Special Issue on “Materialism in Indian Philosophy”

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Special Issue on “Materialism in Indian Philosophy”

Rama Krita Gitaam, Vivaat Fivet Sukham Fivet. There is nothing like an almighty, heaven, after life, ghost. You only have this earthly life. So my friend, live it to the fullest or there won’t be a second chance. Vedas are just incoherent rhapsodies. Such texts are written by opportunist Brahmans, not by divine superpower. This material body is the ultimate truth. It is formed by four elements - earth, air, fire and water. Vyan or ether cannot be perceived, so doesn’t exist. Perception (Pratyaksa) is the only pramana. Inference can’t be valued. The mind infer the knowledge of something from the knowledge of something else. That could be accounted for by its being based on a former perception or by its being in error. There is nothing like reincarnation, extracorporeal soul, fate on law of karma. The universe came into being by accident. God cannot be perceived, so it doesn’t exist. Neither heaven nor hell do. This life is the red colour comet, betel leaf. You don’t own it. So earthly body it’s in the ultimate of human life. live happily. If you borrow food, there is no heaven after this life. The ideal of the ultimate care for any. Don’t in any.
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In this issue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Title of the Paper &amp; Author</th>
<th>Page No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Matrilineal Roots in Some Early Materialist Tradition in India: Re-Visiting Tantra from a Marxist Perspective- Archana Barua &amp; Rekhamoni Devi</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>All Philosophical Revolutions is an Offshoot of Materialism in India: A Brief Study based on Evolution of Materialistic Thinking after later Vedic Period- Ferosh.M.Basheer</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>An Appraisal to Indian Materialism: Special Reference to Cārvāka Philosophy- Leena. K.R.</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Rudiments of Materialism Prior to Classical Indian Materialism- Rajen Lakra</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Cārvāka or Lokāyata Philosophy as a theory of Materialism- Sayantani Mukherjee &amp; Gargi Goswami</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Dialectical Materialism- Shikha Kumari</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Relevance of Substance Theory of Charvaka in Present Times – Desh Raj Sirswal</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>REPORT OF THE PROGRAMME</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>CONTRIBUTORS OF THIS ISSUE</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Matrilineal Roots in Some Early Materialist Tradition in India: Re-Visiting Tantra from a Marxist Perspective

Archana Barua & Rekhamoni Devi

Abstract

This article traces the gradual development of early Indian Materialism in the philosophy of Sāṃkhya and in Tantra following the guidelines laid down by scholars such as Debiprasad Chattopadhyay and some others that suggests a possible Marxist –Communist way of looking at some such developments. On the other hand, there were certain alternate and non-Marxist ways of re-visiting the same in its attempt at throwing some light on certain other remaining issues in this regard. Is there any scope for an alternate way of assessing the Indian materialistic tradition from some other perspectives, for example a Feminist One, or a Theistic one that may also accommodate a refined version of materialism in its fold? This question is to be addressed here as well. Besides, the article makes an attempt at re-discovering some socio-cultural belief systems of some primitive and matriarchal societies that might have largely contributed to the growth and development of the Materialism as well as the esoterism of the philosophy of Tantra.

Introduction:

Though the nature of Indian thought has often been identified to be exclusively spiritual or other-worldly, there can be no doubt, says Garbe that Sāṅkhya is one of the oldest philosophies of the Indian materialist tradition and there are many others. Garbe cites the well-known reference in Kautilya’s Arthasāstra to the three systems of “philosophy” or “science” (anviksiki) current at that time: Sāṅkhya, Yoga, and Lokāyata (Materialism). However, what one means as materialism may harbour different shades of meaning within it. Although its final outcome in classical period gave it a definite shape as we see in Isvara Krishna’s SāṃkhyaKarika, there were in between small steps that showed possibilities of alternate developments. In Richard Garbe’s analysis, for example, though the old Sāṃkhya was the singular work of Kapila or Pañacaśikha that had its origin in pre Vedic traditions, it
still remains questionable whether Sāṃkhya is materialistic in an exclusive sense as it is understood in the West. So it remained not a finally resolved position despite attempts made to give it a final shape in the SāṃkhyaKārikā.

The Sāmkhya uses two mutually exclusive patterns of the real and does not evaluate them, that is, prefer one to the other. Apparently, *prakṛti* is independently real, as real as *purusa*, and in that sense it could be called a ‘self’, existing by itself. Prakṛti exists and acts by itself, but it is not for itself, the value of its existence is for another. Garbe assigns a ‘spiritual principle’ behind the evolution of matter in the universe from the unconscious primitive matter. This spiritual principle is ‘the collective influence of the innumerable individual souls which—themselves incapable of any activity—contemplate, as spectators from all eternity, the movement of matter. It is not by conscious will that the souls exert an influence on matter but by their mere presence, which in a purely mechanical way excites matter to activity and development, just as a magnet acts on the iron’. (Marwaha 2013)

*Prakṛti* as the female principle giving birth to all phenomena divided into 24 categories. However according to Sāṃkhya, “creation” means only the unmanifest (avyakta) becoming manifest (vyakta) as it is impossible for an entity to come into existence out of non-entity. “The *vikāra* or evolutionary products of *prakṛti* are called *kṣetra*, whereas the *avyaktā* part of *prakṛti* is regarded as the *kṣetrajña*. As Bhattacharya and Larson state: “With the Sāṃkhya concept of matter (*pradhāna*), causality, the *guna*-s and reductive materialism, it would be expected that the school develops a definitive materialist position. This did not happen, however. Instead, the Sāṃkhya teachers worked out an eccentric form of dualism with primordial materiality or the tripartite constituent process (encompassing twenty-four fundamental principles) as one kind of ‘existent’, and pure consciousness (*puruṣa*, a twenty-fifth *tattva*) as a second kind of ‘existent.’ Eccentric, as it does not follow the usual or conventional notions of dualism, which profess two different kinds of reality—the physical and the mental.” (G. J. Bhattacharya 1987).
The question is, to what extent this boundary level can be extended and in what manner? For example, if Sāṃkhya remains stubbornly a dualistic tradition refusing to part with its spiritual counterpart, its non-material other half irrespective of the fact that in its passivity and inactivity that so called non-matter is actually disrobed of its spiritual or conscious-like distinctiveness? But even then, will that kind of fractured materialistic position remain a viable option?

Early Materialism in Tantra and in Sāṃkhya in Light of Various Materialistic Positions in India:

Cārvāka and Ajita Kesakambalin are said to have established Indian Materialism as a formal philosophical system and accordingly Indian Materialism has also been named Cārvāka after one of the two founders of the school. In the Mahabharata Cārvāka is introduced to King Yudhishthira as a 'wicked Rakshasha' (demon) 'in the guise of a Brahmin' who 'seeks to accomplish the purposes of (the) 'enemy' because, after the great fratricidal battle, he appeals to tribal values and tells the king: "Since you have slaughtered your kinsmen and eiders, death is desirable for you, and not 'life.'" Gregory Claryes comments: ‘In this sense one of the Indian names for materialist thought Lokāyata, meaning’ prevalent among the people’, serves in a self-explanatory manner as one of the bases of the above view of importance of materialism….‘" However the tradition is not one and homogeneous that all these shades can be clubbed together in a similar vein. For example, Lokāyata in early Buddhist and Brahminical writings invariably stands for ‘the science of disputation’,vitandāśāstraand not materialism (Bhattacharya 2009a 18796).

Lokāyata was 'casuistry, and that this was exact description throughout the Buddhist period. While for Rhys Davis and others Lokāyata is one who disbelieves, in, paraloka, Shastri, Dasgupta, and Radhakrishnan are in agreement that the earliest meaning of Lokāyata was 'casuistry, (vitanda), and that this was its most exact description throughout the Buddhist period." More substantial is the passage in the MaitriUpanisad discussing the role of Brihaspati (apparently an abbreviation of Brahmanhaspati, the teacher of the gods) in the exposition anti-Vedic views. Apparently the reference is a Brahmin attempt to restore the reputation of Brihaspati, a recognized Rig Vedic teacher from an
association with materialism.\textsuperscript{iv} P. Shastri held that there were three possible Brihaspatis, one a philosopher, another 'an economist a third a law giver' (Shastri 1925). C.K. Raja, however, holds that "We do not, know of another Brihaspati in the Indian tradition, the one Brihaspati whom we know in later times has been the teacher of the gods, and it is the same Brihaspati who is the originator of the Cārvāka system. He writes that "Brihaspati' is essentially a man who was deified on account of his superior talents and achievements (C. Raja 1963). There are some conflicting accounts of Brihaspati’s life, but, at the least, he is regarded as the mythical authority on Indian Materialism and at most the actual author of the since-perished Brihaspati -Sutra (Chattopadhyaya 1973). Indian Materialism has for this reason also been named "Brihaspatya" Showing a link between "Brihaspatya”-darshana with the essence of Lokāyata, Marxist scholar D.P. Chattopadhyaya has dwelt at length on the gradual development of early Indian materialism in the philosophy of Sāṃkhya and in Tantra. In addition, Chattopadhyaya has emphasized on the role of socio-political factors in the decline of the materialist world view in India.

The earliest form of materialism, which is also known as proto-materialistic world view, may be found in the ancient belief system of Tantra. Tantra is an Asian tradition of belief and meditation and ritual practices that seek to channel the divine energy of the macrocosm or godhead into the human microcosm, in order to attain siddhi and moksha. Aiming at sublimating reality, the Tantric practitioner seeks to use prāna to attain goals which may be spiritual, material or both. Tantric practices are of two types; some are pro-Vedic and some are non-Vedic. This position can be supported by the fact that the philosophical ideas and practices found in some Tantras, such as, the Mahanirvanatantra, the Prapanca-sāra etc. bear remarkable similarities with those of the Vedas. In the view of Bhaskaranaya, the Tantras contain the essence of the Upanishads. On the other hand, practices prescribed in some Tantras, such as Yogini Tantra, the Kumara Tantra, the Niruttatarantra, the Guptasadhanatantra etc. seem to be very far from those of the Vedas.

Although Tantra may find its roots in the ancient Indian culture, its existence still forms an essential part of the contemporary Indian culture, not only in the practices of the tribal population but also in the
religious rituals that are followed. Early Tantra represents a period of human thought that was not as yet acquainted with spiritualism. The fundamental similarity between the three systems of thought, namely, Tantrism, Sāṃkhya and Lokāyata is their common theory of cosmogony according to which the world is “an effect of the sexual urge and it was born as a result of the union of the male and the female” (Chattopadhyaya 1973). Chattopadhyaya notes, ‘According to Tantra, the universe is created by sexual urge (kama); it was born of the female (vamodbhava) and as the result of her union with the male.’ This type of cosmogony is known as ‘genealogical’ and is commonly found among primitive cultures. This archaic view equates the body with the universe, as they are perceived to be made of the same material, acted upon by the same forces and thus function in the same way. This premise serves as the guiding principle behind the Tantra-sādhanā or Tantra-practices—intimately knowing one’s body is akin to intimately knowing the universe. The Purāṇaand other Śāstra accept this conclusion of all Tantras. (Chattopadhyaya 1973)

Matrilineal Roots in Sāṃkhya and in Tantra:

If the tradition of the original Sāṃkhya is traced back to early Tantra view (with its primacy to the procreation process), the literal meaning of the term puruṣa as male and prakṛti as female referring to the original meaning of puruṣa may be more appropriate. “Chattopadhyaya cites the SāṃkhyaKārikā to clarify the meaning of puruṣa, where words such as pumān and pumsah (meaning, the male) are used as substitutes for puruṣa(Īśvarakṛṣṇa 1837). The puruṣa of Sāṃkhya is not to be seen in the Vedāntic sense; it is not an abstract and anonymous one although it retained its unique position that also led to the possibility of multiplicity of many such centers. “It is conceived as the solitary, bystander, spectator and passive witness of procreation” (Marwaha 2013). It was the passive spectator of an essentially real world process which was not of illusory nature. Chattopadhyaya reminds us of the Tantra view of the human body as a replication of the larger universe. Thus, ‘just as a child in the [early] matriarchal society has no real kinship with the father, so the universe, in spite of being real, has no real relationship with the purusa. Hence, the anomalous status of the purusa in a system, known to the early orthodox idealists as essentially the doctrine of the pradhana’. (Chattopadhyaya 1973)
Chattopadhyaya accepts at face value Sankara’s claim that the Sānkhya system as set forth in the Sāṃkhya karikā is anti-Vedic and has no legitimate claim whatever to be an acceptable interpretation of the orthodox tradition. The necessary interpretive task, therefore, according to Chattopadhyaya, is to reconstruct what the original Sānkhya position was; and, in view of the fact that the purusa is an anomalous notion within the classical system, the way to proceed in reconstructing original Sānkhya is to work out a consistent interpretation of the Sānkhya position without the classical notion of purusa. There is some textual support for such an approach, says Chattopadhyaya, since the older Sānkhya texts like Carakasamhita and certain passages from the Mahabharata appears to suggest an interpretation which assigns a minor role to the purusa or consciousness.

