

SUSPENSION OF BELIEF:  
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF EARLY BUDDHISM AND PYRRHONISM

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I hereby declare that this dissertation has not been submitted  
as an exercise for a degree at any other institution,  
and that it is entirely my own work.

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## ABSTRACT

Suspension of Belief:

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By

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A common challenge of Buddhism and Pyrrhonism is to overcome dogmatic beliefs by avoiding rejecting or accepting a set of beliefs and optimizing the ability to search for truth. In this dissertation, I investigate these two approaches from different traditions. On the one hand, the Pyrrhonist notion of epoché (ἐποχή) is to suspend judgment about beliefs, either true or false, with the aim of achieving tranquility (*ataraxia*). On the other hand, the Buddhist notion of withholding beliefs avoids the claim of absolute truth but endorses the practical orientation of one's experiential investigation. In the early Buddhist teachings as well as Pyrrhonist tenets, the suspension of belief is pursued neither to justify beliefs nor to deny reality. How may the respective notions of suspension of belief in Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism be constructed? What are the comparable characteristics and features?

For the study, the writings of Sextus Empiricus represent the Pyrrhonist view of the suspension of belief and are the focus of investigation. I delve into the Buddhist discourses in Pāli Cannon, which contain early Buddhist notions of phenomenon and approach. Furthermore, I pay attention to historical context and to compare the characteristics and features articulated as means and aims for suspending dogmatic beliefs and achieving equanimity in these two traditions.

This study posits that suspending belief is a relevant approach and method of inquiry toward truth statements and views of the world. It encourages the practitioner toward thoughtful investigation that is not caught up in dogmatic agreement or disagreement and allows the mind to be free from disturbance.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

### Pāli Canon

- AN    Aṅguttara Nikāya—the Book of Gradual Sayings
- A i    Aṅguttara-nikāya Eka-Duka-Tikanipāta (Vol. 1)
- A iii    Aṅguttara-nikāya Pañcaka-Chakkanipāta (Vol. 3)
- DN    Dīgha Nikāya—the Long Dialogues of the Buddha
- D i    Dīgha-nikāya Sīlakkhandhavagga (Vol. 1)
- D iii    Dīgha-nikāya Pāthikavagga (Vol. 3)
- Dhp    Dhammapada
- Khp    Khuddka- nikāya Suttanipāta — the Sutta Collection
- Khu    Khuddaka Nikāya — the Short Passages
- MN    Majjhima Nikāya—the Middle Length Sayings
- M i    Majjhima-nikāya Mūlapaṇṇāsa (Vol. 1)
- M ii    Majjhima-nikāya Majjhimapaṇṇāsa (Vol. 2)
- M iii    Majjhima-nikāya Uparipaṇṇāsa (Vol. 3)
- SN    Saṃyutta Nikāya — the Book of Kindred Sayings
- Sn    Saṃyutta-nikāya Mahāvagga
- Ud    Udāna (Khuddka- nikāya) — Exclamations
- Vism    Visuddhimagga — the Path of Purification (Commentary)
- Example: AN 5 = Aṅguttara Nikāya, Sutta Number 5

## **Skeptic Scriptures**

- AL     Against the Logicians (Adversus Mathematikos VII, VIII)
- AM     Against the Musicians (Adversus Mathematikos VI)
- AP     Against the Professors (Adversus Mathematikos IV, V, VI)
- APE    Against the Physicists, Against the Ethicists (Adversus Mathematikos IX, X, XI)
- DL     Diogenes Laertius (Lives of Eminent Philosophers II)
- Med    Meditations of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus
- PH     Outlines of Pyrrhonism (Pyrrhoneioi Hypotyposeis)

## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

Belief is a subject containing significant aspects of suspension of judgment, criteria of truth, and investigation in Buddhism and Pyrrhonism. Actually, belief or opinion (*doxa*)<sup>1</sup> is a position of things in the affirmative or rejective assertion that what things are or are not by nature. It indicates a dogmatic claim of absolute truth in the proposition, either true or false. Mainly, Buddhist and Pyrrhonist views are about beliefs and attitude against dogmatists. In early Buddhist and Pyrrhonist discourses, suspension of belief is a critical challenge to dogmatists, their speculations, and justifications in truth claims. Indeed, Buddhist teaching reflects intellectual enlightenment and the modes of inquiry averting speculative beliefs.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, the Pyrrhonist approach toward an absolute claim is to suspend judgment, *epoché* (ἐποχή) and then to achieve a state of tranquility (*ataraxia*); freedom from disturbance.<sup>3</sup>

According to the discourse to *Kalamas*,<sup>4</sup> the Buddhist notion of the free inquiry of belief is withholding all beliefs or teachings and examining them in advance of one's experiential investigation aiming for equanimity. In parallel, Pyrrhonists view in Sextus Empiricus's account shows that the suspension of belief promotes the modes of arguments against dogmatists.

The early Buddhist discourses describe the achievement of the Siddhātha Gautama, the Buddha, that he formulated his teachings and viewpoints as a man who has

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<sup>1</sup> *Doxa* (δόξα): belief or opinion, dogma (δόγμα), it is an acceptance of truth, viewpoint, and notion of true or false about things based on philosophical theories, judgments, and *dokeo* (δοκέω): what is expected to be true. In this case, it refers to an approval of things, either true or false. Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 9; Peters, *Greek Philosophical Terms*, 40–41.

<sup>2</sup> *International Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*, s.v. “Religion without Speculation.”

<sup>3</sup> PH I.8-10

<sup>4</sup> *Kasaputti Sutta* in Soma, *Kalama Sutta*, 1-7.

attained the mental state of liberation by clinging to nothing to achieve a peaceful mind. In some sense, Early Buddhism has been preserved the authentic teaching of the Buddha and his path of liberation, so it comes to admit a particular belief and practice.

However, the Buddhist discourses describe various criteria of inquiries apart from dogmatic beliefs in which the Buddha announced his teachings as a path of renunciation.<sup>5</sup> According to the early Buddhist texts, the Buddha was an ascetic or a wanderer (*Śramaṇas*). Even though the Buddha achieved the enlightenment; he announced non-assertion and requested only an empirical examination for one's view regardless of any beliefs. The early Buddhist discourses have collected Buddhist and non-Buddhist modes of thoughts in various responses and critiques to other beliefs.<sup>6</sup> Particularly the discourse given to *Kalamas* has signified the Buddhist freedom inquiry by promoting non-judgment to suspend dogmatic beliefs while putting all teachings on trial in a practice mode toward the achievement. In this study, the discourses in Pāli Canon have foremost described the Buddhist thought that reveals the notable aspects of suspending belief in the mode of inquiry and the final achievement as means and aim.

Among ancient Hellenistic philosophers, skeptics<sup>7</sup> have committed no belief but provided their critical arguments against dogmatists. They employ their modes of inquiries attacking dogmatists in advance of the skeptical ability to examine things without judgment and a definite answer. In skeptic tradition, the Pyrrhonist skeptic is considered non-judgment and the modes of inquiry that have given an equal possibility of all aspects either counter or encounter arguments. In some sense, skepticism seems to

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<sup>5</sup> "You should do your work, for the Tathagatas only teach the way." Dhṛp 20.4; Rahula mentions that "Buddhism is a way of life." Rahula and Demiéville, *What the Buddha Taught*, 81.

<sup>6</sup> Makransky, "Buddhist Perspectives," 335.

<sup>7</sup> "Skeptic" is an American English word of sceptic in English, quotation will be used as original sources.

show a more passive view to nothing, either belief or knowledge as a universal solution. Indeed, Pyrrhonist skeptic challenges any pieces of evidence in justification and believes that there are insufficient and inadequate shreds of evidence to prove any assertion of things as true or false, so one should suspend judgment and withhold beliefs. They claim no absolute solution<sup>8</sup> but a clear mindset to withhold any determination and to examine any argument. According to Sextus Empiricus's account, the Pyrrhonist notion of suspending belief utilized various kinds of skeptical arguments adverse dogmas with an equal balance of counter and encounter arguments aiming for the final goal of calm.

On the one hand, each religion has established its belief about life, nature, and reality, so belief is meant to the essence of things that appeals to faith, viewpoint, and knowledge. In the skeptic view, a belief is not a conviction but an equal expectation of true or false. Skeptics could give any specific justification but an equal probability of things neither true nor false. In attacking dogmatists, skeptics could not close any chance of possibility but freely keep searching and looking forward without holding any assumption. Skeptical inquiry is neither to holding what truth is nor denying what truth is impossible, but to unwrap any possible realities with equal consideration. This method is to project the skeptical point that belief can be a possible hypothesis of things instead of the principle of all things. Therefore, the Pyrrhonists suggest the suspension of judgment, so one can approach things without judgment and maintain one's mental state of tranquility. In relevant to liberation in Buddhism, one can achieve by abandoning desire,

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<sup>8</sup> New Academic (skeptical) claims inapprehensible knowledge. Popkin, *History of Scepticism*, xv. The Pyrrhonian skeptics determine nothing. PH I.14



ignorance, and attachments, even a belief to reach the mental state of deliverance.<sup>9</sup> In opposing dogmatism, Buddhist and Pyrrhonist views emphasize neither the epistemic assertion nor the metaphysical claim but their therapeutic approaches toward the mental state of grasping nothing either an absolute entity or self. Consequently, Buddhist and Pyrrhonist inquiries about beliefs are constructed on their methods and aims for the mental calm from disturbance. Both concerning points epitomize the modes of inquiries and investigation “*skepsis*” (σκέψις)<sup>10</sup> to oppose any assertion and justification against dogmatists who hold either positive or negative views of things as the definite truth.

In the discourse given to *Kalamas*, suspension of belief is considered to be a free inquiry of wisdom in Buddhism opposing any beliefs that appeal to story, tradition, text, rumor, logic, speculation, commonsense, schemas, trustworthiness, and authority. Thoroughly the Buddha employed the experiential method to examine any beliefs or doctrines, so one could experience for oneself with his or her way of seeing what things are. In this case, the Buddha warned against the wrong view holding an absolute entity as the truth without a further investigation. On the other hand, the Buddha taught a path that intended to acquire an experimental investigation. Thus, this method of inquiry is not just about creating states of well-being but is about de-conceptualizing any belief in an inherently fabricated self and its existence. The inquiry as a healing path for liberation energizes the critical examination of teaching (*Dhamma*), so one must “come and see” for oneself in a critical examination as the aim and foundation of Buddhist learning.<sup>11</sup>

In scriptures, the Buddhist teaching emphasizes an experimental practice and inquiry of

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<sup>9</sup> In the raft parable, the Buddhist teaching is a means to liberation, like a raft is helpful to cross a river but useless to carry on. M i 130

<sup>10</sup> Vogt, “Ancient Skepticism,” 1.

<sup>11</sup> Guruge, *Buddhist Answers to Current Issues*, 130–31; Segall, *Encountering Buddhism*, 175.

wisdom to guide a seeker to see things for oneself. Buddhist achievement does require no attachment, even faith<sup>12</sup> but begins with an appropriate view to attain enlightenment. In other words, Buddhist inquiry insists on the skeptical inspection of individual experience and wisdom.<sup>13</sup> Withholding belief, Buddhist teaching could not be accepted by faith or what the Buddha taught. However, it is subjected to investigation and understood by seeing and experiencing from one's perspective as well as achieving the final goal of liberation,<sup>14</sup> the ultimate goal is to be extinguished from desire and all attachments.

Therefore, the suspension of belief in Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism is an exciting topic in comparison by tracking its respective notions and characteristics embedded in searching for truth and responding to dogmatic beliefs. In this study, Buddhist and Pyrrhonist discourses are primary resources to identify the comparable characteristics and features of suspension of belief regarding the main concerns in Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism. By comparison, the Buddhist and Pyrrhonist modes of inquiries are the primary subject of suspending belief in responding to dogmas or absolute claims. Indeed, both schools have constructed their ways of searching for truth by means and aim. Therefore, this study will examine and compare those characteristics and features of the suspension of beliefs based on the early Buddhist teaching and Pyrrhonist tenets.

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<sup>12</sup> *Assassho*: without faith, unbelieving. Dh 21.17

<sup>13</sup> Wallace, *Meditations of a Buddhist Skeptic*, viii.

<sup>14</sup> *Nibbāna*: extinction, to become extinguished, being unshaken, freedom from desire and attachments. Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 105–6.

## Study Prospectus

This study aims to identify and compare the suspension of belief in Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism. Mainly belief is the subject in the scope of the Buddhist path and skeptical modes of inquiries. In this case, suspension of belief is a theoretical significance in an existing body of knowledge in religious study and comparative philosophy due to a comparative approach both schools in different perspectives across-cultural fields. The study examines the respective aspects of suspending belief for similarities and differences, which is sufficient to understand and benefit both traditions. Some points of inquiry involve belief, doctrine, judgment, and attitude concerning how things are by nature. Many speculative beliefs and views assert dogmatic claims to grasp what things are in polarizing either affirmative or rejective determination. The suspension of belief in Buddhist and Pyrrhonist notions has dealt with speculative beliefs and absolute claims demanding their solutions in responding to those dogmatic beliefs.

Given an intellectual remedy for curing the mental unrest of holding dogmatic beliefs, Sextus Empiricus announced a skeptic like “*a soul-doctor*,”<sup>15</sup> while the Buddha, providing the spiritual treatment for healing the mind from mental illness, was like a healer.<sup>16</sup> The free inquiry of beliefs is considered a therapeutic solution that aims at a non-dogmatic view through the curing practice regardless of any belief. Indeed, both approaches present the way out of contradiction and problem distinguishing from other schools.

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<sup>15</sup> Empiricus, Annas, and Barnes, *Outlines of Scepticism*, xxviii.

<sup>16</sup> Tay, “*Buddha as Healer*,” 191; De Silva, *Introduction to Buddhist Psychology*, 8–9.

The study contemplates the suspension of belief as it is being constructed and embedded in Buddhist and Pyrrhonist discourses that suspending belief is mentioned as a primary aspect in the modes of inquiry to achieve the mental state of tranquility. This work addresses a significant implication concerning main ideas, methods, and arguments against dogmatists in the doctrinal research of both schools by drawing the Buddhist thought in Pāli cannon and the Pyrrhonist thought in Sextus Empiricus's account.

This comparative study will approach different criteria of religion and philosophy encounter Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism, which it could reflect the notorious standpoints of Buddhist and Pyrrhonist modes of thought in the suspension of belief. In noticeable similarity, the Buddhist modes of inquiry utilize suspending beliefs to deal with extremists; by comparison, it is close to the Pyrrhonist view of withholding belief against dogmatists. In modes of thought, the methodological emphases focus on Buddhist and Pyrrhonist thoughts employing intellectual and awareness as the prominent faculty to reach such a claim to stabilize the mind. However, this comparative study could be superficial and pointless if it assumes from typology and schematization. Indeed, it will compare both accounts in challenging through any possible outcomes across boundaries and deeply analyze the early Buddhist and Pyrrhonist discourses and arguments concerning the modes of thought and inquiry about beliefs and how to deal with dogmatic beliefs. The following content will be indicated to suspension of belief comparing Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism.

## Literature Review

Many studies have approached Greek skeptics, by comparison, Western philosophy, Chinese sages, Indian philosophy, *Mādhyamika*, and Zen Buddhism in fields of Indology, philosophy, history, religion, philology. A study based on the historical contexts of ideas has investigated and identified the patterns of Buddhist and Pyrrhonist thoughts about the Eastern religion and Western philosophy. The skeptic is one of the Western philosophies traced to Eastern religions such as Buddhism in characteristics that heavily rely on dichotomies. Indeed, many comparisons aim to see similarity and dissimilarity by juxtaposing those features. Still, some analytical studies are profound to the roots of each subject to see any interconnections and influences of East and West. Most studies have established various topics approaching Greek skepticism, Pyrrhonism, and Buddhism.

In Greek skepticism and Hellenistic philosophy, many studies have described skeptics in an account of Greek skeptics at the beginning Pyrrho of Elis to Sextus Empiricus such as Norman Maccoll (1869) *Greek Sceptics: From Pyrrho to Sextus; An Essay Which Obtained the Hare Prize in the Year 1868*, Mary Mills Patrick (1899) *Sextus Empiricus and Greek Scepticism*, Charlotte L. Stough (1969) *Greek Skepticism: A Study in Epistemology*, A. A. Long (1974) *Hellenistic Philosophy: Stoics, Epicureans, Sceptics*, Malcolm Schofield, Myles Burnyeat, and Jonathan Barnes (1980) *Doubt and Dogmatism: Studies in Hellenistic Epistemology*, Myles Burnyeat (1983) *The Skeptical Tradition*, Leo Groarke (1990) *Greek Scepticism: Anti-Realist Trends in Ancient Thought*, Myles Burnyeat and Frede Michael (1997) *The Original Sceptics: A Controversy*, Keimpe Algra (1999), *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy*, and Vogt, Katja (2011) *Ancient Skepticism*. These texts discuss various controversial issues and distinctions

between Pyrrho, Pyrrhonean, Sextus Empiricus, and Academic skeptic in great detail from a historical perspective, textual analysis, and modes of arguments. Particularly the studies start from the founder of the skeptic school such as Richard Bett (2008) *Pyrrho, His Antecedents, and His Legacy* and *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Scepticism* (2011). Moreover, Juha Sihvola (2000) *Ancient Scepticism and the Sceptical Tradition*, Alan Bailey (2002) *Sextus Empiricus and Pyrrhonean Scepticism*, Luciano Floridi (2002) *Sextus Empiricus: the Transmission and Recovery of Pyrrhonism*, Miriam McCormick (1998), *The Nature and Value of Skepticism*, Walter Sinnott-Armstrong (2004), *Pyrrhonian Skepticism*, Harald Thorsrud (2009) *Ancient Scepticism*, Diego E Machuca (2011), *Pyrrhonism in Ancient, Modern, and Contemporary Philosophy*: These works are beneficial to study the main course of Greek skeptic accounts from Pyrrho and Sextus Empiricus. Briefly, the Pyrrhonist skeptic can be examined in the historical and textual analyses of skeptical tradition and its rival philosophies.

John Owen (1881) *Evenings with the Sceptics* is a primary intent of fulfillment works in the history of skepticism. It is a closer look at the skeptical tradition and dogmatic beliefs in the various perspectives. According to the skeptic responses to dogmas, a discussion on a natural basis and starting-point are genuine skeptics that present skeptical discourses about doubts, beliefs, and knowledge for suspending beliefs. The accurate skeptic view is not to give an absolute answer or belief but to ask a question. The discussion has defined the significant characters of Skepticism and Pyrrhonism in the suspension of belief (*epoché*) and calm (*ataraxia*) established in Greek pre-post-Socratic periods Hebrew and Hindu traditions. Each tradition was allied with the skeptical thought related to beliefs and knowledge.

In Buddhist study, a scheme of pure skeptical negation was shined under the shadow of nothingness. The Buddhist notion of nothingness energized religious examination toward liberation (*nibbāna*), rejecting dogmatism and speculation. However, the Buddhist view of existence might have interpreted as pessimism. It could let go of everything under the realm of its skeptical refutation. Significantly, the Buddhist view of nothingness compared to Pyrrhonism goes beyond skeptics by denying reality and self. Alike Pyrrhonist and Buddhist tendencies of suspending belief intend to achieve the mental state of tranquility that Buddhism seems to have a determination about the truth and the self. However, suspension of belief could be identified differently by means and ends in both traditions. At least comparing both schools in the differences and similarities would achieve more comprehensive discussion to open different traditions, cultures, and perspectives. Even though the discussion was not entirely developed in a full-blown academic manner sincerely from each discourse, some claims were made by categories and opinions based on Greek philosophy over Orientals regardless of those accounts and sources. This study will approach each interpretation and context focus on its perspective and response to the suspension of belief.

In skepticism and Indian philosophies, *Skepticism in Early Indian Thought* (1977), John M. Koller presents the similar schemas and claims of Greek skeptics comparing Carvake philosophy, Sextus Empiricus, and Nagarjuna. In contrast, Dipankar Chatterjee (1977) *Skepticism and Indian Philosophy* argues that skepticism as a systematic claim of doubt is unlike any Indian philosophies such as Carvake, Buddhism, Jain, and realistic Hindu schools that do not deny the possibility of knowledge that is utterly ineffable.

In exchanges of East and West, Hellenistic Greek and Indian Buddhism was by comparison in modes of thought, and cultural relations based on texts and inscriptions of Hellenistic Bactria, Asoka's monumental inscriptions, and Milindaphaha. The pieces of evidence support various chronological events that there were deeply cultural exchanges and philosophical influences according to David H. Sick (2007) *When Socrates Met the Buddha: Greek and Indian Dialectic in Hellenistic Bactria and India*. In the study of Evrard Flintoff (1980) *Pyrrho and India*, he shows the context of Pyrrhonism and Buddhism that were dealing with dogmas and extremist beliefs. Pyrrho, who had been on Alexander's expedition to India and encountered the oriental thought, established a skeptical argument that closely resembled Indian teachings in theoretical aspects and practical notions of Charavaka and Buddhism rather than the Hellenistic philosophy. Wilhelm Halbfass (1988) *India and Europe* addresses the chronological links between East and West religions, languages, philosophies, history, and cultures from ancient Greek and Northwestern India, so the understanding of Greek-Indian philosophy could be recognized in various categories of provenances and schemas.

In study of Buddhist philosophy, Edward Conze (1963) *Buddhist Philosophy and Its European Parallels* discusses that the basic principles of Buddhism were comparable and parallel to European philosophies such as the Greek skeptics. The various archaic thoughts and essential teachings could be characterized into philosophical notions such as emptiness and *Nirvana* particularly Mahayana and Mādhyamaka Buddhism that were comparable to European philosophies. Thus, Buddhist teachings and thoughts were identical and comparable to various European philosophies.



Ben-Ami Scharfstein (1998), *A Comparative History of World Philosophy from the Upanishads to Kant* intends to emphasize various perspectives of each tradition; India, China, Japan, and Europe from a chronology of great philosophers. He identifies the Buddha at the beginning of Indian moral philosophy. He discusses the development of skepticism, such as Sextus Empiricus and Nagarjuna, who articulated their skeptical arguments against dogmatic beliefs and constructive thoughts. These skeptical doubts are based on the refutation of all principles and claims, so the views were nothing could be proven or claimed. Both schemas expound the non-judgmental belief neither deny nor affirm anything but emptiness. Consequently, this comparative study contributes a philosophical view in chronological history that each view could speak for itself and be compared on common ground and with different schemas.

A closer look in practice, *Joy of Torture: Hellenistic and Indian philosophy on the Doctrine that the Sage is Always Happy Even if Tortured* (2001) Joseph Waligore discusses Hellenistic and Indian characteristics of sages and philosophers on the notion of pain sharing Indian ascetic life and joy of torture in Hellenistic philosophy that had entailed by Epicurus, the Cynics, and the Stoics. Therefore, this study highlights comparative approaches in different religious and philosophical aspects and views. Brian P. P. Morton (2003), *Ineffability and Self-Refutation: Non-Monotonic Logic in the Thought of Pseudo-Dionysius, Sextus Empiricus and the Astasahasrika Prajnaparamita* explored three stands of ancient thoughts focusing on ineffability and self-refutation that claim to be a defensible use of Greek skeptics, Sextus Empiricus and Mahayana Buddhism.

*Pyrrhonism and Mādhyamika*, Thomas McEvilley (1982) was the historical and philosophical attempted to mark the parallel views of Greek Pyrrhonism and Indian Mādhyamika by thoughts and schemes toward life with non-judgmental belief. Pyrrhonism on Sextus Empiricus's account and Mādhyamika on Nagarjuna's account were comparable in their terms and arguments. The similarities between Pyrrhonism and Mādhyamika have underlined various periods and scriptures projecting their attitudes toward the goal and the methods. In this case, the evidence and views could open alternative perspectives to examine the topic from ancient Greek and India in developing skepticism, empiricism, and naturalism. However, based on a hypothesis of Indian-Greek influence, the chronology and geography could provide no further than a possibility of Hellenistic culture and the Near East. In the later works (2002), *the Shape of Ancient Thought: Comparative Studies in Greek and Indian Philosophies* made a comparative typological study of Greek and Indian philosophies based on the pre-Socratic and Hellenistic philosophies. Pyrrhonist and Buddhist views have insisted on critical questions and critiques in previous traditions about belief and knowledge in the rising of skepticism, empiricism, and naturalism.

On the one hand, *Emptiness Appraised: A Critical Study of Nāgārjuna's Philosophy* (2001), David Burton argues that Nāgārjuna is not a skeptic based on the nature of knowledge and the fundamental nature of things. This ultimate truth characterizes either to entail nihilism or to imply no knowledge. His dialectical method presents some parallel notions of Mādhyamika and classical skepticism. Indeed, emptiness (*śūnyatā*) refutes a false conception of reality and attacks all validation of knowledge with absolute certainty of emptiness. However, *Nāgārjuna's*

*philosophy* emphasizes emptiness and the Middle Way that can be interpreted as searching rather than anti-realistic views. Moreover, *Nāgārjuna*'s notion of emptiness could have traced to the Buddha's teaching in the early Buddhist discourses that present the whole system of thought in its historical context.

On the other hand, *Buddhism, Knowledge and Liberation: A Philosophical Study* (2004), he identifies Buddhist skepticism from Mādhyamaka Buddhism and some pieces of evidence such as a skeptical soteriology in Early Buddhism from the Pali Canon". He depicts Mādhyamaka in a skeptical view of anti-realistic and the Middle Way as a thing in itself, so one does not access reality or knowledge but only the means of correct cognition. In discussion of Kant's mind-independent world in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1965), the mind-independent reality expresses the pure knowledge in indubitability and irrefutable justification. He discusses a skeptical interpretation of Early Buddhism in *Sutta Nipata* about the unanswered question of the Buddha that audiences have tried to get an answer about *Avyakata-Vastu* (eternal questions about the world), so the Buddha has given on answer or silence.

However, Pyrrhonian skeptics did not project accessible knowledge of reality but only outlined for all possible knowledge without accepting or rejecting of truth. In his discussion, he mentions Hamilton's point of Early Buddhism that emphasizes the Theravada scriptures in conceptual diffusion (*papanca*) as the only world of reality that does recognize through form, sensation, perception, and consciousness, so human can access it. Otherwise, the world is fabricated by the mind. Indeed, Buddhist teaching underlines the world of our experience rather than the world that exists independently of our minds. This point is to doubt about things that are simply out of reach from human

perception. He mentions a skeptic point addressing things in themselves as mysticism and ineffability. According to Pyrrhonist skeptics, their attacks are not modes to embrace or refute the truth rather than against dogmatic belief in which skeptics can hold their minds stable with no judgment for searching. Burton's view interprets Buddhist skeptics with merely philosophical supports and arguments. However, the point of comparison is to see Buddhist and Pyrrhonist notions on suspension of belief against dogmatism and speculation in which therapeutic implication was employing as means for achievement.

In *Empty Words: Buddhist Philosophy and Cross-Cultural Interpretation* (2002), Jay Garfield discusses *epoché* as a core concept to represent skepticism, comparing *śūnyatā* as the main focus of skepticism. He remarks the suspension of judgment based on Sextus Empiricus's works that withholding a nihilistic view is comparable to the notion of emptiness in Mādhyamikas in which is considered as "positionlessness" in spending belief.

In *Doubt: A History* (2004), Jennifer Michael Hecht aims to give a historical view about doubt in various historical circumstances from the Hellenistic period at the beginning of Greece to Rome and worldwide. Indeed, skepticism began with Pyrrho of Elis and many different cultures and traditions. Buddhism was a movement of reform and rejection of Vedas as well as Carvaka, Jainism. Mainly the Buddha addresses his teaching neither self-indulgence nor self-abnegation to claim nothing. The teaching of the Middle Way implies either dogma or disbelief but holding a possibility of truths or non-judgment belief. Indeed, many significant characters and events in the history of doubt could have compared from those different contexts, cultures, and traditions in the world.

In *Pyrrhonism: How the Ancient Greeks Reinvented Buddhism* (2008), Adrian Kuzminski examines the Mādhyamaka School and Pyrrhonism. He argues that Pyrrhonism is not skepticism, unlike Academic skeptics, which promotes incomprehensible knowledge. He draws a possible historical link between Buddhism and Pyrrhonism based on similar aspects that could have identified in terms of anti-realist and emptiness. He underlines the modes of inquiry in evident and non-evident that is noticeable similar between Pyrrhonism and Mādhyamaka in terms of nihilistic dialectic and anti-realistic view. His arguments are based on modern Pyrrhonism and western philosophers who adopted and presented their understanding of the Pyrrhonist view. He addresses some Buddhist discourses that described the non-dogmatic view. His arguments depict merely a philosophical interpretation that is roughly thriving for similarity regardless of contradictory. Therefore, one could make up a horse-rabbit-cat regardless of their existence. Indeed, this comparison of Buddhism and Pyrrhonism seeks to approach those criteria and contexts supported by discourses and primary resources in both schools.

An analytic comparison of Skepticism and Zen Buddhism, *Skepticism, Ordinary Language and Zen Buddhism* (1977), Dick Garner focuses on ordinary language in Sextus Empiricus as a Pyrrhonist skeptic and Zen Buddhist as an embodiment of Madhyamika school. Both schools use a common language to present their viewpoints, formulas, modes, debate, and concepts such as calmness, emptiness, and middle path. Even though they were different in using and practicing, they attempt to philosophize without judgment or to understand without concept, so they claim nothing opposes philosophical arguments but offers a state of non-assertion or non-dualistic view, neither

being nor non-being. Therefore, they have considered similar characters and different ways of expression through ordinary language and philosopher's tendencies.

*Toward a Philosophy of Tranquility: Pyrrhonian Skepticism and Zen Buddhism in Dialogue*, Carlo Jamelle Harris (2009) draws Pyrrhonian philosophical methodologies from Sextus Empiricus's works in comparing to Zen Buddhist teaching from the Sixth Patriarch of the Southern Zen School. The Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch shows "tranquility" comparable in terms of non-dogmatic attachment either to deny or to confirm any judgment. Both are identifiable in various respective positions.

Paul Kjellberg, (1996) *Essays on Skepticism, Relativism and Ethics in the Zhuangzi* is an across-culture philosophical study by comparing Sextus Empiricus and Zhuangzi and Xunzi that epoché: the suspension of dogmatic judgments is a therapeutic way of Pyrrhonist skeptic to establish nothing and to challenge all possible knowledge with the mental state of calm. Similarly, Zhuangzi, a Daoist who used similar questions and dialogues to challenge an impossible of knowledge for a practical purpose of "skillful living." Therefore, this study draws those similarities and differences of Greek skeptics and Chinese about belief and knowledge. This study provides a comparative method across-culture of different traditions. The comparative analysis of Buddhist and Pyrrhonist notions of suspending belief could have given a possible way to see their thoughts and concerns in reflecting the noticeable characteristics in both schools.

