



Research Paper

## Pure 'Silence' to follow the Middle Path: The Hidden Thesis of Bengal Buddhism

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### Abstract

Any extremism gives birth of competition between duality. It happens externally or internally. It creates a never-ending conflict socially, morally, ethically, and spiritually. So on and so forth by conquering one of this a person become happy or unhappy. Such cycle of wish-fulfilment never ends. Out of this, 'sufferings' occur at all level of our lives. Buddha kept silent. Which signifies not to chose any of the sides at all to get free of this continues circle of birth and death or pleasure and pain neither existence and non- existence. Such ultimate truth has been practiced decade after decade. In this article we are going to explore a unique realisation, written by the poets of Bengal, thorough the mystical and metaphorical poems. This school of thought is originally known as 'Caryāpada' (Charyapada) Their poetries are unique in the sense because it denies even the extreme position of following the path of nirvana. They have followed neither samsara nor nirvana to live in their spiritual life. Following Buddha's pure utterance, 'majjhimanpanthā', in their practise and praxis, only the middle path has been followed by negating all extremism.

**Keywords-** Sufferings, Duality, Extremism, Majjhimanpanthā, Caryāpada

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Buddha revealed the ultimate truth that all of us realise every day, is nothing but sufferings. As he has shown that the four noble truth; technically said as *caturāryasatyam* which needs to be understood before curing our mind and thought. Those are, firstly, '*sarvam dukṣam*'; suffering is a continuous trouble in this world – physically and mentally. Even after getting some temporary adjustment, one cannot deny the endless wandering between the perpetual cycle of pain and pleasure – they stand on the very locus of sufferings at the end. Secondly, the question raises that why we are suffering? addressed as '*samudayam*' or the causes of suffering. There belongs a circle of sufferings – i) *avidyā* or ignorance; the root cause of all sufferings, out of that the momentum seems to be permanent. ii) *sangaskāra*; out of the ignorance the doer falls into the circle of sufferings; ex; volition, activities, thoughts, intentions, other habitual tendencies which binds up our mind both outer and inner space. iii) *vijñā* or cognition; it arsis out of six sense organs – sight, hearing, taste, touch, smell, and mental perceptions, iv) *nāmrūpa* or name and form; name represents the mental aspects were as form stands as physical body. v) *sadāyatana* or the six sense bases; eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind. vi) *spārsa* or contact between objects and sense organs. vii) *vedanā* or feeling of sensation from object contact like pleasantness or unpleasantness. viii) *trīṣṇā* or the thirst for worldly affairs ix) *upādāna* or clinging or grasping the object of desire. x) *bhava* or worldly existence; i.e. being locked in the circle of birth and death. xi) *jāti* or rebirth with the casual chain from last circle. xii) *jadāmarāṇa* gather. Thirdly, *nirodha* or cessation is possible by knowing this endless circular process. Fourthly, there are Eightfold Path or *aśāṅgikamārga* to attain cessation.

In the Early Buddhist Texts like Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta, the term 'Majjhimanpanthā' was discovered which signifies the Middle Path". Varias texts claims that Buddhist tradition regards to be the first teaching that the Buddha delivered after his awakening are composed in this sutta. Buddha describes the eightfold path as the middle way which navigates the the extreme sensual indulgence and self-mortification.

"Monks, these two extremes ought not to be practiced by one who has gone forth from the household life. (What are the two?) There is addiction to indulgence of sense-pleasures, which is low, coarse, the way of ordinary people, unworthy, and unprofitable; and there is addiction to self-mortification, which is painful, unworthy, and unprofitable.