Re-Visiting Tantra from a Marxist Perspective:

Tantric traditions, according to Chattopadhyaya, are very ancient and in many instances pre-Vedic and these archaic traditions of mother-right later come into conflict with the Brahmanical pastoral-patriarchal tradition of the alien Indo-Aryans. Tracing the origin of Sāmkhya to primitive Tantra and to the early mother rights, Chattopadhyay argues “because agriculture is the discovery of women and which remains their exclusive preoccupation in its early stages, it created exclusive conditions for the economic and, therefore, also of social supremacy of the female. By contrast, the Vedic ideology was ‘purushapradhana’ or male dominated”(Chattopadhyaya 1973)! The obvious reason for this is that the economic life of the early Vedic peoples was predominantly pastoral: “which has a natural tendency towards a social organization in which males dominate” (Chattopadhyaya 1973). The notion of prakrti is feminine, and a tradition like the Sāmkhya, which affords such a primary role to the notion of prakrti, probably reflects an ancient agricultural-matriarchal social reality different from the Indo-Aryan pastoral-patriarchal context. Similarly, Chattopadhyaya continues, such an agricultural-matriarchal tradition of mother-right is undoubtedly the context from which arise many of India’s archaic fertility rites, traditions of ancient magic, forms of proto-materialism and the Indian Tantra in all of its varieties.
Re-visited Matrilineal Roots of Tantra and some of its Socio Cultural Dimensions in Light of Some Possible Feminist Perspectives

In this background it is understandable that at a time when the ancient land Pragjyotishapur came to be known as Kāmarupa, with its centrality of one of the most venerated Shakti shrines in Medieval India, the Devipitha Kāmākhyā, the Devi here becomes completely transformed into the eroticised form of Yoni of Sati or Parvati. Wilson, in his preface of his translation of Vishnu Purana remarks that Assam or at least the northeast of Bengal (Kamarupa) seems to have been the source from which the Tantric and Sākta corruption of the religion of the Vedas and the Puranas proceeded. Shaktism, says Eliot, “in the sense of a definite sect with scriptures of its own, if not confined to the northeast corner, at least has its headquarters there” (Eliot 1910). In Assam Shaktism and Tantrism originated in the 4th to 5th century onward and rose into prominence in the seventh century A. D. centering round the Shakti-shrine (pitha) Kamakhya with strong Hindu Buddhist intermingling in Shaktism and in Tantrism. Kāmākhyā, who had her base in folk tradition, is now shown as indistinguishable from the Great Goddess of the Shakti Tantra who is superior to Brahma the creator and Vishnu the preserver and all others. Around the late 7th century, the female practitioner in Tantric Hinduism, yoginis came to be same as the Great Tantric Goddess Devi or Shakti, woman of great power, a goddess-like. The male sādhaka is known as a yogin or Shiva, a great Hindu god. In Tantric Buddhism, the female practitioner of Tantra is known as the mother (Tibetan, yum) symbolizing skilful means. Both the traditions stress the need to combine female and male attributes to achieve realization of ultimate reality (Benard 2000). For example, in the Kaula Mārga (Path of Time) practice, yoginis of different categories are included in the chakra or circle of experience, theśāddhaka (practitioner) aspires to control body and mind, bring rain and otherwise regulate the elements, obtain wealth, heal the sick and perhaps also acquire destructive powers. Some inscriptions indicate that dākini rituals were practiced well into the 16th century, but within mainstream Indian religion the cult diminished to the point that its temples were abandoned. Yet even today, offerings are often left at the feet of the images. Sometimes vāmacara practices with Five M s like madya,maangsha,maithuna, etc. are practiced literally as well as
symbolically. Such practices are part of common rituals practiced among the animistic traditions of aboriginal peoples as reflected in the folk traditions of similar kind.

Indifference towards the caste system was often expressed as open revolt against it. Chattopadhyay submits: ‘The Tantrikas proclaimed the essential equality of all men and of all women and, along with it, the rejection of the traditional marriage morals. Ānandagiri, in his Samkara Vijaya, described the followers of UcchistaGanapatias belonging to the vāmacari cult.According to him, they proclaimed: “However, according to our cult, there are two fundamental creeds (dharma) to be followed. All the males belonging to the various castes should be (treated) as one caste. This is one creed. All the females belonging to the various castes should be (treated) as one caste. This is the other creed. There is no sin in their mutual union or separation. There is no rule as ‘such a man is the husband of such a woman.’ All the castes being but one caste, the institution of marriage is a fiction!” (Anandagiri 1868). “This is simply startling! (Nevertheless) this does represent the standpoint of real Tantrism,” Chattopadhyay comments! The scholar concludes :“The family, as well as God', said Thomson, “goes hand in hand with private property!” (Chattopadhyaya 1973).

Towards a Meaningful Dialogue between Tantra and Marxism

In order to understand Marx's view of the family, we need to first explore Hegel's concept of marriage and then see what Marx inherits from Hegel and how he differs from Hegel. In “Hegel on Marriage and Politics,” Peter Steinberger maintains that for Hegel, marriage is an ethical relationship involving a significant change in the consciousness of individuals: husband and wife cease to be independent individuals, each recognizing himself/herself as first and foremost “a self-conscious member of a larger entity” which, because of its intimate union, is now “one person”. (Steinberger 1986). For Marx, Hegel's authentic male individual is an alienated man who leads incoherent lives: one in the family where he is dominant in a relationship with his natural subordinate and the other outside the family in the public sphere where he is to treat others as equals. He is an alienated man with a divided
consciousness, both hierarchical and egalitarian. An egalitarian family life is, therefore, essential in the development and sustainment of sociability.

Like Hegel, Marx views the family as the primary location of the development of species relationships though their final positions on matters related to family etc. differed to some extent. Marx's theory of alienation implicitly suggests that the bifurcation of life into domestic and nondomestic realms structured on conflicting principles is another arrangement that results in man's alienation (man's incoherent double existence). Marx's theory of alienation, with an emphasis on the importance of a coherent life of species-being, demands the principle of equality, not hierarchy, to be applied in the family as well as in the nondomestic sphere. Marx's insistence that emancipation from alienation requires man leading a coherent life of species-being in all spheres directly challenges Hegel's application of different structural principles to the domestic and nondomestic spheres. It can thus be logically concluded that Marx's theory of alienation makes sexual inequality in the family unacceptable, even though Marx may not have explicitly stated this conclusion.

Some Concluding Remarks:

While some such changed focus on the glorification of the Mother indirectly contributes to re-associating Femininity with Power that remains strong role models for aspiring Feminist scholars, it still remained debatable how far women could actually be empowered in the true sense of the term even among the traditions that glorified her image in the most abstract way possible. To quote Sukumari, Bhattacharya: “With the Feminist Movement steadily gaining ground, the tendency to see womanhood apotheosized into the Goddess, especially the Mother Goddess, becomes increasingly perceptible among certain sections. And who but Kali can personify the dark mystery of femininity as well as the cosmic power of creation and annihilation? By ascribing ultimate power to a Goddess the male guilty conscience compensates for the subjugation of woman in real life. 'Kali: the feminine Force' sees this idealized abstraction in the Goddess and glorifies her image” (Sukumari 1988). The scholar concludes: “Subordinate to husbands and superiors, totally powerless and active agents, human
mothers suffer the pangs of impotence. And yet Mother goddess worshippers point out how they have elevated the mother conceptually. What they have actually elevated is ‘motherhood in the abstract’, on a plane where they defeat demons; avert cosmic holocausts just as the male gods have done of yore. Can the luckless human mothers draw any consolation or spiritual sustenance from the image and myths of the mother goddess which the various cults produce as Shaktis of the male gods? The basic assumption comes from Sāmkhya philosophy where the male principle purusha is inertly acted upon by his consort Shakti. Tantra advanced the philosophy still further until Shakti on her own became a significant and formidable goddess. It is disingenuous to claim that India elevated her mother’s to a lofty altitude; if only because history brings out glaringly the discrepancy between the rise and exaltation of the mother goddess and the progressive deterioration of the human mothers position.” (S. Bhattacharya 1990)

While this kind of Materialism and its association with atheism remained objectionable to the Theists in particular, it found a comfortable support in the philosophy of Marx and its Dialectic Materialism. Non-intelligent Nature is quite incapable of this kind of reflection prior to engaging in creative action, argued Ramanuja. As observation goes: “The Theists' principal intention was to establish the distinctly glorious character of Brahman as supreme person, the Lord of all. Neither Ramanuja nor his Sri Vaishnava successors accepted the idea that it is the female principle that is the essential creative power (sakti), an idea, so dominant in the Tantric system.” (Lott, Vedantic Approach to God 1980)

In a similar vein, Acārya Sankara repeats a number of times his conviction that it is not insentient Prakriti but the sentient Brahman that is the cause of the world. Despite this initial opposition with Tantra’s centrality of non-sentient Prakriti at the center, there emerged shared commonality between Advaitavada of Sankara and the Material Monism of Tantra when Tantra will adhere to non-duality between Shiva and Shakti. This justifies the great Advaitin’s passionate devotion for the Goddess. “There is a celebrated hymn to Kali, the goddess, composed by the famous Sankaracharya. He was a fervent devotee of the Goddess.” (Zimmer 1946)
Notes:

i. Gregory Claeys, “Marxism and the Social Basis of Early Indian Culture”, (A Thesis Submitted to the ~Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the, Degree of Master of Arts), Department of Political Science, McGill University, http://&dvs=1517684816096~123.

ii. Ibid

iii. Ibid

iv. Ibid

References:


All Philosophical Revolutions is an Offshoot of Materialisms in India: A Brief Study on Evolution of Materialistic Thinking after later Vedic Period

Ferosh M. Basheer

Materialism can be defined as a state of being in which everything is visualized in a positive realistic sense. Here physical matter matters. It negates both the mental and metaphysical phenomena’s like concepts, feelings, human will, and faith etc. This article gives emphasis of the importance of materialistic thinking for the culmination of any ideology living in a false metaphysical virtual reality by citing the example of happenings in later Vedic period.

There was a bridge between later Vedic period and the period of Buddha. This bridge was filled with the ideals of materialistic philosophy. The materialist thinking paved the way for liberal and broader ideologies of Buddha from a rigid religious trend of Vedic period. So every cultural and philosophical transition can be attributed to a more realistic philosophical and material ideology which treats the world to be lived with much altruistic and hedonistic perspective.

Normally, in a narrow sense the word materialism always related to certain economic phenomena like accumulating certain material goods, pursuing wealth, enjoying material world etc. But in a much wider sense the term is highly philosophical in its outlook. Materialistic philosophy always believes in a single basic substance as a real one, which is a monistic philosophy and is opposite to dualism or pluralism. It always denies all supernatural phenomena and stress up on Nature as existential phenomena. It also denies all conceptualism including idealism and even immaterialism and holds the basic philosophy of physicalism.

The later Vedic period, the period in which most of the principal Upanishads were composed was marked by rigid religious dogmas together with various superstitions and social stratifications based on hereditary traits. High metaphysical and philosophical doctrines along with rigidity in caste and the various social stigmas result in the evolution of much sophisticated and practical way of altruistic thinking. It is this type of practical thoughts which we commonly called as the materialistic. It resulted in the evolution of many of the heterodox schools during this period. They challenged the prevailing beliefs and practices of the society rejecting all traditional means of knowledge and relaying on empirical evaluation and sense perceptions. Dr. Radhakrishnan rightly speculated this period in saying that the faith of the century was dissolving like a dream.