*The Faith to Doubt: Glimpses of Buddhist Uncertainty* (1990), Stephen Batchelor underlines the Buddha's response to doubt in question without assertion representing an individual state of being with defilements aiming for liberation in Zen tradition. In a later

book, *Buddhism Without Beliefs: A Contemporary Guide to Awakening* (1997), he points out the Middle way in the first sermon on turning the dharma wheel that emphasizes an interwoven complex of truth requiring the way of understanding. In this case, Buddhist belief is a trial of practical application along the path of realization. This application neither affirms nor denies things but recognizes dharma as a non-dogmatic belief even to doubt something that you do not know. However, his work is not a comparison but gives some light to non-dogmatic and therapeutic views in Buddhism. Mainly, Buddhist practice and Pyrrhonist modes are focused on suspension of belief and aim for tranquility.

A Buddhist skeptic, *Meditations of A Buddhist Skeptic: A Manifesto for the Mind Sciences and Contemplative Practice* (2012), Alan Wallace points out the Buddha himself embraced the value of skepticism for holding non-judgmental belief (epoché) from hearsay, legend, tradition, text, logical conjecture, probability, and authority, and for seeking the truth on an individual practice as well as the Greek term “*skeptikoi*” seekers or inquirers in a Pyrrhonist skeptic. He addresses that Buddhism is not simply a set of beliefs to be accepted on faith or traditional ritual practices to be followed. It requires an experimental and rational examination and the demands of skeptical inspection of one own experience. However, his points make Buddhism parallel with science, which seems to join the trend of modern skeptics. In the shadow of skeptics, Buddhist thought has philosophized regardless of the distinctive characters in skeptic and Buddhist courses. Indeed, this comparison of Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism avoids a sole interpretation and integrates those distinguish characters but examines suspending belief as a means and aim according to the historical contexts and discourses in both schools.

*In Early Buddhist Discourses*, John J. Holder (2006) discusses Buddha's teaching in rising of *Samana*, *Carvake*, *Ājīvika*, *Brāhmanical* beliefs and practices. In this context, Buddha was the enlightened person who achieved liberation (*Nibbana*) with no claims of what thing is and is not (being nor non-being). Indeed, *Nibbana* is a goal in Buddhism that describes calm, happiness, joy, and tranquility. Moreover, the early Buddhist discourses can offer various philosophical issues, including biography, methodology, metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, and practices. The text revealed the discussion about belief and its critiques on investigation regardless of a complete solution or infallible truth. In *Doubting the Kālāma-Sutta: Epistemology, Ethics, and the Sacred*, Stephen A. Evans (2007) interprets the Buddha's answers as an attempt to refuse the *Vedic* tradition in the free inquiry of belief.

In sum, many works address Greek skeptics and Hellenistic philosophies in various fields of history, discourses or texts, modes of arguments that provide the basic understanding of Pyrrho of Elis, Sextus Empiricus, Pyrrhonist, and Academic skeptics. Sextus Empiricus's account is a primary resource of the Pyrrhonist skeptic in the great numbers of skepticism studies. Furthermore, the dissertation will examine the Pyrrhonist discourse in Sextus Empiricus's works that reveals Pyrrhonist points of view, principles, modes of inquiry, and arguments. However, the study will go across-culture to compare with Buddhism based on the early discourses of Pali cannon as a primary resource that has been preserved and presented Buddhist thought on suspending belief. The early Buddhist discourses provide the historical context of teachings in responding to dogmas and absolute claims by the modes of inquiries parallel to Pyrrhonist skeptics.



On the one hand, this study seeks to analyze Pyrrhonist skeptic and Buddhist views based on their accounts of collected discourses and works. On the other hand, it will compare both views in responding to dogmas and beliefs in the criteria of suspended belief. Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism stand by their modes of inquiry that reflect the means and aim in terms of suspension of belief.

## **Methodology**

In religious studies, a critical survey of belief is an exciting dimension that provides an alternative spectrum of teaching to define the knowledge and examine any beliefs with non-judgmental assumption. Hence, one can see various aspects of beliefs throughout any possibilities without asserting any dogmas or absolute claims.

Undoubtedly philosophizing with non-judgment is an adequate solution to achieve an open mind and to gain wisdom. This concern is attributed to philosophy and religion to avoid any ambition and dogmas but to remain closed in the subject matter. Despite the tendency to believe, human beings intend to grasp various representations or speculate things as absolutes or truths. The threat of belief is extremism or fundamentalism and a belief without a critique or an examination.

In some sense, belief is a religious attitude toward affirming a truth; experience, doctrine, and teaching are projected or held as truth.<sup>17</sup> In philosophy, this term refers to a mental attitude of being justified by knowledge, whatever has to be either true or false.<sup>18</sup> Belief is interpreted as an individual understanding and justification that could not assume by authority, tradition, and even any certainty. All possibilities are equal in true and false, so doubting everything or searching without judgment means having more

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<sup>17</sup> The religious term, belief infers to teaching and doctrine as truth. *Encyclopedia of religion*, s.v. "Belief."

<sup>18</sup> *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, s.v. "Belief."

chances to achieve any possible outcome rather than holding an absolute certainty. Therefore, suspension of belief refers to an inquiry with clinging to nothing, neither true nor false. Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism mainly have been established the suspension of belief as their prominent viewpoints and healing path to achieve the mental state of tranquility for their aims.

The approach seeks to study the suspension of belief by comparing Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism based on their accounts against extremists and dogmatists. According to Timon's passage about Pyrrho, Pyrrhonist skeptic has responded and articulated their questions on suspending belief.<sup>19</sup> The study examines the suspension of belief by modes of inquiry, means, and aims in both schools. The main questions are what would be the respective aspects of suspension of belief embedded in Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism? How is the suspension of belief constructed and articulated as a means and aim in both schools? What are the noticeable characteristics and features of suspending belief by comparison?

This study framework analyzes and reconstructs the suspension of belief by comparing across-culture between Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism. The noticeable aspects of suspending belief are compared by means and aim in context and response to dogmatists based on Buddhist and Pyrrhonist discourses.

This comparative study is categorized in "a mode of self-comportment."<sup>20</sup> It is to think in the sense of the actualization, its nexus, and being in contexts of history. This category obtains a self-compartment of understanding and articulating of being and

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<sup>19</sup> The questions are about things by nature, attitude, and solution. Empiricus and Bett, *Against the Ethicists*, 6-7.

<sup>20</sup> Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle*, 38.

objects in terms of what and how? It must be determined and grasped at the principle level of the subject.<sup>21</sup> It does not focus on form or essence or as a matter of principle otherwise; it shows a matter of fact to appropriately grasp its way of understanding and approach. The approach will define objects in the sense of actualization based on primary resources in both schools.<sup>22</sup> In this case, suspending belief could be drawn from the noticeable aspects embedded in Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonist schools. Comparing one to other subjects could bring a new way to examine the early Buddhist and Pyrrhonist views of suspending belief. The category indicates what is in terms of suspension of belief. It shows how it has been articulated in the early Buddhist teaching and Pyrrhonist argument according to their opponents through the discourses.

However, the comparative study of religion in this sense does follow the scholastic category and across-cultural interpretation that adopts different dimensions as an analytic and cross-cultural category in various contexts of history, culture, and perspectives. It is not simply to approach various accounts of religious aspects regardless of similarity and distinction that transforms the conceptual apparatuses of objects into knowledge to understand one thing from previous things, even from different perspectives. In the boundaries of philosophy and religion, category analysis is a cognitive structure that paves the new way to approach possible terms such as knowledge or belief. Nakamura suggests reexamining and reinterpreting more carefully and broadly from different perspectives across cultures based on particular tradition or scheme and encountering tradition or “cross-cultural cognitive anthropology.”<sup>23</sup> Therefore,

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 18-19.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 40-45.

<sup>23</sup> Larson and Deutsch, “*Interpreting Across Boundaries*,” 151.

comparative perspectives are a possible method to describe and tell about religion as a reality of its own based on being and reflecting in human belief and practice. The activities are not considered a scholastic meaning-making about fitting or justify to the world or thoughts. However, they apply to various modes of meaning and different approaches for the analytical comparison of religious study. This study does require the scholastic activities of philosophizing schemata and concepts of religion. Indeed, a categorical framework is associated with the interconnectedness of characters and objects, contexts of history, and culture. Therefore, to determine what would be the category of comparative perspectives of suspension of belief in Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism is to examine their views and modes of inquiry. How they respond and project it, so the key features of comparative study in this approach are not beyond these naturalistic, humanistic, and moralistic criteria in the early Buddhist teachings and Pyrrhonist arguments.

In sum, this study of suspension of belief in Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism compares its aspects based on their discourses covering the criterion of belief as means and aim. Suspension of belief is the main focus to identify similar and different notions in the criteria of belief by pulling out its aspects from Buddhist and Pyrrhonist thoughts. Indeed, this approach would be comparable with the process and reconstruction across boundaries of philosophy and religion. It must rely on each tradition in contexts of history and discourses that signified and constructed its line of arguments and descriptions to bring out some traits or patterns in juxtaposing and analyzing for better understanding them both beyond cultural differences. In this case, focusing on suspension of belief is to be reconstructed cross-religious categories aiming for a

comparative study in cross-cultural approach to capture an exciting issue based on extensive and analytical studies.<sup>24</sup>

## **Contribution**

The study of religion is an inter-disciplinary approach to humanistic subjects. This knowledge identifies human as a rational being and a toolmaker who invents unlimited instruments to create and examine things in many possible ways. This dissertation is another tool to examine belief in another view integrated philosophical thought and religious inquiries to justify nothing but to investigate beliefs carefully. According to Buddhist and Pyrrhonist views, belief does not require accepting an entity but a way of guiding one's experiment and mental attitude toward it. Indeed, belief is about the pursuit of wisdom in a thoughtful way to reveal a mystery of religion. In some sense, religious belief is a meaningful therapeutic method to maintain a spiritual life. Belief as human justification could go beyond either dogmas or absolute claims. Comparative perspective across boundaries is an example of freed inquiry that the human mind is wide open and handles an endless horizon of wisdom. Therefore, any study considers an account of possibilities of seeing things based on evidence and subject matters. The study of East-West could have integrated with other references. This comparative study of Buddhist and Pyrrhonist perspectives might close a gap between East-West, religio-philosophy in which the suspension of belief does oppose dogmatism and provides a thoughtful inquiry for those therapeutic claims of tranquility.

In exchanging differences, Buddhists could barely sustain detachment and set off a healthy mindset in the present. At the same time, Skeptic could hold their arguments

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<sup>24</sup>Stausberg and Engler, *Routledge Handbook of Research Methods*, 23–28.

appearing in a moment of despair for a meaningful life. Skeptic and belief apply to dialogue their counterparts because skeptics will have no shortage of argument against endless sources of belief, so any faith-based beliefs must be on trial. Otherwise, both can be distinctive rivals because skeptics could be made religious meaning and value absurd or pointless. Indeed, they can be friendly colleagues who could reflect and criticize each other's views with somewhat academic mindsets. Unfortunately, belief could go beyond any reach of thought or intellectual limits, but it appears closer to the human mind or the spiritual realm of what has come to be. Thus, this approach will be a human exercise that the realms of thought and belief are on the same page of attempting without judgment and searching across boundaries to provide another aspect of belief and its approach in general study and academic level in particular.

### **Chapter Narrative**

In the following chapter contents, the suspension of belief is the main subject of investigating Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism and drawing viewpoints on the criteria concerning beliefs and inquiries. It covers the scope and limit of this study, terminology, and methodology by means and aims that capture its comparable characteristics and features against dogmatists. The first chapter introduces the suspension of belief as a critical inquiry founding in Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism, and the research method includes study purpose, literature review, contribution, chapter narrative.

Chapter 2 addresses an outline and background of suspension of belief to explore Buddhist and Pyrrhonist standpoints with historical background and context according to discourses and arguments in both schools. History and tradition are the criteria to trace Buddhist and Pyrrhonist accounts. The notions of suspension of belief are the main

arguments constructed into their modes of inquiry against extremists and dogmatists. Indeed, withholding belief is a clue to discover any distinctive aspects and familiar characters signified in the modes of inquiry in both schools. This chapter will lay down the framework in juxtaposing comparable characteristics and features of suspending belief based on historical context and discourse in both schools.

Chapter 3 discusses the suspension of belief in the early Buddhist teachings. The doctrinal analysis underlines the noticeable characteristics and features regarding the suspension of belief from early Buddhist and Pyrrhonist accounts. In this case, religious categories and philosophical terms are helpful to understand the standpoints and methods toward beliefs and inquiry.

Chapter 4 discusses the suspension of belief in Pyrrhonist tenets. The following contents will explore Pyrrhonist accounts of suspension of belief in the analysis and interpretation of inquiry and modes of thought to detect the characteristics and features based on Sextus Epiricus' account of Pyrrhonist tenets.

Chapter 5 compares suspension of belief in Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism. In comparing both perspectives, the main focus will be on the belief criteria according to their healing path by those inquiries of wisdom to attain achievement. However, this chapter compares these categories and criteria and assumes both viewpoints as a therapeutic hypothesis about belief to analyze any possible outcome of comparing Buddhist and Pyrrhonist views. Unfortunately, the possible outcome will define Buddhist and Pyrrhonist standpoints of suspending belief, so it will delight which parts or points of

each view instead of similar and distinctive viewpoints of Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism by comparing both categories.

Chapter 6 summarizes the result of comparing Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism. It remarks early Buddhist and Pyrrhonist viewpoints of the suspension of belief and its aims, focusing on criteria of belief and inquiry. The characteristics and features underline the suspending belief in similar aspects based on both accounts. This study attempts to understand Buddhist and Pyrrhonist perspectives concerning belief and how they deal with it. It applies a cross-cultural approach in historical and doctrinal analyses to reconstruct noticeable aspects by comparison. As a result of chapters, further research will offer an exciting point from Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism in the limits of this research. Similar and different aspects of suspending belief reveal the narrow patterns of Buddhist and Pyrrhonist thoughts. Indeed, this approach will adopt the process and reconstruction across boundaries of philosophy and religion.



## CHAPTER 2

### History and Tradition

The history of ideas<sup>25</sup> is employed to study the suspension of belief in Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism based on its tradition and historical context; even so, the prominent characteristics and features have formulated and projected both perspectives of judgment about belief. The early Buddhist and Pyrrhonist thoughts are related and responded to other beliefs and characterized by founders, heads of school, and disciples who expounded those ideas and outlines in their main courses. Nevertheless, they have responded to dogmatic beliefs and claims through the historical context of antithesis against the mainstream traditions.<sup>26</sup>

In the following contents, the body of tenets and traditions relies mainly upon the later compiled works as the resources of both schools.<sup>27</sup> Thus, this chapter will explore the prominent features of predecessors and successors treated and reflected in Buddhist and Pyrrhonist views concerning belief. It provides the common ground as the general equation for understanding Buddhist and Pyrrhonist perspectives by placing both traditions exemplifying each side of both views of suspending judgment. Furthermore, it constructs a platform to compare suspension of belief in Buddhist and Pyrrhonist

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<sup>25</sup> Lovejoy, "Reflections on the History of Ideas," 4–6; Mandelbaum, "History of Ideas," 33–35. The history of ideas is presented as the procedure and the subject matter showing relationships between "systems" and "unit-ideas." This study aims to bring out the suspension of belief from the contexts of each tradition and the key features to understand its means and aim in Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism.

<sup>26</sup> Conze points out that the Buddhist teachings are from the Buddha as the founder and related to other Indian beliefs. Bronkhorst argues that Buddhist teachings and practices are identifiable in the ancient discourses of beliefs in Great Magadha. Murti defines the Buddhist tradition as a fountain source of thought and culture. Hence, Buddhism is one of the Indian traditions originating from the Buddha's search for truth in beliefs and practices. Conze, *Buddhist Thought in India*, 31–33; Bronkhorst, *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism*, 6–1; Murti, *Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, 10.

<sup>27</sup> The tradition includes the predecessors and successors of Pyrrhonism. In terms of "Pyrrhonist," "Pyrrhonian skeptic," and "skeptic" are used interchangeably to designate philosophers who contribute the core aspects of Pyrrhonism and who appoint the Pyrrhonist view. Burnyeat, *Skeptical Tradition*, 1–2.

standpoints based on its characteristics and outstanding features through their sources and historical background. As a result, the outcome could reveal the standpoints and the concerns of Buddhist and Pyrrhonist search for truth, which are vis-à-vis to the ancient thoughts and the mainstream philosophical debates at that time.

In sum, the study of suspension of belief in Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism utilizing the primary discourses have made this investigation and comparison with an equal amount of support to identify the main features, means, and aims.

In Early Buddhist scriptures, the suspension of belief was interrelated to other beliefs in the context of Indian Vedic and non-Vedic traditions. The Buddha was the founder who responded and encountered those rival schools and endorsed the Buddhist modes of inquiry.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, Pyrrho was the head of Pyrrhonian School, who responded and corresponded to Hellenistic philosophers and traditions from pre-Socratic, Stoic, and Pythagorean who projected their criteria of truth and truth-claims.<sup>29</sup>

To identify the main characters in Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism, the suspension of belief is the central aspect of both schools responding to other traditions based on their modes of inquiry. This approach compares suspending beliefs through the reconstructed means and ends for similarity and distinction in both traditions.

In brief, this chapter seeks to investigate Buddhist and Pyrrhonist traditions from their standpoints and discussions in the historical contexts of belief and judgment. Combining the historical background of Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism, both accounts could provide an appropriate equation to understand the history of ideas that occurred behind what Buddhists and Pyrrhonists formed and encountered other traditions.

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<sup>28</sup> Varma, *Early Buddhism and Its Origins*, 41. Vedas is recognized as the root of Indian beliefs and traditions; in many cases, Buddhism comes up against the Vedic tradition.

<sup>29</sup> Long, *Hellenistic Philosophers*, 16.

Therefore, observing the whole period of tradition, the history of ideas could deeply reveal various terms and key features of ancient predecessors and successors. Thus, the main courses of Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism could draw the key features and noticeable aspects of suspension of judgment about belief and modes of inquiry.

### **Historical Background**

The history of ideas and traditions would unwrap the notions of suspending belief in the early Buddhist and Pyrrhonist thoughts. Each tradition encounters the archaic presupposition of dominant beliefs and tenets that indicate those related ideas and traditions.<sup>30</sup> In Indian traditions, the archaic beliefs in Early Buddhism were in Vedic tradition and non-Vedic tradition.<sup>31</sup> This doxography can be interpreted distinctively as Indian orthodox systems of Brāhmanical teaching and the heterodox teachings such as Buddhists, Jainas, and Ajivakas.<sup>32</sup> The early Buddhist tradition has initially been around the 6th-3rd century B.C.E.<sup>33</sup> In the Greek philosophical period, the ancient skeptical tradition was around from 300 B.C. to A.D. 400. This tradition has indicated to Pyrrho of Elis, who lived around c. 365- c. 270,<sup>34</sup> where it was from pre-Socratic tradition and flourished in Hellenistic tradition.

According to the Buddhist discourses, the Buddha had faced and responded to those views of predecessors in his periods such as Brāhmanas and Śramaṇas. Dogmatic beliefs and speculative views (*diṭṭhi*) designate the absolute claims to determine things as

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<sup>30</sup> Halbfass, *On Being and What There Is*, 35.

<sup>31</sup> Nakamura, *Indian Buddhism*, 61–62.

<sup>32</sup> Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, 23.

<sup>33</sup> Prebish, *Historical Dictionary of Buddhism*, xxix; Nakamura, *Indian Buddhism*, 61–63; Hirakawa, *History of Indian Buddhism*, 13–14; Keown and Prebish, *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, 105–106. The Buddha period in “long chronology” based on Pāli sources dates around c. 566-48 B.C.E. and “short chronology” based on Sanskrit sources is around c. 448-368 B.C.E.

<sup>34</sup> Burnyeat, *Skeptical Tradition*, 5.

the only truth. The Buddha's reflection<sup>35</sup> is considered as an imprint of thought and teachings. Thus, the Buddhist thought and inquiry reflect and remark beliefs and views in discussions and arguments against extremists. Therefore, the notion of suspension of belief could be drawn from the prominent figures to see the main features, the modes of inquiry, and attitudes concerning beliefs and views of suspending judgment.

In the historical background of Early Buddhism, the belief was the primary concern of spiritual quests and practices in the Great Magadha. Johannes remarks that "*liberation can be attained through knowledge of the self.*"<sup>36</sup> The movement of non-Brāhmanas such as Buddhists, Jainas, and Ajivakas challenged dominant beliefs and prompted a critical investigation against absolute claims. Thus, the belief was meant to be an individual examination.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, Buddhist teachings promote the thoughtful examination of predominant beliefs and praxis in establishing the Buddhist tradition.<sup>38</sup> The Buddhist notion of suspension of belief reflects the Indian beliefs that the Buddha himself redefined and constructed his thought and teachings related to other beliefs.

In the historical background of ancient Greek skeptics, the Pyrrhonist tradition was about to remark other beliefs as a subject of philosophical concerns and claims in the criteria of truths and beliefs. Pyrrhonists treated and criticized beliefs as dogmatism, and the main argument was to suspend any judgment. Suspension of belief took place in most parts of the Pyrrhonist discussion. It has interacted with various ideas and teachings under various prominent figures attributed to the suspending belief throughout the Pyrrhonist

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<sup>35</sup> Barnes, *Presocratic Philosophers*, 13. By reflection and interpretation, he suggests we could reach some philosophers who have left no writhing such as pre-Socratic philosophers.

<sup>36</sup> Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha*, 28.

<sup>37</sup> Hamilton, *Early Buddhism*, 7.

<sup>38</sup> Wallace in "Methodological Relevance of Contemporary," *Buddhist Theology*, 88-91.

tradition. Thus, the modes of inquiry and the main concerns of Pyrrhonist tradition were described under Sextus Empiricus's account.

To see the standpoint of different skeptical traditions is achieved by juxtaposing each feature to others and examining the skeptical responses to the problems in which this is the main focus of this study. Hence, the Pyrrhonist perspective could be seen as a response to a set of historical circumstances that includes views, modes of thought or inquires, and claims of various traditions between skeptics and non-skeptics.<sup>39</sup>

The following contents will compare both traditions to see their similarities and differences and postulate their main features concerning belief, mode of inquiry, attitude, and aim. Combining the historical background of Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism, their correspondences have linked to other beliefs and traditions, formulating their encounter standpoints to suspend judgment on belief against dogmatism. Thus, beliefs, modes of inquiry, attitude, and the final goals will bring the whole picture of Buddhist and Pyrrhonist responses to these predecessors or rival schools and traditions.

### **Pyrrhonism and Related Traditions**

In the Hellenistic period, skeptics discussed belief, attitude, investigation, inquiry, and equanimity.<sup>40</sup> Skeptic tenets have consisted of collective characters to project the standpoints about beliefs and modes of thoughts projecting beliefs and modes of thought from the prominent skeptical figures.<sup>41</sup> Under Greek philosophical traditions, skepticism has outlined the skeptic characteristics inspiring various movements of ideas and

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<sup>39</sup> Groarke, *Greek Scepticism*, 29.

<sup>40</sup> Stough, *Greek Skepticism*, 1.

<sup>41</sup> Suzanne in Sedley, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 242. Pyrrhonist figureheads include Carneades' anti-theoretical stance, Sextus's suspension of judgment, and Agrippa's five modes.

thoughts from Pyrrho of Elis, Timon of Philus, Aenesidemus, Acrippa, and Sextus Empiricus.<sup>42</sup>

Identifying the Pyrrhonist features, the survey of skeptical tenets in contexts of history implies that Pyrrhonian's responses were inherently associated with the previous philosophical traditions from the pre-Socratic to post-Hellenistic period.<sup>43</sup> There were the ancient predecessors' and successors' archaic features integrated into the skeptical traditions. Indeed, various emphases and endowments of skeptic characteristics have been espoused and systematized by the notorious philosophers in the skeptical traditions, such as modes of inquiry from the mainstream of ancient Greek philosophical traditions.

The chronological history<sup>44</sup> reveals that skeptical tradition has flourished in the Hellenistic period from the pre-Socratic period (625-400 BCE) and revival in the Graeco-Roman period (31 BCE – 600 CE).<sup>45</sup> Sextus's account of Pyrrhonism provides the reliable source of information about the Stoics and other Hellenistic schools. It also contains a significant portion of the pre-Socratic fragments and the Pyrrhonist tenets and views against dogmatists.<sup>46</sup> Therefore, Pyrrhonist skeptic has constructed by Pyrrho and multifarious philosophers accumulating the whole tradition and Pyrrhonist perspective.

First of all, belief (*dóxa*)<sup>47</sup> is the main topic of ancient skepticism.<sup>48</sup> At the same time, most of Greek philosophy in the pre-Socratic and Hellenistic periods has discussed

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<sup>42</sup> Burnyeat, *Skeptical Tradition*, 9; Patrick and Sextus, "Sextus Empiricus and Greek Scepticism," 11; Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, xxx.

<sup>43</sup> Stough, *Greek Skepticism*, 1–2.

<sup>44</sup> Burnyeat, *Skeptical Tradition*, 3–5; Gascoigne, *Scepticism*, 32–33.

<sup>45</sup> Stough, *Greek Skepticism*, 3; Kristeller, *Greek Philosophers of the Hellenistic Age*, 41.

<sup>46</sup> Sextus and Mates, *Skeptical Way*, 5.

<sup>47</sup> *δόξα*: notion of true or false; expectation, judgment, a mere opinion, conjecture; *δοξάζω*: to think, imagine, suppose, fancy, conjecture, to hold an opinion, to magnify. Peters, *Greek Philosophical Term*, 40–41.

<sup>48</sup> Vogt, "Ancient Skepticism," 1.

knowledge (*epistēmē*)<sup>49</sup> involving judgment, either truth or false. Pyrrhonist could be recognized as an anti-thesis movement against non-skeptics such as the Dogmatic and the Academic. Pyrrhonism has projected the skeptical inquiry to the problems and limits of knowledge and belief. It used the modes of inquiry and arguments opposing judgments. According to Sextus Empiricus's account, the Pyrrhonist aspects could be traced in pre-Socratic and Hellenistic philosophies. Remarkably, Greek philosophical studies show the successors and predecessors testified as doxographers of views and opinions from the rival philosophies. In this case, doxography reveals the interrelation between skeptics and the pre-Socratic and Hellenistic philosophies in contexts of Greek philosophy for understanding the skeptical tradition and transmission under the account of Pyrrhonism.<sup>50</sup>

In the context of ancient Greek philosophy, the inquiry about nature (*phusis*)<sup>51</sup> is the main subject in common of modes and inquiries. Many testimonies provide the primary accounts of determination and gratitude concerning nature<sup>52</sup> and reality.<sup>53</sup> In the pre-Socratic period, the nature of things expresses the pre-Socratic worldview reflecting all things and cosmos of the external world.<sup>54</sup> The contributions of Greek speculations or

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<sup>49</sup> Knowledge: "acquaintance with a matter, skill, experience, knowledge, science, theoretical knowledge" Peters, *Greek Philosophical Term*, 58–59.

<sup>50</sup> Long, *Cambridge Companion to Early Greek Philosophy*, 23; Barnes, *Presocratic Philosophers*, 14–15; Mansfeld, "Doxography of Ancient Philosophy," 5–9. Doxography is the descriptive study of view or tenets that Hermann Diels developes to reconstruct the lost work of philosophers in contrast with the biography genre.

<sup>51</sup> Naddaf, *Greek Concept of Nature*, 1. The early Greek notion of *Phusis* was captured in an analysis of book 10 of Plato's *Laws*.

<sup>52</sup> Natura covers the origin aspects of reality, primordial matter, process, and result. Brunschwig et al., *Greek Thought*, 20.

<sup>53</sup> Anaximander's an account concerning *Nature* (*Peri Phuseos*); Barnes, *Presocratic Philosophers*, 19.

<sup>54</sup> Naddaf, *Greek Concept of Nature*, 3–9; Brunschwig et al., *Greek Thought*, 301–302.

thoughts have given significant views, theories, and beliefs of things and nature to proclaim the truth or reality.<sup>55</sup>

Among speculations and beliefs, the Pyrrhonist has promoted a skeptical attitude and investigation toward nature or things in Timon's quote of Pyrrho. Indeed, Pyrrhonist outlook of nature criticized all human ability to establish the truth or define reality. In Timon's *Silloi*,<sup>56</sup> skeptical provision of Pyrrhonism said how things are by nature, what attitude we should take toward them and the result for those in this disposition.<sup>57</sup> Hence, the skeptical provocation is to suspend any proclaims or beliefs and to seek an equal balance of accepting or rejecting things aiming the peace of mind.

Opposing belief with disbelief, the Pyrrhonists endorse non-assertion to suspend any beliefs (*epoché*) due to the equal account of arguments as means to reach the final aim of tranquility (*ataraxia*). Pyrrhonist attitude concerning nature or things is exclusively a significant character to refrain from dogmatists and upholds attitude and action without belief.

According to Timon's passage of Pyrrho, "nature or things (*phusis*) are equally undifferentiated, unstable, and indeterminate."<sup>58</sup> Indeed, Pyrrhonist view of nature was subjected in pre-Socratic philosophy described in various criteria and views. Moreover, Pyrrhonists lead their tenets and attitude with equal arguments or views without a dogma. Having an undecided opinion, Pyrrhonists express the utterance of determining nothing to

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<sup>55</sup> Naddaf, *Greek Concept of Nature*, 18–20. According to Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, early Greek philosophy attempts to philosophize all things (*phusis*) originated by the Milesian school's material principles such as water, air, fire, and earth.

<sup>56</sup> Aristocles, *Aristocles of Messene*, xiii. Aristocles of Messene recounted his *On Philosophy* which deals with the Pyrrho and Timon, who were the key figures in early Pyrrhonism.

<sup>57</sup> Vogt, "Ancient Skepticism," 3.

<sup>58</sup> Aristocles, *Aristocles of Messene*, 21.



hold any trust or belief.<sup>59</sup> Briefly, various descriptions of knowledge, belief, and reason have justified and claimed to be the ultimate truth.<sup>60</sup> Nevertheless, the Pyrrhonist tradition has responded to those ideas throughout pre-Socratics and Hellenistic philosophy.

Pyrrhonists withhold judgment, either affirmation or rejection, in response to dogmatists but keep the mind open and investigate. Most skeptics seem to have nothing certain but desperately doubt. This feature is roughly known as doubt which is often meant to doubts something in matters of ambiguous things that one could not make any points or undecidability.

In Greek philosophy, *Aporia*<sup>61</sup> was a sense of wonder based on the Socratic method of interlocutory, which assumes the features of a dialectical process to investigate various opinions or solutions.<sup>62</sup> In Sextus's account, however, "to be at loose"<sup>63</sup> is an attitude without judgment due to the perplexity of assertion in belief or disbelief.

In some sense of ongoing examination, Pyrrhonist school has known as the seeking school; "inquirer" (*zetetic*), "suspense" (*ephectic*), "investigating" (*aporetic*).<sup>64</sup> Skeptical pointless was adopted along with another school such as the Academy of Plato labeled as *zetetic*.<sup>65</sup> Pyrrhonists do not dogmatize in a broad sense of approval of things, neither evident nor non-evident. They have used the skeptical method of arguing that pro

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<sup>59</sup> Aristocles, *Aristocles of Messene*, 21; Vogt, "Ancient Skepticism," 4.

<sup>60</sup> Like Heraclitus's account of nature, in Plato's footage of Heraclitean Flux and Paradox shows that "everything moves and nothing rests." Barnes, *Presocratic Philosophers*, 65.

