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## THE ETHICAL PHILOSOPHY OF C RV KA SYSTEM

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### Abstract:

*The philosophical systems of Indian philosophy are divided into two classes- stika and N stika (orthodox and heterodox). stika means one who believes in the existence of God or the Absolute and N stika means one who does not believe in the existence of God or Absolute. In view of the philosophers, the stika is one who believes in the validity of the Vedas and the n stika is one who does not believe in the validity of the Vedas:*

### KEY WORDS:

philosophical systems ,C rv ka System ,materialists ,Ethical Philosophy .

### INTRODUCTION

“Asti n sty dishtam matihi, Asti paralok iti evam matir yasyasah stikaha. N sti iti matir yasyasah n stik ha”

The similar interpretation of the terms stika and n stika have been recorded in the abdalpadruma as well.

**Vedapr m ?yav di( stika)Ved pr ma?yav di(n stika)<sup>1</sup>,**

The term n stika is used in various senses: one who disregards Vedas:

**yavamanyate te mule hetu? stra?rayad dvija? |  
sa s dhubhirbahi?k rryon stiko vedantindaka? || <sup>2</sup> manu,2,11**

Who denies the existence of other world (N sti paraloka?). Who does not believe in the transmigration of jiva and the existence of I?vara.

paraloka? asti iti matir yasya ?a stikah, tadviparita? n stika?-pradipa,

paraloka? asti iti yasya matir asti sa stikah, tadviparita?, n stika?-

k sik ,asti paraloka? ityeva? matir yasya sa stika?,n sti iti matir yasya sa n stika?<sup>3</sup>

In Indian philosophy Ny ya, Vai e?ika, S ? khya, Yoga, Mim ? s and Ved nta are the six orthodox ( stika) philosophical systems whereas Jaina, Bauddha and C rv ka are the three heterodox (n stika) systems. Among the n stika systems, C rv ka also known as Lokayata is a system of Indian philosophy that assumes various forms of philosophical skepticism and religious indifference.<sup>4</sup> C rv ka occupies a very important place in the history of Indian philosophy. The origin of the word C rv ka is not

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definite. According to some scholars, a seer named C rv ka, who is mentioned in Mahabharat, enunciated this school of philosophy and after whose name this school is so called, is said to be the chief disciple of Brahaspati.

The name C rv ka applies to the materialists, because it is the name of the founder of the system. The word C rv ka is derived from the root 'c ra' which means to chew or to eat. In other words, C rv ka means agreeable speech (c ru- agreeable and v ka speech). Therefore, the welcome utterances (c ru -v ka) found in this philosophy accounts for its name. This school of philosophy is also referred to as Lokayata School because the name Lokayata is the most commonly applied to ancient doctrine (Dar ana) in India, traditionally attributed to this school of thought. The name Lokayata can be traced to Kautiliya Arthshastra, which refers to three anviksikis yoga, S mkhya and Lokayata. However, Lokayata in Arthshastra does not stand for materialism because the Arthshastra refers to Lokayata as a part of Vedic lore. Lokayata here probably refers to logic or science of debate and not the materialist doctrine. Rhys Davids rightly observes that, we do not know of a single individual who claims affiliation with Lokayata or any text that calls itself Lokayata.<sup>5</sup>

Regarding the relations of C rv ka to Lokayata, scholars have different opinions. S.N. Das Gupta explained the word C rv ka in different way. He says that C rv ka is not a historical individual<sup>6</sup>. According to Max.Muller, C rv ka is represented as a teacher of Lokayata. He is treated as a historical individual to whom Brhaspati or V caspati delivered his doctrine.

The name C rv ka was first used in the 7<sup>th</sup> century by the philosopher Purandara, Who referred to his fellow materialists as "The C rv kas and it was used by the 8th century philosophers Kamalasila and Haribhadra. Adi Shankara always used the term Lokayata not C rv ka.<sup>7</sup> But in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, the terms C rv ka, Lokayata and Brahaspati were used interchangeably to signify materialism<sup>8</sup>. As materialism in India is known to be the Brahatya because of the ascription by tradition of the authorship of the classical work on Indian materialism, viz, the Brahaspati sutras to Brahaspati. But as to who this Brahaspati was- and whether he was at all a historical figure- controversy still persists. Dr.Shastri, maintaining the real founder ship of Brahaspati attempts to distinguish Brahaspati the materialist from Brahaspati the writer on artha and the Smrtikara.

It is not sure that if C rv ka was a particular name of some individual or merely a nickname of the followers of Lokayata School. It is characterised as a materialist and atheistic school of thought. While this branch of Indian philosophy, some describe it as an atheistic or materialistic philosophical movement within Indian philosophy.<sup>9</sup> They were thorough atheists (n stika) because they rejected outright Isvara, Atman, Paraloka and the Vedas and they have only accepted the four basic mohabhutas, i.e. prthvi, apah, tejas and vayu. Even the concept of Mok?a in this system of philosophy is queer and strange because they treat it as the destruction of the body and said only physical death is liberation. The total rejection of Isvara, Atman and Paraloka placed them in the category of staunch materialists.