Another important aspect of materialistic philosophy is the freedom of enquiry. It was due to this scientific quest which led to the evolution of many of the heterodox system including Buddhism.
They tried to answer the existential problems of the common people beyond caste, creed and colour. Their rationality was marked by sensibility, commonsense and practical utility. For example Sanjaya questioned the existence of soul and focused on attainment of peace and happiness.

Later Vedic period underwent a series of social changes. Society starts changing, so rigid that the entire system was divided into four castes. The Brahmin caste began to dominate and their principle occupation was to deal with Vedas, performing yajnas, ceremonies and yearning donations and gifts. The kshatriyas who were mainly occupied with war, defense and weapons. The third groups were mainly occupied with agriculture, animal husbandry, trade and business and were known by the name vaishyas. The last were the sudras, who were considered as slaves to serve the other groups.

Women were treated as slaves. They came to hold the same positions as the sudras. They were alienated from the main stream political activities. Right to property was also denied. They lost their rights in marriage and even child marriage and dowry crept in. she was totally neglected in the society.

Philosophy of materialism denies all unseen world phenomena. It stress up on mediate scientific inductive knowledge denying all religious Meta physical speculations. For example during this period Ajita Kesa Kambali, who proposed a materialistic philosophy discrediting intuitive knowledge, Vedic rituals and enlightenment of perfected teachers, and acknowledged only four elements, earth, water, fire and air.

Materialism strives for intellectual freedom and free thinking based on pleasure and happiness. For example, the Charvakas, an atheistic and materialistic school, who acknowledged only sense perception (pratyaksha) and considered happiness or enjoyment as the ultimate goal of human life.

In the later Vedic period Brahmincal domination imposed by various religious impositions and restrictions in the name of religion was common. People were stratified and a sectarian card was imposed in the name of caste creed and culture. Any society superimposed by the above said phenomena will grow both scientifically or culturally. So materialism seems to have contributed a spiritual revolution by imposition the naturalistic phenomena in terms of strict religious terms. It can be evident from the fact that why Buddha was agnostic. Buddhism developed in India as a result of spiritual revolt imparted by materialistic thoughts. This is the reason why status of world is as eternal or infinite comes under 14 unanswered questions of Buddha.

Evolution of Buddhism comes under the proto historic evidences where rigid caste system was there. People were grouped as priesthood class, warrior group, merchants and slaves. The period was dominated by religion and the priest hood. this made the people to think in more materialistic way.
Innate character of human being is to seek pleasure and happiness in his life. But many times religious dogmas and ideals stand as a hindrance upon his free thinking. Free thinking always stands close to rationality and the rationality is the core for all scientific revolution. This type of situation prevailed in the later Vedic society where everything was rooted in superstition and myth. It was during this period Buddhism and its ideals began to influence the people.

Even in the mind of warriors who were having more materialistic outlook began to think about bonding of religion and religious people around them who were indirectly controlling the day today affairs of the kingdom. That is one the reason why many of the kshatriya kings adopted Buddhism as their court religion. In the merchant class also the people were bonded with their religious strings and strains. Buddhism was silent about the money lending phenomena. And every act of pleasure for this class was based on money and money lending. And also the dominance of Brahmans and kshatriya class over them was really a factor of concern. So they began to get attracted to Buddhism. So before the religious ambition really it was the materialistic ideologies which lead to the growth of much heterodox view of Buddhism.

Next important factor is the position of women. During later Vedic period the position of women was not good. The status of women suffered a setback when various restrictions were put on women’s right and privileges by Manu. Even the birth of women was considered inauspicious. They were considered mere entity or were totally ignored. Over religiousness gave the status of women a very low position. But later there stated a realization among the women about her individuality and the old completely dependent attitude began to vanish. A much wider speculation about life and a vision of seeing life as a naturalistic phenomenon made a general awareness to regard women as a human being and thereby express her right and dignity. She became more assertive and conscious of the latent individuality. It was a period from subjugation to the period of liberation from all rigid religious bounding and enjoying life as it comes. This materialist attitude and mind setting paved the way for setting a heterodox system of thoughts of Buddhism.

During this period scientific temper developed. Rational vision along with the scientific temper led to the invention of iron ore. Discovery of iron made a tremendous impact in the society. Materialistic ideologies always speak in terms of normal naturalistic way. Aided with rational thinking they gave importance to empirical evidences. Influences by these phenomena, Buddhism discarded all its scholarly way of imparting Sanskrit knowledge and start speaking in terms of common people languages like Pali and Prakrit.
Notes & Bibliography:


An Appraisal to Indian Materialism: Special Reference to Cārvāka Philosophy

Leena. K. R.

Abstract

The materialist theory had a good deal to do with the repudiation of the old religion of custom and magic. Liberal efforts at improving existing institutions sanctioned by time and embodied in the habits of people will remain ineffectual if the indifference and superstition of centuries are not shaken up by an explosive force like the Cārvāka creed materialism signifies the declaration of the spiritual independence of the individual and the rejection of the principle of authority. Nothing need be accepted by the individual who does not find its evidence in the movement of reason. It is a return of man’s spirit to itself and a rejection of all that is merely external and foreign. The Cārvāka a philosophy is a Fanatical effort made to rid the age of the weight of the past that was oppressing it. The removal of dogmatism which it helped to effect was necessary to make room for the great constructive efforts of speculation. In later Indian thought materialism naturally has come in for a good deal of severe and contemptuous treatment. The classic argument that it is impossible to evolve a subject from an object, since there is no object without a pre-existing subject, has been often repeated. Consciousness cannot be the result of natural forces.

Introduction

Development of Indian materialism can be traced as movement against Meta ethical supernatural theories prevailed in the early Indian philosophical system. It emphasizes more on present immediate pleasure seeking ethical activities rather than that of aiming something after this life. Many religious scholars always like to attribute an unethical crown to the various ideologies of Indian materialism. But we can find this as totally misguiding concepts. Indian Materialism always goes beyond the normal religious norms and ideas. It was an act of negative reaction to spiritualism and super naturalism prevailed in India. It emphasizes more on practical life of utility and existentialism. That is the reason why Indian materialism is known by the name ‘Lokayata’ which literally means ‘Philosophy of the People’. The synonyms terms like Lokayata, Nastika, Brihaspatya etc can be traced in the early period of Indian philosophical system for indicating Indian materialism.

Early Sources:

The traces of materialism in India may be seen since the days of the Rig Veda. The name of Uddalaka Aruvi is considered as the main materialistic thinkers of this age. The main philosophy of Uddalaka Aruvi is materialistic monism. According to Uddalaka reality is Truth or sat. Uddalaka
maintained that the world, being nothing else than a transformation of \textit{sat}, was eternal and the \textit{sat} could not develop out of an \textit{asat}, because this was unthinkable. Uddalaka made a rational description of death based on sound observation. He does not mention an eternal soul or the doctrine of karma in his chapter on death. Mind, speech, breath and warmth enter \textit{sat}, \textit{sat} being the ultimate or first living material which is eternal, and is truth. Uddalaka in his philosophy does not deal with problems of rebirth, of an eternal soul, \textit{karman} or \textit{moksa}.

Inside Tipitaka -Buddhist semi canonical work, we come across a new doctrine of materialism known as Ucchedavada or doctrine of Annihilation. According to them there is no rebirth, No fructification of karma and death is the annihilation of the individual. It encourages ethical and moral responsibility and seeking pleasure and enjoying life as the highest aim. The chief proponent of this philosophy of materialism is Ajita Kesakambali. He is considered to be the forerunner of the great materialistic school known by the name Cārvāka. He was a contemporary of Buddha and as well as Jaina. According to him, live happily, with death, all is annihilated. Ajita Kesakambali always wore a blanket made up of human hair. His important doctrine includes

- There is no such things as sacrifice ,charity etc
- There is no result for good or evil deeds
- Fools and wise alike, on the dissolution of the body, are cutoff, annihilated and after death they are not.
- Man’s body dissolved into the primary elements at death and no matter what he had or had not done.

We can also trace certain facts about materialism in Jaina canonical works such as Sutra-krtanga sutra and para canonical texts like Nandi sutra. Paurandara-sutra , the base text of the Cārvāka school of materialism gives a detail account of materialism in India.

Cārvāka is known as Indian materialism is quite old among the various non-vedic schools. Chronologically it originated in the post- upanishadic period before Buddha. Materialism is old as philosophy, and the theory to be met within the pre- Buddhist period also. Germs of it are found in the hymns of Rg Veda. Brahaspati is known as the actual founder of Cārvāka materialism. The term Cārvāka has its etymology in Carv which means to chew or eat. Accordingly Cārvāka has acquired the status of a common noun, used derogatorily to refer to anyone who is thought to be a materialist or a preacher and practitioner of the doctrine of ‘eat, drink , and be merry’. Indian materialism is also known as Lakayata-mata, ‘the view of common folk’.
The metaphysics of the materialist is a direct consequence of the epistemological doctrine that perception is the sole source of reliable knowledge. Carvakians hold that gods, souls, heaven, hell, and immortality of soul have no basis in our experience and hence are to be rejected as non-existent. They are concocted by the priestly class in order to protect its vested interests of money, status, and power by presiding over and performing rituals and ceremonies.

According to Cārvāka, matter is the only reality. The Cārvākas admit the existence of the world. It is composed of four element earth, water, fire and air which are perceived. The existence of other (ākāśa) is denied. The world is composed of the four gross elements. There are no atoms of earth, water, fire, and air because they are not perceived. Some Cārvāka admit the existence of ether and regard the world as composed of the five gross elements. Some Cārvākas believe in the existence of atoms. The body is a mere aggregate of the material elements Some Cārvākas believe in the existence of atoms. The sense-organs are produced by the atomic arrangement of the elements consciousness is produced by the material elements even as intoxicating liquor is produced by molasses when it undergoes fermentation. When they are destroyed consciousness is destroyed consciousness found in the modifications of the unconscious material elements of the body even as red colour is found in the combination of betel, arica nut and time. Some Cārvāka hold that consciousness is manifested by the material elements constituting the body. Consciousness in produced or manifested by the material in gradients of the body even as intoxicating liquor is produced or manifested by its un intoxicating material ingredients. But it is objected that consciousness is always produced by the inter course of the sense. Organs with their objects in the form of sensations of colour, smell, taste and the like. The Cārvāka replies that the sense organs and objects are mere aggregates of earth, water, fire and air, which are objects of direct perception. An aggregate is a mere collection of the constituent elements. It has no existence apart from that of the elements when there is invariable concomitance between two things they are causally connected with each other. One being the material cause of the other which is its effect. Lamp and light are always found together. Therefore, lamp is the material cause of light. There is invariable concomitance between a body and consciousness so the body is the material cause of consciousness. Thus consciousness or mind is an epiphenomenon, a by-product of matter. To appeal to God or some supernatural being in order to explain consciousness is nothing but argument from ignorance. To Cārvāka qualities not possessed by any of the elements individually may arise in the aggregates constituted of them. Thus the Cārvāka teaches the doctrine of emergent evolution concerning qualities, including consciousness.

Man is composed of four elements. When man dies, the earthly element returns and relapse into the earth the watery element returns into the water the fiery element returns into the fire, the airy element returns into the air; the senses pass into space. Wise and fool alike, when the body dissolves,
are cut off, perish do not exist any longer. The materialists must have preceded Buddhism, since the oldest Buddhist books mention them. There are references to this doctrine in the epics. Manu refers to nāstikas (nihilists) and pāsandas (heretics). The classic authority on the materialist theory said to be the sūtras of Brhaspati, which have perished. Our chief sources are the polemical works of other schools.