<sup>61</sup> *Aporia*: absence of a way through, puzzlement, being perplexity, it refers to the state of the aporetic and perplexity or being at a loss. Urmson, *Greek Philosophical Vocabulary*, 29–30.

<sup>62</sup> Peters, *Greek Philosophical Terms*, 22–23.

<sup>63</sup> Unlike "to be a doubter" in modern skepticism that philosophers cannot provide a plausible truth. In some cases, *aporia* was used by Stoics to blame skeptics for absurdity and pointless.

<sup>64</sup> Floridi, *Sextus Empiricus*, 20–21.

<sup>65</sup> Ζέτεó means to seek about things, to seek for truth, to enquire about reality. Tarrant, *Scepticism or Platonism*, 28–29.

and con arguments allow them to approximate the truth but do not guarantee the final truth.<sup>66</sup>

Among skeptical formulae, opposing equal strength of accounts (*isostheneia*)<sup>67</sup> examines everything possible without an absolute conclusion. As a result, Pyrrhonist skepticism has admitted non-assertion (*aphasia*),<sup>68</sup> referring to the state of appearance that could not be said what is but what appears, unlike a dogmatic claim<sup>69</sup> that something was the case every situation.<sup>70</sup> In some cases, Stoics meant to give up all beliefs (*doxa*) that do not meet the capacity of reasoning about how things are. However, Pyrrhonists have no beliefs about how things are but how things appear to them, so they do not assent any judgment but reflects what appears to them.<sup>71</sup> Pyrrhonists claim the appearances of things instead of the reality or truth of things.<sup>72</sup> They underlined appearances that things appear under phenomena in experiences or impressions could not tell the true nature of things. In the Pyrrhonist view, things are indeterminacy.<sup>73</sup>

On the same ground, Pyrrhonists and Academic skeptics adopted the modes of inquiry to determine nothings without judgment. On the one hand, Pyrrhonists prefer being in a state of psychic quietude (*ataraxia*) after suspending belief as a means and help to achieve the final goal. On the other hand, Academics thought they did not specify *ataraxia* as the end but justified their modes of inquiry to earn happiness.

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 145. Cicero, Acad II.7

<sup>67</sup> Groarke, *Greek Scepticism*, 104; Kristeller, *Greek Philosophers of the Hellenistic Age*, 51–52; DL IX.28. Arcesilaus adopted Pyrrho's suspension of judgment in pursuit of the tranquility of the soul while he was the head of the Academy.

<sup>68</sup> Speechlessness (*ἄφασία/ἄφατος*): not uttered or named, nameless, unutterable, and ineffable. PH I.193

<sup>69</sup> Burnyeat and Frede, *Original Sceptics*, 8–9.

<sup>70</sup> Groarke, *Greek Scepticism*, 5.

<sup>71</sup> Burnyeat and Frede, *Original Sceptics*, 15.

<sup>72</sup> Stough, *Greek Skepticism*, 155.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 147–148.

However, Pyrrhonists consistently have referred to their teachings as a way of life (*agōgē*).<sup>74</sup> Pyrrho and Aenesidemus recommended life without belief and suspended judgment under common preconceptions and arguments regarding ordinary life.<sup>75</sup> In general, people most likely accept certain kinds of belief or knowledge as comprehensible knowledge.<sup>76</sup>

Moreover, Pyrrhonists endorse being at losses (*aphasia*) as a skeptical attitude in matters of equal accounts of agreement or disagreement.<sup>77</sup> They adopted a life without belief or opinion<sup>78</sup> to assent things based on the impression of appearance.<sup>79</sup> Thus, they do not make a judgment on things unclear and subject of investigation.

According to the Outline of Pyrrhonism, *ataraxia*; a state of tranquility is not the state of wondering whether what thing is (p) or is not (not-p) is the case. Pyrrhonists withhold any judgment aiming for tranquility; a state of rest or equilibrium.<sup>80</sup> For curing dogmatic illness, Pyrrhonists meant to be a physician who gives a remedy to treat a patient based on a diagnostic procedure in the way in which they rely upon appearance to direct a suspending belief avoiding any arbitrary assertions and hope for the state of undisturbance.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Agōgē (ἀγωγή) means guidance or training. Stough, *Greek Skepticism*, 4.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 153.

<sup>76</sup> Burnyeat and Frede, *Original Sceptics*, 37.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 42. PH I.13

<sup>78</sup> Floridi, *Sextus Empiricus*, 124–25; Long, *Hellenistic Philosophers*, 13. Aenesidemus employs the suspension of belief in the criterion of practice that points to live or act without judgment and non-assertion by accepting appearance to guide his life. PH II.10

<sup>79</sup> Phantasiai (φαντάζομαι) means imagination in which things appear to the mind.

<sup>80</sup> Burnyeat and Frede, *Original Sceptics*, 57–59.

<sup>81</sup> Hookway, *Skepticism*, 28–29; Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 147. PH I. 238–9

In practice, Aenesidemus reestablished appearance as a guide for living in daily affairs refining Pyrrho and Timon's acceptance of appearances in Pyrrhonism.<sup>82</sup>

Pyrrhonists accept sense impressions as a subjective basis in the everyday experience of the ordinary world. Indeed, the point of non-belief is to suspend any judgment, so all things are by nature indeterminable (*aprosdióristos*).<sup>83</sup>

In the description of phenomena, Sextus and Timon adopt the phenomenon to be a standard as the skeptical criterion for the conduct of life.<sup>84</sup> In terms of “phenomenon” (*φαινόμενον*)<sup>85</sup> and substantive from “to appear” (*phanein*) means an “appearance” of something. Things indicate the distinction between phenomenon and the existing object that appears to us, not images nor ideas of things, but things exist.<sup>86</sup> While most traditional philosophers post dogmatic views of things, Pyrrhonists realize that the truth is accepted as the correct standard of the nature of things for all phenomena. In this case, Pyrrhonists seem to view it as the renunciation of traditional philosophical theories and advocate the practical affairs of life for peace of mind.<sup>87</sup>

In an attitude toward nature of things, the Pyrrhonist view in Timon's passage provided the phrase “no more” (*ou mallon*)<sup>88</sup> as skeptic attitude beliefs are neither true nor false. Thus, Pyrrhonists could not hold any trust in beliefs that express the utterance of determining nothing. The locution in question that “is no more is than is not, than both is and is not, than neither is nor is not” as Skeptical attitude toward beliefs. The goal of

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 124–125.

<sup>83</sup> In this case, things are undefined or out of propositions, immeasurable, and unidentifiable.

<sup>84</sup> In some points, it is adopted as a standard or guidance for practices. Stough, *Greek Skepticism*, 24–25.

<sup>85</sup> Phanein (*φαίνωφάω*) means to bring to light, make to appear, and to indicate that things are perceived through appearance.

<sup>86</sup> By appearance, things come to light and are seen. Stough, *Greek Skepticism*, 23.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>88</sup> It is a refutation statement to deny, eject things for all possible arguments.

Pyrrhonism has adopted Carneades' solution to the skeptical problem is concerned by Academics to advise an alternative criterion for the "conduct of life" and the "attainment of happiness."<sup>89</sup> Academic will not give unqualified assent to any perceptual statement since there is no absolute truth.<sup>90</sup>

In brief, the main characters of Pyrrhonism were summed in Sextus's account of the two criteria: first, the criterion of truth that Pyrrhonists judge reality and unreality, and second, the criterion of practice in which Pyrrhonists use as a guide in ordinary life.<sup>91</sup> In the criteria of truth, Sextus did not follow Aenesidemus but argues that phenomena are identical with a real object that could be either true or false.<sup>92</sup> In practice, the Pyrrhonist view is close to Sextus's position resembling a skeptic perspective<sup>93</sup> that he endorses appearance to apply the skeptical notion of suspension of belief more thoroughly and conspicuously than his predecessors.<sup>94</sup> To appear, so-and-so, what he says that it bears witness to his state of mind at that moment? It is what appears to him that guides him.

According to Timon and Sextus, Pyrrhonist skeptic has illustrated their intellectual exercises to promote the worth living of skeptical way accepting non-dogmatic view. It is not only epistemological possible but also applicable to ordinary life.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Stough, *Greek Skepticism*, 50. AL I.158,166, PH I.231

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>91</sup> Floridi, *Sextus Empiricus*, 143. PH II.14-18, AL I.29-35

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 144–145.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 146.

<sup>94</sup> Naess, *Scepticism*, 16.

<sup>95</sup> Floridi, *Sextus Empiricus*, 51.

## Early Buddhism and Related Traditions

The Buddhist tradition was well known as non-Vedic tradition. While Buddhism originated distinctively out of the Brāhmaṇa tradition in various costumed features of tenets from other traditions, it employed various discourses dealing with those predominant traditions. In Early Buddhism, belief and inquiry are solely separated from those archaic perspectives of belief in Indian beliefs and practices. Therefore, the following content will investigate the early Buddhist thought in Indian beliefs from Vedic and non-Vedic traditions that Buddhism had related and responded to those rival traditions.

According to the history of Indian beliefs, the overview of Indo-Aryan periods will be the first step to glance at the context of the early Buddhist view on suspension of belief. The Vedic period has accommodated the corpus of Vedas around 2500 - 600 BCE,<sup>96</sup> which almost identical principles and archaic modes of beliefs and practices concerning life, origin, and ultimate reality. In this period, the characters gradually began in the Rig-Veda that contained myths, creation, hymns praising divines and sacrifices (*yajña*) established by priests using the rituals as the authority and direct revelation as a source of truth. The later rise of Upanishads and Śramaṇas was a philosophical reflection and exercised toward self and its substantial entities and the reality of universes.<sup>97</sup>

A retrospective view of self or divine has created Brāhman, the ultimate divine reality, and Atman, the individual soul. However, the traditional Upanishads were encouraged by

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<sup>96</sup> Thapar, *Early India*, xxviii; Sharfshtain, *Comparative History of World Philosophy*, 12. Many scholars point out the new approach of heterodox traditions as the turning point of new era. Karl Jaspers called this period as the axial age.

<sup>97</sup> Davids, *Early Buddhism*, 3–4; Davids, *Buddhist India*, 141; Warder, *Indian Buddhism*, 12. They were teachers or hermits some not ascetics who were intellectual thinkers or spiritual practitioners comparable to the Greek sophists in many senses as sages of their teachings or views.

Vedas and Śramaṇa movements. The orthodox tradition of Indian beliefs accepts the validity of Vedic scriptures such as Upaniṣads. The unorthodox tradition of Indian beliefs does not assert Vedic tradition but opposes various doctrines and practices such as Buddhism, Jainism, and the Carvaka Schools.<sup>98</sup>

In the Indo-Aryan religions of Indian, Vedic Brāhmanism was a dominant group of beliefs and practices inherited from the Vedic corpus. It refers to an orthodox tradition such as Brāhmanism and Upanishad. On the other hand, Buddhist, Jains, Cārvākas, Śramaṇas, Nirgranthas, Ājīvikas, and Parivrājikas were a group of wanderers distinguishing from Vedic traditions. They were the heterodox traditions who have established themselves in various thoughts different from Vedic tradition. Early Buddhist thought has mentioned two distinguish teachings on the ātman-doctrine and anātama-doctrine. Hence, Buddhism promoted the non-substantial notion (*anātama*) that is distinctively apposed substantial entity or self (*ātman*) placing by the natural characters of flux unitary (*dharmmātra*). However, Buddhism and other non-ātman-views represented teachings and tenets opposing Brāhmanical tradition or ātman doctrine. Indeed, Doxography of Śramaṇas has remained in fragments of other beliefs in their discourses, dialogues, and debates that frequently occurred at rest-houses, meeting-places, (*samyapavādākasālā*) dwelling-places. Thus, the scriptures have described the Buddha's search, teachings, and practical experience. In contrast to the Brāhmanical

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<sup>98</sup> Joshi, *Aspects of Buddhism in Indian History*, 5; Nakamura, *Comparative History of Ideas*, 75. Buddhism was treated in the *Purāṇas* as a heretical teaching but in this case, Early Buddhism was only non-Vedic tradition. Murti, *Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, 12.

tradition, Buddhism shows more critical inquiry against dogmatic and speculative views.<sup>99</sup>

In Turning the Wheel of the Dharma, the Buddha described the teaching of the middle path as the main character of the early Buddhist thought. The Buddhist teachings were associated with Śramaṇa movements<sup>100</sup> that have distinguished the main characteristics and features in contexts of inquiries against the mainstream tradition. Under the movements, the Buddhist modes of inquiry reflected beliefs, nature, and reality apart from Vedas. In the primary resource of Indo-Aryan beliefs and practices, Vedic scriptures were the root of Vedas; Rig-Veda, Yajur-Veda, Sāma-Veda, and Atharva-Veda<sup>101</sup> as an origin of religious beliefs and practices in the Indian subcontinent. These scriptures revealed knowledge and the sophisticated forms of belief and practice under authorization and orthodoxy.<sup>102</sup>

According to Rig-Veda, the divine's truth and knowledge were given essences and meanings to human beings to create sacred relationships through sacrifice ritual and order of the world or reality.<sup>103</sup> It is notorious as the mainstream of Indian tradition, which is characterized by Vedic-archetype epitomizing divines, mystery, and sacrificial ritual (*yajña*). Moreover, Rig-Veda was a futile source of Vedas, Brāhmaṇa, and Upaniṣads. This archaic form of belief and practice signified the sacrificial rituals, the ultimate view of cosmic processes, and the metaphysical view of all things. However, the

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<sup>99</sup> Murti, *Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, 12.

<sup>100</sup> Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism*, 17.

<sup>101</sup> Basham, *Wonder That Was India*, 232.

<sup>102</sup> Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began*, 120; Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection*, 23. The Veda is said to be the true knowledge or knowledge of the supreme reality and the source of all authority endorsed by Brahmins, so it is the source of validity and authority.

<sup>103</sup> "Voices heard with hymns" were the orders of the creation. Griffith, *Hinduism*, IX–XI.



sacrificial ritual (*yajña*)<sup>104</sup> becomes a critical point of the later Upanishad period, so the Śramaṇas has acquired a new challenge out of Vedic tradition. Particularly the Buddhist inquiry was given a critical mode of thought and practice.<sup>105</sup> The new perspectives took place in the Śramaṇa movement. Notoriously searching for truth has shifted from the outside to the inside of self and reality.<sup>106</sup> In the notion of freedom (*mokṣa*) from saṃsāra, Upanishads, Buddhism, Jainism, and other Śramaṇas were developing its thought aiming for liberation.

In brief, Upaniṣad and Śramaṇa movements had elaborated various philosophical discussions and speculative theories compatible with their modes of inquiry and intellectual activities. The renunciation was adopted in the practices of ascetics such as wanderers and beggars (*Parivrājakas, Bhikṣus*).<sup>107</sup>

According to Rig-Veda, the divine's truth and knowledge were given essences and meanings to human beings to create sacred relationships through sacrifice ritual and order of world or reality. It is notorious as the mainstream of Indian tradition, which is characterized by Vedic-archetype epitomizing divines, mystery, and sacrificial ritual (*yajña*). Moreover, Rig-Veda was a futile source of Vedas, Brāhmaṇa, and Upaniṣads. This archaic form of belief and practice signified the sacrificial rituals, the ultimate view of cosmic processes, and the metaphysical view of all things. However, the sacrificial ritual (*yajña*) becomes a critical point of the later Upanishad period, so the Śramaṇas has acquired a new challenge out of Vedic tradition. Particularly the Buddhist

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<sup>104</sup> Basham, *Wonder That Was India*, 240.

<sup>105</sup> Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, 35.

<sup>106</sup> Potter, *Presuppositions of India's Philosophies*, 39-40. These activities acquire not only various disciplines or paths but also beliefs as their attitudes toward their goals particularly non-attachment.

<sup>107</sup> Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads*, 587–588.

inquiry was given a critical mode of thought and practice. The new perspectives took place in the Śramaṇa movement. Notoriously searching for truth has shifted from the outside to the inside of self and reality. In the notion of freedom (*mokṣa*) from saṃsāra, Upanishads, Buddhism, Jainism, and other Śramaṇas were developing its thought aiming for liberation.

In brief, Upaniṣad and Śramaṇa movements had elaborated various philosophical discussions and speculative theories compatible with their modes of inquiry and intellectual activities. The renunciation was adopted in the practices of ascetics such as wanderers and beggars (*Parivrājakas*, *Bhikṣus*).<sup>108</sup> For example, yoga has provided spiritual and mystical quests to search for truth or well-being. However, the Buddhist modes of inquiry posted anti-brāhmanic beliefs and speculative beliefs, such as six groups of wandering ascetics.<sup>109</sup>

Indeed, the teachings (*Dhamma*) and goals of Śramaṇa have shifted to the ascetic way of intellectual exercise and quest of spiritual realization. In response to metaphysical questions, the silence of Buddha was indicated the non-comprehensibility of superior truth by the ordinary intellectual. The Buddhist search of truth (*sacca*) revealed a dichotomy of truth regardless of the absolutistic truth or false. There were paths of thought in eternity-belief (*sassata-diṭṭhi*) and annihilation-belief (*uccheda-diṭṭhi*)<sup>110</sup> in which was diagnostic in the Buddhist modes of inquiry to refrain both extreme theories (*vāda*) and viewpoint (*diṭṭhi*). However, the Buddhist attitude of non-attachment was

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<sup>108</sup> Basham, *Wonder That Was India*, 246.

<sup>109</sup> Davids, *Buddhist India*, 146–147. In *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*, there were seven wanderers who held various views or beliefs against Brahmanism. The six groups of Śramaṇas are Pūraṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Gosāla, Ajita Kesakambalī, Pakudha Kaccāyana, Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta, Saṅjaya Belaṭṭhaputta.

<sup>110</sup> Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 52.

developing along with the Upaniṣads and Śramaṇas movements. Even though the teaching of dependent origination, Gombrich pointed out as the Buddha's answer to Upanisadic ontology in the framework of Buddhist teaching.<sup>111</sup>

In brief, Śramaṇa tradition has adopted ascetic beliefs and practices that have shifted from Vedas. At the same time, it emphasized the concept of renunciatory modes that project various attitudes and points of view toward its achievement by means and goal.<sup>112</sup> Early Buddhist teachings signify suspending belief through non-attachment and the renunciatory attitude toward other beliefs. Undoubtedly suspend beliefs could be analyzed with the Buddhist notion of non-attachment representing the crucial characteristic to suspend any dogmatic belief. Moreover, the Buddha gives a non-assertion point to avoid dogmatic beliefs and extremist practices with non-self (*anattā*) teaching to release any views of clinging (*diṭṭhi*) neither existence nor non-existence.

In contexts of Indian belief, the early Buddhist standpoint of suspending belief has developed along with the rising of non-Vedic tradition, namely Śramaṇas movement against the dominant view of Brāhmanism. So the suspension of belief energizes paths of thoughts and modes of inquiry to avoid any ultimate beliefs and liberate all attachments.

In contexts of Greek philosophy, the Pyrrhonist notion of suspending belief has integrated the modes of thoughts and inquiries responding to dogmatic views and aiming for peace of mind. Therefore, there is much to consider the views utilizing the features in various areas and contexts describing the characters against extreme and dogmatic beliefs in Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism.

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 48.

<sup>112</sup> Williams, Tribe, and Wynne, *Buddhist Thought*, 12.

In this study, the early Buddhist and Pyrrhonist standpoints of suspending belief have embedded in teachings and attitudes reflecting their responses toward others in the context of history. First of all, finding out the common ground of both views requires drawing the main aspects of both views and analyzing them from their historical contexts and traditions to secure which characters are the key features based on both standpoints. Both have employed tropes or figurative grounds of thought and exercises as their method to examine beliefs and judgments. For the final goal, Buddhist and Pyrrhonist attitudes indicated how to utilize their tenets to hold neither to confirm nor to reject the ultimate truth but to examine things without judgment.

### **Against Dogmatists and Extremists**

In both traditions, Buddhists and Pyrrhonists challenge extremists and dogmatists that abandoning absolute claims is to hold nothing either affirm or deny beliefs but to investigate the truth and the outcome of tranquility. On the one hand, the early Buddhist teaching has distinguished from Śramaṇas tradition that attributes the renunciatory attitude toward beliefs and activities as a significant feature to underline the main aspects of Buddhist thought against dogmatic views (*diṭṭhi*) as well as extreme beliefs and practices. Thus, under the Buddhist notion of renunciation, the Buddhist standpoint is to challenge the dominant tradition and detach all dogmatic views, providing an alternative perspective to examine things as they have come to appear in one perspective. On the other hand, in contexts of Greek Hellenistic philosophy, the Pyrrhonist mode is among skeptical inquiries that emphasize suspension of judgment about belief in withholding dogmatic views neither belief nor disbelief. Therefore, the common ground of both views against dogmatists and absolute claims is a viable criterion to look at the early Buddhist

and Pyrrhonist discourses. Even though Buddhist and Pyrrhonist modes of inquiry formulated the suspension of belief in different aspects, they cover a similar notion of non-attachment to achieve the final goal. Thus, suspend belief is to stand by contrasts to rival teachings such as dogmatists and to examine every aspect of belief and practice without judgment.<sup>113</sup>

### **Intellectual and Spiritual Modes of Inquiries**

Examining the suspension of belief in Buddhist and Pyrrhonist thought is to dissect through patterns, characters and to see attitudes concerning life, nature, and reality. In the Pyrrhonist perspective, suspension of judgment about belief (*epoché*) associates with the way of life (*agoge*) through the mental standstill intellect against the dogmatic belief or opinion. In the early Buddhist view, suspending belief releases wrong views and maintains the middle path avoiding extremist practices. In the discourse to Kalamas, suspending belief has emerged into the main aspects of Buddhist modes of inquiry.<sup>114</sup> There are many discourses that Buddha has answered to dogmatic quests with serious critiques. Indeed, the Buddha endorsed the modes of inquiry in advance of investigation instead of defending true belief and reality. His teachings are verifiable beliefs and practices, so they must be examined and investigated to emphasize self-

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<sup>113</sup> Warder, *Indian Buddhism*, 12.

<sup>114</sup> Uddiyan, *Kālām Sutta*, xiii.

reliance and experiential orientation.<sup>115</sup> As part of Dhamma characteristics, the Buddhist teachings require further examination.<sup>116</sup>

In Pyrrhonist modes of inquiry, skeptical tropes imply the way of thinking as a tool to investigate neither accept nor deny any judgments. In the common ground of those traditions, the intellectual and spiritual training is an essence of ascetics and wandering philosophers trying to search and exercise their intellectual and spiritual quests.<sup>117</sup> Especially, Sextus's treatises of Pyrrhonism provide the skeptical polemic campaigns against dogmatists by using various modes of inquiries not only to doubt (*aporia*) but also to look things around by using 'art', 'science', 'disciple', or 'technic' (*technē*) for examination and learning without judgment or opinion.<sup>118</sup> Likewise, Buddhist tenets of investigation embody the common ground of spiritual exercise for a practitioner to apply spiritual quests for one's self. In both schools, the Buddhist attitude of suspending belief has integrated into the path toward spiritual liberation. The Pyrrhonist modes of inquiry imply encountering arguments aiming at a mental state of undisturbance (*ataraxia*) by suspending either affirm or deny any beliefs or judgments and keeps on an investigation.

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<sup>115</sup> Nakamura, *Indian Buddhism*, 63. Early Buddhist method acquires a critical empirical investigation for an examiner to see facts, evidences, and experiences regardless of beliefs, knowledge, reason, logics, authority, revelation, and tradition. Thus, the sources of knowledge should not obtain from other people but one's own experience of investigating beliefs and practices.

<sup>116</sup> "Buddha and His Dhamma", by Bhikkhu Bodhi. *Access to Insight*, 5 June 2010, <http://www.accesstoinight.org/lib/authors/bodhi/wheel433.html>. Retrieved on 23 September 2013. "ehipassiko": "Come and see for yourself." He invites inquirers to investigate his teaching, to examine it in the light of their own reason and intelligence, and to gain confirmation of its truth for themselves. The Dhamma is said to be *paccattam vedītabbo viññuhi*, "to be personally understood by the wise," and this requires intelligence and sustained inquiry.

<sup>117</sup> *Asceticism and Its Critics*, 4–5. ἄσκησις, *askēsis*, "exercise" or "training, that views asceticism as a certain "exercise" that depicts or describes as a perfect human being.

<sup>118</sup> Sextus and Blank, *Against the Grammarians*, liv–lvi.

## Attitude toward the Final Solution

In the positive mode of skepticism, ancient Greek skeptic adopts the practical modes of inquiry rather than the theoretical arguments. Pyrrhonists promote the suspension of belief as their means to the claim of a mental attitude of tranquility. The therapeutic method is the Pyrrhonist aim to examine things without assertion and to achieve peace of mind.<sup>119</sup>

Withholding neither belief nor disbelief avoids the dogmatic problems of asserting true or false things by nature. Pyrrhonists must let go of any beliefs claim no thesis about things to recognize any possible solution and puzzles of absolute judgments. Thus, they emphasize the way to live an ordinary life without judgment. This assumption will bring peace of mind as the therapeutic solution toward the end. The peace of mind is the most encompassed feature of Pyrrhonian, who resembles Pyrrho's life. Many descriptive characters of Pyrrho, such as a noble citizen and a high priest,<sup>120</sup> were demonstrated an aim of Pyrrhonist skeptics in the attitude of calm or non-anxiety of judgment or belief. In the Buddhist discourses, the Buddhist teachings were posted as the right view (*sammā diṭṭhi*)<sup>121</sup> in the path of liberation. Indeed, the right view does not claim either existence or non-existence but enunciating from grasping (*upādāna*) things as an essence of life, nature, and reality.<sup>122</sup> Indeed, the Buddhist teaching represents commonly contrasting worldly beliefs as well as the metaphysical theses or theories.

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<sup>119</sup> Gascoigne, *Scepticism*, 54–55.

<sup>120</sup> Diogenes and Hicks, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers II*, 479–481.

<sup>121</sup> Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 152.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 184. There are four types of clinging: sensuous clinging (*kamupadana*), clinging to views (*ditthupadana*), clinging to rite-ritual (*silabbatupadana*), and clinging to the personlity-belief (*attavadupadana*).

Mainly the Buddha was free from any belief or theory (*ditṭhi-gata*).<sup>123</sup> However, he asserts and acts holding neither nihilistic nor eternalistic beliefs but only guiding life with peace of mind. In practice, the Buddhist teachings provide the moral criterion in the modes of action and the guide of living.<sup>124</sup>

In brief, both schools have described as their final solutions aiming to abandon various assertions and get rid of anxiety even unsatisfactory of what other views claim to be or to judge things as they thought. Buddhist and Pyrrhonist modes of inquiry have non-presupposition claims to dogmatize things as absolute truth. According to these supports, both schools can be characterized in a renunciatory theme, maximizing their purpose to let go of attachments, belief, or judgment based on their methods and aims.

### **Suspension of Belief: Means and Aim**

In Vedic tradition, the rising of non-Vedic traditions was a turning point to challenge the Vedic belief that could describe and determinate things differently. This path of intellectual and spiritual pursuits has moved toward new goals that could not succeed by primordial and ritualistic contexts of Vedas.<sup>125</sup> Many divergences of wanderers and ascetics who made their speculations and theories have spiked anti-theses responses in Early Buddhism. The rising of the Upaniṣad and Śramaṇa movements rose and guided the new directions away from the dominant traditions. In Greek philosophical contexts, Pyrrhonist skeptics encountered other Greek philosophical speculations in searching what truth is or is not by nature.

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<sup>123</sup> Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 52. MN 72

<sup>124</sup> What the Buddha asserts and preach are what ought to be done and what ought not to be done (*kiriya and akiriya*) AN 2.33

<sup>125</sup> Nakamura, *Comparative History of Ideas*, 73.



Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism established their modes to suspend speculative beliefs and theories by defining their different methods and aims to respond to other schools. In the contexts of therapeutic assumption, the main aspects of suspending belief have integrated into Buddhist and Pyrrhonist modes of inquiry. According to the means and aims of Buddhism and Pyrrhonism, they emphasize the critical features and characters of suspending belief based on the criterion of truth, attitude, nature, and reality. To identify Buddhist and Pyrrhonist characteristics and classify them from their contexts, particularly understanding historical contexts of both traditions and examining those views in their terms or circumstances; how they implied the arguments and modes of thought.

In comparison, it could be no doubt to lay down those features in a similar platform of the common ground to see their standpoints and juxtapose those characters side-by-side in comparing and understanding both schools responding to dogmatists. Therefore, the following chapters will provide more detail on suspending belief and judgment in Buddhist and Pyrrhonist thoughts. According to the means and ends of both schools, suspension of belief could resemble how they have constructed according to the early Buddhist discourse and Sextus Empiricus's account of Pyrrhonist skeptics. Therefore, the chapters will describe both notions in related traditions and contexts of historical ideas to fulfill background and understand the notable aspects of both schools in detail of suspending belief; means, and aim.

## CHAPTER 3

### Suspension of Belief in Early Buddhist Teachings

This chapter explores the detail of the suspension of belief in the early Buddhist teachings. The key features of suspending belief found in Buddhist discourses represent the viewpoints of the Buddha, who encountered rival beliefs and practices. Withholding dogmatic beliefs is a Buddhist inquiry to criticize extremists or dogmatists and refrain from absolute claims aiming for further examination. It emphasizes individual faculty of wisdom in pursuit of liberation.<sup>126</sup> Indeed, Buddhist teachings have constructed and postulated the suspension belief based on discourses and contexts of Indian tradition.<sup>127</sup>

In detail, the Buddhist discourses about beliefs energize the Buddhist modes of inquiry to examine beliefs or things without judgments. Thus, the main point of suspending belief is to investigate ideas and acquire the intellectual and spiritual examination methods, aiming for *nibbāna* as the final goal.<sup>128</sup> The main characteristics of suspense belief could reveal the common ground and the outline of Buddhist thought, aiming to elude dogmatists and extremists based on the modes of inquiry and the healing path.

In analysis, the main characteristics and key features cover the truth, belief, and practice criteria. These components could help to remark the suspension of beliefs and views in Early Buddhism, focusing on historical contexts,<sup>129</sup> theoretical standpoints, and

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<sup>126</sup> Buswell and Lopez, *Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, 589. *Nibbāna*: “blowing out” of attachments that are causes of suffering. The final goal of Buddhism is to release from suffering or to attain liberation.

<sup>127</sup> Basham, *Wonder That Was India*, 15.

<sup>128</sup> Buswell, *Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha*, 46–49; Bronkhorst, *Buddhist Teaching in India*, 16. Abandoning these five hindrances (*nivāraṇa*) and the defilements (*upakleśa*)

<sup>129</sup> This approach considers the Pāli canon as the historical report presenting the Buddha with the records of thought and pieces of evidence. Walters, “Suttas as History,” 259.

critical features that describe those essential ideas to withhold judgments neither agreement nor disagreement.