"Avoiding both these extremes, the Tathagata (The Perfect One) has realized the Middle Path; it gives vision, gives knowledge, and leads to calm, to insight, to enlightenment and to Nibbana. And what is that Middle Path realized by the Tathagata...? It is the Noble Eightfold path, and nothing else, namely: right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. This is the Middle Path realized by the Tathagata which gives vision, which gives knowledge, and leads to calm, to insight, to enlightenment, and to Nibbana."<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, the meaning of middle path declined any extreme or orthodox positions and possessions too. Rather it tries to follow an outlook by accepting both side with the logic of negation and assertion. The journey of Buddhism has started with finding an answer against the obvious truth of life; Sufferings. The suffering is *samsara* i.e. the empirical world, dominated by fragmented intellects. This world remains relative, conditional, dependent thus impermanent. Realisation of impermanence uplift us to understand the truth of ourselves; i.e. we are cycling through birth and death and new birth due to a beginningless ignorance. This is a causal chain based on the law of action or karma. Continuous meditational practices help to purify our mind and enable us to follow the path of liberation or *nirvāṇa*. Constant practices of *prajñā-sīla-samādhi* purifies our *citta* or mind. Right knowledge is known as *prajñā*. Secondly, nonviolence is acclaimed as *śīla*, and *samādhi* is said to be *samyak jñāna* or the true knowledge. These three are called '*margasatya*' lead to the path of nirvana. That has been shown by Buddha only with one utterance – '*eḥ paśyati*'; i.e. 'come and see'. But there is no reason to say one who performs an act, is the 'self' or the 'doer'. *veda* says one who realizes that 'self' is not mere doer or enjoyer, comes to know the reality. Because the notion of 'I' or 'self' as permanent substance is vague because what we call 'ego' is the bundle of five categories or *skandha-s*, and those are matter (*rūpa*), feelings (*vedana*), perception (*saṃjñā*), disposition (*samskāra*) and consciousness (*viññāna*). One of the most acknowledged texts '*Abhidhammapitaka*', we have come across with the four fundamental realities, the consciousness or mind (*citta*), the mental states (*cetasika*), the matter (*rūpa*), and liberation (*nirvāṇa*). Birth and death are just a conjoining and disjoining between the consciousness with the body or matter by purifying our mind with spirituality; technically known as *chryuti chitta* of Buddha has taught 'mind' or 'thought' as continuous flow of consciousness or a series of momentary ideas and 'matter' as series of momentary atoms (namely *pathavi, āpo, tejo, vayo*). The substantial theories of 'mind' and 'matter' have been completely denied in Buddhist practice and praxis.

There is no clear exposition whether mind is reducible to matter or matter is reducible to mind or they flow simultaneously. Buddha kept silence. His enormous silence indicates towards realisation. His great silence initiates different interpretations by different schools of thought in Buddhism, later. The *Vaibhāṣika* school of thought in Buddhist philosophy have developed their philosophical system as '*sarvastivādi*'; i.e. accepting that this perceivable world as true. They have constructed their system of thought by propagating that the existence of both external and internal world. On the other hand, the *Soutānrika* School advocates that we cannot perceive things-in-itself rather infer the existence of external objects. These two schools of philosophy are acclaimed as *hīnayanī-s*. The basic purpose of these schools focus only on liberation of oneself after attaining the truth of four noble shown by Buddha. Whereas two other *mahāyana* schools of thought have never seen the liberation in such way rather they continue the worldly affairs in the light of liberation. The, *Mādhyamika* schools of thought in Buddhism are called as *śūnyavādins*. These schools of thought have explained the logic of middle path extensively. Following which we will explore the thesis of middle path of Bengal Buddhism; poetically, logically and mystically.

Being an important philosopher of Mādhyamika School, Nagarjuna states '*śūnyatā*' or emptiness doesn't mean 'void' but it is beyond the four categories of intellect. What are those categories? The reality which ultimately transcends *sat* or existence, *asat* or inexistence, *adubhaya* or both existence and inexistence, *tadunubhaya* or neither existence nor inexistence. Nagarjuna has wrote several texts in dialectical method to refute everything intellectually accessible, for instance in '*Sūnyatasaptati*' he begins with these phrases – "*Existence and nonexistence, beginning and end, better and worse are not actual (tattva), but only practical ways of speaking (lakavyavahāra) i.e. What exist doesn't begin since it already exist and what doesn't exist doesn't begin since it doesn't exist. To both exist and not to exist is contradictory. Since nothing begins, there is no duration and no destruction*"<sup>2</sup>

Nagarjuna's philosophy slowly encounters the essence of monism or '*advaya*' as because he rejects dualism or the binary opposites, perceivably exist in the objects of intellect. Pure knowledge or *prajñā* is different from mere intellect, it is called voidness or *śūnyatā*; free from these four categories (*catuskotivīnirmukta*). In '*Advayavajrasamgraha*', written by Advayapāda. The body is like the finest tree, with five branches. Darkness enters the restless mind. Strengthen the quantity of Great Bliss, says Luyi. Learn from asking the Guru. Why does one meditate? Surely one dies of happiness or unhappiness. Set aside binding and fastening in false hope. Embrace the wings of the Void. Luyi says: I have seen this in meditation. Inhalation and exhalation are seated on two stools. It has been uttered that the philosophers of Mahāyana cult, were not satisfied with the doctrine of voidness or '*śūnyatā*' as the highest aspiration. Monk Maitryanātha, the teacher of Asanga, wrote an elaborative text *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* sutra, which initiated Yogācāra or Vijñānavāda school of thought through in Buddhism. This philosophy has been narrated later through the great works by Asanga and Vasubandhu<sup>3</sup>.

