ahimsa attitude towards the whole environment, how will human life be protected? We cannot deny the need to conserve natural resources in order to save lives. Although the non-violent Buddha preached the massage of Ahimsa, he approved the eating of fish and meat in certain cases, For example, he said that if it is necessary to eat meat to get rid of a particular disease, then killing animals in the interest of that need is not an inappropriate act. Sick people are eating raue meat here to cure diseases. This exception to the Ahimsa of the Buddha reveals a liberal attitude from a practical point of view.

Nature of Buddha’s View

Nature and the environment had a deep relationship with Lord Buddha. Nature and environment are the basis of Buddhism. The important events of Buddha’s life like birth, death enlightenment were nature centric. He was born on the full moon day of Baiśākhī under the sālā tree of Lumbini forest. He has embraced nature since birth. Despite being a prince, the pet rabbit, deer cub and the peacock were his childhood playmates. While attending a ploughing festival at the village, he noticed that birds and frogs were eating the insects that came out of the wet soil in the away. Thinking about the cruelty of humans and animals for survival, he meditated deeply in the shade of a Jambu tree in solitude from the noise. When he studied politics, horsemanship, archery etc, some exceptional moral behavior could be noticed in him. When he went hunting, he would release the prey a hand so it would save the helpless body deer and he would rejoice in it. Lord Buddha left home on the full moon day of āsārhī to find a way out of sorrow. Which is known as Mahabhiniskramana in Buddhist literature? While traveling in search of the truth. Uruvela Senānigam, near Gaya, immersed himself in deep pursuit under a huge Bodhi tree. He received milk-rice from a bride named Sujata from senānigam

and a happy moment on the full moon day of Baiśākhī revealed his mind to the enlightenment. Buddha attained enlightenment and spent four weeks near the Bodhi tree. In the fifth week he went to the Ajapāla banaya where the goat-hardware rest for some time, in the sixth week at the Muchalinda. In the seventh week he came to the Rajayatana tree. This tree was a shelter for many insects and animals, it maintains the ecological balance. After attaining enlightenment, he went out to preached the first Sermon to the familiar five disciples in the deer park at Isipatana, which is known in the Buddhist tradition as the introduction of 'Dharmacakra'. Buddha's physician Jīvaka was a herbalist. Nature's trees-herbs-shrubs-tree roots are life saving herbs. Buddha's Jataka stories prove that Buddhism broadly encouraged kindness to animals.

According to Mahāparinibbāna sutta of Dīgha Nikāya at the age of 80, the Buddha announced his imminent death. His death is known as Mahāparinibbāna in Buddhist philosophy. On the way of Kusināra. He took shelter, in the house of the Mango grove of cunda in a place called Pāvā. Blacksmith cunda invited him to eat rice, sukaramaddva etc the next day. After eating the meal he fell ill and he told total his disciple Ānanda that the cunda's meal was not the cause of his death. But according to Newman and Waley, the word 'Sukara' is associated with this diet, but it is the only plant that was used as food later, in the biography of the Buddha, the word sukaramaddva was used as the soft flesh of sukara.¹⁰ Despite the disciple Anand's objections, he set out for Kusinara with a sick body. "Even during the last hours Buddha's life. He showed his great love of trees by asking. Ānanda to prepare his last bed in such of fashion that he could eye them. He liked his bed, to be between two sāla trees. This was duty complied with, the twin sāla trees. Showered their blossoms on Buddha's body as a token of love and respect for him. Not only had the sāla trees, but the other trees also. Different kinds of lilies appeared to pay homage to lord Buddha."¹¹ He even liked to give his speeches and teaching's in the shade of big trees. Meditation was done inside the deep forest.

Although environmental ethics was not explicitly mentioned at the early Buddhist philosophy. Buddha never spoke of the arbitrary use of the environment. Buddhism speaks of protecting natural values in practical way like Buddha monastery were built without destroying nature. The Vassa means three months annual "rain retreat" period. Lord Buddha spends his first rains retreat at deer park, Isipatana. Thus he spends twenty first to forty five his vassa in Jetavana and Pubbārāma savatthi. "The Buddhist community all over the world has extended. Popular ritual at Bodhi-Pooja, Which is performed by pouring water to the root of Bodhi tree and paying respect to it, and other species at the trees. This virtually has helped to preserve the trees even during droughts as well as from human destruction"¹². Buddha's environmental mortality clearly indicates that our moral or immoral behavior significantly influences the course of this nature. So, our behavior will be free from violence, envy and greed. Buddha's principles, however are not strictly adhered to by ordinary people but if we adhere to it in flexible way, perhaps we can prevent much of today's environmental problems. If we want to give the gift of a healthy natural environment for future generations, the natural world and our fellow human beings, then the moral responsibility and duty towards the environment must be fulfilled. Sympathy for natural's human beings and other living creatures proves that the nature loving Buddha was responsible enough for nature. The responsibility of man towards the environment and nature however was a matter of

considerable concern in early Buddhist philosophy. SO the discussion of the duty towards the environment is Buddhist ethics to solve the current ecological crisis and to balance the environment is very relevant.

Notes

¹ Dr. Dikshit Gupta: Nītibidyā. P.54

² A Manual of Ethics. J.S. Mackenzie. P.1

³ Dr. D.D. Mishra (S. Chand), Fundamental concepts in Environmental studies as per UGC Model. Curriculum for undergraduate.

⁴ Internet Collection (Author not found) Environmental Ethics (Essay) P-1

⁵ Majjhima Nikāya, 1/4/8, Version, P-155

⁶ Dr. Samarendra Bhattacharya: Sānmānika Nītibidyā, P-51

⁷ J. Sinha. A Manual of Ethics. P.187

⁸ Dr. Dikshit Gupta, Nītiśāstra. P-54-55

⁹ Ibid P.78

¹⁰ Waley 1932 P-343-54

¹¹ Ibid, P-217

¹² Avinashikumar Sirvastava “Buddhist Environmentalism” in D.C. Sirvastava, ed, op.cit. P-140