According to the main discourses of Early Buddhism, the suspension of belief reflected the Śramaṇa tradition that it has given way to other views such as extremists and dogmatists. In the Śramaṇa movement, renunciation is defined as abandoning (*pahāna*) to let go of all attachments or release defilements and hindrances (*nivarana*).<sup>130</sup> Moreover, the suspension of belief indicates that the Buddhist aims to cure ill views or hold back dogmatics that believe in the absolute entities such as soul, self, or ultimate beings based on what exists or not exists. Indeed, the Buddhist modes of inquiry describe the investigation and practice toward the cessation of suffering.<sup>131</sup>

According to the discourses, the Buddhist view is among other *vādas* or opinions that show teachings, dialogues, and discussions expressing attitudes, modes of thought, and characteristics about beliefs and practices. However, the early Buddhist teachings describe the main concerns, attitude, standpoints against the ritualistic views of Brāhmanic or Vedic tradition and the speculative claims in the Early Upaniṣads and Śramaṇas.<sup>132</sup> In dogmatic belief or absolute declaration, the Buddha underlined that “only this is true; anything else is worthless” besides this, many contemplatives and brahmins held their doctrinal standpoints, practices, adherents precepts concerning things either true or false aiming in the different goals.

The following content presents the Buddhist perspective of suspending belief based on Buddha’s point of view via the means and aim in curing suffering (*dukkha*) or

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<sup>130</sup> Bhatt, *Buddhist Epistemology*, 3.

<sup>131</sup> Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 51–53. Wrong views (*ditthi*) are one of the proclivities (s. *anusaya*), cankers (s. *āsava*), clingings (s. *upādāna*), one of the three modes of perversions (s. *vipallāsa*).

<sup>132</sup> Williams, Tribe, and Wynne, *Buddhist Thought*, 6-7, 29.

healing path of deliverance.<sup>133</sup> The Buddha's view of the Buddhist modes of inquiry was crucially distinctive to challenge the dominant beliefs and practices of Brāhmanism and Śramaṇas even if it addressed the same issues or controversial subjects.

However, the Buddhist belief is to define the ultimate goal against the metaphysical thoughts and justify the guideline in the epistemic practice mode to achieve the final solution. As described above, the Buddhist teachings represent understanding the nature of life, reality, and searching for truth. Mainly the Buddha's enlightenment was his experience and understanding of life, true nature, and reality. Therefore, the Buddhist discourses are the evidential supports to the academic points to identify the suspending judgment about belief.

In this case, suspension of belief has its place in the various modes of inquiries towards the goal aiming non-attachment to achieve liberation. Thus, the Buddhist suspending of extremists attributes the Buddhist way of thought to guide practice and deal with any beliefs. The Buddhist attitude toward the goal is not compelling to grasp any absolute entities<sup>134</sup> but to be accompanied by knowledge of methods so that one could not be trapped in any attachments instance of detachment from dis-cess or suffering. The modes of thought and inquiry have shown in the Buddhist discourses can clearly understand the Buddhist modes of investigation for suspending extremist views and dogmatic claims.

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<sup>133</sup> Buswell, *Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha*, 46–49; Bronkhorst, *Buddhist Teaching in India*, 16. Abandoning these five hindrances (*nivāraṇa*) and the defilements (*upakleśa*)

<sup>134</sup> Nauriyal, Drummond, and Lal, *Buddhist Thought*, 252.

## Suspending Belief in the Buddhist Discourses

In Pāli Nikāyas, the Buddhist discourses have covered the critical feature of suspending belief attributing the Buddhist thought and teachings (*Buddha Sāsana*)<sup>135</sup> in responding to beliefs, inquiry for intellectual and spiritual examination of truth. The Buddhist modes of inquiry are featuring on the middle path to cure suffering. Hence, these teachings are fundamentally derived from the Buddha's enlightenment experience,<sup>136</sup> reflecting the nature of things.<sup>137</sup> Briefly, the Buddha's direct knowledge of non-attachment or abandonment of grasping nothing goes beyond existence and non-existence, but it aims to end suffering.<sup>138</sup> In this case, those teachings became the therapeutic guideline to achieve the final liberation. They also reflect the critical features of suspending belief in contexts of renunciatory (*nekkhamma*)<sup>139</sup> in Śramaṇa tradition.

Furthermore, the Buddhist modes of inquiry combine the critiques of belief and critical examination, which are methods to understand life by encouraging free inquiry and investigation to prevent dogmatic beliefs. Therefore, these vital religio-philosophical discussions have conveyed dialoguing, questioning, and discussing attitudes concerning beliefs and practices facing various eternalistic and nihilistic views. Thus, they initiate

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<sup>135</sup> Buswell and Lopez, *Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, 782; Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 35. The Buddha's teachings include order, message, guidance, and doctrine; in this case, sāsana refers to the discourses of the Buddha that are compiled in the suttas.

<sup>136</sup> Hamilton, *Early Buddhism*, 6–7; Holder, *Early Buddhist Discourses*, xii; Fay, "Buddhism as a Stronghold of Free Thinking? Social, Ethical and Philosophical Dimensions of Buddhism," 192; Burford, "Believing and Seeing: The Roles of Faith, Reason, and Experience in Theravāda Buddhism," 219–220. Sangharakshita, *Survey of Buddhism*, 55.

<sup>137</sup> Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 38. Dhamma includes the descriptive nature of things, norm, law, doctrine and righteousness; moral quality.

<sup>138</sup> "abhiññā pariññā pahātabbāṃ, rūpā abhiññā pariññā pahātabbā... yampidaṃ manosamphassapaccayā uppajjati vedayitaṃ sukhaṃ vā dukkhaṃ vā adukkhamasukhaṃ vā tampi abhiññā pariññā pahātabbāṃ." *Abhiññāpariññāpahāna Sutta*, S iv 17

<sup>139</sup> *abhinikkhamana*: giving up the world, renunciation of attachments, freedom from desires; Davids, and Stede, *Pali-English Dictionary*, 377.

through all theoretical standpoints (*vāda* or *vivāda*)<sup>140</sup> and the abandonment of views (*diṭṭhi*) in the matter of the path of deliverance (*Nibbāna*).

The first exploring is to identify how the Buddha was, among wandering ascetics, dealing with rival Brāhmanas and Śramaṇas. The Buddhist discourses reveal the Buddhist attitude concerning beliefs and practices in anti-theses against dogmatists based on viewpoints or theoretical standpoint (*vāda*) that commonly promote and convince the dogmatic claims that things are true or false. Briefly, the subjects of debating and arguing opinion or view (*diṭṭhi*)<sup>141</sup> provide the dogmatic belief of holding absolute truth. In this case, the characteristics of Buddhist teachings on suspending judgment about belief would be identified as the critical point to reveal their modes of inquiry aiming the final goal, namely *nibbāna*.

In contexts of Indian religious claims or standpoints in the early Buddhist period, drawing suspension of belief from the Buddhist standpoint is designated the practical orientation and the attitude toward other claims based on Brāhmanic and Śramaṇaic standpoints. In some aspects, it reveals different or similar beliefs in the dominant tradition. However, various guidelines and standpoints have established the main characters of suspending dogmatic beliefs and practices that provide the experimental tools for searching truth and aiming for deliverance. According to the Buddhist discourses, the features of suspending belief were used and indicated as part of the Buddhist modes of inquiry about beliefs.

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<sup>140</sup> *Vāda* presents the standpoint of accepting the truth, gaining victory, and finding the truth or faults of arguments and beliefs: Tilakaratne, "Critical Thinking and Logic," 53.

<sup>141</sup> Tilakaratne, "Critical Thinking and Logic," 52–53; Grimes, *Concise Dictionary of Indian Philosophy*, 217, 335. It seems like defending of truth or belief "apologetics" (ἀπολογία) which is the discipline of defending a position or faith against critics or an accusation. Mautner, *Penguin Dictionary of Philosophy*, 35.

## Suspension of Belief from the Buddhist Theoretical Standpoint

According to the Indian beliefs, *vāda* was a crucial focus in the early Buddhist teaching and practice. It projected the worldviews and proclamatory standpoints about life, nature, and reality comparable with non-Vedic or Vedic tradition.<sup>142</sup> Indeed, the overall Buddhist teaching presented *vāda* as the theoretical standpoint of Buddhism. In remarking of *vāda*, suspending belief was a critical examination from the theoretical standpoint of Buddhist teaching in dealing with other beliefs and practices aiming for the final solution or the deliverance. According to the analytical discussion based on the Buddhist standpoint, in *Brahmajāla Sutta* (the All-embracing Net of Views),<sup>143</sup> the Buddha analyzed various teachings classified into these sixty-two categorical views of asserting various conceptual theorems. They were polarizing into either annihilationistic or eternalistic proclamatory standpoints (*uccheda-vāda*, *sassata-vāda*). There were recluses, wanderers, and Brahmins who settled down their views or assertions referring to the past and the future or both inclinations based on their religious experiences and speculations. They were all speculators who posted their various asserts of conceptual theorems holding some sorts of things as the reality or the truth.

However, the Buddha pointed out his teaching or knowledge that did not rely upon the theoretical standpoints of grasping such-and-such but his experience of seeing things as “they come to be” (*yathābhūtaṃ*) knowing things according to their nature; rising and falling without attachment. In this sutta, the theoretical standpoint of Buddhist teachings derived from the Buddha’s own experience and knowledge of things without

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<sup>142</sup> “*samaṇabrāhmaṇā*: *Samaṇa* and *Brāhmaṇa* refer to a wanderer, recluse or ascetic and religious person or *Brahmin*.” Davids, and Stede, *Pali-English Dictionary*, 271.

<sup>143</sup> D i.1

grasping by speculation but practical experience of individual mind aiming non-attachment as the final deliverance.<sup>144</sup> As it described in *Dhamma-niyama Sutta*:<sup>145</sup>

Monks, whether or not there is the arising of Tathagatas, this property stands...this steadfastness of the Dhamma, this orderliness of the Dhamma: All processes are inconstant...All processes are stressful...All phenomena are not-self. The Tathagata directly awakens to that, breaks through to that. Directly awakening and breaking through to that, he declares it, teaches it, describes it, sets it forth. He reveals it, explains it, and makes it plain: All processes are inconstant...All processes are stressful...All phenomena are not-self.

The Buddha taught dhamma out of his experience or knowledge, which he has described in three aspects of phenomena that things are inconstant (*aniccā*), stressful (*dukkhā*), and not-self (*anattā*).<sup>146</sup> However, the principal characteristics of things can be interpreted as the fundamental proclamation in the Buddhist teachings distinguishing from the rival schools. Indeed, the teachings were designated to appeal to the different descriptions that postulate self (*ātma*), either existence or non-existence.

Moreover, the Buddhist view of beliefs shows the genealogy of beliefs. It describes the polarizing of beliefs into nihilistic view (*ucche-diṭṭhi*) and eternalistic view (*sassata-diṭṭhi*) in which the right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*) does not imply those extreme views. However, *diṭṭhi* means to view or opinion tending to see “things as they are” as projecting in the central concept of Buddhist thought. In this case, *diṭṭhi* is an obstacle to the right view tending to see things they have come to be. Hence, *diṭṭhi* as sighting things (*dhammā*) as they are (*yathābhūta-ñānadassana*) is the primary concern of Buddhist

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<sup>144</sup> According to *Brahmajāla Sutta*, Stephen remarks that the Buddha is aware of grasping things as “a mode-of-being in the world,” however, it represents things in the mode of existing and non-existing. In this case, holding nothings is to liberate the mind from all attachments as the Buddha points out that he knows and is not attached to the knowledge or views, so he is liberated without remainder. Indeed, suspending beliefs is to assert nothing by speculating the truth but seeing what things are by nature. Evans, “Epistemology of the Brahmajāla Sutta,” 84.

<sup>145</sup> The Discourse on the Orderliness of the Dhamma, A i 286

<sup>146</sup> This descriptive aspect of things is not originated from substantial or nihilistic view but phenomenal standpoint of things in continueing of change and moment. Davids, *Buddhist Psychology*, 13–16.



confidence (*saddhā*) in the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha for the sake of investigation.<sup>147</sup>

To this extent, the Buddhist notion of views (*diṭṭhi*) concerns the refutation of extreme beliefs (*anti-diṭṭhi*).<sup>148</sup> According to deliverance, the Buddhist view endorses the experiential examination to see things rather than to determine things based on testimonies or metaphysical claims of contemplatives (*Śramaṇas*), Brahmins (*Brāhmaṇas*), wonderers (*paribbājaka*).<sup>149</sup>

On the other hand, the Buddhist view is meant to rebut those views by providing various examinations and inquiries to approach the urgent, namely suffering that does not acquire any debate or argument. This case can be characterized and identified in non-metaphysical or non-dogmatism, non-speculation, and experimental searching tools

Searching for the final deliverance is a significant concern of the early Buddhist teachings covering the hypotheses and guidelines of Buddhist frameworks, including concepts and standpoints to deal with other beliefs and practices as the right path toward the final goal. Indeed, seeing things based on an individual experimental experience did not come from philosophical speculation or preconception about self or reality. The Buddhist teachings reshape the view of non-substantiality (*anattā*), which response to the pre-Buddhist view of *ātman* or *attā*.<sup>150</sup> Therefore, the early Buddhist teachings reveal the

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<sup>147</sup> “*tathā tathāhaṃ tasmim dhamme abhiññāya idhekaccaṃ dhammaṃ dhammesu niṭṭhamagamaṃ, satthari pasīdim – sammāsambuddho bhagavā, svākkhāto bhagavatā, dhammo, suppaṭipanno saṅgho*’ti.” M i.317

<sup>148</sup> Buswell, *Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha*, 45.

<sup>149</sup> There are ascetics and recluses such as *Paribbājakas* who claim their beliefs and practices. “*sambahulā nānādiṭṭhiyasamaṇabrāhmaṇaparibbājaka*,” Udāna 6.4. Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pali Proper Names*, 159–160.

<sup>150</sup> Hoffman, *Rationality and Mind in Early Buddhism*, 58–59. Collins, *Selfless Persons*, 84–88. Murti, *Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, 31. This is more likely supported by Norman, Gombrich, Collins, and

theoretical framework of different views in contrast with dominant beliefs and practices of Śramaṇas and Brahmins (*samaṇabrāhmaṇā*)<sup>151</sup> in the battle of metaphysical debate and the attachments of views.<sup>152</sup> According to various speculative and extreme views, suspension of belief was a significant mode of inquiry in the Buddhist theoretical standpoint and attitude concerning beliefs, providing the way to practice and convey a critical examination toward the final solution.

### Remarked Features in Context of Vāda

According to the Buddhist standpoint responding to speculative and extreme beliefs, each belief has claimed to determine its truth and reality. Indeed, Buddhist teachings are described as the way of life and the path of liberation, including the practical guidelines for personal investigation.<sup>153</sup>

In detail, *vāda*; theoretical standpoint is the most identical term that presents Buddhist teachings as “the doctrine of analysis” (*vibhajja-vāda*),<sup>154</sup> which refers to the Buddhist distinction apart from speculative beliefs and extreme practices. The teaching is described without discriminatory points and judgments but by analysis on both sides of pros and cons. Thus, the distinctionistic standpoint (*vibhajjavādī*)<sup>155</sup> is identified through the modes of thought in the early Buddhist teachings. This standpoint describes teaching

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Bronkhorst that the outlook of Buddhist teachings particularly the doctrine of non-self (Radhakrishnan), not self (Acharya Buddhārakkhita), non-substantial (Kalupānana) without self (Carter and Paliawadana) or the *nirātmya* teaching (denial of soul or substance) is interpreted as a revalorization.

<sup>151</sup> Norman, *Philological Approach to Buddhism*, 35–36.

<sup>152</sup> Schroeder, *Skillful Means*, 22–23.

<sup>153</sup> Murti, *Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, 30.

<sup>154</sup> Buswell and Lopez, *Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, 965–66; M 99.

<sup>155</sup> *Subhā Sutta*, AN 24

(*Dhamma*) and the mode of inquiry to conduct one's own search or experience; for example, the Buddha revealed and explained in detail about things.<sup>156</sup>

Moreover, the Buddha suggests non-assertion to safeguard the truth and see things without judgment or definite conclusion, neither true nor false. He points out that “a wise who safeguards the truth does not make a definite conclusion that only this is true; anything else is worthless.”<sup>157</sup> In most cases, *vibhajja-vādī* is mattered in the modes of inquiry that the Buddha responds to questions with a critical analysis instead of a definite conclusion.<sup>158</sup> Indeed, the undetermined questions (*avyākata pañhā*) are about the metaphysical subjects and relevant to speculative beliefs, so they are considered inconstructive to the Buddhist goal.

In the early Buddhist view, the analytical examination presents closer to discussing various teachings or doctrines (*vāda*) that were accepted or rejected things as the only truth. Hence, answering a metaphysical question that yes or no could be fall in affirming or rejecting one way or another to a fundamental assumption based on the extreme views or the dogmatic beliefs holding either the eternalistic view or nihilistic view, for instance, there is a self or nothing.<sup>159</sup>

In the various meanings of *Dhamma*, *Dhammā* can be identified as doctrinal standpoints, moral conducts, phenomena, and reality.<sup>160</sup> They include guidelines, experiences, and things in nature or phenomena. At least they must be required a proper understanding in order to gain knowledge or wisdom. Briefly, the Buddhist doctrines

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<sup>156</sup> “*dhamma vivarati vibhajati*” Sn 87

<sup>157</sup> MN 95

<sup>158</sup> There are four types depending questions that the Buddha responds with categorical or definite answer, an analytical answer, cross-questioning, and undertermined questions.

<sup>159</sup> *Brahmajāla Sutta*: the All-embracing Net of Views, Di 1

<sup>160</sup> Gethin, “He Who Sees Dhamma Sees Dhammas,” 522; Conze, *Buddhist Thought in India*, 92–99.

come from the realization of one's experience or knowledge based on learning (*suta-mayā-paññā*), thinking (*cintā-mayā-paññā*), and mental development (*bhāvanā-mayā-paññā*).<sup>161</sup> Seeing things as they are (*yathābhūta-ñānadassana*) is grounded in the experiential examination.

Moreover, the experiential emphasis indicates the middle path and the goal of teaching that crucially relies on wisdom or insight for enlightenment and achievement of liberation. As a matter of inquiry, the Buddha asked followers to examine all beliefs and teachings to understand and practice. Therefore, most Buddhist teachings do not require obedience but a quest for understanding. He said, "Come and see for yourself" (*ehi-passiko*), which invited inquirers to investigate and examine teachings in light of wisdom even to earn their understanding and assure the truth for themselves. Thus, the *Dhamma* is called "to be personally understood by the wise" (*paccattam veditabbo viññuhi*)<sup>162</sup> which requires individual practice to see with consciousness.<sup>163</sup> Hence, it emphasizes the experiential investigation enduring by wises to pursue their ways out of problems. Indeed, the Buddhist account was depositing its belief and practice responding to various ascetics but reframed its guideline toward liberation by renouncing extremes. The Buddha explained that some ascetics were wises with knowledge and some point to agree and disagree, so he did not blame their points.<sup>164</sup> Furthermore, he gave the method of dialogue or questioning (*Samanuyuñjāpanakathā*).<sup>165</sup> Therefore, the intellectual faculty

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<sup>161</sup> Davids, and Stede, *Pali-English Dictionary*, 122. D.33

<sup>162</sup> Tilakaratne, "Critical Thinking and Logic," 54. A II.56

<sup>163</sup> Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory*, 229.

<sup>164</sup> "Santi, kassapa, eke samanabrāhmaṇā paṇḍitā nipuṇā kataparappavādā vālavedhirūpā...Yaṃ te ekaccaṃ vadanti 'sādhū'ti, mayaṃ taṃ ekaccaṃ vadema 'na sādhū'ti. Yaṃ te ekaccaṃ vadanti 'na sādhū'ti, mayaṃ taṃ ekaccaṃ vadema 'sādhū'ti." D i 384

<sup>165</sup> "na sameti, tiṭṭhantu tāni ṭhānāni. Yesu ṭhānesu sameti, tattha viññū samanuyuñjantaṃ samanugāhantaṃ samanubhāsantaṃ satthārā vā satthāraṃ saṃghena vā saṃghaṃ." D i 385

is the primary requirement of the Buddhist standpoint at least to understand and gain knowledge.

In the Buddhist searching and learning manner, questioning and answering can be interpreted as the mode of inquiry to gain knowledge or achieve the final assumption. However, many metaphysical questions could be classified as unexplained questions (*avyākata pañhā*), which the Buddha did not answer because of the less practical beneficiary. The Buddha advised Potthapada that he had taught and declared some teachings be explained for benefit toward liberation but not metaphysical questions.

Indeed, the metaphysical questions are derived from speculative assertions and dogmatic beliefs that could misguide the final solution. According to the Buddhist standpoint, knowledge or wisdom aims for deliverance. Remarkably liberating knowledge as the guideline of practice (*praxis*) does not solve metaphysical issues or philosophical problems such as the world of beings eternal or non-existing, limited or unlimited. Typically, those questions or categorical assertions are the metaphysical issues and the undermined subjects (*avyākata-vatu*), either true or false. Giving a definite answer or an absolute truth is being cautioned to determine and explain things in Buddhism. There were many cases that the Buddha pointed out the safeguarding of truth without a definite conclusion.

However, some undermined questions (*avyakrta-pañhā*) about ultimate reality or metaphysic topics were to be put aside or speechless in response to the metaphysical question known as the Buddha's silence. In the case of suspending extreme beliefs, putting aside is to provide non-absolute solutions and encourage one's awareness to understand the critical knowledge that leads to realization. In this case, the Buddha has

tried to sort out the solution of suffering rather than debating philosophical problems or metaphysical issues of beings eternal or transitory, limited or unlimited, and so forth, which are regarded as the misconception of knowledge, truth, and reality and fall under the shallow of extremes and undetermined problems.<sup>166</sup> Therefore, putting aside an undermined question (*avyakṛta-pañhā*) is to pause debating and suspend assertion on extreme beliefs that assert the only valid or absolute answer. The way to reply to various quests must not depend on an answer but propositions, proposals, and hidden ideas roughly the nature of the questions or quests. Thus, these denoted aspects of Buddhist teachings deal with metaphysical assertion and dogmatic belief, which acquires investigation to examine things with the intellectual faculty, modes of inquiry, and tendency toward practice closely. Understanding things is a relatively individual experience to see things according to their nature.

On the one hand, the Buddha's standpoint of what could be taught as Dhamma declared the determinable subjects (*ekamsikā dhammā*).<sup>167</sup> For example, the four noble truths that can be employed in the experiential practice grounded in Dhamma (*dhammaṭṭhitā*) and explained by Dhamma (*dhammaniyāmatā*), so wises can understand. On the other hand, the doubtful subjects (*anekamsikā dhammā*)<sup>168</sup> were what the Buddha did not give answers associated with speculation. Particularly metaphysical opinion or eternal subject such as the cosmos is eternal, asserting self or permanent thing and believing in substantial views of self or *ātman*. Hence, the Buddha did not assert ether

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<sup>166</sup> Chakma, "Explanation to the Buddha's Unanswered Questions," 102–3.

<sup>167</sup> *ekamsikā dhammā*: "one part or point" definiteness; affirmation, certain; Davids, and Stede, *Pali-English Dictionary*, 160. In this case, the teachings are related to liberation, which determines the possible outcome to advance the final goal.

<sup>168</sup> doubtful subject (*anekamsikā dhammā*): doubt, uncertainty Davids, and Stede, *Pali-English Dictionary*, 45. The doubtful subjects are based on unanswered questions. In many cases, various contemplatives who hold those beliefs or claims have defended their arguments against others.

things or entities or self but had challenged to change the course of seeing the world. The renunciation (*nekkhamma*)<sup>169</sup> could reactivate the mental process of awakening to shift from clinging onto things and grasping all attachments to embracing changes such as aging, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, and despair all cease as the ending requisite conditions and attachments.<sup>170</sup> Briefly, he attained liberation as being delivered from suffering.<sup>171</sup> In grasping things, self or permanent subject is related to the extreme views of clinging by-product of complex physic-psychological phenomena and clinging to a belief or a doctrine of self. This belief was “baseless speculation,” like a man who knew nothing about a woman he claims to be in love with. Indeed, neither self nor permanent subjects are from fabrication and speculation, which could be explained by depending on Dhamma that asserts nothing to hold as self but abandoning those beliefs and fabrication. Knowing things and seeing thus without accepting or asserting, the Buddha has abandoned those opinions (*vāda*) against the dominant traditions.<sup>172</sup>

In sum, *vāda* is meant to be about teaching based on each mode of thought or theoretical framework. The analytical teaching (*vibhajja-vādī*) is the most acceptable mode of Buddhist tenets emphasizing one’s examination toward the final solution exceeding either eternalistic view or nihilistic view but leading to the right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*) in the direction toward liberation. In some sense, to suspend all views (*diṭṭhi*) or teachings (*vāda*), one should see things not only one side with non-grasping in order to hold off any extreme belief in either substantial or non-substantial view. There is to

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<sup>169</sup> It refers to the stable mind that is free from desire, disturbance, and attachments. Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 105.

<sup>170</sup> In reverse order of the dependent co-arising, seeing things as they are leads to the ending of requisite conditions. “*Yadā have pātubhavanti dhammā, Ātāpino jhāyato brāhmaṇassa; Athassa kaṅkhā vapayanti sabbā, Yato khayam paccayānam avedī’ ti. dutiyaṃ.*” *Bodhi Sutta*, Ud 26

<sup>171</sup> Burnouf, *Introduction to the History of Indian Buddhism*, 69.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, 427.

appeal any misperception or preassumption of clinging things as such.<sup>173</sup> In the Buddhist view, to see things as they are (*yathābhūta-ñānadassana*)<sup>174</sup> is to see the truths in the matter of ending the suffering that the Buddha has guided. Hence, the Buddhist teachings are described as a guideline aiming for nothing, either accepting or rejecting but tranquility.

### **Remarked Features in Context of *Ditṭhi***

In attempting to see the suspending beliefs in Buddhism, there would be reconstructed its critical features by remarking and analyzing the characteristics of Buddhist teachings in the context of belief and its part of the whole picture of other beliefs. Hence, Burford mentioned that the early doctrinal description was the Buddhist soteriology in defending teaching and tradition vis-à-vis those of rival groups.<sup>175</sup> The outlook of the genealogy of beliefs and practices that the Buddha reportedly described speculative beliefs as the traps of views; sixty-two beliefs (*ditṭhi*) based on theorems referring to the past and the future clinging to these beliefs is dangerous and incomparable to liberation.

Indeed, speculators such as contemplatives (*Śramaṇas*), Brahmins (*Brāhmaṇas*) claimed their beliefs to be the truth, or the only view is an absolute truth. They have trapped in and attached to those views without the light of the right view (*sammā-ditṭhi*) that could be penetrated and liberated from any attachments of ignorance (*avijjā*), craving (*taṇhā*), and clinging (*upādāna*). The *Brahmajāla-sutta*<sup>176</sup> describes that:

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<sup>173</sup> Harvey, *Selfless Mind*, 84.

<sup>174</sup> Buswell and Lopez, *Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, 1024–25.

<sup>175</sup> Buswell, *Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha*, 63–64.

<sup>176</sup> The *Brahmā Net*, DN 1



There are things (*Dhamma*), deep, difficult to see, challenging to understand, peaceful and sublime, beyond the sphere of reasoning, subtle, comprehensible only to the wise, which the Tathāgata having realized for himself direct knowledge, propounds to others.<sup>177</sup>

Those who did not understand these roots of views (*diṭṭhithana*), grasped (*ghita*), and clung to (*paramattha*) attachments could lead to the cycle of birth and death.

Otherwise, understanding “things as they are” could bring to the right vision to eliminate all attachments for deliverance. Indeed, the right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*) was meant to suspend dogmatic beliefs and to get rid of holding a polarity of existence and non-existence fabricating the mind as “I” and “myself” or a particular thing that is neither in its self or absolute being. On the other hand, the Buddhist view in the extent of the right view does acquire the direct knowledge or individual experience of things as they become in condition and independent of others. It is mentioned in the following:

This (*sammā-diṭṭhi*) does not get involved with or cling to these attachments, clings, and fixations of awareness, biases, or obsessions; nor is he resolved on 'myself.'...everything exists: that is one extreme. 'Everything does not exist: that is a second extreme.'<sup>178</sup>

To some extent, making the right view is to correct the wrong views by a clear vision to achieve the goal. Indeed, *Sammā-diṭṭhi* in the Buddhist path requires overcoming all views that derived from speculative assumption, either affirmative or rejective assertion. It is relevant to an experiential approach to see how things are by nature. Remarkably, all phenomena have come to a flux of becoming that things are “arising” and “passing-away” (*paticca-samuppada*).

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<sup>177</sup> “*dhammā gambhīrā duddasā duranubodhā santā paṇītā atakkāvacarā nipuṇā paṇḍitavedanīyā ye tathāgato sayamaṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā pavedeti, yehi tathāgatassa yathābhuccaṃ vaṇṇaṃ sammā vadamānā vadeyyuṃ.*” *Brahmajāla Sutta*, D 1

<sup>178</sup> *Kaccayanagotta Sutta*, SN 12.15

By observation, things appear in the aspect of the mutual dependency of name-and-form (mental and physical activities), so subject and object correlation could not be grasped and approached as “I” or “myself” but non-substantiality of all things (*sabbe sankhārā*) regardless extreme views of existence and non-existence. The middle path aims not only to eradicate all views, regardless of neither true nor false but also to extricate the mind of fabrication “for tranquilizing all activities, for casting away all attachment, for the destruction of craving, for dispassion, cessation.” The notion of *diṭṭhi* must be understood as no-views to see things as they are. However, clinging to the world by speculative views is not complied with the correct view by seeing without assertion. According to the path of purification, seeing things with wisdom (*paññā*) is to see the uprising of the world as they are (*yathābhūta-ñānadassana*)<sup>179</sup> subjected to impermanent, stressful, and not-self. The Buddhist view does accept the knowledge (*ñāna*) as knowledge of seeing things as they have come to be (*yathābhūta-ñānadassana*). The Buddhist view of withholding speculative views has posted against grasping an eternity but reflected the direct experience of the Buddha.<sup>180</sup> There were some sorts of mental identity; the personality-belief (*sakkāya-ditthi*) and ego-illusion (*atta-ditthi*) come from eternity-belief (*sassata-ditthi*) or annihilation-belief (*uccheda-ditthi*). Abandoning those views was the first step to enter the stream of *nibbāna* as well as to achieve the final goal; thus, all views must be relinquished, such as the Enlightened One was free from any views (*ditthigata*).<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Ñanananda, *Concept and Reality in Early Buddhist Thought*, 77.