This school of philosophy emphasis that nothing is real except consciousness or *vijñāna*, that could be reached through the meditational practices. In their terminology the ever-changing flow of consciousness is named as '*ālayavijñāna*'. In *Lankavatārasūtra* it has been told that '*ālayavijñāna* is the hub or locus of consciousness, which underlies in subject-object duality of this mortal world. This very locus should be understood beyond any production, existence and destruction (i.e. *utpāda-sthiti-bhangavarjya*). This concept is conceivable beyond all the plurality of imagination (i.e. *vikalpa-prapñca-rahita*). Only through the pure knowledge of a true seeker it is realisable beyond intellectual perception; therefore, Buddha remained silent all along. 'The force behind creation is beginning-less tendency inspired by Ignorance. Technically the *Vijñānavādins* convey that the very locus or hub is called '*ālaya*' to manifest itself as subject-object order of this temporary world (*anādikāla-prapañca-dausthulavāsanā*)<sup>4</sup>. The awareness of the individuals, is terminologically named as *pravṛttivijñāna*, i.e. the will to act. This concept means the waves in the ocean and moving along the cycle of Karma or action. This *pravṛttivijñāna* or individual-consciousness mergers with '*alayavijñāna*' or general-impersonal-consciousness when the karmic cycle ends<sup>5</sup>. What is the difference between two main philosophical schools of *Mahāyana* sects of Buddhism? It is uttered by a renowned scholar *Advayapāda*. He has narrated that one school of thought realises 'I am *śūnya*', that has been philosophised by Nagāryuna, following the *Mādhyamika* schools of thought. While, on the other hand the *Vijñānavādin-s* perceive it in the sense of 'I am conscious that I am *śūnya*'<sup>6</sup>.

Mahayana Buddhism pursues their spiritual procedures by following these ways- namely *pāramitā-naya* is pursued by those, who have crossed the ten stages (*bhumi*). Those are, Ten hubs or *bhumi-s* namely, *pramudita*, *vimalā*, *prabhākarī*, *arciṣmatī*, *sudurjayā*, *abhimukhī*, *duramgamā*, *acalā*, *sādhumatī*, *dharmameghā* by practicing this process of *paramitā*. The concept *Pāramitā* originally comes from the Pali word '*pāramī*' which indicates going beyond. The word, '*paramitā*' originally from Pali initiation '*pāramī*' means that which goes beyond. For Theravādins, there are ten *pāramita-s*; *dāna*, *sīla*, *nekkamma*, *paññā*, *virīya*, *khanti*, *sacca*, *adhiṭṭhāna*, *mettā*, *upekkhā*. For Mahayanist philosophers there are six types of persuasion; *dāna*, *sīla*, *kṣānti*, *virīya*, *dhyāna*, *prajñā* would be liberated. Following this schools of thought there follows a rational stream philosophical schools which is ever continuous. We are going to address that school because Bengal Buddhism has its history and origination.

