



## Psychoanalytic Theory by Dr.B.R.Ambedkar in *The Buddha and His Dhamma*

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### Abstract :

Psychoanalytic theory is the theory of personality organization and the dynamics of personality development. There are number of childhood events in the Buddha's that cast an indelible mark on his psyche. The voracious reader and renowned scholar like Dr. Ambedkar applies this theory in his magnum opus work *The Buddha and His Dhamma*. It is not mere the story elaborating the series of live events of Buddha's life, it gives a detailed account about multiple upheavals taking place in Buddha's personal and domestic life. The journey of Siddharth Gautama to enlightened Buddha mesmerizes the world and provides ample opportunity to study his character using Psychoanalytic theory.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar succeeded in penning down a multidimensional discourse dealing with Buddha's life. The news brought by the five Parivrajakas that the Koliyas and Sakyas had made peace, made Gautama very uneasy. The reason for his renunciation was sorted out. This disturbs a lot to Siddhartha and compels his to rethink of his decision to continue as Parivrajak. His meeting with little Rahul, deserted wife Yashodhara, wailing father Suddhodhana and many more events in Buddha's life must have influenced and moved him. Always putting him among supernatural and denying his human side may not be justified. He faced these all events courageously and attained supreme knowledge glorifies him. But Buddha is an exception among millions of people born on the earth and exception can not be set as a rule. In Buddhism for the first time we find training of the mind to make it act righteously (p.595) This part of discussion makes Buddhism different from other religions.

*Keywords : Buddha and His Dhamma, Psychoanalytic theory, renunciation*



## **Introduction:**

*The Buddha and His Dhamma* is the combination of religion, spiritualism, literature and many more things. Dr. Ambedkar discusses many such events which present psychoanalysis of many characters. The renunciation of Buddha, his great meditation for supreme knowledge, Rahul's meeting, Yashodhara's reaction on Buddha's renunciation, her entry into Buddha's Sangha, Mahaparinibban of Buddha these and many more incidents are described by Dr. Ambedkar which show great psychological upheaval in the minds of many characters. Psychological terminology is colored with the name of Buddhism. The removal of superstition and untouchability is not only a social stigma but also a psychological disorder and needs to be addressed. The book has a silver line of psychoanalysis of human suffering and its solution.

## **Centrality of mind in Buddhism :**

The earliest Buddhist writings are preserved in three-part collections called *Tipitaka*. Various discourses in the Sutta Pitaka contains much psychological material. The methodology of Buddhism is based on personal experience through introspection. According to the Buddha, while initially unreliable, one's mind can be trained, calmed and cultivated so as to make introspection a refined and reliable method. This method provides an opportunity to peep into the nature of mind the Buddha.

The use of Psychoanalysis is the modern approach of the writers. It has expanded the horizons of literature. The art for art's sake has now been conservative terminology the literature has now traveled across. There are many issues the modern literature shows concern for. The form, the structure is less important and the focus is on characters. This approach of Buddhism and reinterpretation by Dr. Ambedkar is *BHD* give modern approach and present Buddha relevant in the modern context.

## **Episodes attracting psychoanalysis of the Buddha :**

The news brought by the five Parivrajakas that the Koliyas and Sakyas had made peace, made Gautama very uneasy. The reason for his renunciation was sorted out. This disturbs a lot to Siddhartha and compels his to rethink of his decision to continue as Parivrajak. (p.57) this the most important incident turning point of his life. Twice he faces *to be or not be* situation. He gives centrality to mind of his philosophy and the modern science has proved how correct he is.(p.111) When the Buddha meets his father, he suppresses his emotions.(p.164) In Buddhism for the first time we find training of the mind



to make it act righteously(p.595) This part of discussion makes Buddhism different from other religions.

Buddha recognized mind as the center of everything. According to him, it is mind that precedes things. dominates them, creates them. He asserted that Mind is the leader of all its faculties. Mind is the chief of all its faculties. The very mind is made up of those faculties. The first thing to attend to is the culture of the mind. (BHD p.104) After enlightenment the Buddha had a dilemma whether to reveal his teaching. This must be a situation of self-conversation. His mind turned to inaction and decided not to disclose his revelation. (BHD p.111)

It is fact that Buddha strengthened himself to fight with self. The five fellow companions condemned Buddha for abandoning austerities and turned to life abundance and luxury when he accepted pudding from Vishakha. This episode is not that much simple as it appears. It takes several decades to discard age old dogmas, rituals. Gautama thought over it and confirmed to renunciate all that is illogical and impractical.

Buddha's discourses on mind reveals his thought process and makes it clear that he has given centrality to mind in his philosophy. He asserts, "Mind is the only instrument through which light can come to man." (BHD p.124). He makes it clear that mind of dungeon-dwellers is not a perfect instrument for the purpose.

Part-IV Call from Home in *The Buddha and His Dhamma* provide perfect situation to psychoanalyze the ripples in the mind of the Buddha. His triumph over all evils shows the culmination of his unapparelled courage. But it must not be denied that his arrival for the first time after enlightenment among family members, last look at father Suddhodana, meeting with Yeshodhara and Rahula and last attempt to make him a householder are some of the most vital litmus tests for the Buddha. Buddha took a seat opposite his father, and the King Suddhodana gazed at his son who was the Buddha now. He had great desire to call him "Siddharth" but dared not. His heart was silently appealing him to come back to his old father and be his son again. And what else a helpless father could do? This is one of the moments that illustrates the concept Aristotelian concept of purgation in the real sense.

While in Kapilvastu on his visit the word was sent to Yeshodhara but she replied: "Surely, if I am deserving of any regard, Siddhartha will come and see me." Once the Buddha meets her, should she touch the Tathagata? Siddhartha was enlightened at this time



but Yeshodhara was not. She was full of love, affection for him like an overflowing vessel, unable to contain herself. This encounter of the Buddha with Yeshodhara is the highest peak of emotional outburst. Then Yeshodhara dressed Rahula and told him to go to his father and ask for inheritance from his father. Rhaul had never seen Siddhartha and he knew no father but Suddhodana. When Rahula asked the Buddha “Aren’t thou my father?” The Blessed one remained silent. Who knows what would the Buddha have felt during those hours. This must have been the heaviest time in his life.

### **Conclusion:**

Death of Suddhodana, Mahaprajapati, death of Yeshodhara and Rahul and murder of Moggallana these and many such incidents must have moved the Buddha. The Buddhist canonical writings can be treated as praise literature intending to glorify the Buddha and nothing is unnatural in it. But the critical analysis, psychoanalysis offer you an opportunity to peep and ponder transparently. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar proved his metal by attempting herculean task to imbibe vastly scattered Buddhist literature in a book without losing its essence. The students of language and literature do get lot of stuff to study venture psychoanalytical analysis of the Buddha.

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