<sup>180</sup> “When you see with discernment, ‘All fabrications are inconstant... stressful... not-self... you grow disenchanted with stress. This is the path to purity,’ “*Sabbe baṅkhārā aniccā’ti... dukkhā’ti ... anattā’ti yadā paññāya passati. Atha nibbindati dukkhe esa maggo visuddhiyā.*” Dhṛp 277-279

<sup>181</sup> “*Atthi pana bhoṭo gotamassa kiñci diṭṭhigata nti? Diṭṭhigatanti kho, vaccha, apanāmetam tathāgatassa*” M i 486

In this case, the Buddha described the notion of non-assertion, to grasp nothing such as self in the substantiality of extreme views. He pointed out the middle path to avoid both extremes. In detail, the abandoning of views (*diṭṭhi*) was described in Aṭṭhakavagga that no viewpoint was not represented the metaphysical standpoint of speculations but the knowledge of direct experience in abandoning ignorance (*avijjā*), craving (*taṇhā*), and attachment (*upādāna*). Understanding the right-view, in this case, is not only to correct wrong-view but to abandon any views aiming toward the goal as the detachment of any cause of dis-ease. According to the goal of Buddhism, every dogmatic belief, mainly *micchā-diṭṭhi* was associated with speculative opinions and theories that were possibly influenced in different directions according to the different beliefs and paths but were not constructive and indeterminable. Hence *diṭṭhi* mostly has held the substantial views of entity or self or egos such as personality-belief (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*), or ego-illusion (*atta-diṭṭhi*), which are represented beliefs in annihilation-belief (*uccheda-diṭṭhi*) and eternity-belief (*sassata-diṭṭhi*).<sup>182</sup>

In the discussion of *diṭṭhi*, the Buddha described his teaching as *vibhajja-vadī*, analytical or discriminating teaching without any assent either what thing is or is not. Thus, this is the key feature of Buddhist teaching to examine things without clinging to things whatsoever. Many Brahmins and wanderers held different beliefs and points of view about cosmic metaphysics, such as “the world is eternal; only this is true, any other (view) is false.”<sup>183</sup> They fought to dispute each other arguments or debates in saying that “Dhamma is like this, Dhamma is not like that! Dhamma is not like this, and Dhamma is

<sup>182</sup> The annihilation view (*uccheda-diṭṭhi*) believes in the non-existence of entities, including physical and mental identity, so nothing exists after death. In contrast, the belief in the existence of things, either self or soul, is eternity-belief (*sassata-diṭṭhi*), so there will be an eternal identity after death. Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 51–52.

<sup>183</sup> “*samaṇabrāhmaṇā evaṃvādino evaṃdiṭṭhino 'sassato loko idameva saccaṃ moghamāñña'nti.*” Ud 66

like that!”<sup>184</sup> They tried to claim their views as the only truth but other is false. Indeed, the Buddha pointed out the beneficial and harmful beliefs or practices attached to an absolute belief projecting things as genuine.

In *Anattalakkhna Sutta*, the Buddha held back to project a theory (*vāda*) but followed ordinary people. The noble disciples were freed from defilements and understood things without grasping any determination.<sup>185</sup> His statement shows no viewpoint (*diṭṭhi*). Gombrich also points out that the Buddha had no viewpoint and rigorously held off any stance to establish a position of things in nature.<sup>186</sup> In this case, the right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*) is the correct aspect in opposition to the wrong perspective (*micchā-diṭṭhi*). Thus, *sammā-diṭṭhi* can be viewed as the way out of all opinions and consider things as they are. However, an alternative perspective is to receive a proper understanding of things detached from any views causing suffering. In addition, Paul Fuller interprets *sammā-diṭṭhi* as “the transcendence of views” that could be designated non-assertion and abandoning defilements and attachments.<sup>187</sup> Generally, the Buddha was among contemplatives and Brahmins (*samaṇabrāhmaṇā*) who claimed to have attainment by having different methods of search. There were four groups of *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇās*;<sup>188</sup> (1) *those* who made such a truth-claim through hearsay (*anussavikā*) followed the lineage of scriptural tradition, (2) those who claimed the sacred knowledge were Brahmins who learned Vedas and obtained the threefold knowledge

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<sup>184</sup> “*edisō dhamo nedisō dhammo, nedisō dhammo edisō dhammo’ti.*” *Paṭhama nānātiṭṭhiya Sutta*, Ud 66

<sup>185</sup> The discourse on the characteristic of non-self shows the non-duality of grasping existence and non-existence of “I, mine, and self.” SN 22.59

<sup>186</sup> Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began*, 16–17.

<sup>187</sup> Fuller, *Notion of Diṭṭhi in Theravāda Buddhism*, 112–115.

<sup>188</sup> *Saṅgārava Sutta*, MN II.50

(*tevijjā*);<sup>189</sup> they were known as traditionalists who uphold Vedic tradition claiming ultimate truth and knowledge by hearsay, (3) those who claimed by mere reason or logic and thoughtful speculation gain knowledge or rational beliefs. Contemplative wanderers; *Paribbājakās*, *Ājīvikas*<sup>190</sup> were among the sages who were rationalists, logicians, and speculators (*takkī vīmaṃsī*), (4) those who claimed their experiential insight of knowledge were *samaṇabrāhmaṇā* who realized what they have ever known.

Experimentailists; contemplatives (*samaṇas*) such as *Alara Kalama* and *Uddaka Ramaputta*<sup>191</sup> claimed to achieve the direct experiences or self-realization.<sup>192</sup> The Buddha told *San̄gārava* that he was among those who have realized the vision of Dhamma<sup>193</sup> The knowledge of seeing things is not meant to be attained through hearsay, mere reasoning, and thoughtful speculation but by individual experience. The experiential practice or self-realization is meant to be the path of accomplishment that leads to realization by seeing things (*yathābhūtaṃ*) without bondage to attachments or clinging but arising and passing away phenomena known as known suffering. Thus, this knowledge was derived from the Buddha's experience of seeing things irrelevant to the extreme views of existence or non-existence. Indeed, it was constituted the right view. According to the noble search, this method has played a significant role in mental

<sup>189</sup> The Vedas is the highest reference of knowledge based on revelation. However, contemplatives (*samaṇas*) use their theoretical or reflective knowledge to entail their beliefs and views. In Early Buddhism, the Buddha criticizes those sources of knowledge such as beliefs or speculation that are questionable and incomparable to the direct knowledge that appeals to an individual solution of suffering through one's own experience or vision of reality. Thus, those beliefs and views could not lead to the ideal goal of deliverance. Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory*, 62–63.

<sup>190</sup> Among ascetics, *Makkhali Gosāla* holds the doctrine of fate rejecting action and consequence. Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pali Proper Names*, 398–99.

<sup>191</sup> In this case, the Buddha left two teachers who claimed supreme knowledge. Jayatilleke, *Buddhist Attitude to Other Religions*, 22–23. MN II 50

<sup>192</sup> There are traditionalists, rationalists, and experientialists. Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory*, 170. Jayatilleke, *Buddhist Attitude to Other Religions*, 22–23.

<sup>193</sup> “*ye te samaṇabrāhmaṇā pubbe ananussutesu dhammesu sāmāññeva dhammaṃ abhiññāya diṭṭhadhammābhiññāvosaṇapāramippattā ādibrahmacariyaṃ paṭijānanti Tesāhamasmi.*” *San̄gārava Sutta*, MN II 50

development to gain knowledge or wisdom (*Ariyapariyesana*).<sup>194</sup> This kind of knowledge does not base on thinking (*cintā-mayā-paññā*) or learning (*suta-mayā-paññā*), but it does rely on mental development (*bhāvanā-mayā-paññā*). This realization or vision could be “the solution of fabrications, the relinquishments of all acquisitions, the ending of craving: dispassion; cessation; Unbinding.” This realization delights the experimental search regardless of the controversial issues of metaphysics, dogmas, speculation, or provision but direct knowledge of phenomena.<sup>195</sup> Indeed, avoiding extreme beliefs of being or non-being, the clinging to nothing could make the way out of attachments.

Furthermore, the different views or beliefs are caused by dispute, quarreling, annoyance, frustration, unrest of mind holding “only this is true, all else is worthless,” (*idameva saccaṃ moghamaññanti*). They could not agree with others who have “the view or opinion that all is pleasing to me, all is not pleasing to me, and a part is pleasing to me, a part is not pleasing to me.”<sup>196</sup> In addition, Brahmins and contemplatives who attach to two extreme views of existence or non-existence accept the only belief but oppose other views,<sup>197</sup> so they cause disputes and arguments. Ordinary people belong to two extremes of sense-gratification and the affirmation of ego-belief. They incline to affirm or deny a particular entity, such as self, in believing as accurate or truth based on craving (*taṇhā*) and ignorance (*avijjā*).<sup>198</sup> Thus, giving up or abandoning those views are straightforward on the prominent path toward peace of mind or quietude.

<sup>194</sup> *Ariyapariyesana Sutta*, M I 160

<sup>195</sup> *Saṅgārava Sutta*, MN II 50

<sup>196</sup> “*ekaccaṃ me khamati, ekaccaṃ me nakkhamatīti, imaṇce ahaṃ diṭṭhiṃ thāmasā parāmāsā abhinivissa vohareyyaṃ*” *Dīghanakha Sutta*, M I 497

<sup>197</sup> “*Ye hi keci, bhikkhave, samaṇā vā brāhmaṇā vā bhavadiṭṭhiṃ allīnā bhavadiṭṭhiṃ upagatā bhavadiṭṭhiṃ ajjhositā, vibhavadiṭṭhiyā te paṭiviruddhā. Ye hi keci, bhikkhave, samaṇā vā brāhmaṇā vā vibhavadiṭṭhiṃ allīnā vibhavadiṭṭhiṃ upagatā vibhavadiṭṭhiṃ ajjhositā, bhavadiṭṭhiyā te paṭiviruddhā.*” M I 63

<sup>198</sup> Nyanaponika, *Discourse on the Snake Simile*, 3.

The general view of beliefs in the Pāli Nikāya describes the Buddhist view facing other beliefs and views in the Buddha's lifetime. Without the main Buddhist concerns, the critical features of suspension could not be the main part of Buddhism. Hence, the Buddhist perspective was along with Śramaṇa tradition in which was away from Vedic tradition and completed with dogmatic beliefs of Brāhmanic view and wandering ascetics in various theoretical and practical concerns. In abandoning those dogmatic beliefs and practices, the middle way was introduced as part of the Buddha's own experience and method to deny any beliefs or concepts of an absolute entity from the philosophical and religious extremists in his period. Therefore, the Buddhist view of beliefs must be justified by suspending any dogmatic views and carefully examining every belief and practice toward the goal as an attitude of free attachment. In other words, detachment or abandonment is the key concept to release the mind from grasping any essential things or absolute claims.

The Buddhist notion of overcoming or abandoning (*pahāna*)<sup>199</sup> which are five kinds of overcoming; (1) suppression abandonment (*vikkhambhana-pahāna*) for example, the temporary suspension of the five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*, (2) antithesis abandonment (*tadanga-pahāna*), for example, a lighted lamp dispels the darkness of the night, (3) removal abandonment (*samuccheda-pahāna*),<sup>200</sup> for example, balancing of counter and encounter issues that one deletes others, (4) equanimity abandonment (*patipassaddhi-pahāna*), for example, the result (*phala*) of disappearing mental unrest,

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<sup>199</sup> *Pahāna*: giving up, leaving, abandoning, rejection; Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 121.

<sup>200</sup> Vism. XXII

(5) renunciation abandonment (*nissarana-pahāna*), it is identical with the extinction of disturbance.<sup>201</sup>

The attachment of views is not the only cause of seeing things only one side but also cause of disputation, which some recluses and Brāhmans have trapped in those views. The Buddhist notion of suspending is to stay away from those traps by giving nonmetaphysical explanations assuming nothing as a permanent thing but by describing things as puzzles of the whole phenomena. Thus, Buddhist opinion on dogmatic views or beliefs must be understood as an abandonment of mental unrest and its cause.

In sum, suspending beliefs in Buddhist view can be seen as eradicating wrong-views neither being (*bhava-ditṭhi*) nor non-being (*vibhava-ditṭhi*), and giving up any views and attachments. Indeed, the Buddha and the noble individuals (*ariya-puggalā*) have put away all attachments of beliefs or views<sup>202</sup> for liberation and the mental state of equanimity.<sup>203</sup> The point of no view that one of the noble disciples was called the vision-attainer (*ditthippatta*) who penetrated all views and had no view and attachment<sup>204</sup> but grasped to nothing, either self or substantial entity.

### **Suspension of Belief as the Dhamma**

The Dhamma is well-known teaching in Buddhism, which Buddhists accept as the enlightenment of the Buddha. It comes from the Buddha's experiences of liberation. As

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<sup>201</sup> M i 27

<sup>202</sup> Three fetters are (1) personality-belief (*sakkāya-ditṭhi*), (2) skeptical doubt (*vicikicchā*), and (3) attachment to mere rules and rituals (*sīlabbata-parāmāsa*). Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 21.

<sup>203</sup> Skeptical doubt (*vicikicchā*) is one of the hindrances (*nīvarana*) to be abandoned for the state of equanimity through seeing things as they are by nature. *Maha-Assapura Sutta*, M i 271

<sup>204</sup> Fuller, *Notion of Ditṭhi in Theravāda Buddhism*, 142.



well as, it has given for the sake of liberation and guidance.<sup>205</sup> In Buddhist teaching, having liberation is to have experiences in examining one's mind aiming toward the end of suffering (*nibbāna*). It means to let go of any detachments, including any views or beliefs. The goal is to achieve a pure and peaceful mind (*suddhi, santi*) that reflects the mental state of calm without grasping anything in the world. It is said in Aṭṭhakavagga that "having seen what does a *bhikkhu nibbati*, not grasping anything in the world."<sup>206</sup> Therefore, Dhamma is described as guidance and mental experience of achieving the goal, indicating nothing but peace of mind in overcoming any views or beliefs and abandoning all detachments. Thus, the Buddhist solution seems to show wisdom, calmness by seeing things as they have come to be. In the raft simile, Dhamma was given to cross the river like a raft but let it go like things (*Dhammā*) according to their co-origination without grasping.<sup>207</sup> Renouncing everything, including teachings, emphasizes clinging to nothing in the world; thus, the enlightenment underlines the point of abandonment. The teaching is pragmatic as a means to an end of liberation. It does not assert an absolute determination.<sup>208</sup> Indeed, the simile of a raft indicates abandoning the opposite and grasping nothings in the world.

In the simile of grasping snake, the Buddha cautioned that disciples who did not learn the teaching for the sake of understanding did not advance or receive no benefit of learning for cessation of suffering. The people who did not carefully handle a snake well could be bitten and suffered.<sup>209</sup> To this extent, they are grasping doctrines associated

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<sup>205</sup> The Buddha describes his teachings aiming for direct knowledge, awakening, unbinding. (*abhiññāya sambodhāya nibbānāya*), S v 438

<sup>206</sup> Buswell, *Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha*, 41. V. 915c,

<sup>207</sup> Alagaddupama Sutta: The Water-Snake Simile, MN 22

<sup>208</sup> Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began*, 24.

<sup>209</sup> Alagaddupama Sutta: The Snake Simile, MN 22

with substantial views or dogmatic views that could lead to wrong directions assuming either existence or non-existence.<sup>210</sup> The wrong views do not engage any means of living in the world following what things are by nature but dogmatic beliefs.<sup>211</sup> The Buddhist teaching is taught as the middle way that is not comparable with the extremist beliefs and practices. However, it applies to physical and mental development as the following passage:

The middle way discovered by a Perfect One defends both these extremes; it gives vision, gives knowledge, and leads to peace, direct acquaintance, discovery, and Nibbana. Furthermore, what is that middle way? It is simply the noble eightfold path: right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.<sup>212</sup>

According to this standpoint, Dhamma can be seen as the whole development to guide a person to the way out of suffering, which appears to be the Buddha's renunciation of non-superiority of belief and practice and non-absolute claim.<sup>213</sup> The standpoint of Buddhist doctrine acquires the intellectual understanding to gain the knowledge of what appears to be in nature and how things have come to be neither presupposition nor doctrinal proposition rather a unique vision of renunciation according to the Noble Eightfold Path (*ariya-atthangika-magga*).

Notably, the Buddhist teaching has provided the path to purify the bounding life with suffering by getting rid of the sensual craving (*kāma-tanhā*), the craving for existence (*bhava-tanhā*), the craving for non-existence or self-annihilation (*vibhava-*

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<sup>210</sup> In this case, Ariththa, a monk who grasped wrong views as “I”, “mine”, and “self”; five aggregates of clinging (*upādānakkhandha*), (1) the corporeality group (*rūpa-kkhandha*), (2) the feeling group (*vedanā-kkhandha*), (3) the perception group (*saññā-kkhandha*), (4) the mental-formation group (*sankhāra-kkhandha*), (5) the consciousness-group (*viññāna-kkhandha*), and world and immortal self. MN 22

<sup>211</sup> Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began*, 25.

<sup>212</sup> The First Sermon of the Buddha, SN V.421

<sup>213</sup> The Buddha concludes his teachings; here and now in describing the suffering and the cessation of suffering. “*etarahi ca dukkhañce va paññāpemi dukkhassa ca nirodhanti*” S iii 119

*tanhā*). In the Buddhist account of Pāli cannon, the Eightfold Path (*atthangika-magga*) was defined in terms of training and cultivation toward the goal or emphasized in practice and spiritual experience that the practitioner trained to achieve liberation. Mainly the path appears to be mentioned based on faith (*saddhā*), tranquility meditation (*samādhī*), and insight meditation (*paññā*) which are the central part of the five spiritual faculties (*indriyas*). Therefore, Dhamma, such as the Noble Eightfold Path (*ariya-atthangika-magga*), leads to the cessation of suffering. Therefore, as the Buddha's teaching, Dhamma is stated what is beneficial for pleasing and unpleasant matters of those who suffer to achieve tranquility. By using "a method of abandoning" to renounce any type of clinging or acquiring self or a particular dogmatic belief in self or permanent being, essence, and soul in which is an account of *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇās* beliefs in *ātman*. As well, Thānissaro pointed to the Buddha's skill in teaching that he had in discussions to instruct the practitioner to stay on the right track of liberation.<sup>214</sup>

The Buddha put his outline of the abandon mode through practical training (*yogā*) to eliminate clinging and cultivate a healthy mental state of equanimity. The Buddha outlined the abandonment; "I teach the Dhamma for the abandoning of the gross acquisition of a self...the mind-made acquisition of a self... the abandoning of the formless acquisition of a self."<sup>215</sup> Hence, to abandon those fabricated beliefs of self could be associated with beliefs neither existence nor non-existence but barely to understand things as they are without assertion, neither formless nor form (*nāma-rūpa*) following a

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<sup>214</sup> Thanissaro, *Skill in Questions*, 143.

<sup>215</sup> "attapaṭilābhassa pahānāya dhammaṃ desemi... 'Manomayassapi kho ahaṃ, poṭṭhapāda, attapaṭilābhassa pahānāya dhammaṃ desemi ... 'Arūpassapi kho ahaṃ, poṭṭhapāda, attapaṭilābhassa pahānāya dhammaṃ desemi." D i 178

metaphysical or an empirical assumption about the true self.<sup>216</sup> As the Buddha concluded that “Citta, these are the world’s designations, the world’s expression, the world’s ways of speaking, the world’s descriptions, with which the Tathagata expresses himself but without grasping to them.”

In brief, as the Buddha’s teaching, the Dhamma is meant to provide neither answers to metaphysical questions about life and the nature of the universe nor theoretical questions about absolute things. However, it guides the way of life and understanding what appears in the human body-mind phenomenon. It helps how to deal with beliefs and practices to achieve peace of mind. To this extend, suspending belief as Dhamma is the guideline to deal with the mindset of existence and non-existence by grasping “I” and “mine” as various beliefs in self that could disturb the peace of mind, either agreement or disagreement.

### **Reconstructed Features**

In Buddhist teaching, the right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*) is incompatible with the wrong views (*micchā-diṭṭhi*), particularly dogmatic beliefs and absolute ideals and practices. On the one hand, the right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*) guides toward the Buddhist liberation (*nibbāna*) that is not only amplified by learning with an appropriated method but also by reflecting the right attitude toward the final goal. In testability of Dhamma, it is subjected for examination that was well proclaimed (*svākkhāto*), to be seen for oneself, (*sandiṭṭhiko*), timeless (*akāliko*), inviting inspection (*ehi-passiko*), leading

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<sup>216</sup> Harvey, *Selfless Mind*, 22–23.

inward (*opanayiko*), and to be known individually by the wise (*paccattaṃ veditabbo viññūhi*).

Hence, Dhamma that the Buddha described could not be taken for an absolute claim, but it welcomes examination (*samannesanā*). Similarly, Dhamma as a prominent practice in the gradual training would lead to realization. It is a prominent approach to seeing things as they are. It provides the path concerning nothing metaphysical views but applicable practice to the investigation, mainly to experience things as they are rather than given things in themselves. According to *Brahmajāla Sutta*,<sup>217</sup> (the all-embracing net of views' *diṭṭhi*') the Buddha gives this exposition about these wrong views (*micchā-diṭṭhi*) of other beliefs which were classified into the sixty-two heretical forms of speculation. For example, the eternal and finite world and self in which some ascetics and Brahmins (*samaṇabrāhmaṇā*) are not only holding their fixed views but also proclaim their ultimate truth regardless the other views or possibilities. These views are rooted in two distinctive speculators who are Eternalists and Annihilationists. There were sorts of knowledge from the mental concentration (*cetosamādhi*)<sup>218</sup> of practice, a logical or a philosophical view of speculation, and an endless equivocation in understanding views.<sup>219</sup> However, these fixed views are speculated by reason, deduction, and testimony based on misunderstanding and attachments.

Otherwise, the Buddha pointed out that these dogmatic views could not break through the net of wrong views that trap the fixed views of the world and the self from

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<sup>217</sup> D i 1-8

<sup>218</sup> “*sammāmanasikāramanvāya tathārūpaṃ cetosamādhiṃ phusati, yathāsamāhite citte anekavihiṭṭaṃ pubbenivāsaṃ anussarati.*” A i 8.31

<sup>219</sup> “*eke samaṇabrāhmaṇā amarāvikkhepikā, tattha tattha pañhaṃ puṭṭhā samānā vācāvikkhepaṃ āpajjanti amarāvikkhepaṃ catūhi vatthūhi.*” A i 8.62

speculation and attachment in holding of unrealistic view. Indeed, the realization of these views is deeply sublime and challenging to see and understand by speculation. However, it is comprehensible only the wise with direct knowledge that “the Tathāgata is liberated without reminder” and “having realized for himself with direct knowledge propounds to others.” Therefore, nibbāna, the achievement of the Buddha, is individual experiential attainment, which is considered to be the highest goal of Buddhism. In general, the achievement applies to all beings to claim their own experience. In other words, nibbāna is the mental goal to accomplish for the sake of liberation in which is illustrated as abrenunciation of fabrication and attachments. For example, Girimānanda reflected that “this is peace, this is the highest, and namely, the calming of all the activities, the relinquishment of all attachment, the destruction of craving, freedom from desire, this is called the perception of cessation.”<sup>220</sup> Even though grasping either eternalistic view of self, substantial entity (*sassata-ditthi*), or nihilistic view of non-existence (*ucche-ditthi*) is being held in dogmatic beliefs. Brāhmins and contemplatives claim only the truth to confirm their beliefs or reject other beliefs based on their theoretical assumptions.

However, Dhamma comes from the Buddha’s experiences and understanding, in which the experiential investigation is a new way to search for the truth. In that case, the Buddhist tenets could not be approached and asserted through the dominant beliefs or views as existence and non-existence.<sup>221</sup> Approaching Dhamma based on dogmatic views (*ditthi*) would lead to a misconception so that one could grasp things either existence or non-existence, for instance, the case of Aritha. The Buddha’s answers and teachings

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<sup>220</sup> “*etaṃ pañītaṃ yadidaṃ sabbasaṅkhārasamatho sabbūpadhipaṭinissaggo, taṇhakkhayo virāgo nirodho nibbānanti*”. *Ayaṃ vuccatānanda nirodhasaññā*.” *Girimānanda Sutta*, AN V.111.

<sup>221</sup> Murti, *Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, 38; Thomas, *History of Buddhist Thought*, 128.

could be misconstrued and fallen either Eternalistic and Annihilistic views. Thus, Stcherbatsky restates that Buddha's concerns about the dogmatic beliefs that many people were trapped and risked by wrong views and immoral conducts.<sup>222</sup> Otherwise, it is not comparable to the arising of knowledge that all phenomena are not-self.<sup>223</sup> Indeed asking for non-existence or substantial entity does not imply reality, so it is an irrelevant question. This sort of question should be set aside (*thapanīya*).<sup>224</sup> In addition, Rahula mentions that the Buddha's answers aimed to guide the questioners for their ways of realization rather than showing their knowledge.<sup>225</sup> The realization of things is an effective method of the Buddhist mode to dealing with misperception or wrong attitude toward substantiality otherwise to understand things as phenomena without grasping things neither existence nor non-existence. Experimental practice is the prime resource of Buddhist teachings that all fabrication should be suspended to let go of the attachments leading inward to peace of mind. The renunciation is mainly employed in the experimental observation that "all as a phenomenon to be abandoned" (*sabbappahānāya dhammo*)<sup>226</sup> includes all perceptions experienced as pleasure, pain, or neither-pleasure-nor-pain.<sup>227</sup>

First of all, the Dhamma is characterized to invite for the experiential or insight investigation for oneself (*ehi-passik, sandiṭṭhiko*). To see all phenomena that subject and

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<sup>222</sup> Shcherbatskoi, *Further Papers of Stcherbatsky*, 27–28.

<sup>223</sup> "Ahañcānanda, vacchagottassa paribbājakassa 'atthattā'ti puṭṭho samāno 'atthattā'ti byākareyyaṃ, ye te, ānanda, samaṇabrāhmaṇā sassatavādā tesametaṃ saddhiṃ [tesametaṃ laddhi (sī.)] abhavissa." SN 44.10

<sup>224</sup> *Avyākata-pañhā* are mentioned in the Questions of Milinda addressing some questions about the world based on speculations or metaphysic issues such as Is the world eternal or not? Does the Tathāgata exist or not exist after death? Shcherbatskoi, *Further Papers of Stcherbatsky*, 29.

<sup>225</sup> Rahula and Demiéville, *What the Buddha Taught*, 63.

<sup>226</sup> In the Buddhist view, things appear through perceptions; eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind. SN 35.23

<sup>227</sup> "yampidaṃ ghānasamphassapaccayā uppajjati vedayitaṃ sukhaṃ vā dukkhaṃ vā adukkhamasukhaṃ vā tampi pahāttabbaṃ." *Pahanaya Sutta*, SN 35.24

object are related in terms of event or circumstance is to perceive without any preconception or assertion but let phenomena reveal things as they have come to be. The Buddha suspended any views or beliefs by abandoning any justify or assertion in all perceptions, so there has nothing neither true nor false in all phenomena as it is stated in *Kalaka Sutta*:

*Tathagata* — being the same concerning all phenomena that can be seen, heard, sensed, and cognized — is 'Such.' And I tell you: There is no other 'Such' higher or more sublime. “Whatever is seen or heard or sensed and fastened onto as true by others, One who is Such — among the self-fettered — would not further claim to be true or even false.”<sup>228</sup>

Seeing things as they have made no form of dogmatic belief; otherwise, to uphold an assertion of grasping things as such for peace of mind is the final solution of suspending belief. Indeed, claiming an absolute truth or falsehood is caused by attachments and bounding in either existence or non-existence that many people have caught in dogmatic beliefs. *Dhammā*, as things by nature, is grounded on a Buddhist standpoint of non-self that can be experienced under an empirical investigation in suspending beliefs and dogmatic claims.<sup>229</sup> Thus suspending beliefs emerges as part of searching without holding a dogmatic belief. To give up or set aside metaphysical views and speculation was recommended by the Buddha and his mode to see things (*dhammā*) without assertion. Particularly dogmatic view (*diṭṭhi*) and opinion (*vāda*) appeal to beliefs and speculation, which fall short of cultivating realistic experience for knowledge or wisdom of things as they are. Hence abandoning those attitudes does not form a belief or a claim but energizes one own ability to investigate how things have come to be without any dogmatic assumption to disturb the peace of mind.

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<sup>228</sup> AN 4,24

<sup>229</sup> Johansson, *Psychology of Nirvana*, 7.



In renouncing all attachments caused by suffering, suspending belief can be traced in various modes of thoughts and application to understand Dhammā. On the one hand, Dhamma is a set of the Buddha's teachings that is described as a truth-claim, such as the four noble truths. Indeed suffering (*dukkhā*) has been used in various translations, particularly stresses,<sup>230</sup> despair, un-satisfactoriness, which are inferred to the mental states in the suffering of projecting or grasping things either like or dislike. Hence clinging things as substantiality and one's mindsets could turn out to be unsatisfied for grasping things as such (self), commonly the five clinging-aggregates.<sup>231</sup> In an aspect of the noble truths, satisfactoriness *dukkhā* have to be understood or experienced to abandon its causes, which lead to liberating the mind from attachments and stress. As experienced and enlightened by the Buddha, Dhamma conduce to tranquilities, namely nibbāna, considered the uttermost security and unshakable from the bonds in any position neither being nor non-being (*nibbāna*).<sup>232</sup> However, suspending belief is the mental attitude to assert nothing like truth and determine what things are or what reality is substantially objective entities such as physical body and subjective spirit such as a soul. Indeed, it does grasp neither truth nor falsehood toward things, but it puts aside any assertion.

In this case, the Buddha's guidance of practice, such as the middle path, is part of Buddhist teachings defined through individual experience that one can investigate for the sake of liberation, which is due to non-assertion to grasp nothing such as self. In preserving the truth, the Buddhist modes of inquiry start from withholding extreme

<sup>230</sup> There are three forms of *dukkhā*; the stressfulness of pain, the stressfulness of fabrication, the stressfulness of change “*dukkhadukkhataṃ saṅkhāradukkhataṃ vipariṇāmadukkhataṃ*” S iv 259

<sup>231</sup> “*saṅkhittena pañcupādānakkhandhā dukkhā*” S v 420 The aggregates of clinging is described as the mental attitude of holding beliefs of the body as an essence of life (*atta-vādu*), grasping views (*ditthi*), craving (*kāma*), and rules and rituals (*sīlabbata-parāmāsa*). Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began*, 68–70.

<sup>232</sup> “*Idampi kho thānaṃ duddasaṃ yadidaṃ sabbasaṅkhārasamatho sabbūpadhipaṭinissaggo taṇhakkhayo virāgo nirodho nibbānaṃ.*” M I.168

beliefs and claims. In this study, the suspension of beliefs can be seen in terms of attitude, way of thought, and inquiry to search for truth and obtain the final goal. The Buddhist teaching is generally Dhamma, which can be recognized as the suspending mode to achieve tranquility. Grasping nothing is a guideline to achieve liberation.

Even though the modes of inquiry deal with the external and internal sources of beliefs, they emphasize hearing and learning of others (*parato-ghoso*) and critical reflection (*yoniso-manasikāro*)<sup>233</sup> that lead to the development of the right view<sup>234</sup> and direct knowledge.<sup>235</sup> The primary source of the Buddha's experience or vision of liberation was acquired none of those acquiring true belief or absolute claim but preserving the truth (*saccanurakkhana*) that opened to the practical application of seeing things (*Dhamma*), namely suffering and its ending. In addition, Walpola Rahula summarizes the Buddhist quest of the cessation of suffering (*Nibbana*) as "knowing and seeing but not that of believing."<sup>236</sup> Mainly the fundamental understanding of Buddhist monks, the correct personal knowledge has come through the dependent origination of things (*paticca-samuppāda*) regardless of conviction, preference, tradition, reasoning through analogies, and agreement through mere thought. Therefore, knowing dependent co-arising is directly due to penetrating and seeing things as the primary source of Buddhist achievement without being caught in all beliefs.

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<sup>233</sup> *Yoniso-Manasikāra*: directing the attention to the roots of things or critical reflection and investigation, leading to direct knowledge by seeing phenomena as they are. Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 209.