Most of the studies on C rv ka have been motivated by prejudices. Generally, the critics of C rv ka have been unsympathetic and their approach has been casual in branding C rv kas as notorious atheists who had no regard for tman, paraloka and the authority of Vedas.<sup>10</sup> Now we will discuss the ethical philosophy of C rv ka:

C rv ka the n stika system of Indian philosophy appears as a note of discord in the symphony of Indian philosophy. In all the Indian philosophical systems, none is so much anti-Vedic as C rv ka School of thought is. It is more a philosophy of life than a theory of ultimate reality. Unlike Jainism and Buddhism, C rv ka school of thought has not turned into its own religious sects and remained a philosophical ideal. It has its truth in man's eternal urge for pleasure and has its truth in challenging all the traditional values. They believe in manly strength and the efficacy of human endeavor in the attainment of happiness, even though they are realists enough to realise the difficulty in attaining unmixed happiness.

The ethical philosophy of Veda had advocated four purusarthas or the ends of life i.e., Dharma, Artha, Kama and Mok?a for the integrated development of the individual as well as the society. The C rv ka have bitterly antagonised against the Vedas. Out of four human values- Dharma, Artha, Kama and Mok?a, the C rv ka accepted only two purusarthas or the ends of life i.e., Artha and Kama (wealth and satisfaction of desires).

### Arthakumau purusarthau<sup>11</sup>

According to C rv ka Kama or sensual pleasure is regarded as the end and Artha or wealth is regarded as the means to realise that end, while Dharma and Mok?a are altogether rejected. Pleasure is regarded as mixed up pain, but that is no reason why it should not be required.<sup>12</sup> Nobody casts away the grain because of the husk.<sup>13</sup> Should nobody cook because of beggars? Should nobody sow seed because of

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animals.<sup>14</sup> One should not reject the pleasures of this life upon the false hope of future life. To them pleasure is the highest good and to sacrifice the present for future is unjustified.

### **Yavajjiveta sukham jived rnam krtva ghrta pivet I Bhasmibhutasya dehasya punaragamanam kuta II**

In the ethics of C rv ka philosophy, they regard sensual pleasure as the summum bonum of life. The only goal people ought to pursue is maximizing sensual pleasure in life while avoiding pain. Eat, Drink and Be Merry, for you have only life to live. Money is a means to enjoyment and consequently it is necessary to earn it. A man can do anything to accumulate more wealth and more pleasure - beg, borrow, steal etc. The laws of the country or state prevent a man from doing the bad actions and punish him if he disobeys them. If he did the action without coming in to notice of them, then his action is justified. Otherwise, he should follow the rules to avert the pain of punishment.

**While life is yours, live joyously:  
None can escape Deaths searching eye:  
When once this frame of ours they burn,  
How shall it e'er again return-15**

According to the ethical philosophy of C rv ka, 'as long as you live, live life to the fullest.' After death, the body is reduced in to ashes and there is no hope of coming back here again. If he who departs from the body goes to another world, how is it that he comes not back again, restless for love comes not back again, restless for love is kindred? There is no world other than this, neither hell nor heaven. There does not exist anyone who lives in the other world. The lives after death or rebirth, immortality of soul etc, all are false ideas or imagination and these are the inventions of impostors. The past and future being dead and doubtful respectively, the present alone is regarded as the possession of the individuals. According to C rv ka, Eat, drink and be merry, if you are living here happily, this world is itself heaven and if you lead miserable life, this world is hell (Nurag).

### **Parlokinobh v tparlok bhava?<sup>16</sup>**

Despite the fact that there is no other world which we can say heaven and hell and there is no particular place named heaven and by heaven. There is no hell other than the worldly troubles produced and hell means merely the endurance of pain. C rv ka however, a materialistic philosophy believes in the present life, their dictum is live this life fully, and they places most of its emphasis on here and now life. To them pleasure is the ultimate end. Any action rendering more pain than pleasure is wrong. In this way, C rv kas are hedonists in their ethical thought because they clearly advocates the fulfilment of desires and the search for pleasure as the only ideal to be followed in life.

C rv ka rejected the orthodox Indian religious philosophical systems whose authority was derived from the Vedas and Vedic principles. The doctrine dismisses all gods, devas and supernatural beings.<sup>17</sup> They not only denied the existence of an absolute God and the soul (The Brahman and Atman) but also rejected the concept of dharma and karma as the basis of morality. Haribhadra S ri, the Jain author in his work ?a?dar anasamuccaya (verse 80) states their view, as "There is neither god (deva) nor liberation, Dharma and Adharma also do not exist. Nor is there any fruit of virtue and vice."<sup>18</sup>

Liberation according to C rv ka is conceived as the total destruction of suffering. Some philosophers think that liberation can be attained only after death, when soul is free from the body and believe that it can be attained even in this life but C rv ka holds that none of these views stands to reason. According to them, if liberation is freedom of soul from bondage to physical existence, it is absurd because there is no soul, but if liberation means attainment of a state free from all pain, in the very life, it is also an impossible ideal. Existence in the body is bound up with pleasure as well as pain, we can only try to minimize pain and enjoy as much as we can. Liberation in the sense of complete cessation of suffering can only mean death. "Maranamevapavargah." It means death is liberation.