The doctrine dismisses necessarily all belief in a supernatural or transcendental being and with it also belief in everything that constitutes the specific subject – matter of religion and philosophy. It recognizes neither a God who controls the universe nor conscience which guides man; and it does not care for belief in a life after death which so far as right conduct is concerned, matters more according to the Indian than even belief in the existence of God. It thus draws away man’s mind altogether from the thought of a higher life and fixes it upon the world of sense. It smothers all consciousness of a deeper reality. Accordingly the ideal, if such an expression is admissible at all in this case is one of hedonism, pure and simple. Pleasure in this life—and that of the individual is the sole aim of man. Collective happiness if it is ever thought of is regarded is no conception of a general good to which the interests of the individual are to be subordinated, of the four purusartha or ‘human values; the Cārvāka rejects two viz. dharma and moksa, thus restricting the scope of human effort to the attainment of sensual pleasure (Karma) or securing the means therefore (artha) whatever virtues, are cultivated or either based upon convention or are the result of worldly prudence. The useful is the only good which the doctrine knows of pain is recognized as an inevitable features of existence; but that affords no reason, it is argued, for denying ourselves pleasure which appeals to us as desirable and towards which we are instinctively drawn. ‘Nobody casts away the grain because of the husk.’ The Cārvāka is no important of obtaining pleasure that he does not even try to secure freedom from pain. He makes a compromise with evil, instead of overcoming it. Every man, according to him, must make the best of a bad bargain and enjoy himself as long as he lives. The repudiation of the traditional teaching and all the moral and spiritual discipline for which it stands is a necessary corollary to this crude utilitarianism, whose motto is sufficient unto the day, is the good thereof.

It may be that death is finding and nothing remains afterwards but to believe in an ideal of life devoid of dharma is to reduce man to the level of the brute. It is difficult to believe that there could ever have existed such a school of thought. Even if we explain it’s extreme views as due to a reaction against the free speculations and the austere asceticism that were widely current in ancient India, the system we must admit, should once have inculcated less objectionable principles. The form in which it is now presented has an air of unreality about it. If any proof were required, it is found in its lesson of self-indulgence, which needs not to be taught. It is also somewhat suspicious that the Cārvāka doctrine should consist so much in denying what is accepted by the other schools and so little in contributing any new ideas of its own to the sum of Indian thought.
Materialism is concerned with inquiring into the sources, nature, validity, and limits of man’s knowledge of reality. The Cārvāka regard perception or *pratyaksha* as the only means of valid knowledge. And reject the validity of inference. Inference is the process by which we claim one proposition to be true or false on the basis of other propositions. They are free thinkers. They reject the authority of the Vedas and the supremacy of the Brāhmanas they are naturalists and accidentalists, and reject final causes and universality of Causation. They are materialists, positivists, atheists and hedonists. They identify the soul with the body and deny pre-existence, future life, Law of Karma, heaven and hell, bondage and release, and the existence of God. They admit the reality of gross matter. They advocate egoistic hedonism in ethics. The Cārvaka advocates materialism, atheism, positivism, and hedonism. He admits the reality of the world only composed of the gross elements of earth, water, fire, and air which are perceptible. He regards consciousness as an epiphenomenon of the body, and the self as the body endued with consciousness.

The Cārvākas regard perception as the only means of valid knowledge, an reject the validity of Inference. They are free thinkers. They reject the authority of the Vedas and the supremacy of the Brāhmanas. They are naturalists and accidentalists, and reject final causes and universality of causation. They are materialists, positivists, atheists and hedonists. They identify the soul with the body, and deny pre-existence future life, Law of Karma, heaven and hell bondage and release and the existence of God. They admit the reality of gross matter. Only they advocate egoistic hedonism in ethics the most important of its doctrine is that perception (pratyaksa) is the only means of valid knowledge. Every other pramana including inference (anumana) is rejected so that philosophy, which according to the common Indian view ought to be a discipline of life, cases here to be even a discipline of the mind. The reason assigned for rejecting inference is that there is not sufficient warrant for believing in the truth of the inductive relation or vyapti which forms its basis. The ascertainment of this relation, even supposing that it actually exists, depends upon observed facts; and since observation is necessarily restricted in its scope, it does not entitle us, it is urged, to universalize the conclusion reached with its help. It may be granted for the sake of argument that observation can comprehend all present instances coming under a general rule; but even then it should be admitted that there are others which are removed in time and which, therefore, lie beyond the possibility of investigation while a general proposition may be all right so far as holds good of uninvestigated cases also. Even the suspicion that it may not is enough to render the general proposition useless for purposes of exact investigation. If to avoid this difficulty we assume that it is not the examination of isolated particulars that is really the basis of induction but only the proper linking up of essential features or universals which are permanently associated with them, the Cārvāka objects that such a course would leave unrelated the particulars which alone are of practical concern. Nor can the universals themselves be
taken as its subject, for in that case there would be no Inference at all the so-called inferred truth connecting one universal with another being identical with the observed fact it self as stated in the major premise. It is in the quagmire of such a dilemma, as a well known stanza has it, that a logician finds himself floundering when he tries to maintain the validity of Inference. Our the familiar belief in the validity of inference, the Cārvāka explains as due to associations established during observation so that it is purely a psychological process with no implication whatsoever of logical certitude. The Cārvāka denial of the next world is adumbrated here in Brahadaranyaka Upnisa and also this view is given Yajnavalkya speaks to Maitreyl. Arising out of these material elements one enter into them again and vanishes. After death there is no consciousness. Here Yajnavalkya refers to the materialistic view of the self as identical with the body and denial of its survival after death. The Cārvāka recognize perception as the only means of valid knowledge. They reject inference and testimony as means of valid knowledge perception is either external or internal. External perception is due to the intercourse of the five sense organs with their objects. Internal perception depends upon external perception. The means can work upon the material supplied by external perceptioniv.

Materialism in one form or the other is to be found in Indian philosophy from the distant past. It is also occasionally mentioned in the Vedas, Buddha Works, puranas and Sarva Darshan Sangraha. It has no independent and exclusive book of philosophy of its own. So we can gather information about it mainly from the repudiation of materialism or of Charvaka School that we find in other philosophical books. Charvaka is materialistic in fact people with materialistic outlook have been branded as Charvakas in ancient Indian literature. For persons believing in a materialistic philosophy only grass matter exists and to consciousness or mind also springs from gross matter. The Charvaka philosophy is elucidated in Sarva Darshan Sangraha as there is no heaven, no ultimate salvation. No soul exists in the next world, nor are the actions of the four varnas fructuous in any way.

Concerning ethics and the conduct of life, the materialist teaches the doctrine of Hedonism, according to which the pursuit of pleasure and the enjoyment of worldly goods are the only proper and sensible ends of lifev, men should pursue and secure for themselves the maximum pleasure and enjoyment compatible with their lot in life. It is sheer folly and the height of unwisdom for man to relinquish the pleasures this life has to offer in the hope of finding some state of greater and permanent enjoyment elsewhere after death. For death is the ultimate end, there being no other world than this. Accordingly, the Cārvāka teaches that asceticism, self immolation, and self-mortification are the epitome of stupidity and delusion. Religion. God, Soul, the afterlife, heaven, and hell are the fabrications of priests for assuring themselves a comfortable livelihood. Of the four goals of human life (purusarhas), namely Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha, the materialist recognizes only two, that is Atha and Kama; the other two are rejected.
It should, however, be pointed out in fairness to the materialist school that not all followers of it were crude and egoistic hedonists. Cārvāka of ancient India and the Epicurean of ancient Greece bear a striking resemblance to each other in many respects. Both were philosophical materialists whose hedonism was tempered with self-discipline, discriminating intelligence, refined taste, and genuine capacity for friendship. 

Virtue is a delusion and enjoyment is the only reality. Life is the end of life. There was a distrust of everything good, high, pure and compassionate. This indicated individual hedonism. The core philosophy of Cārvāka itself reveals the pleasure of individual. Ie., egoistic hedonism. The materialist theory had a good deal to do with the repudiation of the old religion of custom and magic. Liberal efforts at improving existing institutions sanctioned by time and embodied in the habits of people will remain ineffectual if the indifference and superstitions of centuries are not shaken up by an explosive force like the Cārvāka creed. Materialism signifies the declaration of the spiritual independence of the individual and the rejection of the principle of authority. Nothing need be accepted by the individual which does not find its evidence in the movement of reason. The Cārvāka philosophy is a fanatical effort made to rid the age of the weight of the past that was oppressing it. The removal of dogmatism which it helped to effect was necessary to make room for the great constructive efforts of speculation.

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Rudiments of Materialism Prior to Classical Indian Materialism

Rajen Lakra

Abstract

Generally, materialism in Indian Philosophy is considered to bear the titles Lokāyata or Cārvāka. However, in the present era, a study is being made by various scholars that a traditional view of materialism was already present before the classical understanding of Lokāyata or Cārvāka. It is very difficult to say when exactly this traditional view of materialism arose nonetheless a few fragmentary criticisms are found in many texts of other philosophies. But one thing is for sure that it is developed in contradiction to the Indian dogmatic teachings. Indian materialism has two phases of understanding and I shall deal here only with a few concepts that are prevalent in the Pre-Classical period.

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Materialism is a form of philosophical monism which holds that matter is the fundamental substance in nature as if it is the only reality. Generally speaking, existence is composed of matter and it is viewed as the foundation of all things which also includes mental aspects and consciousness. Materialism developed independently in several geographically separated regions. However, materialism in some form or other has been present in India as occasional references of it are found in the Vedas, the Buddhist and Jain literature, the epics like Rāmāyana and Mahābhārata as well as in the later classical works of philosophy.

The time in which materialism made its manifestation is called the epic period of India because it was a time of great religious and philosophical confrontation; at this time Buddhism made its appearance as the new world religion along with Jainism.¹ According to Radhakrishnan, during the epic period, the ideas of the intellectuals were unsettled in 600 B.C to A.D 200. at that time, the faith of the people in the authority was diminishing. Under such circumstances, materialism was playing a historic role. People rejected traditional customs, religion and magic. They wanted spiritual independence. ² Hence the Indian materialists drew the attention of the thinkers of the traditional Indian philosophy.

Many modern writers on ancient Indian Philosophy have arrived at some of the most extraordinary conclusions with regard to its significance and origin of the Lokāyata. For example, few would say that
it was a time of crisis because the Brāhmans who were originally priests of magic and sacrifice, which could be still found in undeveloped peoples. The Brāhmans or the priests developed into the highest ruling caste by claiming authority over the other three principal castes. However, they did all these by their talent. The Brāhmans ruled without serious competition in this early period in the time of the Vedas because the village community had an economically and socially democratic government. Nonetheless, the problem arose when the Aryan who migrated into India from the north, and conquered natives and made slaves. Thus, in its place of free and equal members of the democratic and communistic village-community a class of people were oppressed and slaved. It is understood that in this collision, many materialistic schools could have been born. Further, the opponents of materialism destroyed their works, so that materialist literature was almost completely wiped out. What we now concretely possess are a few stray references to the Lokāyata views as preserved in the writings of those who wanted only to refute the Lokāyata.iii

In the modern era, however for most of the people materialism in India means the Lokāyata or what came to be known as Cārvāka. The name Cārvāka was the name of the disciple to whom the doctrine was first taught by its founder. The word Cārvāka means sweet tongued (cār-vāka) cārv means to eat. They were exponents of the doctrine of egoistic hedonism. Their views were very attractive to the ordinary people. Therefore, they were called Lokāyatikas (lokeṣu āyatam - prevalent among people) and their doctrine was called Lokāyata-Mata. Lokāyata consists of two words, loka and āyata or ayata; āyata may be derived as ā+ya+mt+kta or from ā+yat (to make effort) + a either in the accusative sense or in the sense of the verb itself, and ayata is formed with the negative particle a and yat (to make effort).iv

One must note here that this particular view just mentioned above about Lokāyata is supported by many scholars such as E. B. Cowell, Chattopadhyaya, H. P. Sastri, S. N. Dasgupta etc., but it is also taken otherwise, for example, Buddhaghoso and Ramkrishna Bhattacharya use it in the sense of scientific disputation (vitaṇḍāśāstra) as found in the works such as Saddanīti, Milinda Pañha and Sumangala Vilāsīnī.vi
The earliest unmistakeable reference to the word Lokāyata which denotes genuine materialist belief appears, in the work of Śāntarakṣita a Buddhist Scholar. A particular section of his work Tattvasamgraha is called Lokāyataparikṣā and contains a somewhat lengthy exposition of materialistic belief with a careful refutation of the same.\textsuperscript{vii} Further, the distinctive title as Cārvāka first appears clearly in the eleventh century Sanskrit drama Prabodhacandrodaya of Krṣṇa Miśra. Here a character by the name of Cārvāka appears, expounding the doctrine that the only things we are sure of in this world are the four elements earth, water, fire and air and there is no other world as such.\textsuperscript{viii}