Firstly, the philosophy of '*mantra-naya*' emphasises on the hymns and chants; i.e. *mudrā* and *nyasā* turns to tantric Buddhist practice in the diction of *Vajrayana* philosophy. The *Vajraysna* cult in Nepal and Tibet has taken the shape as '*kālachakrayana*', i.e. emphasis on breathing process to understand the flow of time<sup>7</sup>. *Vajrayana* has its genealogy in form of Tibetan Buddhism which also follow the lineage of eighty-four *mahāsidhha-s*, can be discussed later. The powerful word '*Vajra*' allegorically means '*śūnya*', it holds a deep spiritual meaning. As the diamond sharply pierces an object the pathway of *Vajra* plays as a powerful weapon which leads to final realisation to curtails the veil of ignorance. With the glimpse of the rigid physical-mental practices following Tibetan Buddhism the *Vajrayana* sects of thought have been evolved in a simplistic way of life and living on the basis of complete silence. This secret cult of *Vajrayana* schools mainly has been nourished in the area of extended Bengal. Their way of life is acclaimed as *Sahajayāna* or realising the enigmatic truth in every day's life. The word '*sahaja* tradition or *sahajayāna* came into being as an anti-reaction to ritualistic rigors of *mantra-naya* that came to be known as the *Vajrayana*. '*Sahaja*' is not-external to anything and lies as the foundation or basis of everything, can be translated as '*pure-existence*'. 'Pure existence' belongs to all mortal things and individuals as permanent. Those who try to merge with this '*sahaj*' or 'pure existence' are called '*sahajiyā-s*'. For *sahajiyā-s* the means or the practice and praxis (*sādhana*) both are '*sahaja*' or simple. But not only that behind this simplicity there lies a true meaning of the word '*sahaja*'. The literal meaning signifies 'easy' and as the 'end' or '*sādhaya*' or *mahāsukha*<sup>8</sup> is '*sahaj*' as well. The *sahajiya* practices truly follow the golden middle path in Buddhist term they follow the *majjhimanpantha* between '*nirvana*' and '*bhava*'; i.e. liberation and the world. They also follow the middle way in between voidness and compassion those are named as '*śūnyatā*' and '*karuṇā*' in this philosophical structure. As because this practice of '*Sahaja*' never claimed any establishment or authenticity they didn't convey any propaganda neither wrote any philosophical text publicly. To discover their insight, we have to follow the poetries they wrote once.

From here we can switch over to the mystic songs written by the poets of *Charyāpada*. In 20th Century the original palm-leaf manuscript, contained 50 poetries, was discovered by Shri Haraprashad Shastri from Nepal Royal Court Library and published from Bangiya Sahitya Parishad under the name of '*charyachayavinischaya*' (*hajar bacharer purano banglabhashay bouddhogan o doha*). These poetries have been written approximately in 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> century, in proto-Bengali as well as proto-Maithili, proto-Assamese, proto-Oriya language known as '*abahatta*'. These poetries need to be discussed in extent to research over their philosophical foundations. The later discussion would be continued by interpreting the meanings from the original poetries. Among all of them we would interpret the meaning where the middle path of Buddhism would be shown properly. The have hidden the truth and practices via wonderful metaphors of common life.

The history has been discovered by Haraprashad Shastri that should be cultivated. There are 23 mystic poets have been identified by him. The names and their written verses in the whole poetic texts are mentioned bellow under the brackets besides – *Luipāda* (1,29) *Kukkuripāda* (2, 20, 48), *Virubāpāda* (3) *Gundaripāda* (4) *Chātillapāda* (5) *Bhusukupāda* (6, 21, 23, 27, 30, 41, 43, 49) *Kānhapāda* (7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 18, 19, 24, 36, 40,

42, 45) Kambalāambarapāda (8), Dombipāda (14), Śantipāda (15, 26), Mahidharapāda (16) Vināpāda (17), Sarahapāda (22, 32, 38, 39), Shabarapāda (28, 50) Āryadevapāda, (31), Dhendhanapāda (33), Darikapāda (34), Bhādepāda (35), Tādakapāda (37), Kankanapāda (44), Jayanandipāda (46), Dhāmapāda (47), Tantripāda (25). Historically all these mystical poetries are not only poems at the same time these have been bloomed with *rāga-s* or Indian music to represent an eternal expansion where nature and the individuals connects with each other. The *raga-s* represent the grand nature and the state of the practitioner. Some of the *rāga-s* would be mentioned –*Patamanjari, Gaudā, Aru, Gurjari, Devakri, Deshākha, Kāmod, Dhaneshri, Rāmakri, Barādi, Shabari, Mallāri, Mālasī, Mālasī-Gaburā, Bangāl* , *Bhairavi*. Many *rāgas* among these are still popular and continuing their enigmas and gorgeousness following the modified form of Indian classical music through decades and decades. Therefore, these mystical poetries can be called as songs of realisation at the same time. Though, out of this mystic metaphor people also try to depict the social structure of that era and most of the times misinterprets. We won't follow that root.