According to C rv ka philosophy, there is no immortality, no rebirth. Religion is a foolish aberration, a mental disease. A God is not necessary to account for the world. They criticised the Brahman priests and their craft and Vedic rituals, sacrifices for them were considered meaningless. Those who make ritual offerings of food to the dead, why do they not the feed the hungry around them? The Brahman priests say that a beast slain in a sacrifice will itself go to heaven. How is it that they do not kill their fathers in a sacrifice in order to send them directly to heaven? Under the dominance of religious prejudices, men are accustomed to the idea of another world and of God and when the religious illusion is destroyed; they feel a

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sense of loss and have an uncomfortable void and privation.

Law of karma occupies a central position in Indian philosophy. All the good and auspicious actions performed with the desire of good results are karmas. The law of causation applied in the moral world is called the law of karma. According to law of karma, pleasure, pain, grief, happiness, unhappiness of human life are related to their action. Every person has to undergo the fruits of his actions. Good actions results in good fruits. If a person performs good action then he gets good fruits and on the other hand, bad action results in bad fruits; he cannot avoid the sufferings of his bad actions. Therefore, according to law of karma one cannot escape from the fruits of his action. Every one faces the fruits or results of his own action either in this very life, or in the life after death. People take birth again and again because of the law of karma. The doctrine of karma is peculiar to Indian tradition.

Almost all the system of Indian philosophy with the exception of the C rv ka accepted the doctrine of law of karma and rebirth. According to C rv ka philosophy, there is no place for the doctrine of law of karma and rebirth. They rejected the law of causation. Therefore, they reject the law of karma. There is no necessary relation between action and its fruits. Therefore, for them there is no truth in the doctrine of karma. There can be no fruits according to its action. The life after death or rebirth, immortality of soul etc, all is some false ideas or imagination and these are the inventions of impostors as after death or the destruction of the body nothing is left. Therefore, there can be no question of taking a new birth again. Thus, C rv ka philosophy rejects both the doctrine of karma and the theory of rebirth.

The C rv ka philosophy has generally been dismissed as unworthy of consideration, inimical to ethics and religion and illogical. It was condemned as a kind of stark sensualism and grossly selfish philosophy of life.<sup>19</sup>

Indian philosophy has made an immense contribution in the world of thought particularly in the field of philosophy and religion. For over a period of four thousand years, Indian ascetics developed their systems of philosophy. Indian philosophy is intensely spiritual and has always emphasized the need for practical realization of truth. It signifies a natural and a necessary urge in human beings to know themselves and the world in which they live, move, and have their being.<sup>20</sup>

In short, we can say that it is more a philosophy of life than a theory of ultimate reality. This school of philosophy has its truth in man's eternal urge for pleasure. It has its truth in challenging all the traditional values. In metaphysics and epistemology, C rv ka stands in defying contrast to all other Indian philosophical systems. C rv ka ethical theory is undoubtedly based on the choice of the pleasure as the ideal of life. They argued each individual to seek his or her pleasure here and now. For them, pleasure is the highest good and to sacrifice the present for the sake of future is unjustified. Pleasure and pain are the central facts of life. Those who try to attain in life a state free from pleasure and pains by rigorously suppressing the natural appetites, thinking that all pleasures arising out of their gratification are mixed with pain, those people act like fools. To them, a good action is one, which leads to a balance of pleasure and a bad action is one, which brings about more pain than pleasures.

Thus, C rv ka says that the goal of human life is therefore to attain maximum amount of pleasure in this life, avoiding pain as far as possible because if we remember that our existence is confined to the existence of the body and to this life, we must regard the pleasure arising in the body as the good thing, we can obtain. Even during life, there cannot be even the most remote probability for complete escape for pains. Pain is always an antecedent of the body. Pleasure and pain are physical states. The past and future being dead and doubtful respectively, the present alone is regarded as the possession of the individuals. We should not through the opportunities of enjoying this life in the futile hope of enjoyment here after, "rather a pigeon today than a peacock tomorrow". "A sure shell (Courie) is better than a doubtful golden coin." Who is that fool who should entrust the money in the hand to the custody of others?<sup>21</sup> The C rv ka way of life speaks that the differences between castes and their distinctive duties are laid down misleadingly by interested people. There are no objective ethical laws, so one can do what one wishes to, provided he is careful that his actions do not bring pain as an outcome. This school of thought is unique in the sense that without much literature and established tradition, it made its mark as a major school of materialism in Indian philosophy.

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