There are several indications of the existence of several Pre-Cārvāka philosophical schools although there may have been differences of opinion among them and many modern scholars admit to this fact.\textsuperscript{ix} There are several scholars who have marked two stages in the development of Indian materialism. The first stage can be called the early stage or Pre-Classical stage where one comes across many realistic arguments. Several words in Sanskrit, Pali, and Prakrit proves the existence of materialist outlooks before the Cārvākas. For example, the word nāstika or the atheist is used in Kathopaniṣad which is considered to be the first attempt to refute the heretical idea; namely denial of the after-world. Further, an old Jain canonical work SKS (1.1.1-20, 2.1.15-16) mentions the ideas of bhūtavādins. It is the doctrine that consciousness arises from four or five elements or tajjīvataccharīravāda (the doctrine that body and soul are the same).\textsuperscript{x} In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad, there were a number of views in which one finds the doctrine that matter or the elements are the ultimate principle. Its references were also found in Arthaśāstra of Kautilya where it is compared with Saṁkhya and Yoga as a logical science (vitaṇḍā).\textsuperscript{xi} Further, one could also say about the earlier heretical teachers, such as Sañjaya the sceptic, Ajita Keśakambalin the materialist, Purāṇa Kāśyapa the indifferentist, Maskarin Gosāla the fatalist and Kakuḍa Kātyāyana the elementalist etc.\textsuperscript{xii}

The second stage, which starts from sixth century A.D onwards, can be called as the classical stage. This is the period when the Brahaspati-Sūtras are formed and commented upon and materialism is associated with a pramāṇa theory and here the pramāṇa theory becomes an important issue.\textsuperscript{xiii}
In recent debates on materialism scholars like Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya and Ramkrishna Bhattacharya interpret Cārvāka philosophy as essentially a materialistic school whereas scholars like Eli Franco and P. Gokhale associate with it at least two sub-schools - one materialist and the other skeptic. It is because materialism is primarily a metaphysical doctrine whereas Skepticism is primarily an epistemological view.

Cārvāka's story is also found in the Dīgha Nikāya, Brahma-Jala-Sutta, and in Mahābhārata in the book of Śalyaparvan and Śāntiparvan. Sometimes Cārvāka is identified with Brhaspati, who incarnated himself as an atheist in order to bring ruin unto the demons. In the canonical writings of the Buddhists as well as of the Jainas, we hear about a materialistic king by the name of Pāyāsi (Prakrit form: Paesi) who conducts various experiments to demonstrate the non-existence of the soul and the soulless origination of living creatures. For example, he has a person executed and the corpse is put in an iron pot and sealed. A few days later when the pot is opened again, the corpse is full of maggots. Hence for Pāyāsi, no souls could get into the pot since it had been sealed; so there is no soul, and there is the spontaneous origination of life. And if this is possible for worms so why not in the case of human beings?

However, the traditional society never accepted their views and most of the materialists doctrines were criticized in literature. For example, in Rāmāyana Lokāyatikas are blamed as 'clever in useless things' and in Harṣcharita, the Lokāyatikas are classed by the Vedāntists as heretics. Further Manusmṛti and Viṣṇupurāṇa also mention them as the nihilists and the heretics. However, the name Lokāyat was not attached.

Another interesting fact is that even though the Lokāyatikas were against the Brāhminical system this does not mean they were opposed to rituals. This is evident from a passage found in the Saddharma Pundarika Sūtra in which the word Lokāyata mantra dhāraka and Lokāyatika are mentioned together. Further, in one of the Buddhist text Divyāvadāna there is a phrase 'Lokāyata-yajña- mantreṣu
niṣṇātah', which means experts in Lokāyata ritual and spell. From this one can draw the conclusion that there may not have been severe criticisms to the belief system of rituals.xiv

Lokāyata also meant 'those obscure beliefs and practices which were broadly related to tantrism'. In Brhaspati-Sūtra and Prabodhchandrodaya, the Lokāyatikas, give importance to varta which means agriculture. Further, vamacara of tantrism was the belief of the people who were engaged in agriculture. Hence, the identity of tantra and Lokāyata was legitimate. However, tantrism was understood as something related to sex and the original significance was lost.xvii

According to Kṛṣṇa Miśra, Buddhism, Jainism and the Kāpālika sect are based on the Lokāyata system.xviii Brhaspati-Sūtras tell us that "the Kāpālikas are an ancient sect, as ancient as the Lokāyata; and that as the Lokāyatas, with their materialistic philosophy, marked the beginning of the science of Economics, so the Kāpālikas, with what system of philosophy we do not know, marked the beginning of the science of Erotics".xix Gunaratna identifies the Kāpālikas with the Lokāyatikas, however, Brhaspati considers them to be distinct sects. According to Haraprasad Shastri, the influence of Lokāyatikas and of the Kāpālikas is still strong in India. For him there is a sect which believes that deha or the material human body is all that should be cared for; their religious practices are concerned with the union of men and women and their success varies according to the duration of the union. They call themselves Vaiṣṇavas but they do not believe in Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa or his incarnations, but they believe in deha. Another sect is Sahajia which is the name of a sect of Buddhists which arose from Mahayana in the last four centuries of their existence in India.xxx

The Cārvāka philosophy encouraged the spirit of free thinking among the philosophers and suggested them not to accept a theory merely out of reverence for the time honoured tradition unless it had satisfied their reason. They denied the reality of inference, the authority of the Vedas, the reality of God, soul and rejected any value except the gross sensual pleasures. It should also be kept in mind that the primary goal of the Cārvākas was to give a blow to the ideology of Brahmanism as Nehru writes in his work The Discovery of India "The materialists attacked authority and all vested interest in thought,
religion and theology. They denounced the Vedas and priest craft and traditional beliefs and proclaimed that belief must be free and must not depend on pre-suppositions or merely on the authority of the past. They inveighed against all forms of magic and superstition... Some concluded that Lokāyata was originally imported into India from ancient Sumeria. Others thought that it originally formed part of the Indian priest craft. Also, it has been claimed that Lokāyata did not belong merely to the ancient times, for it still survives in the country in the form of certain obscure and highly obscene cults. However, Indian materialism has drawn the attention of the thinkers from the traditional period of time and every system of Indian thought tried to meet the materialist's objections and made the Cārvāka a cornerstone of its theories. Since Lokāyatikas promoted the ideas to give up dogmatism, and become critical and cautious in speculation were hated rather than understood. Perhaps, for this reason, the Lokāyata metaphysics and ethics have not been analytically discussed so far. However, in the present era, many recent scholars are trying to understand it positively.

Notes & References:


ii. Ibid., 227ff.


x. Ramkrishna Bhattacharya, "Development of Materialism in India: the Pre-Cārvākas and the Cārvākas" in *Esercizi Filosofici*, 2013, 3-5.


xiii. Gokhale, "Materialism in Indian Philosophy: ... 132.


xviii. *Prabodhacandrodaya of Kṛṣṇa Miśra*, ed. Sita Krishna Nambiar... 42.


xx. Ibid.


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Cārvāka or Lokāyata Philosophy as a theory of Materialism

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Abstract

There has been a widespread debate regarding the theory of Materialism in history of Indian Philosophy. The word “materialism” stands for that theory which believes that unconscious matter is the sole entity of this world. But from the very ancient times the word ‘materialism’ has been identified with realism, but the word ‘realism’ has a wider connotation. In history of Indian philosophy, materialism school primarily stands for lokāyata or Cārvāka philosophy. Lokāyata have taken into consideration the four elements as the basic constituents of the physical world. Their epistemology, metaphysics and their ethical theory has been the subject matter of misinterpretation throughout the history of Indian Philosophy. The present paper tries to clear certain misconceptions about Cārvāka philosophy.

Materialism holds an important position in the history of Indian Philosophy. The word “materialism” stands for that theory which believes that unconscious matter is the sole entity of this world. But from the very ancient times the word ‘materialism’ has been identified with realism, but the word ‘realism’ has a wider connotation. By bhūtavāda is meant that the four physical elements viz. earth, air , fire and water are the main constituents of the world. In history of Indian philosophy, materialism school primarily stands for lokāyata or Cārvāka philosophy. The Greek philosophers have accepted only one of the four elements as the basic constituent of the universe, viz. Thales (water), Anaximenes (Air), Heraclitus (Fire). But Lokāyata instead of accepting only one of the elements, have taken into consideration the four elements as the basic constituents of the physical world. Moreover the basic features of materialism philosophy gets fully reflected in Lokāyata or Cārvāka philosophy.

Lokāyata or Cārvāka philosophy strictly holds that apart from the four physical elements-earth, water, fire and air, there is no other matter. All matter is constituted by these four unconscious physical elements. Jaggery or molasses does not have any intoxicating factor in it by itself but when it is fermented it achieves its intoxicating quality, similarly the four physical elements may not have consciousness but when they constitute to form the physical body it gains consciousness. As ākāśa is not perceivable and it is void, Cārvākas do not accept ākāśa as a fifth physical element. Being non believer in validity of Vedas, soul and God- Cārvākas are also counted as nāstikas. Since the soul disintegrates along with the disintegration of body, there is no belief in afterlife, rebirth, heaven or hell. For them perception is the only valid source of knowledge. However a Cārvāka philosopher named Purandara says anumāna or inference can only be accepted as a valid source of knowledge only in
case of laukikajñāna as in cases of smoke and fire, but not in cases of alaukikajñāna like God, soul, rebirth etc. In this sense Cārvāka or Lokāyata are very much materialists.

Even though Indian sub-continent is the land of spiritualism or idealism yet its contrary view of materialism also originated and developed here too. The real debate between materialism and idealism focused on the main question of existence of soul outside body. The core theory of materialism focuses on dehātmavāda i.e. there is no soul separate from the body. On the other hand, as per idealism soul is distinct from body, mind or sense organs, and disintegration of body does not lead to disintegration of soul. We find clear instances of the debate between materialism and idealism in Prajāpati&Indra – Virocana dialogue in ChāndogyaUpaniṣad, Uddālaka-Āruni dialogue in ChāndogyaUpaniṣad and Yājñavālkya view stated in BhadāranyakaUpaniṣad. In Prajāpati & Indra – Virocana dialogue in ChāndogyaUpaniṣad we find that both Asura King Virocana and Devatā King Indra go to PrajāpatiBrahma to gain knowledge related to ātmā or soul. Virocana quite satisfied with learning that self is nothing but the body goes back and preaches this doctrine to the āsuras, while Indranot beings satisfied with what he has learnt goes back to Prajāpati to learn the extreme idealist view of soul. Again in ChāndogyaUpaniṣad we find reference to dehātmavāda in Uddālaka-Āruni dialogue, when Uddālakaproves through experimentation that out of the sixteen arts, one art is fulfilled by food, it shows that a healthy and filled body gives shelter to consciousness and if the body is unhealthy, consciousness disintegrates. But in BhadāranyakaUpaniṣad, Yājñavālkya tells his disciple Āruni that even though soul is immanent in all the elements, it is distinct from all the elements. Self is invisible but can see everything, inaudible but can hear everything, unknowable but can know everything. It is eternal and pure. This description given by Yājñavālkya indicates the Idealist view of self. Thus the debate between materialism and idealism can be observed from the time of Upaniṣad. Between 8th century to 12th century, the debate between the Cārvākas and the āstika school like Nyāya-Vaiśesika, Mīmāmsā, Sānkhya, Vedānta and even the nāstika schools like Yogācāra, Shvetāmbara and Digambara rose to great heights. Cārvākas had presented several criticisms against the idealist view of rebirth, eternal soul, after life, God, validity of Vedas etc. For this reason Cārvākas were criticized by both Āstika schools as well as Nāstika schools who believed in some of these views. The opponents have always put forward the Cārvāka view as the purvapaksa and refuted them accordingly.

