

THE EASTERN INFLUENCE ON THE WESTERN THOUGHT, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY AND NIETZSCHE.

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Eastern philosophical trends influenced Western thought immensely in the later modern period. This is especially evident in Kantian and Post Kantian philosophers. This study focuses on Buddhist influence on NIETZSCHE (1844 – 1900) who is one of the twentieth century's most important, controversial and influential philosophers. Friedrich Nietzsche is the author of many philosophical works including *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872), *untimely Meditation* (1873-6), *Human, All Too Human* (1878-80), *The Dawn* (1881), *The Gay Science* (1882), *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1883-1885), *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886), *On The Genealogy of Morals* (1887), *The Anti-Christ* (1888), *The Autobiography*, *Ecce Homo* (1888) and other writings. The main philosophical task of Nietzsche is to unmask the fictions and delusions of European values, in the light of a Buddhist understanding of philosophy and ethics.

The main contribution of Buddhist philosophy consists of the critique of metaphysics with deep consideration of social change through meditative and existential understanding. All the historians of Indian philosophy consider Buddhist philosophy, as the best form of Indian thinking, for its critique of metaphysics and the dialectical understanding of reality and for the notion of Nihilism. The existential understanding and the value system of Buddhist thought influenced many Post Modern thinkers. Nietzsche also deals with overturning the history of Western Metaphysics, European Nihilism and the Principle of new valuation of Western philosophy. Nietzsche's mission on "*The will to power*" is an attempt at a revaluation of all values, based on an Eastern understanding of philosophy and values. Nietzsche's approach to the conventional problems of Western philosophy is unique and he identifies the experience that determines his thinking.

"Life... more mysterious since the day the great liberator came over me - the thought that life should be an experiment of knowers" (*The Gay Science*. 1882. Book IV no. 324).

The fundamental position within which Nietzsche unfolds the guiding question of Western thought is deeply influenced by an understanding of eastern existential philosophy and Self-realization. The understanding of the essence of being and the practical realization of values have been symbolized as 'death of God' in Buddhist philosophy and Nietzsche's Thinking.

In Nietzsche's discourses, Zarathustra voices the Nietzschean idea of 'over-man' which can be compared with the Buddhist 'Bodhisatva' ideal - that has come to be associated with Nietzsche more than any other ideal. The doctrine of Eternal Return - being as a whole - touches the fundamental thought of Nietzsche's philosophy.