Dualism, in every zone of thought, can be proceeded towards some kind of extremisms. Time and space locked the vastness of individuals. In the first poem Luipāda wrote-

*'kāyā taruvara pancvi dāla/ cancala ciye paith'o kal'/  
Driḥ kri'o mahāsuha parimāṇa/ lui bhaṇai guru pucchio jāṇa//  
Sakala samāhita kāhi kari'āi/ sukhe dukheṭe nicita mari'āi//  
eri' eu chāndaka bandha karaṇaka pāter āsa/ sunupākha bhidi lahu re pāsa//  
bhāṇai lui āmhe sāne dithā/ dhamaṇa chamaṇa beṇi pandi baithā//<sup>9</sup>*

Translation given bellow;

*“The body is like the finest tree, with five branches.  
Darkness enters the restless mind.  
Strengthen the quantity of Great Bliss, says Luyi.  
Learn from asking the Guru.  
Why does one meditate?  
Surely one dies of happiness or unhappiness.  
Set aside binding and fastening in false hope.  
Embrace the wings of the Void.  
Luyi says: I have seen this in meditation.  
Inhalation and exhalation are seated on two stools”//<sup>10</sup>*

Time and space first distinguish our mind to see the world with duality. Dual position always differentiates between men and women, human beings and animals, good and bad, left and right, philosophy and science, spirituality and practicality etc. and so on and so forth. Let us express some basic thesis of such hidden school of thought. First of all, this school of thought is not merely a philosophical school to be established, nonetheless negating the periphery of the world like a secret monk who lives *samsāra* and its load. Rather this school worships the ultimate reality with its energy. All practitioners devote themselves accepting the coupling between the voidness and compassion, i.e. *śunyatā* and *karuṇā*. This fundamental understanding also shows the mid path of Buddhism. In worldly affairs people take each other for production and causally bind themselves in sexual magnetism between a man and a woman. To understand the eternal coupling between the voidness and the compassion they try to follow the same asexual spirituality with each other; i.e. mortal partner. Most significantly it should be mentioned that men completely surrender to women energy to go beyond mundane erotic desires in their practice and praxis. The spiritual characters of women are metaphorically named in terms – *dombī, yogini, śundinī, ankavālī* etc. This philosophical position is very significant because complete the conglomeration of men and women allows a perfect equality. It is uttered by Dhammapāda-

*kamala-kuliśa mājhe bhāi'mo miolī/ samatā jo'en jali'o candālī//<sup>11</sup>*

This metaphor signifies that when in the spiritual locus both men and women; i.e. the consciousness and its energy met the pure equilibrium sprang an eternal calmness. That can also be felt by following the middle path. In other text it has been written too-

*gangā yamunā manjhe re bahāi nāyī/ tahi budilī matangī yoiā līle pāra karei//  
..... bāma dāhīṇa cānda sujja dui cakā sithi sanghāra pulindā/ dui mag ana revai bāhātu chandā//*

Between the Ganges and the Yamuna rivers, it is too hard to carry my boat. Oh! Mother, *dombinī* you are the ultimate energy to bring me up. The moon and sun are creating the circle of the worldly affairs like birth and death. The mother energy never declares the truth until and unless the true seeker realises.

In another verse poet Sarahapāda has clearly encompassed the truth. He wrote-

*karuṇā chaddi jo sunṇahi laggu/ n'u so pabai uttam maggu//  
ahaba karuṇā kevala bhābai/ janma sahasahi mokkha ṇa pabai//<sup>12</sup>*



One who gives up the path of compassion or *karuṇā* and only follow the path of liberation or *nirvāṇa* , and choose one of them – is not following the middle path except rigidity. Those who follow only the path of *karuṇā* or compassion can never attain *moksha* even after thousands of births.

One's mind distracted and divided the path into two extremes. Thus, an obvious query arises that what is mind? Kanhapāda wrote –

*Mana taru pāca indi tasu saha/ āśā bahala pātaha bāhā//<sup>13</sup>*

It means our mind is just like a tree whereas the five sense-organs play like the tree leaves, those leaves welcome the empirical desires. By the sane word of a wise curtail that tree so on the tree won't be able to grow once again. The mind with all its will won't be grown if one follows the mid-way.