We can never get a full picture of Lokāyata view as we find scattered and vague references to Cārvāka and Lokāyataperspective in literature like Purāṇa, Upaniṣad, Philosophical doctrines, Epics, stories etc. Even if a composite picture of Lokāyata philosophy can be found in first pariccheda of Sāyaṇa-Mādhava’sSarvadarśanasamgraha and last pariccheda of HaribhadraSūri’sŚadadarśanasamuccaya, still there is no independent literature or work as a valid
source of Cārvāka philosophy. But certain references of Cārvāka philosophy can be found in the following:

- **Vārtika or Bhāṣya named Bhāguri in Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya**
- Reference of Purandara as a Cārvāka philosopher in Kamalaśīla’s Tattva-vaṃgraṇa-paṇjikā, who has written a vṛtti named Purandara’s vṛtti.
- Mention of five materialist philosophers between 5th century BCE to 10th century CE named Avidhakarṇa, Udbhata-Bhaṭṭa, Kambalāśvatara, Bhāvivikta, Purandara indicates that school of Cārvāka did exist in those times.

Materialism is a very ancient doctrine. Ajit Kesakambala is one of the early materialist. In 5th century CE in Bauddha and Jaina literature we find mention of Ajit Kesakambala and King Pāyāsi as two materialists. In Sāmañña-phala-sutta, Ajit Kesakambala’s view and in Pāyāsi Suttanta, King Pāyāsi’s view has been represented. Ajit Kesakambala represented the following view: There is no gift in charity, there is no sacrifice and there are no offerings. There is no fruit and ripening of good and bad actions. There is no this world or that. There is neither mother nor father. There are no suddenly born beings. In the world, there are no ascetics and Brāhmaṇas who have gone along the right path of conduct and follow the right conduct, who have seen this world and that world out of independent knowledge and proclaimed it. A man consists of four elements. When he dies, earth goes into the mass of earth, the water into the mass of water, the fire into the mass of fire, the breath into the mass of air and the sense organs enter into space (ākāśa). Such a view projecting Ucchedavāda, is reflected in Keśakambala’s view. King Pāyāsi also through his personal experiences showed his adherence to gross materialism by not believing in rebirth and after life. He proved that apart from the visible physical body there is no such thing existent as extra sensory soul. If you take out the sword from its shield you can perceive that they are disjoined, but in case of body if you try to take out the consciousness and perceive it separately, it is not possible.

During 4th-7th century CE a Tamil epic named Maṇimēkalai was an important landmark in the development of materialism. In this epic a Vedic logician tells the heroine of the epic that there are six systems of logic, viz Lokāyata, Buddhism, Sāṅkhya, Nyāya, Vaiśesika and Mīmāṃsā. The respective teachers of these sects are Brihaspati, Buddha, Kapila, Akshapāda, Kanāda and Jaimini. Though the name ‘Cārvāka’ is not explicitly mentioned in Maṇimēkalai but reference to Lokāyata and Bhūtavāda can be found here. A materialist mentioned in Maṇimēkalai shows how materialism is different from Lokāyata. The materialist accepts perception as the only source of knowledge and also talks about dehātmavāda, and falsifies the belief in afterlife. Thus indicating that materialism depicted in Maṇimēkalai is not synonymous with Lokāyata, rather it is a different outlook.
Even though *Lokāyata* has been counted as an extreme form of materialism, yet the meaning of the word ‘*Lokāyata*’ has undergone several changes in the past. Etymologically ‘*Lokāyata*’ means “*Lokesuayetolokāyatah*” i.e. that which is popular among the common people. Debiprasad Chattopadhyay, Surendranath Dasgupta, Cowell have all used the term ‘*Lokāyata*’ in this sense. Jainācārya Guṇaratna holds that those who act indiscriminately as common people are *lokāyata* or *lokāyatik*. Śaṇkarācārya identifies *lokāyatikas* with common people. Mādhavācārya holds that Cārvāka are *lokāyatikas*. Petersburg dictionary calls *Lokāyata* as materialism. Monier Williams holds that in the masculine sense *Lokāyata* stands for materialist and in the neuter sense it is atheistic materialism. Manibhadra who was the commentator of *Ṣadadarśanasamuccaya* says that as *lokāyatas* are believers in the existence of perceivable object that is why they are called loka. Kautilya’s *Arthaśāstra* also mentions *Lokāyata* as one of the three major philosophical schools. *Lokāyata* has been referred as Brihaspati’s view in Jaymangala commentary and Yogaghām commentary. In Pāli translation of *Attakathā* of Tripitaka, *Lokāyata* has been referred to as *Vitandaśāstra* or casuistry. Many believe *Vitandaśāstra* or casuistry is the original meaning of *Lokāyata*. Exponent of Pāli literature Rhys Davids calls *Lokāyata* as naturelore. In *Vātsāyana’sKāmasūtra* *Lokāyata* is regarded as an anti-religious stand. Earlier Buddhist literature says that a special class of Brahmins was proficient in *Lokāyata* philosophy. In Āṅguttara Nīkāya and *Samyutta Nīkāya* references are given for the same. But Buddhist literature is not clear as to why these Brahmins were termed as *Lokāyatikas*. So it is clear that somewhere in earlier times there was no discordant relation between *Lokāyatas* and Vaidika philosophers. *Lokāyata* Brahmins were very much a part of philosophical discourse. Jaina literature called *Sutrakṛtāṅga Sūtra* talks about two schools of materialism - *Tajjīvataccharśravāda* (that which is soul is body) and *bhūtavāda*.

Even though there is mention of *Lokāyata* in *Padma Purāṇa* and *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* yet Brihaspati is taken as the founder of *Lokāyata* view. Both the purāṇas say that the Asuras in order to defeat the Devatāstook recourse to Śrota method of concentration and meditation on the banks of river Narmada. In order to deviate the Asuras from the Yajña, Brihaspati, the lord of Devatās took the form of Śukrācārya and preached the doctrine of Nāstikas. At the same time Māyāmoha (Illusion cum Delusion), a magical being created by Viṣṇu was sent to the Asuras to defeat them as they were pious Vedists. Māyāmoha approachesthem and not only speaks against the Vedas but also pleads to adhering to reason, yukti instead of abiding by authoritative verbal testimony, āptavāda. Māyāmoha denounces the three Vedas, criticizes the gods for promoting injury to animals, hīṁsā (referring to animal sacrifice in Yajñas), indulging in drinking wine and consuming flesh in śrāddha ceremonies and for being lecherous. Thus the demons were persuaded to give up the Vedic path.
In MaitrīUpaniṣad and Gitā, Lokāyata view has been denounced as Asura view. In MaitrīUpaniṣad, it is believed Brihaspati took the form of Śukra in order to protect Indra and destroy the Asuras and preached Nairātmyavāda through which the Asuras started believing good to be evil and evil to be good and started practicing non-Vedic faith. In Gitā too, Sri Kṛṣṇa too refers to the Asura view and says, “Pravṛtiṇcā Nivṛtiṇcā jayānirvidurāsura:, nāsaucamūpicācāronasatyameteśhuvidyate”-People who adhere to the Asura view are not aware of pravṛtī towards dharma and nivṛtī towards adharm; that is why they neither have any śauca, ācāra or satya(truth). Kumārila Bhātta in the 1st chapter of Ślokavartika says lokāyata is a kind of non-Vedic knowledge of sacrifices. Maybe prior to Kumārila Bhātta the Vedic rituals and customs got deviated and took a non-Vedic stance. Bhatta wanted to bring back the faith in Vedic customs. Even though Lokāyata view has been criticized in Upaniṣad, Gitā, Purāṇa etc. yet it must be admitted that Lokāyata was very much a part of Brahmāna education and highly respected in those times.

In both the epics, Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata references can be found of materialism. Even though there are several interpretations of Rāmāyaṇa, the Jābāli account of Ayodhyākānda reflects the summarization of main points of Lokāyata. He tries to explain that oblation offered after death is a wastage of food as after death there is no one to enjoy that food. If an oblation here (really) passes into the body of another, then a śrāddha can be offered to a man who is travelling abroad and he need not carry food on his journey. There is no world apart from the one which is visible. As perception is the only source of knowledge, one must only believe in perceivable objects, not in non-perceivable objects. Even if we find reference to materialism in Jābāli statement yet there is no mention of Jābāli or Lokāyata in ĀdiRāmāyaṇa. Again in Mokṣadharmaparvadhyāya of Śāntiparva of Mahābhārata we find the picture of two sides of Lokāyata or Čārvaka view-Dehāmavāḍa and Pratyaksapradhanyavāḍa. There nāstikas as purvapaksa point out that after the destruction of the body there is no such thing as indestructible soul. Perception is the highest source of knowledge. If there is no perception prior to inference then that inference is useless.

Modern scholars have also explained Lokāyata from their perspective. According to Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan the advent of philosophies like Lokāyata and Buddhism during the epic age of 600-200 BCE was a negative backlash due to the breakdown of age old beliefs of Śruti tradition. Radhakrishnan feels that as Lokāyata only believed in perception as valid source of knowledge and in ethical hedonism and thus were counted as one-sided. Again in Muir’s view, even though there was a popularity of Āstika Vedic view during the age of composition of Ramayana but later on with the advent of nāstikatradition, Āstikas started feeling insecure and propagated the strict Śruti tradition. Muir believes Lokāyata to be one of the causes of origination of Śruti tradition. According to Surendranath Dasgupta in pre-Aryan age the primitive form of Lokāyata was prevalent in Sumerian
civilization. In Sumerian civilization dehātmavāda and belief in after life was equally accepted. They believed that adornment of the dead body was necessary for after life. S.N. Dasgupta however believes that after the Sumerians came to India; their view of dehātmavāda got transformed to belief in afterlife.37

According to Tucci, earlier Lokāyatikas were not totally opposed or contrary to the view of Āstikas. Because earlier lokāyata stood for the advice given to kings by the priestly class. In heaven Brihaspati was regarded as the guide of Indra, similarly priestly class was regarded as the guide to all kings. But later the royal class got apprehensive about the interference and guidance given by the priests. As a result the purusārtha of priestly class was considered to be different from the purusārtha of the Kṣatriyas. Due to this the āstika class started considering artha to be subordinate to dharma, which resulted in origination of dharmaśāstra. On the other hand, nāstikas started thinking artha and kāma to be the main purusārtha; thus disbelieving the existence of God and karmaphala. In order to prove perception as the only valid source of knowledge the nāstikas took recourse to reasoning and casuistry, the result of which led to origination of extreme materialism and Lokāyata tradition, who were non-believers in God and believers in perception only.38

Pandit Haraprasad Śāstri brings out a unique feature of Lokāyata tradition. According to him, Lokāyata is deeply connected with Kāmacarana. He shows that if we observe Brihaspatiśūtra and Guṇaratna’s Tarka–rahasya-dīpikā we find that even though Lokāyata is quite ancient, yet even today this tradition is followed by Kāmasādhak class by the name of Sahajiyā. According to this class, body is the only truth and the union of man and a woman is the only ritual.39 Even though there might be disagreement among the scholars regarding the Lokāyata tradition but it is clearly observable that Lokāyata tradition is still followed by some cultures.

Even though materialism as depicted by Lokāyata is traditional but the name Cārvāka is quite recent. Because prior to 8th century CE the ‘Cārvāka’ name was never used in case of materialism. Cārvāka as a materialist school was first recognized by Haribhadra Sūri of Jainatradition and his contemporary Kamalśīla of Buddhist tradition. Rhys Davids, however, holds that the name “Cārvāka” probably was first mentioned in Śāntiparva of Mahābhārata. Between 8th century BCE and 12th century CE materialism came to be known by different names like-Asura view, Lokāyata, Cārvāka, Bārhaspatya, Nāstika, Dehātmavāda, Bhūtacaitanyavāda and Svabhavāda. Though materialism was known by these eight names, the most popular were Lokāyata, Cārvāka, and Bārhaspatya. After 11th-12th century we do not find any mention of sūtra or bhāṣya related to Lokāyata view. Many believe that the opponents of the Cārvāka destroyed all the literature of Cārvāka tradition.
In conclusion one can say that *Lokāyata* or *Cārvāka* tradition took time to reveal itself as an important materialist tradition but it surely projected a great deal of liberty of thought. The philosophic activity in ancient times was many-sided but the later tradition showed their apathy and dislike towards such an important philosophical tradition. The history of Indian philosophy does owe a lot to this materialist non-Vedic *Lokāyata* or *Cārvāka* tradition.