<sup>234</sup> "Parato ca ghoso ayoniso ca manasikāro. Ime kho, bhikkhave, dve paccayā micchādiṭṭhiyā uppādāyā' 'ti....Parato ca ghoso, yoniso ca manasikāro. Ime kho, bhikkhave, dve paccayā sammādiṭṭhiyā uppādāyā' 'ti" An ii.126-127

<sup>235</sup> The Buddha points out the critical reflection that leads to vision, knowledge, and understanding, "yoniso manasikāra ahu paññāya abhisamayo... 'ti kho me bhikkhave, pubbe ananussutesu dhammesu cakkhum udapādi. Ñāṇaṃ udapādi. Paññā udapādi. Vijjā udapādi. Āloko udapādi' ti." S ii 10

<sup>236</sup> Rahula and Demiéville, *What the Buddha Taught*, 9.

According to the Buddha's opponent outlines to suspend speculation and extremes of beliefs and practices,<sup>237</sup> Dhamma is not similar to dogmatic beliefs and views. However, it is regarded as the method to advance in the practical mindset for mental development to attain liberation. To this extent, the Buddhist teachings are the main components of suspending beliefs constructed into the Buddhist modes of inquiry. In some sense, the Buddhist guidance opposes any extremes held by Brahmins and contemplatives. Briefly, Bhikkhu Bodhi concludes that the teachings had given to acknowledge human intellectual ability for investigation without dogmatic beliefs but practical orientation.<sup>238</sup> Various discussions have given the crucial points to deal with dogmatic beliefs. Coincidentally, Buddhist teachings emerged in beliefs without an absolute claim that only this is true, like the eternalistic view (*sassata-ditthi*) or nihilistic view (*ucche-ditthi*). Thus, they are the fundamental grounds for investigating other beliefs and practices and abandoning beliefs that hold on to suffering and its cause of unsettled mind. In contexts of beliefs, opinion, and Dhamma, various discourses show suspending belief that insists and associates with the genuine aspects of Buddhist teachings concerning means and goal of equanimity. Those features are the puzzles to draw the whole picture of suspending beliefs based on the Buddhist perspective, including the core features, attitudes, and modes of inquiry.

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<sup>237</sup> In a reversal of speculations, the four noble truths are from seeing things as they are (*yathābhūta ñāṇadassana*) for knowledge and tranquility. *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*, S v 42 -423

<sup>238</sup> Bodhi, *Buddha and His Dhamma*, 11.

## Negation: (*Na*, *Mā*)<sup>239</sup> Un-Equivalence of Experiential Investigation

The Buddhist belief is often depicted as confidence under various degrees of understanding to achieve liberation as the final goal.<sup>240</sup> To this extent, suspending beliefs is articulated as an intellectual inquiry to testify beliefs and imply the mental attitude to abandon all justification for peace of mind. In the Buddhist view, belief must have some evidence and proof of examining any claims. The great numbers of Buddhist discourses provide a significant clue that the Buddhist theoretical view is identified distinctively to dogmatic beliefs and extreme practices. Indeed, Buddhism originates from the Indian tradition, but teachings are uniquely different from Vedic tradition. The Buddhist view is classified by the Noble One or noble persons (*ariya-puggala*) tied to the noble truths (*ariya-sacca*).<sup>241</sup> In *Ariyapariyesana Sutta*, the Buddha's achievement has described in terms of the noble search, experience, and realization due to cessation of suffering.<sup>242</sup> Nobility is implied into the middle path, including moral conduct and spiritual inquiries, and the ability to achieve the state of noble ones, such as the mental state of un-disturbance. In this case, the nobility is mentioned as noble search (*ariya-pariyesana*), noble truths (*ariya-sacca*), noble teaching, and disciplines (*ariya-dhamma-vinaya*), and noble path for practice. Briefly, this notion is based on the Buddha's own experience of enlightenment<sup>243</sup> abandoning self-identity view (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*), doubt, (*vicikicchā*), attachment to rituals and vows (*sīlabata-parāmāsa*), sense-desire (*kāma-chanda*), ill-will

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<sup>239</sup> They are used to indicate the opposite of meanings, negatives forms, and function as a separate opponent. In this case, they are used in refutation to avoid misunderstanding and introduce the new idea that is not equivalent to those extremes or dogmatic beliefs. Davids, and Stede, *Pali-English Dictionary*, 1.

<sup>240</sup> Things are to be realized through the insight investigation. Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 154.

<sup>241</sup> *Ariya*: noble, holy, pure, not ordinary; the Buddha redefines it with the teachings and practices relating to liberation, such as the noble truth (*ariya-sacca*), a noble person who has reached freedom. Davids, and Stede, *Pali-English Dictionary*, 75.

<sup>242</sup> Anderson, *Pain and Its Ending*, 72.

<sup>243</sup> Bodhi, *Buddha and His Dhamma*, 1.

(*vyāpāda*).<sup>244</sup> Thus, the Buddha provides the noble account of his search experienced distinctively between the nobles and other beliefs. These teachings are characterized by *nibbāna* as the main components of being noble or having a vision and wisdom.

Moreover, the Buddha entreated beliefs with the nobility described by the notion of self-negation or non-self and tranquility.<sup>245</sup> For undetermined questions, the noble silence that the Buddha put aside the metaphysical questions. McEvilley interpreted it as “the source-form of the Buddhist dialectic” that represented not only non-propositional standpoint in extremes; either affirmative mode (*modus ponens*) or objective mode (*modus tollens*).<sup>246</sup> Indeed, the middle path reveals “the dichotomy-and-dilemma” of the previous beliefs and practices following *nibbāna* for inner peace (*nibbāna*).<sup>247</sup> Holmes recognized the Buddha as an agnostic regarding the metaphysic dilemma of equal indifference of all answers of solving the ultimate problems, either rejecting or affirming existence. The Buddha remarked that dogmatic beliefs and speculations were inapplicable to ending suffering.<sup>248</sup> Hence, suspending belief presents an unequivocal mode of believing that either true or false claim cannot hold the truth of things. However, it is justifiable with a new vision of seeing things as they are by nature. In the metaphor of footprints, the enormous footprints refer to various kinds of elephants; the problem is seeing that footprint is not equivalent to seeing those real elephants. To this extent, the elites who were convinced by debating and teaching are not equal to having one own

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<sup>244</sup> Mahā Mālukayāputta Sutta; M 2.2.4

<sup>245</sup> Joshi, *Brahmanism, Buddhism and Hinduism*, 6.

<sup>246</sup> Elio, “Belief Change as Propositional Update,” 429. Belief is a proposition of truth or falsehood. To this extent, the Buddhist view of beliefs is justified with the whole vision of things, but it does not hold any dogmatic claim about things. In the analogy of blind men and footprints, the Buddhist view and the Buddha’s experience are described without grasping things but realizing the whole vision of things as they have come to be by their conditions.

<sup>247</sup> McEvilley, *Shape of Ancient Thought*, 412–14.

<sup>248</sup> Holmes, *Creed of Buddha*, 170–71.

practice and experience to achieve the vision of dhammā as the penetration of views (*diṭṭhi*).

Therefore, those teachings have conveyed the noble modes distinctive to the rival beliefs and claims. In the Buddhist search for truth, suspending beliefs is a task of abandonment to let go of the wrong views for understanding beyond any extreme view and opinion for the final goal of a peaceful mind. In addition, Bhikkhu Bodhi points out that the penetration of the Four Noble Truths is an immutable advance of the nobility as the modes of inquiry to deal with extreme views or beliefs and to stay progress toward the goal.<sup>249</sup>

In sum, the noble ways of Buddhist guidance in this case: “*Dhamma-Vinaya*” is laid out distinctively incomparable to the mainstream and does make different approaches and consequences in pursuing the mental state of calms and the moral conducts by which its aim to challenge other opponents<sup>250</sup> such as Vedic tradition and Śramaṇa tradition as well as to treat the wrong views of world-affirmation and world-rejection using the four noble truth; *dukkhā* by understanding, by abandoning (*samudaya*), by realization (*nirodha*), and by cultivation (*magga*).<sup>251</sup> Gombrich mentions that the noble way is not associated with any beliefs of affirmation and rejection of existence in an ontological approach.<sup>252</sup>

According to *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*,<sup>253</sup> the discourse on the setting in motion of the wheel of the basic pattern: the four actual realities for the spiritually

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<sup>249</sup> Bodhi, *Buddha and His Dhamma*, 13.

<sup>250</sup> Nauriyal, Drummond, and Lal, *Buddhist Thought*, 252.

<sup>251</sup> “*Taṃ kho panidaṃ dukkhaṃ ariyasaccaṃ pariññānti ...dukkhasamudayo ariyasaccaṃ pahātabbanti ...dukkhanirodho ariyasaccaṃ sacchikātabbanti ...dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā ariyasaccaṃ bhāvetabbanti.*” *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*, SN V 422

<sup>252</sup> Gombrich, *Theravada Buddhism*, 61.

<sup>253</sup> Thanissaro Bhikkhu. *Access to Insight*, 12 February 2011.

ennobled ones, the Buddha showed the path of renunciation “*pabbajita*” based on the middle path (*majjhimā paṭipadā*) that did not have many features in common with two extremes; (1) a sensual pleasure regarding sensual objects: base, vulgar, common, ignoble, unprofitable; and (2) a self-affliction: painful, ignoble, unprofitable. Otherwise, the Tathagata’s middle way produces vision, knowledge and leads to calm, direct knowledge, self-awakening, and unbinding.<sup>254</sup> To this extent, the Buddha expounded on the middle path as the specific criterion of training in the developments of ethical conduct (*śīla-bhāvanā*), mental discipline (*samādhi-bhāvanā*) and wisdom (*paññā-bhāvanā*). On this path of training, he achieved the liberation.

In detail, the four noble truths, on the one hand, are considered to be the Buddha’s vision, understanding, and wisdom that have never been found before in the other traditions, so they are legitimately from the Buddha’s experiences.<sup>255</sup> In other words, they are the psychological diagnostic method that suffering is a struggle phenomenon, and it is verified by the complete understanding (*pariññā*), by abandoning (*pahāna*) its cause, and by the realization (*sacchikiriya*) its extinction, and by the developing (*bhāvanā*) of its cessation.<sup>256</sup> Notably, this sutta describes the knowledge of the truth (*sacca-ñāna*)<sup>257</sup> as the result of Buddha’s experience, which the first *Kondañña* who is known for himself. However, *sacca* is not entirely equivalent to the truth, only accurate facts, statements, and arguments. It includes practice and training, such as abandoning craving or suspending extreme beliefs. According to the path of enlightenment, direct knowledge consists of

<sup>254</sup> “*ubho ante anupagamma majjhimā paṭipadā tathāgatena abhisambuddhā cakkhukaraṇī ñāṇakaraṇī upasamāya abhiññāya sambodhāya nibbānāya saṃvattati.*” S.v. 1081.240

<sup>255</sup> “*Idaṃ dukkhaṃ ariyasacca ’nti, bhikkhave, tathāgatānaṃ pubbe ananussutesu dhammesu cakkhuṃ udapādi, ñāṇaṃ udapādi, paññā udapādi, vijjā udapādi, āloko udapādi.*” *Tathāgata Sutta*, SN 45.139

<sup>256</sup> Phra Thepwethi and Olson, *Buddhadhamma*, 182.

<sup>257</sup> Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 151–52.

understanding and penetration in realizing suffering from an empirical perspective by changing perspective and knowledge regardless of the extremes. Therefore, this kind of knowledge is not from old tradition, hearsay, and scripture but understanding by one own experience of the path of purification.

According to *Anattalakkhana Sutta*,<sup>258</sup> the discourse on the not-self characteristic, the Buddha discusses this topic with five brethren (*pañcavaggi*) that form, feeling, perception, mental fabrications, and consciousness are not self because they are inconstant, stressful, subjects to change, and uncontrollable, but reflect the state of mind at the moment in past, present, and future. At the end of the discussion, the group of five ascetics has achieved full knowledge abandoning all wrong views (*micchā-ditthi*) neither the annihilation-view (*uccheda-ditthi*) and the eternity-view (*sassata-ditthi*). Therefore, the act of suspension relies upon the purification that requires rejection of presumption based on any extreme beliefs. Otherwise, self-realization reveals even the fundamental understanding to penetrate and see oneself as a mental and conscious phenomenon. As the Buddha asserted nothing in the following:

Citta, these are the world's designations, the world's expressions, the world's ways of speaking, the world's descriptions, with which the Tathagata expresses himself but without grasping.<sup>259</sup>

According to *Pasādika Sutta*,<sup>260</sup> the Buddha described what he did not answer for an inappropriate question that assumes from a dogmatic belief and speculation. He gave the guideline for a question (*Pañhābyākaraṇa*) that associates with present time, truth, reality, and benefit. He also declared himself as *dhamma-vādī* and one who would answer based on those conditions. Some question assumes from an ontological category, an

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<sup>258</sup> Thanissaro Bhikkhu. Access to Insight, 29 June 2010. *Pañcavaggi Sutta*, S.iii.66

<sup>259</sup> *Potthapada Sutta*, DN 9

<sup>260</sup> *Pāsādika Sutta*, DN 29



existential view, and a metaphysical hypothesis. Otherwise, he gives no answer (*Abyākata karaṇa*) for undetermined questions that proclaim a definite answer proclaiming this alone is accurate, and any other is absurd. Therefore, the Buddha is willing to explain the topic about the four noble truths starting from suffering until its end. Thus, the practical experience is verified by knowledge in the path of liberation. Indeed, the Buddha describes the awareness of mindfulness (*sati-upatthāna*); the contemplation of physical, feeling, mental, and phenomenon. In an empirical criterion, consciousness and phenomenon appear beyond the views of acquiring self in the past and future. For insight, phenomena are expected to be seen based on the dependent origination (*paticca-samuppāda*) providing the model for the descriptive experience, so one can investigate to see things based on those conditions rather than grasping things as such.

In analysis, the *Dhamma* as a path to spiritual emancipation reveals the whole aspect of suffering, straightforward observation. To see or understand the *Dhamma* as the right view is to liberate the mind from suffering and penetrate the view of non-self based on the co-arisen condition. In contrast, the extreme point of view claims the only truth but blames others. Having the right direction is to let go of any assertion and search and see things as they are. Therefore, for suspending beliefs, the *Dhamma* requires mindfulness training to experience and achieve the final goal, not by tradition, authority, scripture, and speculation, but by the experiential investigation.

Several suttas show that Buddhist disciples, monastics, and laypeople who had their visions were not believers, so they did not accept teachings by faith. The discourse

such as *Maha-satipatthana Sutta*<sup>261</sup> provides training criteria for “the realization of unbinding” and abandoning defilements. Clinging to substance was due to suspending belief in clinging things, neither pleasure nor pain, in continuing to search and see them as phenomena. This gratitude is dealing nothing to believe but being experienced for oneself. Therefore, the noble path is the primary instrument to create wisdom from the spiritual experience. The Buddha disclosed the *Dhamma* as the path of training. The suspension of belief can be interpreted and endorsed as an instrument or means to achieve the goal. For this purpose, the *Dhamma* is like a raft for crossing over a river; no one carries it anymore, so having held the definite view of self is impossible. Because having known thing as it appears is out of tradition, scripture, gesture, and speculation, it must be entirely from the experiential knowledge. Thus, the suspension category can be used to verify and approach any belief, either holding as the definite view or rejecting other beliefs.

In this case, the suspension of belief crucially provides some sense of 'let go' or leaving behind a false view or ignorance about self. Without holding any view, a seeker can follow teaching (*Dhamma*), well proclaimed, (*Svakkhato*), testable (to be seen for oneself; *Sanditthigo*), anytime (*Akaligo*) for inviting of inspection (*Ahipassiko*), be known individually by the wise (*Paccatam veditabbo vinnuhi*). The *Dhamma* as the suspension of belief is an approach without accepting an absolute belief. Otherwise, rejecting belief or absolute claim limits a chance to gain knowledge regardless of others. Therefore, the middle way is to refrain from extremes but to approach any possible way to understand things as they are; thus, the *Dhamma* utilizes all human faculty to achieve enlightenment as the end of suffering.

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<sup>261</sup> DN 22

## Equanimity (*Upekkhā-Sambojjhanga*)

In general, belief is a mental attitude of holding some sorts of claim that statement or proposition of things is believed to be true or truth-claim.<sup>262</sup> In Buddhist discourses, view or opinion (*diṭṭhi*)<sup>263</sup> is often used to define what reality is or is believed to be true which has related a truth-claim or standpoint (*vāda*) in projecting what really is in the nature. Having a belief refers to whatever people take to be the case or regard it as true. Hence, a belief represents a personal attitude in an account of holding a substantial entity as “mine”, “I”, and “myself.”<sup>264</sup> As a matter of abandoning, the wrong attitude is released through the insight experience to realize things as phenomena through the sensory perceptions. In short, renunciation is to abandon the fabrication of self or substance, leading to the awareness of all defilements. Particularly nibbāna as the goal of liberation that does require to purify the mind or to acquire the mental state of mind detaching from any attachments briefly the five aggregates of grasping or personality factors.<sup>265</sup> Hence the mental state of abandoning could not be asserted or detected with any fabrication or description of being existing or non-existing. The position with regard to the mental tendency toward the extremes of philosophical speculation is to be remained neutral regardless any views neither affirmative nor negative inclination but as it appears by nature.

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<sup>262</sup> Bennett, *Logically Fallacious*, 5. *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, s.v. “Belief.”

<sup>263</sup> In Indian beliefs, view (*dr̥ṣṭi*) is an attitude associating with the truth-claim and formulation of truth. Allen, “Phenomenology of Religion,” 2425.

<sup>264</sup> “*etaṃ mama, eso haṃasmī, eso me attā*,” *Pañcavaggi Sutta*, S iii 66

<sup>265</sup> In the Buddhist view, the five aggregates of grasping are impermanent, unsatisfactory, and non-self. For grasping nothing, the awakened mind leaves no traces to identify in the position of existence or non-existence. SN 22.86

In general, the Buddhist perspective of abandon seems to be a far cry from eternalists or nihilists who either accept or deny things such as self as well as “a product of grasping.”<sup>266</sup> Therefore this mental state is acquired suspension of belief in order to achieve the enlightenment namely the factors of enlightenment (*bojjhanga*)<sup>267</sup> in this case equanimity (*upekkhā-sambojjhanga*). In practical emphasis, Mahasi Sayadaw described those factors as the mental conditions and the constituents of awakening as well as they are subjects to the enlightenment.<sup>268</sup> Indeed, this qualification of the mind does imply by means of the four foundations of mindfulness (*satipatthāna*) including contemplating the body (*kāya*), feeling (*vedanā*), mind (*citta*) and mind-objects (*dhammā*) with strenuous, clearly-conscious, mindful, which would release from worldly greed and grief.<sup>269</sup> In order to reach complete perfection, one must develop the factors of enlightenment; mindfulness (*sati-sambojjhanga*), investigation of the law (*dhamma-vicaya*), energy (*viriya*), joy or rapture (*pīti*), tranquillity (*passaddhi*), concentration (*samādhi*), and equanimity (*upekkhā*).<sup>270</sup> In the case of psysical-psychological investigation of phenomena, equanimity (*upekkhā*) comes to play a significant role not only to observe things as formations<sup>271</sup> for understanding but also to penetrate in braking up of formations for deliverance of grasping as such.

In addition, Mahasi Sayadaw explains “Equanimity about Formations” that it is to abandon neither delight nor craving nor hate with regard to any object but to acquire nothing instead the pure realization in accordance with “equable vision” and “neutral

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<sup>266</sup> Nauriyal, Drummond, and Lal, *Buddhist Thought*, 257.

<sup>267</sup> Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 35–36.

<sup>268</sup> Sayadaw, “Requisites of Enlightenment,” 47.

<sup>269</sup> M 118

<sup>270</sup> Satipatthana Sutta, M I 55.

<sup>271</sup> Sobhana, *Progress of Insight through the Stages of Purification*, 21.

state” toward things as formations that present their nature of arising and passing away.<sup>272</sup>

In the sense of looking on things that appear either arising or passing with the neutral attitude of disinterestedness in feeling which is neither pain nor pleasure, is the mental ability of awakening in the phenomenal processes tendency toward grasping (*upanana*) things as an artificial essence of “one’s self”.<sup>273</sup> To this extent, the Buddha described the abandonment of mental attitude in attached things neither delight nor depress of a monk who has released and dwelled with equanimity, mindfulness, and comprehension<sup>274</sup> in looking upon phenomena in sensories of experiences such as seeing. In reversing tendency of clinging, the mindfulness does not either construct things by means of extreme existent view or reduce things by means of extreme non-existent view but does insightful to unfold things as they are in accordance with abandoning of those causes neither craving nor attachments.

Therefore, suspending belief is basically embraced an attitude of equanimity (*upekkhā-sambojjhanga*) to experience things without assertion for releasing and understanding as the subjective experience. There were various realms of equanimity expressing the mental attitude toward the world and renunciation including worldly types of equanimity (*gehasitā upekkhā*) to diverse clings such as form, non-worldly to single clinging such as concentration (*nekkhammasitā upekkhā*), and equanimity of abandoning what “made of that” (*nissāya atammayataṃ*).<sup>275</sup> Thus the mental attitude toward things are purely and causally originated phenomena nothing neither “I” nor “mine” nor

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<sup>272</sup> Ibid., 22-23.

<sup>273</sup> Nariyal, Drummond, and Lal, *Buddhist Thought*, 256–57.

<sup>274</sup> “*vimuttacittassa...satatavihārā adhigatā honti. So cakkhunā rūpaṃ disvā neva sumano hoti na dummano; upekkhako viharati sato sampajāno.*” *Vappa Sutta*, A ii.196.

<sup>275</sup> *Salayatana-vibhanga Sutta: An Analysis of the Six Sense-media*, M iii 215

“me.”<sup>276</sup> Abandonment mental attitude is manifested as to live “freely without clinging to enythings in the world.”<sup>277</sup>

The result of renunciation is be interpreted as an unveiling or reversing attitude of grasping nothing with “bare attention”<sup>278</sup> of seeing things without fabrication and speculation. It is to see things with the complete awareness by means of dependence co-ordination. According to the awareness of mindfulness (*sati-upatthāna*),<sup>279</sup> practising the contemplation of body, feeling, mind, and mind-objects (*kāyā-vedanā-cittā-dhammā-nupassanā*) is to see things as they appear in their true nature as bare phenomena (*suddha-dhammā*) noticing without gasping on detail and the mental attitude of detachment and disturbances neither the external ones or the interal states facing the rise and fall (*udayabbaya*) of the occurrence by the reflection on briefly selflessness which is inclined to giveup any attachments for dispassion (*virāga*).<sup>280</sup> In addition, Soma Mahathera concludes that the “detached attitude” of equanimity is the state of freedom from attaction and repulsion toward being existence neither self, nor soul, nor substantial things.<sup>281</sup> Hence, unfolding things by means of abandoning craving and attachments is as part of the investigation and the mental method to deal with belief and to achieve the enlightenment. Apparently reversing that attitude of grasping in *Bāhiya Sutta* is given to

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<sup>276</sup> “*Sabbaloke ca atammayo bhavissāmi, ahaṅkāra ca me uparujjhissanti, mamaṅkāra ca me uparujjhissanti, asādhāraṇena ca ñāṇena samannāgato bhavissāmi, hetu ca me sudiṭṭho bhavissati, hetusamuppannā ca dhammā.*” *Atammaya Sutta*, A III.104

<sup>277</sup> “*na ca kiñci loke upādiyati*” *Samugghātasārappa Sutta*, S IV

<sup>278</sup> Nyanaponika defines it as the mindfulness in practice that reflects the thought process in the cultivation of mindfulness for the unfolding things as they are arising and falling away to deliberate the mind for inner peace. Nyanaponika, *Power of Mindfulness*, 3–4.

<sup>279</sup> “*ime cattāro satipatṭhāne evaṃ bhāveyya sattāhaṃ, tassa dvinnam phalānam aññataram phalam pātikaṅkham diṭṭheva dhamme aññā sati vā upādisese anāgāmitā ti.*” M i 55

<sup>280</sup> Nyanaponika, *Power of Mindfulness*, 12–13.

<sup>281</sup> Soma, *Way of Mindfulness*, 15.

train the mind to observe in the sense-experience things as they are without grasping or clinging anything. The training is given as the following:

In reference to the heard, only the heard. In reference to the sensed, only the sensed. In reference to the cognized, only the cognized. That is how you should train yourself. When for you there will be only the seen in reference to the seen, only the heard in reference to the heard, only the sensed in reference to the sensed, only the cognized in reference to the cognized, then, Bāhiya, there is no you in connection with that. When there is no you in connection with that, there is no you there. When there is no you there, you are neither here nor yonder nor between the two. This, just this, is the end of stress.<sup>282</sup>

In spite of the sense-experience, the knowledge of awakening could not be seen in reference of things neither form nor formless nor mentality nor corporeality (*nāma-rūpa*). Thus, self is related to grasping things beyond evidence. Hence the cessation of suffering cannot be defined by means of philosophical speculation and metaphysical substantiality but the phenomenal process of things as they have come to be. In sum, the observation of self is to look things as all formation in accordance with the dependence co-ordination. Particularly the Buddha is said to experience as well as to describe as part of the key factors of enlightenment (*ojjhanga*) that leads to enlightenment.<sup>283</sup> Therefore, the explaining all empirical phenomena and all mental events are the main part of Buddhist perspective as well as the descriptive experience aiming liberation which was an existential vision of seeing things neither assuming from essentialism nor nihilism.<sup>284</sup>

In the case of belief, Buddhist teachings are mainly the direct experience of wisdom rather than accepted by faith and reason. In suspending faith or judgment, withholding any assertion is the key to balancing all formation equilibrium for observing

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<sup>282</sup> “*diṭṭhe diṭṭhamattaṃ bhavissati, sute sutamattaṃ bhavissati, mute mutamattaṃ bhavissati, viññāte viññātamattaṃ bhavissati, tato tvaṃ, bāhiya, na tena; yato tvaṃ, bāhiya, na tena tato tvaṃ, bāhiya, na tattha ; yato tvaṃ, bāhiya, na tattha, tato tvaṃ, bāhiya, nevidha na huraṃ na ubhayamantarena. Esevanto dukkhassā ti.*” Ud 1.10

<sup>283</sup> *Bojjhanga Samyutta*, S. XLVI

<sup>284</sup> Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began*, 4–5.

things by nature. In the mental observation, Nyanaponika mentions the mindfulness<sup>285</sup> that that it does possess and affect the mental attitude in realizing things as all formations for “stilling (*vūpasamo*) and stopping (*nirodha*)” that imply through *Nibbana* referring to “the end of things” or “stilling of formations” (*saṅkhārānaṃ vūpasamo*). Therefore, mindfulness is to contemplate things in the world of phenomena with a detachment by grasping nothing, neither affirmation nor rejection but watching things as they are by their aspects and conditions. The attitude toward beliefs is embodied by equanimity (*upekkhā-sambojjhanga*) to experience things without assertion in extreme beliefs and judgments good or bad, neither good nor bad, pleasant or unpleasant neither pleasant nor unpleasant, and right or wrong, neither right nor wrong<sup>286</sup> but observing with the equilibrium of formation in accordance with the dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*). All phenomena such as things<sup>287</sup>, formations (*saṅkhārā*), world (*loka*), and personal identity can be identified in terms of dhamma which is perceived by means of experiences in the Buddhist guide leading to penetration and enlightenment as the ending; the way out of suffering. Particularly self and world is considered to be an existence of experiences which could not view as self or “I” or “mine”.

However, the Buddhist tenets show neither an individual existence nor substantial eternity. Nyanatiloka pointed it as “*a mere process of physical and mental phenomena*” which is believed to be self or grasped as “ego-entity” or merely an illusion-atta. Hence it is so-called as the five aggregates of existence (*khandhas*). On one hand, the extremes

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<sup>285</sup> Nyanaponika, *Power of Mindfulness*, 14.

<sup>286</sup> Things (*dhammā*); compounds, conditions (*sankhata*) such as formation (*saṅkhārā*) can be classified in good or bad, neither good nor bad (*kusalā dhammā, akusalā dhammā, abyākatā dhammā*). Taylor, *Patisambhidamagga*, 104.

<sup>287</sup> All phenomena are described in the dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) that “when this is, that is. from the arising of this comes the arising of that” (*Iti imasmiṃ sati idaṃ hoti, imassuppādā idaṃ uppajjati*). Ud 1



could project their beliefs based on eternitistic view or nihilistic view by means of either sensual enjoyment or bodily mortification. On the other hand, the Buddhist path of enlightenment described nothing designate to an absolute ego-entity as soul, *atta* instead of “*a changing combination of physical and mental phenomena*”<sup>288</sup> which can be understood by means of the dependent origination (*paticca-samuppāda*). Therefore the attitude toward things is to be seen as new vision in observing of the processes of continuum of psychophysical equilibrium.<sup>289</sup>

### **Thorough Investigation (*Vicaya-Sambojjhanga*)**

In ancient India tradition, the philosophical speculation was in common to investigate what things really are in the nature (*dhama*); by contrast the Buddhist method seems to be the medical diagnostic method to overcome such as doubt with requires a process of investigation and scrutiny namely thorough investigation (*vicaya-sambojjhanga*). Hence to see things as they are must require with investigation of the law (*dhamma-vicaya-sambojjhanga*), the serious manner of investigation can be employed to see things by revealing fabrication in grasping things as such in terms of essence or substance entities. By means of appearance, this examine does penetrate any clinging of by means of empty and without any substantial entities neither form or formless. For instance, a great ball of foam, a bubble in the heavy rain of autumn, a mirage quivers, at midday, a giant young banana tree, an illusionist or his apprentice appear to have an essence or things behind those things but they were considered to be empty and non-essence as well as all from feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness were turnout to be nothing other than all formations or conditions (*saṅkhārānaṃ*).

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<sup>288</sup> Sobhana, *Progress of Insight through the Stages of Purification*, 10.

<sup>289</sup> Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began*, 37.

In the caution of faith or belief that this conscious state is associated with knowledge by way of perceiving things as they are based upon actuality which manifests the nature, function, characteristic and so on. As Soma described as the “correct reflection”,<sup>290</sup> which the equation of inclining factors of enlightenment could not achieve by means of each factor but the whole process of perceiving and understanding things as they come to be in nature. This state of conscious is objectively reflected by the phenomenal nature of things rather than beliefs or faith. In this sense, it can be called as the state of synthesis and analysis things by means of purely investigation to examine things based on their conditions to develop the way of insightfulness.

According to *Mahāsatipatthāna Sutta*, the Buddha describes the thorough investigation (*vicaya-sambojjhanga*) as the main components of the foundation of mindfulness. In the path of knowing, whatever is arising and passing away cannot be grasped in a certain way, but letting go of things leads to freedom from disturbance. Actually the way to see things as they are (*yathābhūta ñānadassana*) is referred into the mental process of thorough investigation of knowing (*janam*) that or seeing things as phenomena indicating nothing neither self nor substantial essence nor absolute entity but pure reflection of neutral events either physical or mental appearances as the following:

When the enlightenment-factor of the investigation of mental objects is present, the monk knows, “The enlightenment-factor of the investigation of mental objects is in me”; when the enlightenment-factor of the investigation of mental objects is absent, he knows, “The enlightenment-factor of the investigation of mental objects is not in me”; and he knows how the arising of the non-arisen enlightenment-factor of the investigation of mental objects comes to be, and how perfection in the development of the arisen enlightenment-factor of the investigation of mental objects comes to be.<sup>291</sup>

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<sup>290</sup> Soma, *Way of Mindfulness*, 136.