In another verse Kambalambarapāda writes-

*sone bhariti karuṇā nabi/ rupā thoi nahika thabi//  
bāhatu kāmli g'aṇa ubesen/ gelī jama bahudai koise//  
khunti upādi melili kacchi/ bāhatu kāmili sadguru pucchi//  
mātanga cadili caudisa caha caha 'o/ kedu'ala nāhi kena ki bahabake pāra 'o//  
bāma daīna cāpī mili mili māgā/ batata milila mahāsukha sangā//<sup>14</sup>*

It means – my boat of compassion is filled with gold where may I keep the silvers. The significance is hidden here. It signifies if my pure mind or *bodhichitta* is carrying the voidness or *sūnyatā* where should I put my compassion or *karuṇā*. The compassion, in its broader sense justifies *rupa-vedanā-sajñā* etc. Translated –

*Loading the boat of Karuna with gold*

*Leaves no room for silver.*

*Hey Kamli, glide towards the sky.*

*How does the cycle of rebirth return?*

*Take the wooden pole out and loosen the rope.*

*Ask a good Guru and sail ahoy.*

*When you climb into the boat, look around.*

*There are no oars, without them who can move?*

*Pressing right and left, he found his way  
to great happiness.<sup>15</sup>*

In another verge the realiser *Cātilpāda* has presented metaphorically that the continuous flow of *samsāra* like an ever-flowing river is difficult to cross until and unless a bridge has been made. Metaphorically it represents on one side there lies the emptiness ('*sūnyatā*') and on the other side the stream of compassion ('*karuṇā*') is flowing too. For sake of those who wants to cross the river, *Cātil* will build the bridge between two banks. This metaphor signifies vividly to move forward through the middle path. This philosophy has been mystecally written by the poet *Cātilpāda* –

*“bhabaṇai gahan gambhirbange bāhi / duānte cikhil majhe na thahi//  
dharmārthe cātil sankam garai/ pargami lo'a nibhara tarai'//  
fādiya mohotaru pati jodi 'o/ ādaadidi tangī nibāṇe kodi 'a//  
sankamata cadile dāhiṇa bāma ma hohī/ niyaddī bohi dūra ma jāhi//  
jai tumhe lo'o he hoiba pārgāmī/ pucchatu cātila anuttarasāmī//<sup>16</sup>*

translation is given bellow –

*“The river of life, dark and deep, moves swiftly.*

*The two sides are muddy, the middle is depthless.*

*Chatilla makes a bridge for the sake of Dharma.*

*Those who wish can cross in confidence.*

*With the axe sharpened with Nirvana*

*Split open the tree of delusion and join the planks together.*

*When you climb the bridge, do not go fight or left.*

*Bodhi is near you, do not go any further.*

*Those of you who want to cross to the other side*

*Ask Chatillapa, the greatest Guru”<sup>17</sup>*

Now a philosophical question could be raised are they accepting the two opposites as dual entity? Or they are obtaining the middle path as extra path to be followed? No, such interpretations are wrong. This Sahaja Buddhist school is just showing that both birth and death are equal for a seer. Therefore, on the note Buddha uttered that 'ehi paśya'; i.e. come and see that there is so such binary. The *sahajiya* practices shows the silent middle path which refer a perfect balance any extremes. They have denied the reality of both '*bhaba*' and '*nirvāṇa*' because

they have not seen any significant difference between these two. The *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa* as two opposites are lofty creations of mind and people fix themselves in the process again. We, Sarahapāda wrote, the *acintyayongin-*s, the dwellers of unthinkable truth ignore the bondage of birth and death. It is wonderfully written by Sarahapāda-

*apne rachi rachi bhaba nirvāṇa / minche lo'o bandhab'e apaṇa//  
amhe na janahu achintya jo 'i/ jama maraṇa bhaba kaisaṇa hoi/  
jaiso jama maraṇa vi taiso/ jīvante mo'ole ṇāhi viśeso//  
jā ethu jama maraṇe vi sankā/ jo karau rasa raśanere kankhā /  
je sacarācara ti'asa bhamanti/ te ajarāmara kimpi na honti// jāme kāma ki kame jāma/ saraha bhaṇati acinta  
so dhāma<sup>18</sup>*

Poetically translated in English –

*“By making his own samsara and Nirvana  
Man ties himself to it.  
I do not know, unknown yogi,  
How birth, death and life happen.  
Death is like birth.  
There is no difference between living and dying.  
One who is afraid of birth and death  
Should desire medicine or chemistry.  
Those who travel in the three worlds  
because of the cycle of action  
cannot become immortal.”<sup>19</sup>*

The middle path ultimately leads to *mahāsukha* which has been used many times along with the poetries. The concept of *mahāsukha* or ultimate renunciation can be understood in terms of the Indian concept of 'ānandam'. The word signifies that the philosophy of mahāsukha shows absolute renunciation, which stands beyond the circle of pleasure and pain therefore it is named as pure joy. Where our mind becomes impure out of sensual thirst then where I can seat alone? Ajadev is writing