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5. Ibid., 6.5.7.
17. Śaṅkarācārīya, *Brahma Sūtra Bhāṣya*,1.1.1.


27. *AṅguttaraNikāya*,9.4.7; *SamyuttaNikāya*, 12.48.50.


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Dialectical Materialism

Shikha Kumari

Introduction

Dialectical Materialism is philosophical thought developed by Marx and is associated with Marxian followers mainly Engles and Lenin. Dialectical Materialism as it reads refers to two different concepts which are equally ambiguous and in need of clarification. I would begin this paper by describing dialectic in section 1. Dialectic is method of analyzing any phenomenon or problem as a concrete totality which is comprised of complex system of intrinsic relations (each relation is referred as relata. these relata, forming totality are different and identical, interdependent and opposing each other.), these intrinsic relations are related to each other as a process, which is continuously undergoing transformation (viewed in terms of negation, transcendence and inversion). Therefore dialectic method involves understanding of four concepts: a) totality, b) intrinsic relations c) process and d) relatedness. I will elaborate each of these concepts and present the method of dialectical thinking.

Section 2, deals with concept of materialism. Here I will explain materialism from three perspectives: ontological, epistemological and methodological, and show that materialism is not much concerned with explaining ontological questions. Materialism is also not useful in epistemological context. Therefore, it is only methodological context where materialism is helpful in explaining the analysis of society through the central role of ‘material’ process of production.

In Section 3, I will briefly describe the dialectical materialism developed by Marx. Important to note here is what Marx means, when he uses the word “material”. This paper shows that word “material” is used by Marx in restricted sense, to those implicit in common-sense language. Therefore it can be derived that Marx’s dialectical materialism is essentially useful in explaining the methodological context and more importantly understanding the social development.
Section 4, will highlight the problems in Marxian dialectical materialism. Here we see that even in methodological context, Marx dialectical materialism has some serious limitations.

**Keywords:** Marx. Dialectic. Materialism. Ontological. Epistemological. Methodological.

1. **Dialectic:**

No idea or concept can be understood completely without the understanding of its opposite (this is the inherent idea in dialectic thinking). Therefore to understand dialectic we should understand what is opposite of dialectic. Opposite of dialectic is the isolated consideration of things and consideration of them only in their fixity. In other words, opposite of dialectic is mechanical, atomistic, and static consideration of things and reality.\(^1\) Dialectic way of looking at things involve a interrelated process approach in which different opposing and identical relations are interacting with other and undergo continuous transformation, forming the totality. Therefore dialectic analysis presupposes the four concepts of totality, intrinsic relations, process and relatedness.

Totality is arrived by synthesis or unification of opposing forces (which are assumed as opposites in dualistic notion) such as “subject-object”, “body-mind”, “worker-capitalist”, “and psychological-physiological” etc. Totality negates all kinds of dualism and atomism. Dualism refers to all kinds of bifurcation of world into sharply separated and extrinsically related entities or events. Atomism on other hand is construction of complex system starting from simple elements and building upward through ordering, categorizing and relating these events. Here Totality differs from atomism because it is not simply sum of parts. Rather totality in dialectic is form of thought concreteness which is arrived at, using mode of presentation through mediation and some sort of reflexion generated through mode of enquiry on empirical concreteness using abstraction. Abstraction is process in which something is isolated from its

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context, so that it can be investigated and studied empirically using observable facts. According to Marx, this is referred as process of knowledge production through scientific enquiry. To understand reality, it should be broken up into thinner “abstracta” to arrive at simple characteristics which can be exposed to mode of enquiry. Mode of enquiry deals with what is immediately given (appearance or manifestations of objects). Using mode of enquiry we form hypothesis about appearance which would give comprehension or understanding of some aspect of reality and would lead us to mode of presentation where through mediation we arrive at thought concreteness or essence of the reality, referred as totality.

Notion of totality presupposes the existence of intrinsic relations called releta which are different and identical, interdependent and opposing each other. Here we see three important aspects of dialectic intrinsic relations. Firstly, relata make up a whole or totality. Second, they are different i.e. each of them can be identified as something specific. Third, they are interdependent in a contradictory way. Contradiction can be in three senses: a) contradiction which is mutually exclusive and exhaustive, b) contradiction which is mutually exclusive but not exhaustive c) “oppositeness” as complimentary. Fourth, relata are not interrelated arbitrarily but in definite to each other as they have something in common.

Dialectics is concerned with processes. When we speak of processes we essentially mean some sort of change in two senses. First, in the sense of “movement in a time-space dimension.” Second, in the sense of “transformation of the given”. Movement in sense of transformation can be considered as evolution of given into higher or more complex structure, which can be viewed as negation and transcendence. Presumption of process is central to dialectic thinking as through transcendence the structure of relata in relation change over time to form inversion. Inversion in dialectical process can be understood as reciprocal negation of negation. This is an outcome in which relata have shifted their place and relation for example

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2 Israel, Joachim. The Language of Dialectics and the Dialectics of Language. P. 115
3 Ibid., P. 115
the subject becomes the object and object become the subject, and the process is now conducted on a higher level of historical development.

Finally, fourth presupposition in dialectical thinking is concept of relatedness, where social world is visualized in a relational approach or in other words as “relations of relations.” A relation of a relation is something which goes on, which is changing and changed, transforming and transformed, transcending and transcended. Dialectical way of looking at things is, therefore to view them in their relatedness and in process of development and change.

With these presuppositions, we develop dialectical thinking using the dialectical triads called “thesis”, “antithesis: which is negation of thesis” and after analyzing both thesis and antithesis we retain some good aspects of both to develop some higher form of thesis called “synthesis: which is the negation of negation (“antithesis”). Above explanation of dialectical thinking is summarized in following figure 1.

![Figure 1: Dialectical Method of reasoning](image)

4. Ibid., p. 122
2. Materialism:

Once we have understood the dialectical method of reasoning, let us understand what the word “materialism” means. Word “materialism” or “materialistic” is used in three different contexts: ontological context, epistemological context and methodological context. We will briefly understand the notion of “materialism” in these contexts. In ontological context: materialism is based on the assumption that reality consists of material, matter or stuff. But if accept this assumption question arises is how are mental events or consciousness related to matter. A reply to this question can be found in dialectic materialism, as analyzed by F. Engles (though not by K. Marx) in terms of genetic materialism where he assumes that matter is primary to mind. Furthermore, genetic materialism maintains that mind originates out of matter, and that it is its highest and most elaborated stage. But in this case we are presupposing dualism of mind and matter which is contradictory to any dialectic thinking. Therefore, we see that Marxists are not much concerned about materialism in ontological context.

In epistemological context: Marxian materialism describes the process of knowledge production, where he tries to relate it to material process of production, but he never tried to reduce the process of knowledge production to material process of production. According to Marx reality should be grasped as cognitizing and practical activity. He wanted to eliminate the distinction between cognitive activity and material, object producing activity. Both are different but interdependent aspects of a total activity and they are intrinsically related. He further states this theory as mirroring of reality using praxis. Mirror thesis asserts that knowledge of “external” world is reflected in consciousness. In other words the knowledge we have is a picture or mirror of “objective reality” existing independently and externally to the subject and furthermore, there is a parallelism between reality and knowledge of reality. Here several objections can be raised against mirroring theory. Firstly, this thesis presupposes the dualistic
notion of reality which is sharply separated from consciousness or knowledge. Therefore it is contrary to dialectical reasoning. Secondly, it abolishes the role of subject. Because a notion of mirror image cannot be reconciled with notion of actively producing and transforming, and with reflexion. Thirdly, it has difficulties in explaining the historically conditioned changes in our knowledge. For example how can transition from Newtonian to Einstenian physics be explained, if the only knowledge we can have of physical reality is that which is mirrored? Therefore mirror thesis or Marxist position of materialism in epistemological context, is logically and psychologically untenable.

Methodological Context: Methodological questions are concerned with the ways the social world is different from physical world and how society is to be studied. We find that it is methodological context in which materialism is most effective in explaining societal development. We see that it more often in analyzing society than in analyzing human nature, Marx talks about the word “material”. For example, He talks about ““material life”, “material production,” “material means of production”, “material requirements of human life”, “material wealth”, “material powers of production” etc.” In all these quotations “material” is used in restricted sense of a usage concerning physical objects or that, which can be transformed into physical objects i.e. material labor through which the world was produced and changed.

Therefore I conclude this section by stating that the predominant way Marx uses “material” has little to do in ontological and epistemological context but is primarily helpful in explaining social development in methodological context.

3. Marx’s Dialectical Materialism:

I have covered dialectical method and materialism in above sections and while explaining these I have stated Marxian thinking of dialectical materialism in different contexts, while doing this, and keeping the scope of this paper limited to dialectical materialism. I refrained myself from giving any other dialectical views like those of Hegelian idealistic dialectical thinking.

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6 Israel, Joachim, *The Language of Dialectics and the Dialectics of Language*, p. 43-49
Therefore, in this section I would briefly state central notion of dialectical materialism in methodological context. According to Marx to all social analysis and dialectical materialism reasoning begins with man, who is primarily an acting, and language using being, involved in his daily activities, guided by intensions, desires, goals, inclinations and purposes though all his actions form part of a social network with a history of its own that is continuously changing. He distinguishes himself from other animals in two ways: One way, in which he produces material for his subsistence and in other way during this material production for subsistence, man indirectly, produces his actual material life. He produces this “actual material life” through formation of social institutions which function as the framework for this production process. Therefore in this process man not only produces societal relations in accordance with his productive forces, but also the “the ideas, the categories, i.e. the abstract, cognitive expression, of exactly these societal relations. These “categories” are not eternal or transcendental, but related to historically given conditions and therefore, themselves historically limited. Since societal systems are undergoing change and transformation, the theories about societies are consequently transformed. Furthermore, theories about social systems cannot be formulated independently, and/or prior to, a certain developmental level of society itself. The Marxian analysis of the capitalist system in “Capital” could not have been developed before the sufficient development of capitalism itself. Marx explains the development of capitalism and inversion of man subject–object relation using the concept of living labor and dead or objectified labor as carried out by machines. As the productive forces develop, the relation between living and objectified labor is interchanged in a way such that objectified labor gains at the expense of living labor. Increased productivity implies that more can be produced with less human labor power. Societal wealth accumulation comes into being less and less through human living labor, and more and more through the conditions created(previously) by human labor. Objectified labor becomes more and more powerful. This process of objectification is undergoing inversion. Workers as subject of this process, become more and more dominated by
the objectified conditions of work. Therefore, they become reified, i.e. transformed into a thing, into labor power and become object. Capital on the other hand, which starts as object of the process of production becomes more and more powerful. From means of production it has transformed into controlling and exploiting living labor and thus now becomes the acting subject. Marx makes it clear that this process is “natural”. It is, in his opinion the transition to creation of a free human society, in which man again becomes subject of his own destiny.

4. Problems in Marxian Dialectical Materialism:

We see that dialectical materialism has little relevance in explaining the ontological and epistemological problems. However even in methodological context dialectical materialism has following problems:

Firstly, as Popper points out against Marx economism-emphasis on economic background as being the ultimate basis of any sort of development-is exaggerated. Social experience shows that under certain circumstances the influence of ideas supported by propaganda can outweigh and supersede economic forces. Also other point raised is that if metal development cannot be understood without understanding economic background, it is also equivalently true to say that economic development cannot be understood without understanding the development of say for instance, of scientific or religious ideas.

Secondly, dialectical Materialism faces the same problem as the any other dialectical thinking has, is that of its conflict with absolutism. Here what I want to emphasize is that only logical outcome of the principle of dialectic can be the “relative truth” and the “relative falsity” of the unity of opposites, and the absolute truth of the Absolute can be achieved only within which the contradictions are both possible as well as resolved.