<sup>291</sup> D ii 290, M i 55

In the process of training for insight, the thorough investigation is a mental ability to examine and to see all things either inside or outside, physical or mental appearance as phenomena by means of their origination and causation that are appearing and falling with complete mindfulness of the present without clinging neither craving nor grasping things in the world. This mental exercise is aiming for penetration or breakthrough any clingings and to see things as they are through all phenomena which are absented of “I” or “mind” or “self” appearing mentally associated with consciousness as simply as flowing of physical and mental phenomena. Therefore, it is considered to be “the raising of the knowledge of the rise and fall of phenomena.”<sup>292</sup>

In scientific investigation of the modern scholars, the Buddhist doctrines of rebirth can be interpreted as a subject of investigation that the empirical evidences are welcomed to draw the relation between two case of birth in the timeline that one could be identified and resembled to other with really closed assumption. According to Jayatilleke’s explanation<sup>293</sup> he pointed out that the Buddhist doctrine would be stood up as “the most plausible hypothesis” to account for the empirical examination. Hence the Buddhist view or guideline is considered to be subjected to experimental investigation which is required neither proof nor disproof by means of mere faith but by means of an empirical investigation that wises would see for themselves (*paccattam vedītabbo viññūhī*).<sup>294</sup> In examining of beliefs or religio-philosophical theories, the Buddha is said to recommend thorough investigation all of them including the Buddhist teaching in accordance to preserve the truth or to maintain the way of course with neither accepting

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<sup>292</sup> Soma, *Way of Mindfulness*, 134.

<sup>293</sup> Jayatilleke, *Buddhist Attitude to Other Religions*, 16.

<sup>294</sup> “*sandiṭṭhiko dhammo sandiṭṭhiko dhammo ’ti, bho gotama, vuccati. Kittāvatā nu kho, bho gotama, sandiṭṭhiko dhammo hoti akāliko ehipassiko opaneyyiko paccattam vedītabbo viññūhī ti.*” A i

nor rejecting but putting on trial to examine without prejudices neither accepting nor rejecting by likeness (*chanda*), aversion (*dosa*), delusion (*moha*), and fear (*bhaya*) which are made the ways of going off course.<sup>295</sup>

However, the Buddhist perspective emphasizes the experience of the world or things as a flowing flux of phenomena; knowledge through direct experience is comparable to the search for the final liberation (*nibbana*).<sup>296</sup> However, the way of mindfulness is designed for the achievement of inner freedom or the unshakable deliverance of the mind from fabricating of all phenomena and grasping certain information as such. To penetrate those clings things as such does require the thorough investigation to hold back any beliefs, views, and judgments in any sense of self or substantial entity for realization on observing process of seeing as pure phenomena. If life as we experience it, three hallmarks is the phenomenal existence that it is impermanent (*anicca*), unsatisfactory (*dukkha*) and not the 'self' (*anatta*) in which is opposite to 'self' (atman) as well as universal self (*Brāhman*). In addition, it was given by the Buddha to *Bāhiya* to train himself that "in the seen will be merely what is seen; in the heard will be merely what is heard; in the sensed will be merely what is sensed; in the cognized will be merely what is cognized."<sup>297</sup> In practice of training the mind, mindfulness is the main concern to bear attention on all phenomena which an absent of self or permanent entity is a corner stone of investigation and reflection aiming for the end of stress. It is well known as the recognition of selflessness which will gradually

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<sup>295</sup> "Chandā dosā bhayā mohā, yo dhammaṃ ativattati; Nihīyati tassa yaso, kālapakkheva candimā' 'ti. sattamaṃ." The unstable mindsets (four agati) are not reliable to preserve the truth. A.IV.17

<sup>296</sup> "imasmiṃyeva byāmaṃte kaḷevare sasaññimhi samanake lokaṇca paññāpemi lokasamudayaṇca lokanirodhaṇca lokanirodhagāminiṇca paṭipada' 'nti." Rohitassa Sutta, A ii 47

<sup>297</sup> "diṭṭhe diṭṭhamattaṃ bhavissati, sute sutamattaṃ bhavissati, mute mutamattaṃ bhavissati, viññāte viññātamattaṃ bhavissati' 'ti." Ud 6

create the optimal conditions for cultivation of mindfulness toward the path of awakening. Even in everyday sensory experience that is said to realize by the Buddha as the recognition of selflessness to suspend any beliefs or views neither true nor false for tranquility.<sup>298</sup>

Moreover, Jayatilleke describes the Buddhist mode of investigation as the “critical outlook” of Buddhist tenets that the Buddha is said to recommend an experimental investigation to test all beliefs and practices in order to see the truth rather than grasping the only truth.<sup>299</sup> On one hand, dharma is a set of truths and as such is abstract and eternal like all truth in explaining all empirical phenomena and all mental events. On the other hand, the truth as his discovered as the truth of the dharma that aims for liberation from rebirth or an empirical existence as his mentioned as the liberation flavor as well as salty flavor of the sea. Therefore his teaching as the truth that is not essentialism but only his teaching was that he had experienced its truth himself.<sup>300</sup> Therefore, justification of experience resulting from the enlightenment by reason or proofs through speculation or beliefs is considered useless instead of understanding.

### **Abandoning: Non-Clinging and Avoiding Extremes**

In practice, abandoning is crucial to the mental state of deliverance; whatever arises and passes away reveals the natural events of physical and mental appearance without clinging and judgments. There is nothing as the identity of self or substance but the imprints or reflections of phenomena. In realization, renunciation is the Buddhist

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<sup>298</sup> “*Yam kiñci diṭṭhaṃva sutaṃ mutaṃ vā, Ajjhosiṭaṃ saccamutaṃ paresaṃ; Na tesu tādī sayasaṃvutesu, Saccam musā vāpi paraṃ daheyya.*” A II.24

<sup>299</sup> Dogmatic views or beliefs claim the only truth that is tolerance to other possibilities in process of searching.

<sup>300</sup> Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began*, 4–5.

guide for the practice of insight observation in which the cessation of suffering does require abandoning defilements and cravings.<sup>301</sup> Briefly, the Buddha concludes that his enlightenment did not hold any mental object of existence and non-existence but mindfulness with knowledge of renunciation or grasping nothing in the world.<sup>302</sup>

In abandoning dogmatic beliefs and views, the Buddha appealed those views through personal experience and examination, aiming for understanding and realization. Indeed, all beliefs or claims are subjected to doubt and examine by the guideline toward *Nibbana*. In *Aggi-Vacchagotta Sutta*, the Buddha referred to those views as

A thicket of views, a wilderness of views, a contortion of views, a writhing of views, a fetter of views in which are accompanied by suffering...it does not lead...to calm, direct knowledge, full Awakening, Unbinding.<sup>303</sup>

Indeed, dogmatic beliefs and claims are originated from eternalism and annihilationism.<sup>304</sup> Brāhmans and Smanas are trapped and dogmatized through speculation. Nevertheless, they did not expound those views using dependent origination to liberate the mind from grasping as self or substantial entity.<sup>305</sup>

According to the path of liberation, the Buddha mentioned his teachings (*Dhamma*) as the holy life (*brahmacariya*), which applied to the sense of virtue or practical guideline for the cessation of suffering. Hence, the practical guidance does not aim to convert, convince, debate, and claim the truth but to abandon and discernment.<sup>306</sup> In detail, the Buddha declared that “truth is one and there is no second” (*ekam hi saccam*

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<sup>301</sup> Buswell, *Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha*, 84.

<sup>302</sup> “yāvadeva ñāṇamattāya paṭissatimattāya anissito ca viharati, na ca kiñci loke upādiyati.” M i 55

<sup>303</sup> M i 483.189

<sup>304</sup> The closed-end questions confirm (yes) or reject (no) the assumption that there is self or no-self. The claims of existence and non-existence determine the answers. SN 44.10

<sup>305</sup> Harvey, *Selfless Mind*, 239. *Alagaddupama Sutta* presents the perfected being (*tathagata*) that cannot be identified with clinging to views (*ditthi*) as self or substantial being but appears following co-arising factors. M I 140

<sup>306</sup> A II.25

*na dutiyam atthi*). Second, it was necessary to prevent this truth from deteriorating into absolute truth. As the dogmatic statement asserts that “this alone is true, everything else is false’ (*idam eva saccam mohgam annam*).

However, the Buddha’s statement of truth or reality is different that “this is true” (*idam saccam*) from that “this alone is true” (*idam eva saccam*). To this extent, “this” (*idam*) does emphasize the particular or the individual that could be taken individually in demonstrative statements. Therefore, “this alone is true” asserts an essential truth isolating experience from anything else but determining the absolute truths or claims. In this sense, it refers to an immediate impression exclusively from experiences and pure perception.<sup>307</sup> The pre-Buddhist Indian philosophers assume that neither perception nor conception is as pure. Buddha’s concern of truth (*sacca*) is understood as the condition of things but not a dichotomy as the absolutistic true or false. The truth represents things under conditions related to others with possible and confusing explanations. Things are not only true or false but by their relations with proper understanding or confusion. The Buddha refers to the truth as things under conditions with appropriate reflection and insight, unlike confusion (*musa*) and wrong (*kali*) of grasping things in an absolute manner.<sup>308</sup>

Even though the Buddhist views of changing phenomena and the contradiction of things are related to the Upanisadic belief, the Buddha did not accept the essence and absolute reality that the world is determinable with existence or non-existence dichotomy. But things are relevant by dependent origination. In Brāhmanical thought, the world is

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<sup>307</sup> Kalupahana, *A History of Buddhist Philosophy*, 46.

<sup>308</sup> Kalupahana, 47.

classified by essences. In a definite sense, Dharma in the singular means as knowable knowledge of ultimate reality. In the same context, the original Buddhist Dharma accounts for experience and descriptive phenomena of things that appear to a human perspective, which refers to thought contents; objective and subjective phenomena.<sup>309</sup> Harvey called the “empirical self” or “not-self phenomena” that the metaphysical self or “I-ness” was not found, so belief or view of self must be abandoned. Hence abandoning of self is recognized in the non-attachment view.<sup>310</sup>

The knowledge of seeing things as they are (*yathābhūta ñānadassana*) does have nothing in common with extremes that have perceived things in a tendency toward self or no self or not-self or others behind all phenomena. Thus, this perception of conscious deliberation is to realize everything without clinging to those senses operated under those tendencies of a pleasant or unpleasant experience, leading to endless suffering instead of awakening as the end of suffering.<sup>311</sup> The abandoning is meant to coach the mind in giving up attachments and causes of disturbance. “The mind’s tendencies of amplifying and proliferation”<sup>312</sup> corrupt the perception of things blindly grasping things as self. The Buddha taught Kaccāna that the world is bound to those tendencies to grasp at stratagems (*upāya*) that one should abandon neither “I” (*eso me attā*) nor “mine” (*etam mama*).<sup>313</sup>

The teachings of the Buddha (*Dhammā*), such as the four noble truths, are what he had experienced in seeing things by nature. The Buddha’s teachings come to be the same as an object of thought. Thus the *dhammā* are the elements of reality as understood by the

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<sup>309</sup> Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began*, 34-35.

<sup>310</sup> Harvey, *Selfless Mind*, 246–47.

<sup>311</sup> Thanissaro and Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation., *Noble Strategy: Essays on the Buddhist Path*, 3.

<sup>312</sup> Nauriyal, Drummond, and Lal, *Buddhist Thought*, 233.

<sup>313</sup> *Kaccānagotta Sutta*, SN 12.15



Buddha.<sup>314</sup> In the turning point of the mode of experience, things as they are, clinging to nothing, were declared the central position in the history of Buddhism. The first sermon at Deer Park showed that abandoning neither extremes of the eternalistic view nor the nihilistic view could lead one to achieve the goal of liberation (*nirvāṇa*) under the way things are. The noble guideline was a new mode of experiences that could not be seen through fabrication, speculation, mere thought but utilizing mindfulness of realization by the dependent origination (*pratītya-samutpāda*). Clinging sensual pleasures, views, rules, observances, and self presents the recluses who did not delight in the ending of suffering.<sup>315</sup> In contrast, the recluses did not accept or oppose things as existence or non-existence. Abandoning those extreme views affected by lust, hate, delusion, craving, and clinging will raise the right perspective. The proper knowledge will arise for one who clings to nothing. In a simile of the raft, abandoning was the primary concern to leave things behind, neither Dhamma nor path that is worthless to grasp as things or absolute entity. Notably, the abandoning (*pahāna*) could come by the mental process of suppression, opposition, destruction, tranquility, and renunciation. In practical application, abandoning is more likely to deal with defilements and mental hindrances to overcome the view of self-illusion (*sakkāyaditthi*) for the realization through all phenomena as grasping nothing, neither self nor soul nor eternity. Indeed, the steady-state of mind (*samatha*) is the ability to see via the mental training for insight appealing things under their nature and conditions.<sup>316</sup>

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<sup>314</sup> Gombrich, *How Buddhism Began*, 36.

<sup>315</sup> Thanissaro and Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation., *Noble Strategy : Essays on the Buddhist Path*, 3.

<sup>316</sup> Buddhaghosa and Ñānamoli, *Path of Purification*, 89.

Indeed, the final escape is to abandon neither self nor its cause of suffering or the extinction (*nibbāna*) of attachments.<sup>317</sup> In brief, the Buddhist guideline of the extinction of all attachments grasping worldly things is the primary concern of Buddhism. Against the mainstream of Brāhmanic tradition, the renunciation is an antithesis of world-affirming and rejecting views in which is to extinguish craving (*taṇhā*), attachment (*rāga*), and ignorance (*avijjā*) in any views. Abandoning all views and beliefs can bring an utterly tranquil (*upasama*), state of peace (*santi*), and supreme bliss (*paramasukha*).<sup>318</sup> Hence, the central discourses of Dhamma as the Buddhist tenets aiming for liberation emphasize the mental attitudes toward dispassion (*virāga*) and toward the doctrine of non-self (*anattā*), which establish the notion of suspension to abandon those causes of un-satisfactoriness.

On the one hand, the Buddhist knowledge or vision is aimed at the final achievement of searching the truth and understanding reality. On the other hand, discernment is a subline of knowledge and the ability to see things through eradicating corruption (*āsavā*) for the cessation of suffering at the final goal of Buddhism.<sup>319</sup> Therefore, the final goal for ending suffering (*nibbāna*) is meant to be unabiding and knowing-releasing (*vijjāvimutti*) the mind from the mental corruption of seeing things.<sup>320</sup>

### **Modes of Inquiries: Non-Speculation and Individual Search for Discernment**

In the discourse to *Kalamas*, the Buddha endorses an individual experiential investigation for practicing instead of accepting a dogmatic belief. The search inquiry

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<sup>317</sup> M i 27

<sup>318</sup> Joshi, *Brahmanism, Buddhism and Hinduism*, 23.

<sup>319</sup> *Cula Saropama sutta*, M i 198

<sup>320</sup> *Ananda sutta*, S v 328

shows the Buddhist attitude toward realizing and solving problems by withholding any undetermined question, doubt, and speculation but implies an experiential searching for truth. The solution of well-being involves the mental development in searching for truth with an individual understanding. In this case, *Kalamas* heard various dogmatic beliefs and claims that Brāhmans and contemplatives (*samaṇabrāhmaṇā*) had expounded and held onto their doctrines as the only truth, but they blamed and disagreed with others. At the same time, they fell into a state of doubt with no way out. Hence, the discourse encourages everyone to examine things by an individual experience and the wise's inquiries of any searching for truth rather than beliefs. In detail, *Kesaputti Sutta* presents the ten inquiries of beliefs and intellectual diagnosis with the ethical awareness to examine what is good or bad regardless of all references and beliefs. Indeed, the Buddha gave the freedom of inquiry<sup>321</sup> that Kalamas can realize and verify any teaching in the criterion of mind and ethical evaluation individually and by wise without accepting an absolute belief. These given categories to *Kalamas* for suspension of belief are the following:

Come Kalamas, do not go upon what has been acquired by (1) repeated hearing; nor upon (2) tradition; nor upon (3) rumor; nor upon (4) what is in scripture; nor upon (5) surmise; nor upon (6) an axiom; nor upon (7) specious reasoning; nor upon (8) a bias toward a notion that has been pondered over; nor upon (9) another's seeming ability; nor upon (10) the consideration, 'The contemplative is our teacher.' Kalama, when you yourselves know: (11) 'These things are bad; these things are blamable; these things are censured by the wise who undertaken and observed, these things lead to harm and ill,' abandon them.<sup>322</sup>

In detail, the outcomes of hearsays, legends, traditions, scriptures, logic, inference, analogies, theories, probabilities, and teachers do not guarantee the final truth. However, seeing things through the insight observation aims to understand all

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<sup>321</sup> Soma, *Kālāma Sutta*, 5.

<sup>322</sup> Thanissaro Bhikkhu, "*Kālāma Sutta*" *Access to Insight*, 12 February 2012. A i 188-189

phenomena directly related to the actual problems, even though this is blameless by wises who can realize and verify their minds.

An absolute answer (*ekaṇṣaveyyākaraṇa*) is associated with the fixed doctrines regardless of other justification and an individual verification. Accepting a belief from these testimonies is to accept a particular teaching without an individual examination. For this point, the suspension of beliefs remarks the truth in a state of hypothesis and puzzlements. It emphasizes that an individual can solve the problems and evaluates with one's examination. Withholding beliefs, seers must realize and exercise their intellects to have their knowledge. Having own understandings are blameless and praised by the wise. Regardless of any faith or religious beliefs, realization and critical examination are the main methods to assure the practices from wrong actions and ill-views here and now with worry less in the future. Without dogmatic beliefs, one can purify the mind to secure his life from troubles and consequences in the present and hereafter.

Therefore, the freedom of inquiry is given to believers to suspense their beliefs while having a question and further examination by searching to solve problems and get the correct understanding. In this case, the method can be interpreted as a philosophical verification that wises can verify the reality or the truth regardless of any extreme beliefs and practices that could lead them to self-realization, even having a proper path of liberation. This application presents a breakthrough dogmatic method that opens to further possible self-investigation and self-realization in Dhamma as the reality that one must see and understand for oneself. These criteria reveal the primary concern of Buddhist tenets for liberation and the characters of Dhamma that one must-see for oneself

with an opened investigation that cannot achieve without self-realization and purification of the mind.

Moreover, these inquiries help to avert the dogmatic beliefs and endorse *Dhamma* as the path of achievement. In this case, beliefs or views are subject to doubt or uncertainty, which one could not decide either truth or falsehood. The modes of inquiry are described in various descriptions as means to deal with beliefs and references. All beliefs could be blinded and fell into the nets of theoretical assumption or fallacy or unjustified assumption, or rational thinking or logic known as wrong viewpoints rooted in the ultimate assumption. According to these modes of inquiry, free-thinking and inquiries indicate the Buddhist teachings in searching that everyone is independently able to investigate phenomena directly. Thus, all phenomena depend on the nature of impermanence, stress, and transition by those causes and effects. For the direct knowledge, one can achieve it by oneself.

Therefore, one who seeks to understand things and follows those guidelines of search could not accept any assumption or belief that comes upon traditions, theories, and references. Many recluses and contemplatives have projected their views, opinions, and beliefs to speculate things as the truth asserting with right or wrong against others. Notably, schemas, theories, and categories are granted the ultimate truths but hold no thoughtful examination ground. Indeed, what is right or wrong is based on argumentation or presumption affirming the only view against others. Thus, seeing things by nature is essential to comprehend the direct knowledge and the right vision.<sup>323</sup> It is the part of guidance for the realization that the mental process of mindfulness is to abandon those

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<sup>323</sup> “*Aparappaccayā ñāṇamevassa ettha hoti*” *Channa Sutta*, S iii 132

assumptions or beliefs about self, essence, or spirit as a result of grasping to craving (*tanhā*), conceit (*māna*), views (*diṭṭhi*).<sup>324</sup>

In “knowing that for yourselves,” the Buddhist teachings aim to suspend any judgment or an absolute belief that “only this is true; anything else is worthless.”<sup>325</sup> Otherwise, the dogmatic beliefs accept prejudgments based on their views and assumptions that they do not realize the universal nature of all physical and psychical phenomenal conditions. On the one hand, according to *Samkīti*, those inquiries are classified as a sort of knowledge by learning (*suta-mayā-paññā*) and thinking (*cintā-mayā-paññā*) that turns out to be either true or false, for which is accepted to be the truth, but all else is false. Hence, these beliefs could not lead to the direct knowledge instead of clinging to views, which are the pitfalls of dogmatic beliefs.<sup>326</sup> Thus, they are based on speculation to assert things either true or false.

Moreover, the insight or vision comes from the mental development (*bhāvanā-mayā-paññā*). The Buddhist understanding of things comes upon the critical investigation (*dhamma-vicaya*) promoting giving up (*paṭinissagga*)<sup>327</sup> defilements as a cause of mental unrest. Indeed, knowing that things are arising, fading, and dissatisfaction is by releasing them.<sup>328</sup> Holding a belief attaches to either right or wrong view and adheres to its proposition with the judgment that this alone is true; anything else is falsehood. Besides this, suspending belief is the mental process to direct an individual view toward understanding for the sake of tranquility which is no place of mystical and metaphysical criteria for the attainment of liberation.

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<sup>324</sup> Vism 17; Upādāna: grasping things and views. Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 184–85.

<sup>325</sup> “*idameva saccaṃ moghamāñña'nti.*” *Canki Sutta*, MN 95

<sup>326</sup> Pandit, *Being as Becoming*, 175.

<sup>327</sup> Relinquishing indicates the renunciatory path. Anālayo, *Excursions into the Thought-World*, 266.

<sup>328</sup> *Pañcattaya Sutta*, M iii 102

In brief, the Buddhist perspective of suspending belief emphasizes the direct knowledge for seeing rather than a belief that could not lead to the path and abandonment of the mental cause of unrest. Thus, any belief does not secure the truth but shows an assent of things. In preferences, faith (*saddhā*), preference (*ruci*), hearsay-learning (*anussava*), arguing upon evidence (*ākāra, parivitakka*), and liking through pondering a view (*ditthii, nijjhānak, khanti*) are not secure as the truth. To preserve the truth, one should not take for granted that “only this is true, the other is wrong.”<sup>329</sup> However, knowledge based on the experience of truth is by understanding with the direct knowledge. As shown in the allegory of blind men figuring out the whole elephant from its partial body, there are beliefs grounded on an individual conviction but groundless knowledge.<sup>330</sup> The final arrival at truth comes by seeing and understanding the truth. To this extent, beliefs and theories but direct experience could not be acquired through practical investigation. Indeed, one can see the mental phenomena, conditions, and way out for oneself and its benefit. As it is said that

As he observes him, he comes to know, "There is no such quality based on greed... His bodily behavior & verbal behavior are those of one not greedy. Moreover, the Dhamma he teaches is deep, hard to see, hard to realize, tranquil, refined, beyond the scope of conjecture, subtle, to-be-experienced by the wise."<sup>331</sup>

Grasping things as being (*bhava*) or non-being (*vibhava*) is a polarized determination showing the four possibilities of reference (*tetralemma*); affirmation, negation, both, and neither, so they are settled on those sorts of conviction either confirm

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<sup>329</sup> MN 95

<sup>330</sup> Beliefs or views cause disturbances and disputes by saying that the Dhamma is like this but not like that. Holding onto beliefs (*ditthi*) is determined by only one side of truth. “*Viggayha naṃ vivadanti janā ekaṅgadassīno ti.*” *Tittha Sutta*, Ud 6.4

<sup>331</sup> MN 95

or deny. The overwhelming views (*ditthāsava*)<sup>332</sup> are tied to people who could not get rid of those views based on what they believe or hold in the tinted mind of desires for a reason, craving, grasping for self-identity, essence, and eternity.<sup>333</sup> The dogmatic beliefs are like a trap of the supreme net to pervert the mind (*vipallāsa*). Many contemplatives and Brahmins were tied and conjugated onto those views as the roots of thought and action. Otherwise, rejecting those beliefs in the sense of inquiry could not compromise with dogmatic beliefs and claims approved through other methods based on non-vision of reality regardless of critical inquiries.<sup>334</sup>

Indeed, giving up is significantly to suspend dogmatic beliefs and to clear the path of insight examination without presupposition, schemas, and speculation. The dogmatic beliefs establish claims by grasping things as the truth or the absolute proof. Briefly, the figurative thought is based on the speculative assumption that is not rooted in the direct experience and unshakeable truth. However, seeing things as they are (*yathābhūta ñānadassana*) is grounded on the comprehensive knowledge (*abhiñña*) or the knowledge of direct experience.<sup>335</sup> In detail, the knowledge or the insight is related to the right view, the proper understanding, and the direct experience. In this case, wholesome roots (*kusala-mūla*) come from the mental states of greedlessness (*alobha*), hatelessness (*adosa*), undeludedness (*amoha*)<sup>336</sup> briefly an absence of lust (*virāga*).

Otherwise, many Brahmins and contemplatives (*samaṇabrāhmaṇā*) claim their doctrinal standpoints asserting a particular thing that “only this is true; anything else is

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<sup>332</sup> The dogmatic view (*ditthāsava*) is one of āsavas (intoxicant biases) including sense-desire (*kāmāsava*), being (*bhavāsava*), and ignorance (*avijjāsava*). D i 16

<sup>333</sup> Sangharakshita, *Survey of Buddhism*, 40.

<sup>334</sup> Ibid., 80–81.

<sup>335</sup> Rigopoulos, “Avyākatāni and Catuṣkoṭi Form,” 240.

<sup>336</sup> AN 7



worthless.”<sup>337</sup> In the Buddhist perspective, belief is a mental attitude, and its validity of truth claims is based on the experiential experience of truth. The truth claims indicate the overwhelming mode of thought and fabrication for grasping things as reality. Hence, grasping things is fabricated by the mind due to hearsay, tradition, reasoning, and logic. Moreover, the Buddha asked *Kāpaṭhika*, who hold Brāhmanical tradition that no one in that tradition claimed to have the direct knowledge.<sup>338</sup> Indeed, these five sources of groundless beliefs are (1) conviction, (2) liking, (3) unbroken tradition, (4) reasoning by analogy, and (5) an agreement through propounded views. These are the five groundless beliefs (*amūlikā saddhā*), in which conviction can turn out in two possibilities in which they can be seen at present either well-proclaim (truth) or empty.

Either these genuine testimonies are well proclaimed or not so that the possible outcomes will be either true or false. The groundless convictions will be either true or false. In this case, belief could not guarantee the truth either by logical reasoning (*atakkavacara*) or thinking. The causes of problems are under the influence of craving (*taṇhā*), leading to suffering. Indeed, direct knowledge based on a thorough investigation is required to overcome obstacles and understand the nature of phenomena. In preserving the truth, do not grasp what has been accepted by modes of inquiry. Therefore drawing the definite conclusion that only this is true anything else is worthless is not a proper way to safeguard the truth. In this case, the Buddhist attitude toward belief is grounded on the realization that speculative testimonies or groundless beliefs could not achieve the final

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<sup>337</sup> “*idameva saccaṃ moghamāññaṃ nti.*” M ii 164

<sup>338</sup> “*tepi na evamāhaṃsu – ‘mayametaṃ jānāma, mayametaṃ passāma. Idameva saccaṃ, moghamāññaṃ nti.’ Canki Sutta, MN 95*

liberation.<sup>339</sup> Indeed, Asanga Tilakaratne and K.N. Jayatilleke point out that the Buddha is aware of the limits of faith, tradition, and the validity of logic and speculation for accepting things as truth.<sup>340</sup>

In some sense, suspending beliefs refers to the mental model of training to overcome the hindrances and acquire the knowledge of reality through insight meditation; thus, one who realizes and liberates the mind from grasping things. Seeing things by suspending belief or opinion is the solution to avoid grasping an absolute assertion. To suspend opinions and views is akin to purifying the mind in the process of realization for the final enlightenment releasing the mind from extremes of affirming or rejecting any substantial entities or absolute certainty.

Abandoning reveals the insight investigation to overcome influxes (*āsava*) through withdrawal (*vikkhambhana*), opposite (*tadanga*), destruction (*samuccheda*), tranquillization (*patipassaddhi*), and leaving behind (*nissarana*).<sup>341</sup> At least full awakened monks are free from biases through grasping no more (*anupādāya āsavehi cittāni vimuccimsū'ti*).<sup>342</sup> On the contrary, there is nothing behind or grasping as an essence of phenomena because things are non-self (*anattā*). Hence, grasping nothing is to be guided as the way out of suffering. There is nothing to grasp as self or substantial

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<sup>339</sup> Faith or belief (*saddhā*) is defined by many Buddhist scholars as confidence or conviction in accordance with knowledge or intellectual faculty. Tilakaratne, “Critical Thinking and Logic,” 58; Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory*, 227; Rahula and Demiéville, *What the Buddha Taught*, 8; Nyanaponika, “Devotion in Buddhism,” 3; Nyanaponika, “Pathways of Buddhist Thought,” 10–11; Soma and Dhammadinna, *Faith in the Buddha’s Teaching*, 2–3; Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 154–15. By contrast, it can be interpreted as belief in aspects of the mental attitude of conviction toward those reliable sources of knowledge such as a person and teaching in order to believe or to take an action. Thus, it does not only imply to an intellectual significance but the mental factors, (*cetasika*), clarity of mind, emotion, and volition. Joshi, “Faith and Wisdom,” 67; Hoffman, “Pragmatic Efficacy of Saddha,” 399–412; Janakabhivamsa, *Abhidhamma in Daily Life*, 40–41.

<sup>340</sup> Tilakaratne, “Critical Thinking and Logic,” 58; Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory*, 227.

<sup>341</sup> Anālayo, *From Grasping to Emptiness*, 47–48; Pa-Auk Tawya Sayadaw, *Workings of Kamma*, 9–10.

<sup>342</sup> *Khīnāsava* is “one who is cankerfree.” Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 23.

identity by avoiding extreme views, but things are conditions of psycho-physical phenomena.

In developing the direct knowledge (*abhiññā*), to detach (*virājayam*) defilements and to abandon graspings things are the keys of investigation.<sup>343</sup> Renunciation means to suspend any grasping. First, it is called the full-knowledge of the abandonment (*pahāna-pariññā*). Second, it is fully known by investigating of insight-wisdom (*vipassanā-pariññā*) such as seeing the five aggregates as they appear to be in nature. Third, it directly knows (*abhijānam*) that the five aggregates are to be understood as phenomena through direct experience and understanding according to their reality; thus it is called the full knowledge of the known (*ñāta-pariññā*). Therefore, these types of knowledge are from seeing how things are by nature with understanding by investigating things as phenomena. Thus, suspending views can be seen as the process of investigation and abandonment of grasping things as such. To this extent, the Buddha recommends abandoning all fabrication or dogmatic mindsets for grasping things such as self.<sup>344</sup>

However, this direct understanding is acquired the outstanding practice and mental training, briefly the modes of realization for insight understanding. These types of abandonment discipline (*pahana-Vinaya*) are used in the modes of inquiry with the thoughtful investigation for seeing things as they are.<sup>345</sup> In this case, the abandonment by replacing (*tadaga-pahana*) the equation is the mode of thought to investigate an alternative or equal equation of views or beliefs. For example, Pa-Auk Tawya Sayadaw<sup>346</sup>

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<sup>343</sup> One who has released from hindrances could have a clear visibility of reality. *Samaññaphala Sutta*, D i 47; The knowledge of one's own direct experience (*sandiṭṭhika*) is the breaking point of making a clear vision by abandoning attachments in order to see things as they are (*yathābhūta*). *Maha-Assapura Sutta*, M i 27

<sup>344</sup> The Buddha addresses the abandoning things through perception that "the eye is to be abandoned through direct knowledge and full understanding." *Pahana Sutta*, SN 35

<sup>345</sup> Buddhaghosa and Ñānamoli, *Path of Purification*, 117.