*'jahi mana indi'oraṇ ho ṇatha/ ṇa jānami apa kanhi gai poitha//  
akata kruṇā damruli baja 'o/ ājadeva nirāle rājai/<sup>20</sup>*

One might ask the definition of this middle path. The immediate reply comes the middle path is something which is a straight root that leads to pure joy or *mahāsukha*. It has been stated by Sarahapāda that –

*uju re uju chādi mā lehu re banka/ ni'adi bohi ma jahu re lānka//  
hāte re kānkaṇ ma loi dāpaṇa/ apaṇ apā bujhatu ni'amaṇa//  
pāra u'āre soi gaji 'i/ dujjana sāṅge abasari jai//  
bama dāhiṇa jo khāla bikhlā/ saraha bhṇoi bpā ujubāta bhāilā/<sup>21</sup>*

From the translation it could be properly understood– When you leave the straight pat, do not take the curved one.

*“.....Bodhi is in you. You do not have to go to Lanka.  
Do not look at the mirror to see you bangles.  
Look at yourself with inner sight.  
The yogi achieves enlightenment on both sided of the band.  
Evil in company truly dies.  
Right or left is full of ponds and canals.  
Saraha says, son, you take them for the straight path.”<sup>22</sup>*

Here in the endling part of this article, once again we may recall the logic of *Nāgāryuna*, as because he is one of the best scholars, who has logicalized the basic philosophy about 'middle path', in his great text *Mūlamadhyamakakārika*, that –

a) "It exists" is an eternalist view, whereas "It does not exist" is an annihilationist position. Therefore, how a wise one would have a recourse to follow the path either towards existence or towards nonexistence.

b) For whatever exists by its intrinsic character does not become non-existent. Then, eternalism may say though "it does not exist now but it existed previously"—from this once again, annihilation follows.

Thus, the realization why the true seeker follows the *majjhimanipphā*, can be understood only via such logic by common people. The middle path leads beyond all extremes. As far as in this article we have come across logically and literally how such silence is going on and on through decades which shows the middle path.

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- <sup>1</sup> The Perfect One, one attained to Truth. The Buddha used it when referring to himself. For details, see The Buddha's Ancient Path, Piyadassi Thera, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, Sri Lanka, p 17, n.4.
- <sup>2</sup> E10 & E11, Nagarjuna, *Sūnyatāsaptati*, p-135.
- <sup>3</sup> The new *prajñāpāramitasūtra* confirms three aspects of knowledge- *parikalpita*(illusory), *paratantra*(relative), *pariniṣpanna*(absolute). Ibid. Introduction, p-xxv.
- <sup>4</sup> Chandradhar Sharma, A critical survey of Indian Philosophy, p-110.
- <sup>5</sup> *Lankāvatārasūtra*, Chapter V.
- <sup>6</sup> *Advayavajrasamgraha*, p-xxxviii.
- <sup>7</sup> Shashibhushan Dasgupta, Bouddhodharma o Charyagiti, p-68.
- <sup>8</sup> Mahāsukha means the supreme bliss. Without happiness there is no Bodhi, no true knowledge, because knowledge is happiness. *Advayavajrasamgraha*, p-xii.
- <sup>9</sup> Charyagīti, 119
- <sup>10</sup> Open Knowledge Foundation Network, p-3
- <sup>11</sup> Charyagīti, verse- 48, p-180
- <sup>12</sup> Sarahapāda, referred by Shashibhushan Dasgupta, Bouddhodharma o Charyagīti, p-66.
- <sup>13</sup> Charyagiti, verse – 45, p-178
- <sup>14</sup> *Charyacharyavinishchaya*, Kambalambarapāda, Verse 8, p-16.
- <sup>15</sup> Open Knowledge Foundation Network. p-6
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid, Chātilpāda, Verse 5, p-10.
- <sup>17</sup> Open Knowledge Foundation Network
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid, Sarahapāda, Verse 22, p-41.
- <sup>19</sup> Open Knowledge Foundation Network, p-11
- <sup>20</sup> Charyagīti, verse 31, p-158
- <sup>21</sup> Charyagiti, verse-32, p-160
- <sup>22</sup> Open Knowledge Foundation Network, p-15

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