Thirdly, a philosophy of the dialectic, no matter of what brand, must also lead to the doctrine of the secondary reality or phenomenality of the dialectic of the world process. In other words it should provide satisfactory solution to the problem of “change” and “permanence”, of “being” and “becoming”, of “identity” and “difference”. Marxist dialectic is just another halting
attempt to conceive of both being and becoming, of ‘identity and difference as somehow identical’

5. Conclusion:

In this paper, I have tried to explain the dialectical method of thinking and thereafter I have analyzed materialism in different context. Here we see that Marxian dialectical materialism has very little to explain in ontological and epistemological context. It helps us in understanding the societal development in methodological context. But we see that even in its later attempt dialectical materialism fails to explain the absolute truth of social development. It helps in understanding some aspects of reality which states that man’s material condition is responsible to great extent in forming his mental and social endeavors, but greater horizon of reality remain unexplained using this approach.

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चार्वाकदर्शन के तत्त्व-सिद्धांत की वर्तमान प्रासंगिकता  

(Relevance of Substance Theory of Charvaka in Present Times)

देशराज सिरस्वाल

भारतीय धिन्तन परम्परा में पंच-महाभूत का बहुत महत्वपूर्ण स्थान है। भारतीय प्राचीन ग्रन्थों से लेकर अब तक विश्व की सरंखना सम्बन्धी सिद्धांतों में पंच-महाभूत सबसे स्वीकार सिद्धांत माना जाता रहा है। ये पांच तत्त्व हैं: पृथ्वी, जल, वायु, अग्नि और आकाश। परन्तु चार्वाक जैसे दार्शनिक और आर्यभट्ट (पाँचवीं शताब्दी) जैसे विज्ञानी यह कहते आ रहे हैं की तत्त्व पांच नहीं, चार हैं। इन लोगों ने आकाश को स्वतंत्र तत्त्व के रूप में स्वीकार नहीं किया। चार्वाक का यह भी विचार रहा है की सारा भौतिक और प्राकृतिक परिप्रेक्ष्य न ही किसी ने रचा है, न इसका कोई उद्देश्य है, प्रकृति में परिवर्तन, विकास, रूपांतरण आदि इसकी अपनी प्रक्रिया है जो तब भी लाखों करोड़ों वर्षों से हो रहा था और आज भी विविधता रूपों में हो रहा है। अतः इस शोध-पत्र का मुख्य विषय पंच-महाभूतों की अवधारणा की चार्वाक के सन्दर्भ में समीक्षा करना है और चार्वाक दर्शन की आज की प्रासंगिकता को देखना है।

बुनियादी अंतर

पंच-तत्त्व के सिद्धांत को मानने वालों का विचार है की इन पांच तत्त्वों से जब शारीर बनता है तब आत्मा बाहर से प्रविष्ट होती है जबकि चार तत्त्व को मानने वाले चार्वाक का कथन है की इन चारों तत्त्वों के विशेष रूप में परस्पर मेल से ही चेतन्त्य (चेतना) की उत्पत्ति होती है, आत्मा कहीं बाहर से नहीं आती- भूलेभ्य: चेतन्त्यम।

चार्वाक के इस कथन को सिद्ध करने के लिए लोगों ने अनेक प्रयोगों द्वारा तथ्य इकट्ठे करने का प्रयास किया है, जैसे बौद्ध साहित्य से पता चलता है की पायसी (प्रदेशी) नामक राजपुरुष ने अनेक प्रयोग किये और पाया की मृत्यु के समय कोई चीज़ शरीर से निकल कर कहीं नहीं जाती। चार्वाक कहते हैं - नात्मा पारलौकिकः.
काफी प्रयोगों के बाद पायथी इस निष्कर्ष पर पहुंचते हैं कि शरीर में कोई आत्मा बहर से प्रवेश नहीं करती, बल्क़ उन्हीं चीजों के मेल से उत्पन्न होती हैं जिनसे शरीर बना है. आज हम जानते हैं कि शरीर केवल इन चार तत्वों की देव नहीं है , आज विज्ञान बहुत आगे बढ़ गया है और चार्ज उसके अनुसार नये तत्वों की बात करते हैं.

वास्तविकता तो यह है कि जिन्हें हम तत्व कह रहे हैं वे तत्व न होकर योगिक या मिश्रण हैं . तत्व वह होता है जिसमें एक नरह के परमाणु रहते हैं और जिसे सरलतम पदार्थ के रूप में विभाजित नहीं किया जा सकता.

पाँच-तत्वों का विश्लेषण:

उपरोक्त प्रश्न की ये पाँच तत्व न होकर मिश्रण या योगिक हैं हमें निम्नलिखित वैज्ञानिक तथ्यों को भी समझना होगा:

1. पृथ्वी: पृथ्वी 100 से ज्यादा तत्वों का मिश्रण है जिनमें ये आठ प्रमुख हैं : आक्सीजन-46.65%, सिलिकन-27.72%, एल्युमीनियम- 8.13%, लोहा-5.01%, कैल्सियम-3.63%, सोडियम-2.85%, पोटेशियम-2.62%, मैगनिशियम-2.09% तथा अन्य तत्व 1.41%.

2. जल: यह भी योगिक ही है और हाइड्रोजन और आक्सीजन से बना है . यह तरल रूप में भी होता है, ठोस में भी और बाप रूप में भी.

3. वायु: वायु कई गैसों का मिश्रण है जिसमें नाइट्रोजन 79% और 20.96% आक्सीजन का मिश्रण, थोड़ी बहुत कार्बनडाइआक्साइड तथा कुछ जलवाष्प रहते हैं जिनका प्रतिशत बदलता रहता है.

4. अग्नि: ज्वलन एक प्रक्रिया है, एक घटना जो घटित हो रही है जिसमें पदार्थ हवा में मिलने वाली आक्सीजन से रसायनिक तौर पर मिलते हैं और प्रकाश तथा ताप (गर्मी) छोड़ते हैं, यह स्पष्ट है. इसलिए प्र. यशपाल कहते हैं कि अग्नि कोई चीज़ (थिंग) नहीं है यह एक घटना (हप्पेनिंग) है .
5. आकाश: चार्यों और आयंभुव जैसे विज्ञानी इसे सदियों पहले नकार चुके हैं फिर ’इथर’ नामक द्रव्य की कल्पना की गयी जिसे मिकल्सन और मार्ली नामक वैज्ञानिकों ने अनेक प्रयोगों द्वारा पूरी तरह कमोलकलिपित सिद्ध किया है। आकाश का ढांचा उसमें मौजूद द्रव्यमान से निर्धारित होता है जैसे न्यूटन ने माना है। यदि वह वस्तुएं गायब हो जाएं तो न कहीं आकाश का पता लगेगा न कल का। साथ ही जो आकाश स्वयं दूसरी वस्तुओं के आस्तित्व पर आश्रित है वह वस्तुओं को बनानी वाली सामग्री किस तरह हो सकती है।

इस लिए हम कह सकते हैं की ये पंच-तत्व की अवधारणा बौद्धिक और वैज्ञानिक विश्लेषण के अनुरूप नहीं हैं। आज विज्ञान 118 से उपर तत्वों को खोज निकला है और वही शरीर और विश्व के निर्माण के लिए उत्तरदायी है।

जीवन का सार-तत्व: प्रोटोप्लाज्म

हमारा शरीर कोशिकाओं से बना है। हर कोशिका के अंदर कोशिका-द्रव्य या ’जीव-द्रव्य’ होता है जिसे प्रोटोप्लाज्म कहा जाता है। इसे पदार्थद्वारा भौजन और आक्सीजन प्राप्त की जाती है। प्रोटोप्लाज्म में राइबोसोम, गोल्गीबाड़ीज आदि भी होते हैं जो शरीर की विभिन्न क्रियाओं को पूरा करते हैं। आर्थिक विज्ञान का विश्लेषण कर के पाया है कि इसमें 55 भाग कार्बन, 14 भाग नाइट्रोजन, 7 भाग हाइड्रोजन और 1 भाग गोंधक, पोटेशियम, सोडियम आदि हैं।

55+23+14+7+1=100.

यही जीव द्रव्य है, जीवन है। अब वैज्ञानिकों ने कृत्रिम जीवन का निर्माण भी कर लिया। 2010 में अमेरिका के जीनोम क्रेग वेटर की टीम ने रसायनों को जीवित कोशिकाओं के रूप में परिवर्तित करके कृत्रिम जीवन पैदा कर दिया है। ये कृत्रिम क्रोमोसोम रसायनों के रसायनिक संशोधन से बनाये गये थे। पर धार्मिक लोग इसे कुदरत के साथ
खिलवाड़ बता कर अपनी झेप मिटा रहे हैं. अतः हम कह सकते हैं की पंच-तत्वों का सिद्धांत आज के विज्ञानिक
विश्लेषण में सही नहीं बैठता.

चार्क की प्रासंगिकता

चार्क प्रकृति के जड़ रूप से ही, भौतिक तत्वों से चैतन्य की उत्पत्ति को मानता है. जैसे किनव, मध्य और शर्करा आदि के मिलने से भादकता उत्पन्न होती है उसी प्रकार शरीर में चैतन्य की उत्पत्ति होती है. जब भौतिक तत्वों का तालमेल बिगड़ जाता है तो चैतन्य भी खत्म हो जाता है- सदा के लिए, सर्वदा के लिए - भस्मीभूतस्व देहस्व पुनरागमन कुल-चार्क का कहना है की चैतन्य आत्मा का आक्रमक गुण नहीं बल्कि भौतिक गुण है और चैतन्ययुक्त शरीर ही आत्मा है. यद्यपि आज चार्क के चार तत्व भी आदर्शवादियों के पांच तत्वों की तरह ही रहे हो चुके हैं तथापि उनकी स्थिति दूसरी है. उन्होंने चार तत्वों को प्रकृति के प्रतिलिपि कह कर इन से चेतना की उत्पत्ति मानी है, प्रकृति एकतत्ववाद का उनका सिद्धांत आज विज्ञानसम्बन्ध सिद्धांत है, भले ही उन की तत्वों की बात तकनीकी रूप से सही न हो. उनके लिए चार तत्वों को मानना न अनिवार्य है और न ही उसे मानने के लिए कोई ईश्वीय आदेश है क्योंकि तत्व उनके लिए प्रकृति के प्रतिलिपि मात्र हैं, जो तब यदि चार थे तो आज 118 हैं. इससे उन्हें कोई फर्क नहीं पड़ता जबकि अन्य दर्शनों के लिए करना दुरुस्त है. अतः हम कह सकते हैं की चार्क का दर्शन अनात्मवादी, प्रत्ययवादी और भौतिकवादी है.

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REPORT OF THE PROGRAMME

PG Department of Public Administration and the Department of Philosophy of P.G. Govt. College for Girls, Sector-11, Chandigarh organised a One-day Capacity Building Workshop on ‘Ethics in Public Life’, under the aegis of RUSA on 19th March, 2018.

The Workshop was inaugurated by Prof. Anita Kaushal, Principal of the college. More than 70 faculty members, research scholars and students from various institutions of Punjab, Haryana, New Delhi and Chandigarh participated in the Workshop.

In the Inaugural Address, Dr. Lallan S. Bhagel, Chairperson, Department of Philosophy, Panjab University Chandigarh made a presentation on the theme “Ethics in Public Life: Some Philosophical and Normative Reflections”. Talking about the significance of ethics and values in the historical perspective, and its relevance in the contemporary context, Dr. Bhagel traced the contributions of thinkers ranging from Socrates and Marx to Gandhi and Ambedkar. He highlighted that all of them have given primacy to the components of ethics, truth and morality.
In the Second Session, Dr. Sudhir Baweja from USOL, Panjab University, Chandigarh elaborated on the theme “Ethical Values in Indian Context”. He underlined the significance and practical utility of age-old Indian values and their gradual erosion due to growing materialism and western impact.

Both the sessions were highly participative and the interaction between the delegates and speakers yielded a fruitful discussion.

Prof. Anita Kaushal congratulated the departments for organising a Workshop on such a pertinent theme. She felt assured that the faculty and the students have been enriched from the deliberations and motivated the faculty to carry on with the conduction such academic endeavours.
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Instructions to the Contributors

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“My objective is to achieve an intellectual detachment from all philosophical systems, and not to solve specific philosophical problems, but to become sensitively aware of what it is when we philosophise.”
- Dr. Desh Raj Sirwal