

Thematic Paper Title : Development of the Concept on the First Principle (Pathamadhātu) of the World and Life : Buddhism's Denial

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation paper is a qualitative research of two purposes; namely 1. To study development of the concept on the first principle (Pathamadhātu) of the world and life 2. To analyse the Buddhism's denial of the concept on the first principle.

From the research, it is found that the first principle is the viewpoint from Veda Philosophy more than 1,000 years ago. At the age before the Buddha's time, the Veda Philosophy and the Upanishad Philosophy, were of the influences overpowering all the beliefs over the Ancient India for a long time. These two philosophies are of the same belief that sat (Beings) or the Brahmins gave the births to all things and beings which are the First Principles on both sides:- Purusha and Prakṛti. Besides, at this age, there were two Ancient Greek thinkers:- Homer and Hesiod who had an influence on the Greek Philosophy at the later period. The philosophical viewpoint at this age is of all the patterns of Idealism. In this way, there is an observation that the viewpoint of the first principle appeared clearly in Greek Philosophy from the school of Miletus up to Aristotle. The Greek Philosophy was of the thought development beginning from Monistic to Pluralistic and of the special characteristic of various types up to the state of saying that the viewpoint of the first principle of the world and life was of the best colours in Greek Philosophy.

At the Buddha's period, there were three groups of philosophy, namely:- Materialism, Idealism, and Dualism which are divided according to the system of Indian Philosophy in 6 schools including the Jain Philosophy all of which proposed the viewpoint of the first principle of the world and life differently according to the bases of one's own the original

belief. When the Buddhist Philosophy originated in the middle of the belief in Brahmanism according to the Ancient Indian tradition. This point is very interesting in that the Buddha entirely denied the existence of the “Pathamadhātu” by understanding that it is a wrong belief that Brahma was the creator of the world, and refuted the belief with the principles of teaching about “Paṭiccasamuppāda” and “Sāmaññalakkhaṇa”. However, the Buddhism’s viewpoint of the 4 elements is in relation to the Ancient Indian Philosophy with the important point. This point is regarded as that in Buddhism, there is the way of bringing the said principle to be used and deeply and widely developed to the teaching of “Rūpa”.

At present, though the viewpoint of the first principle (Pathamadhātu) would disappear at the Buddha’s period, it is still found that the present scientists try to find out the answers about the process of the origin of the universe with different theories which did not aim at the First Principle as before. However, the scientists are interested in finding out the secretness of the nature in elementary particle (Anubhāga-Mūlathāna).