<sup>346</sup> Pa-Auk Tawya Sayadaw, *Workings of Kamma*, 10; Shulman, *Rethinking the Buddha*, 23–24.

explains those equations of different mental recognition of ordinary people and nobles with the different views and understanding. Different equations are described by the discernment of formations (*udaya dassana*) opposing to grasping things, either affirmative or rejective views. The abandonment by suppression (*vikkhambhana pahana*) means withdrawal of asserting for grasping no more in the world but leave things as phenomena must detach from the hindrances. The abandonment by eradication means uprooting or analyzing the whole process toward the end; for example, eliminating the causes of suffering is the mental realization of the noble paths. The abandonment by tranquility (*paippassaddhi pahana*) is to abandon the hindrances that cause the disturbance. Hence aiming for non-assertion would make the peace of mind. The abandonment (*nissaraa pahana*) is to leave without grasping things but just all phenomena without substantial entity. Therefore this mode of liberation remarks the mental ability to suspend beliefs and inquire about one's purification through the personal experience to see things as they are by nature. Indeed, abandoning possessions of view, the Buddha points out a dependency of views (*ditthi-nissaya*) to reverse sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair. Thus, all phenomena are subjected to non-self, without essence but constantly change and impermanent.

In the mental process of grasping things, objectification (*papañca*) is the Buddhist term that presents the tendency of the mind to proliferate issues from grasping things as “self” and its cause of suffering. It reveals self-reflective thoughts about things as mine and self. In the Buddhist view, it is an inappropriate mode of thought that leads to the long process of worldliness. As well, Ñāṇananda Bhikkhu defines this term as man's “tendency toward proliferation in the realm of concepts,” which infers to the mental

attitude of clinging to things in a psychological context.<sup>347</sup> It shows in threefolds of the mental attitude of worldliness including craving (*tanhā-papañca*), conceit (*māna-papañca*), and views (*diṭṭhi-papañca*). It is a delusive conceptualization of grasping things, such as the five aggregates of grasping. Indeed, *Dhamma* or things can be seen under reality through the direct experience from the meditative investigation rather than an absolute assumption and speculation. The Buddha suggests an examination mode of inquiry by the absence of an abiding self or substantiality. All perception of the six-sense experience in knowing that nothing is there just all mental-physical phenomena appear in our perception of knowledge in those senses, to detach (*viveka*) the mental attitude of grasping (*upādi*) in the following:

In mental phenomena, the mind is internally appeased, in one point, without thoughts and thought processes and with joy and pleasantness born of concentration...Attained, he reflects all things that matter...is void, and devoid of a self.<sup>348</sup>

Indeed, abandoning hindrances (*nīvarana*) is related to the path of releasing the mind from obstacles, the mental attachments (*citta-viveka*), and the roots of suffering (*upadhi-viveka*) following that things are “impermanent, unpleasant, an illness, an abscess, an arrow, a misfortune, an ailment, foreign, destined for destruction.”<sup>349</sup>

The mental withdrawal (*viveka*)<sup>350</sup> is a reversal or unabiding of self that things are impermanent, change, and non-self. In some manner, abandonment is to giving up (*virāga*) anything whatsoever for grasping (*upādāna*) briefly the five aggregates of

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<sup>347</sup> Ñāṇananda, *Concept and Reality in Early Buddhist Thought*, 1–10.

<sup>348</sup> *Māhā-Malunkya Sutta*, M ii 102

<sup>349</sup> Ñāṇananda, *Concept and Reality in Early Buddhist Thought*, 102.

<sup>350</sup> *Viveka* means detachment or abandonment including physical withdrawal (*kāya-viveka*), mental withdrawal (*citta-viveka*), and withdrawal from the roots of suffering (*upadhi-viveka*). Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 205.

graspings in realizing that “there is nothing” (*natthi kiñcī’ti*). These graspings are causes of an eternal continued consequence of existence as the following passage:

Overcoming all the sphere of consciousness, with there is nothing, abides in the sphere of no-thingness. Attained to it he reflects all things that matter... This is peaceful, this is exalted, such as the appeasement of all determinations, the giving up of all endearments, the destruction of craving, detachment, cessation, and extinction.<sup>351</sup>

This experimental investigation designates two modes of abandonment; suspending things without preconception<sup>352</sup> and giving up attachments for seeing or knowing that nothing is there, just phenomena following the reality in nature. In the general cognitive attitude of investigation,<sup>353</sup> the mode of thought should be focused on neither abandoning to detach the mind that the mind is neither distracted and scattered externally nor settled internally nor grasping things. In the senses of mental recognition, the mind is not scattered and diffused in the external world, such as bounding and searching for pleasure externally in form. Internally, the mind settles in neither pleasantness nor unpleasantness nor equanimity. Withholding beliefs, the mind is not identified with anything neither by speculation nor absolute truth such as self.<sup>354</sup> The mental attitude of fabrication and speculation is identified by grasping things in the world, either existence or non-existence. Indeed, Harvey discusses as “selfless” that clinging to things as a metaphysical or empirical self is inappropriate and inapprehensible.<sup>355</sup>

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<sup>351</sup> *Māhā-Malunkya Sutta*, M ii 102

<sup>352</sup> Harris, *Detachment and Compassion in Early Buddhism*, 4–6.

<sup>353</sup> The mode of investigation is mentioned as the general cognitive attitude of an arahant who has the cognitive experience by means of abandoning all hindrances and defilements as cause of suffering or long continuity of birth and death. De Silva, *Nibbana as Living Experience*, 6.

<sup>354</sup> *Dhatu-vibhanga Sutta*: An Analysis of the Properties, M iii 237

<sup>355</sup> Harvey, *Selfless Mind*, 32–33.

Otherwise, abandoning all fabrication and speculation, the mind does not cling to anything in the world. Moreover, Avi Sion calls that is “knowledge of actual phenomena, not some imagined reality behind them.”<sup>356</sup> Indeed asserting things behind phenomena is the mindsets of imagination and reflection that inflicts the vision of reality. To this extent, it is like the simile of an oil lamp that burns in dependence on oil and wick. In practical application, abandonment is part of mental training to see things under conscious experience. The Buddhist teachings emphasize the mental training for seeing in various perceptions as the following:

When for you there will be only the seen in reference to the seen, only the heard in reference to the heard, only the sensed in reference to the sensed, only the cognized in reference to the cognized, then, Bāhiya, there is no you in connection with...you are neither here nor yonder...This, just this, is the end of stress.<sup>357</sup>

The method is to have the experimental investigation in which the Buddha advised to Bhaddiya for seeing himself. At the final arrival of liberation, an appropriate observation and examination appear to have much of empirical evidence that things briefly the five aggregates of grasping appear empty, void, without substance. With the emancipatory knowing empty of essence like a bubble, a mirage, a banana tree, a magic trick,<sup>358</sup> one could grasp nothing, give up, and be free from *rāgā* as causes of suffering.<sup>359</sup> The Buddhist tenets aim to guide an individual examination for the final goal in the following:

These things are unprofitable, blameworthy, censured by the intelligent, these things, when performed and undertaken, conduce to loss and sorrow, then indeed, Bhaddiya, do you reject them, such was my reason for uttering those words.<sup>360</sup>

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<sup>356</sup> Sion, *Buddhist Illogic*, 65.

<sup>357</sup> Ud 1.10

<sup>358</sup> “*Phenaṇaṇḍūpamaṇ rūpaṇ, vedanā bubbuḷūpamā... desitādiccabandhunā.*” *Phena Sutta*, SN 22.95

<sup>359</sup> “*Nibbindaṇ virajjati virāgā vimuccati.*” *Anatta-lakkhana Sutta*, SN 22.59

<sup>360</sup> *Bhaddiya Sutta*, AN 4.193

This pragmatic concern refers to neither the fundamental assumption nor the truth-claim from the speculative thought or theories. It is grounded on testability and hypothesis of verifiable conducts mainly based on individual experiences regardless of either belief or ritual, but applicable practice. For examining beliefs as the guideline to Kalamas, the Buddha emphasizes the direct experience of seeing things for oneself (*attanāva jāneyyātha*)<sup>361</sup> as a prerequisite of knowledge factors for searching the truth but not accepting a truth-claim. In sum, the Buddhist modes of free thinking or inquiring energize the direct experience that does not come upon tradition, reason, logic, and authority. In other words, the critical point of the Buddhist insight investigation relies on the experiential truth, vision, and knowledge regardless of neither traditional nor verbal nor theoretical truth claims.<sup>362</sup>

## Conclusion

The aim of Buddhism is known as liberation (*nibbāna*) that can be achieved by knowledge of understanding the truth. The final goal is liberation as the end of suffering, which knowledge is the means for achievement. It is described as a means or method (*upāya*) that presents Dhamma or guideline in the skillful means to achieve liberation. It could not be seen as the metaphysical description reflecting what things really are but knowing and seeing things that have come to be in phenomena and conditions without self or essence behind and beyond. In terms of renunciation as the ending suffering, withdrawal of grasping views and defilements is a significant implication to verify the path and purify the mind with no further assertion.

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<sup>361</sup> *Kesamutti Sutta*, AN 3.65; *Bhaddiya Sutta*, AN 4.193

<sup>362</sup> Fay, "Buddhism as a Stronghold of Free Thinking," 76–78.



In this case, suspending beliefs is associated with developing an attitude to eliminate all attachments through the right path for deliverance (*vimokkha*).<sup>363</sup> To this extent, as the Buddhist teaching or guideline, Dhamma is purposely used as a helpful raft for crossing a river. Grasping or holding onto Dhamma is considered to be a struggle. Otherwise, the experiential knowledge of seeing is to abandon any further grasping. Knowing is not an absolute end in its self but means for deliverance. In grasping nothing, things that appear upon our perceptions or experiences must be abandoned regardless as good or bad, neither good nor bad. The Buddha remarks that “all things are unworthy of attachment.” (*sabbe dhammā nālaṃ abhinivesāyā’ti*).<sup>364</sup> Briefly, the five aggregate of grasping are to be abandoned neither have they appeared to be good or bad neither good nor bad as the following passage:

The eye is to be abandoned. Forms are to be abandoned...And whatever there is that arises in dependence on contact at the intellect...experienced as pleasure, pain or neither-pleasure-nor-pain...that too is to be abandoned. This is called the All as a phenomenon to be abandoned.<sup>365</sup>

Things by experiences, pleasure or pain, neither pleasure nor pain, are inflicted the mind for grasping unreal or fabrication and blinding the right vision to see reality. In the philosophy of the *Atthakavagga*,<sup>366</sup> Premasiri points out that grasping objects of sense pleasure and the five aggregates is the wrong attitude toward things that must be abandoned for the ideal of renunciation. Hence, detachment embodies solitude and the withdrawal of attachment to one’s view (*sanditthi-raga*), neither asserting from a

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<sup>363</sup> Three deliverances (*vimokkha*) are the conditionless (*animitta*) liberation, the desireless (*apanihita*) liberation, the emptiness (*suññatā*) liberation. Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 191.

<sup>364</sup> *Paṭhamaavijjāpahāna Sutta*, S 4.50

<sup>365</sup> “*Cakkhuṃ, bhikkhave, pahātabbāṃ, rūpā pahātabbā... yampidaṃ manosamphassapaccayā uppajjati vedayitaṃ sukhaṃ vā dukkhaṃ vā adukkhamasukhaṃ vā tampi pahātabbāṃ. Ayaṃ kho, bhikkhave, sabbappahānāya dhammo’ti.*” *Pahanaya Sutta*, S iv 15

<sup>366</sup> Grasping beliefs or views is related to speculative views and visions that reverse the mental attitude away from liberation. Premasiri, *Philosophy of the Atthakavagga*, 2.

personal experience alone, neither convictions nor speculation or mere reason.

Unfortunately, clinging to things as an absolute truth leads to judgment and dogmatic belief that is not beneficial for unbinding (*nibbuti*) as the goal of practice. Indeed, the mental state of detachment with grasping nothing is an antithesis attitude for being released from objectification (*papañca*).

In terms of *Buddhi*, the Buddha's enlightenment (*sammā-sambodhi*) indicates awakening and knowledge of understanding things in reality, which is not about a theoretical but practical model to describe phenomena through arising origination. Deliverance is an ideal of the final goal in the Buddhist practice. As Sangharakshita points out the practical aim that "Buddhist is the insight into the true nature of phenomena."<sup>367</sup> It is to achieve understanding things and cessation of suffering through realization or vision but not of mere views and speculation from extremes or dogmatics. In some sense of enlightenment, the Buddha described his experience of Dhamma for the noble search (*ariyā pariyesanā*) that did not reconcile under the polarizing views of existence or non-existence but through realization and direct knowledge.<sup>368</sup> Therefore, the Buddhist perspective of suspending belief emphasizes the modes of inquiry for the ideal of practice to cultivate and improve the mind for seeing and realizing things that can be achieved by awakening or knowing things from experience without grasping either essence or essence immortal identity. To this extent, the knowledge of experience claims nothing but affects the mind to give up any beliefs or grasps in ending suffering. In sum, Dhammā, as the Buddha's guidelines, were given to Gotami that "*they lead to dispassion*,

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<sup>367</sup> Sangharakshita, *Survey of Buddhism*, 108–9.

<sup>368</sup> *Ariyapariyesana Sutta*, M i 160

not to passion.”<sup>369</sup> Therefore, the Buddhist teachings for suspending beliefs or views are meditative to achieve the goal of practice, aiming to renounce from abiding pleasant or unpleasant.<sup>370</sup>

In practical training, the middle path (*majjhimā-patipadā*) is the most potential hypothesis to achieve the Buddhist goal of individual deliverance. Indeed, the achievement is well known as the destruction of defilements, which is the ideal goal in the Buddhist perspective through direct knowledge, understand, and experience regardless of the speculation.<sup>371</sup> The most effective method for reaching the ideal goal was concerned by abandonment results, in this case, is to suspend whatsoever grasps as self and its views (*anti-ditthi*). Hence, giving up the attachment to views is improved to clear the path for a new vision and direct knowledge. To this extent, suspending beliefs or views is elaborated into the Buddhist guideline of deliverance as a provisional device to accomplish the ideal goal with the knowledge of seeing.<sup>372</sup> However, the *Dhamma* is the method for enlightenment to be abandoned as the final solution of renunciation, so the mind is free of attachments, then the peace of mind. In brief, the Buddha’s diagnosis of curing suffering addresses that “the five aggregates of attachment are suffering.”<sup>373</sup> Individual knowledge of seeing *Dhamma* or things is the Buddhist method to grow in the opposite of ignorance (*avijjā*), delusion (*moha*), and misapprehension (*vipallāsa*) that lead to the mental unrest or disturbance. Indeed, the state of mind could overcome unsatisfactory, positive, and negative feelings without clinging to things. Briefly, the

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<sup>369</sup> “*dhammā virāgāya saṃvattanti no sarāgāya*” *Sanjkhitta Gotamiyovāda sutta*, A iv 280

<sup>370</sup> The renunciation guides the mind for equanimity without the mental disruption. *Anuruddhamahāvitakka Sutta*, A iv 228. The state of calm: “the well-instructed disciple of the noble ones, when touched with a feeling of pain, does not sorrow, grieve, or lament.” (*ariyasāvako dukkhāya vedanāya phutṭho samāno na socati na kilamati na paridevati na urattāliṃ kandati*) *Salla Sutta*, S iv.207

<sup>371</sup> Buswell, *Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha*, 66–67; Louis de La Vallée Poussin, *Way to Nirvana*, 139.

<sup>372</sup> Schroeder, *Skillful Mean*, 25.

<sup>373</sup> “*saṅkhittena pañcupādānakkhandhā dukkhā*.” *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*, S v 420

Buddhist perspective in pursuit of deliverance does require a helpful method to achieve ending suffering. The Buddhist teachings are guides and follow wise who have been accomplished or experienced their assumptions, known as the skillful means (*upāya-kosalla*) or “teaching-aids.”<sup>374</sup>

An individual could develop the different approaches and set off the right path for the ideal goal of solving suffering, aiming for mindfulness and undisturbance. In this case, a significant number of skillful methods presents in the Buddhist account and approach toward the problem simply a possible challenge to the dominant beliefs or views by asking, thinking, and observing for the sake of one’s advance of understanding or vision. Particularly suspending beliefs or views is pivotal to an individual’s aim to receive the direct knowledge of reality or things realized through one’s own experience. At the final point of renunciation, abandoning attachments is the most advance of suspending belief or view of affirming or rejecting self whatsoever metaphysical concepts caused by abiding and an endless midset of grasping. In the Buddha’s guideline of renunciation, the attitude of giving up defilements, views, or things as self is like a raft for crossover a river known as *nibbāna* that is the state of freedom.

Briefly, the suspending belief covers the modes of inquiry in the Buddhist teachings, thoughts, and practices. It is imbedded in the means and aim of the Buddhist search for truth, presenting the key features, standpoints, and attitudes of renunciation in contrast with dogmatic beliefs and speculative inquiries.

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<sup>374</sup> It is used as skillful in means or skill in question or answer or skillful account. Mills, *Wheel of Birth and Death*, 8; Kalupahana, *History of Buddhist Philosophy*, 116–17; Thanissaro, *Skill in Questions*, 7–10; Schroeder, “Nāgārjuna and the Doctrine of ‘Skillful Means,’” 559; Sion, *In Defense of Aristotle’s Laws of Thought*, 127–28; Schroeder, *Skillful Means*, 2–4.

## CHAPTER 4

### Suspension of Belief in Pyrrhonist Tenets

This chapter explores the Pyrrhonist outline and the modes of inquiry that exert the suspension of belief (*epoché*) in the criterion of reality, practice, and viewpoint. The scope of this chapter focuses on the suspension of belief in various responses of Pyrrhonian skeptics to dogmatists in the counterpart of views. The chapter contains the skeptical points and main arguments against dogmatists. It mainly addresses Pyrrhonism's key features and characteristics, drawing from the Pyrrhonist methods and attitudes in dealing with dogmatic beliefs and the way of life to reach peace of mind by means and aim in Pyrrhonism.

In Greek philosophy, Pyrrhonist skeptics defend their views against dogmatists or non-skeptics in the Hellenistic period. They define their standpoints and attitudes based on Pyrrho of Elis and Pyrrhonist thought, such as Sextus Empiricus's works and Diogenes Laertius. Mainly, the Pyrrhonist views deal with beliefs in contrast to dogmatists and other Greek philosophers such as Stoics, Epicureans, and Academic skeptics who claimed their opinions and teachings and philosophical standpoints toward things or the nature of reality.

Indeed, the sources of Pyrrhonism were various reports of philosophical views (*testimōnia*) and arguments against non-skeptics. Many discourses show the skeptical views and attitudes toward other beliefs and views. Indeed, Pyrrhonists have underlined their views and other claims in defining the modes of inquiry to investigate and examine thoughts and beliefs aiming for freedom of the mind as the final goal.

According to Pyrrho of Elis's skeptic, the main concern was a belief that reflected the attitude toward nature by suspending any judgment and then achieving the state of tranquility. In responding nature, Pyrrho made no claim but implied an attitude of non-dogmatic view and belief to achieve peace of mind and the way of life. On the one hand, having nonbeliefs or accepting non-dogmatic views is to cling to nothing aiming for the final solution of tranquility. On the other hand, having suspended belief enables the mind to investigate without preconception and absolute solution to see things as they are by their condition.

In detail, the Pyrrhonist standpoints were opposite dogmatic beliefs that claimed and accepted things as truth. The Pyrrhonist skeptics did not accept any dogmatic truth but did not deny the truth but kept searching and investigating without an absolute preconception and assumption. According to the Pyrrhonist perspective, the main point is not to assert or oppose the truth but for a non-metaphysical standpoint in grasping nature or things with dogmatic beliefs and inflecting viewpoints.

In ancient skeptics, Pyrrho of Elis was a profound skeptical founder who was provided the main emphasis on the way of life and responded to the belief that one could respond to the skeptical matter of withdrawing belief to achieve peace of mind. Pyrrhonist arguments are considered a remedy to cure an unsettled mind for people from disturbing assumptions and dogmatic beliefs in a therapeutic sense. It also implies a way of life without grasping anything true or false, so it does not require metaphysical assumption. Instead, it appeals to the investigation procedure through encounter arguments against dogmatic beliefs. Hence, the Pyrrhonist aims toward the final goal by suspending belief and then peace of mind. Floridi concludes that the Pyrrhonist aim

intends to guide human knowledge in the balance of opinions or equal strength (*isosthenia*) in order to suspend belief (*epoché*) and to the final achievement of tranquility (*ataraxia*).

Mainly to deal with an opinion as part of attitude in taking a position, either truth or false, is a cognitive aim of the skeptic to see through all beliefs with all sides of the argument for a purely epistemological position without adopting any dogmatic assumption. Briefly, *dóxa* is an opinion based on proposition (*katalepsis*), a self-evidently true proposition.

The chapter examines; first, there was the suspension of belief in Pyrrhonist skeptic perspective through their modes, attitude, and standpoint concerning what is and is not what mentioned as suspending belief. Placing Pyrrhonist features alongside others is the second approach to lay these terms on an equal platform to compare reconstructing core features, attitudes, and modes of inquiry. Hence, Pyrrhonist skeptic features are postulated and characterized distinctively according to its standpoint by means and aim. Particularly, skeptic discussion and discourses are contained and corresponded to dogmatists as anti-theoretical standpoints against mathematicians, logicians, physicists, musicians, grammarians, and ethicists who asserted doctrinal and metaphysical views criteria of beliefs and practices responding to the nature of things. Under the examination of other doctrines and views, skeptics are compilers who had tried to investigate without committing any philosophical position but collecting and presenting in a high degree of fairness for discussion, which was consisted of quotations and references of various influential sources. Thus, Pyrrhonian sources contained Greek philosophy and reliable evidences of historical and context of ideas in the skeptical investigation throughout

Pyrrhonist non-theoretical standpoint of discussion and debate. Having these sources is more beneficial to understand the ancient Pyrrhonist skeptic. It is considered a reliable source to recover other philosophical schools with fewer surviving sources of information.

Mainly Sextus Empiricus compiles various doctrinal and philosophical standpoints of Greek philosophers and his arguments and discussions straight forward to Pyrrhonist skeptic that is combined in the Outlines and Against the Mathematicians. Understanding his opponents is considered crucial for reconstructing and describing the Pyrrhonist point of view evidentially connected to the history of those ideas and contexts. Sextus's works were only the survival sources of Pyrrhonist writings and the general investigation of Greek philosophy that kept it intact, referencing various standpoints.

The following contents are to be identified and postulated: the Pyrrhonist teaching, revival outline, and discourses of Pyrrhonist skeptic by successors and disciples to identify the key features and standpoint toward dogmatists. The Pyrrhonist skeptics respond to their challenges, discussions, arguments, and philosophical standpoints in Hellenistic and Academic periods.

In Pyrrhonist skeptic, suspending belief does signify the most concern about the belief by giving various tenets about knowledge (*epistēmē*) aiming for tranquility as the most concern of skeptic standpoint. The main argument is labeled in non-assertion and various tropes, briefly pointing out appearance as the key feature to perceive things by nature. Roughly speaking, Pyrrhonist modes of inquiry are to be applied and employed against dogmatists.



The planning of this study goes back to the Hellenistic philosophy where skepticism has related and rooted from it, particularly with Pyrrhonism and fully facing and responding with the Pyrrhonist revival in the collective works of Sextus Empiricus. Initially, skepticism was not quite a school of philosophy that was later reformed and classified as the distinctive school of skeptic in the case of Pyrrhonist skepticism. The figurehead represents a skeptical school that claimed allegiance to Pyrrho in spreading skeptical tenets in various aspects of skepticism. Identifying Pyrrhonist skeptic requires the common ground of skepticism and the core features from the beginning to the revival of the school to have an acceptable characteristic feature to understand the skeptic school's full development from the contexts of Hellenistic philosophical history. The Pyrrhonist skeptic has corresponded to the head of school or figurehead in particular as founder and contexts of Hellenistic philosophy as a whole.

Particularly skeptical discourses rely on Sextus Empiricus to reconstruct the historical context of Hellenistic philosophy as the revival Pyrrhonist skeptic and the reports of other philosophies. The objective prospect of this chapter is to describe skeptical means and end in establishing Pyrrhonist perspective and foundation of skeptic tenets throughout the historical context of the Hellenistic period. The following topics will present various aspects and key features of Pyrrhonist skeptic to analyze Pyrrhonist view on suspension of belief by means and end.

In this case, to remark the Pyrrhonist skeptic is to look at skepticism in the context of Hellenic philosophy. As a whole movement of establishing Pyrrhonist perspective hoping to identify its features and main concerns especially what it was at its first beginning with Pyrrho of Elis and final revival of Sextus Empiricus. Thus, this chapter

aims to explore the Pyrrhonist outline and modes of inquiries in describing suspension of belief in the criterion of reality, practice, and viewpoint to analyze Pyrrhonist skepticism based on its means and aim against dogmatists as well as attempting for the goal of tranquility. The discussion involves Pyrrhonism and other Greek philosophy in the historical perspective to reconstruct the Pyrrhonist notion of suspending belief.

### **Suspension of Belief: Pyrrho of Elis and Sextus Empiricus**

The skeptic standpoint covers the overall outlook of Pyrrhonism, particularly Pyrrho of Elis and Sextus Empiricus. Indeed, the Pyrrhonist notion of suspending belief can be reconstructed from its features known as skeptical modes of inquiry intending toward the final goal; tranquility (*ataraxia*). In the practice of suspending belief, a life without belief is wisely suitable to achieve peace of mind.

To identify the Pyrrhonist suspension of belief, understanding of the philosophical antecedents of Pyrrho does require not only the later collective account of Sextus Empiricus but also the early concerns and attitudes of other philosophical views to classify the distinguished Pyrrhonist standpoint and the conjunction of those thoughts and attitudes. The following is to attribute the plausible accounts of Pyrrho that are comparable to the original and revival Pyrrhonist skeptics.

In Pyrrhonist skeptic, the discussion covers Pyrrho's precursors from the Early Socratic and Hellenistic Greek periods. Particularly Pyrrhonist standpoint must be considered and reconstructed in the context of those Greek influences and later revival of Pyrrhonism in Sextus's works. These standpoints and attitudes are closely related to evidence reconstructing the Pyrrhonist viewpoint of suspending belief.

## Pyrrho of Elis

For Pyrrho's view, his statements can be seen as a non-theoretical assertion, but they reveal the skeptical attitude and remedy to heal the mindset for equanimity.<sup>375</sup> On Sextus's account of Pyrrhonism, Paul Kjellberg remarks that skeptic statements are not theoretical claims but a treatment to cure the rashness of dogmatic belief (*epoché*) by suspending belief and using appearance as a guide for peace of mind at the final goal (*ataraxia*).<sup>376</sup> Based on this interpretation, the Pyrrhonist view is more compatible with the whole tradition from the early Pyrrhonist and later account of Sextus.<sup>377</sup> According to Diogenes' account of Pyrrho, Pyrrho was like a moralist, a noble philosopher, and a chief priest who suspended all beliefs in the continued searching with peace of mind.<sup>378</sup> He was the master of action "who devotes all his time to himself apart from men, talking to himself, not caring for what others think and for their verbal wranglings."<sup>379</sup> Thus, Pyrrho's views, attitudes, and guidelines can be reconstructed in the practice mode, particularly the suspension of belief aims for equanimity without settling down but ongoing investigation. The practical interpretation shows Pyrrhonists' similar themes concerning beliefs and peace of mind that Pyrrho's view and guideline embody life in peace.<sup>380</sup>

Briefly, Pyrrho's life and thought represent a philosophical formula in having a neutral stance toward dealing with dogmatic beliefs based on actions to achieve an

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<sup>375</sup> Lisa Raphals, "Skeptical Strategies in the Zhuangzi" in Kjellberg, "Skepticism, Truth, and the Good Life." 28.

<sup>376</sup> Kjellberg and Ivanhoe, *Essays on Skepticism*, 6–7.

<sup>377</sup> Bett, *Cambridge Companion to Ancient Scepticism*, 18–19; Groarke, *Greek scepticism*, 86.

<sup>378</sup> Groarke, *Greek scepticism*, 87; Vogt et al., *Pyrrhonian skepticism in Diogenes Laertius*, 19. DL IX.65

<sup>379</sup> Vogt et al., *Pyrrhonian skepticism in Diogenes Laertius*, 21. DL IX.69

<sup>380</sup> Groarke, *Greek scepticism*, 90.

imperturbable mind and live one's life without beliefs.<sup>381</sup> In some way, skeptics could live without beliefs while there were no criteria of truth to justify what is right or wrong. While knowledge does not entail beliefs, rational justification is not comparable with the guide for living.<sup>382</sup> Somehow, Pyrrhonists could live their lives regardless of any criterion of truth or belief or knowledge. Without an assertion of truth-claim or absolute conclusion, they had neither belief nor disbelief but the mental state of tranquility. Pyrrhonists did not claim that nothing can be known but made no truth claim. They wisely adopt their skeptical methods to abandon any belief or disbelief of grasping any position and claim to maintain mental tranquility.

In the historical portrayal of Pyrrho, the most survival resources are the indirect secondary reports of his pupil, Timon,<sup>383</sup> who has reported on Pyrrho's fundamental statements describing standpoint and guide in the attitude toward the nature of reality. The primary account was in Aristocles' reported summary.<sup>384</sup> The statement expresses Pyrrhonist attitude toward how things are by nature and how to deal with them without judgment.<sup>385</sup>

In the same way, Diogenes Laertius described that Pyrrho determined non-dogmatic beliefs but held an appearance for his skeptical criterion and brought about

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<sup>381</sup> Ramón Román-Alcalá, "Pyrrho of Elis and Indifference as Therapy," 113; Brennan, "Ethics and Epistemology in Sextus Empiricus," 22.

<sup>382</sup> Gascoigne, *Scepticism*, 48–49.

<sup>383</sup> Vogt et al., *Pyrrhonian skepticism in Diogenes Laertius*, 54. Timon of Phlius (c.320-230 BCE.) is the chief disciple and spokesman who wrote satirical poems, *silloi* in the report of Pyrrho's conversation about how things are by nature.

<sup>384</sup> Long, *Hellenistic Philosophers*, 16; Bett, *Pyrrho, His Antecedents*, 42–43. The recite of Pyrrho's view was advocated Aristotles' argument against it.

<sup>385</sup> Bett, *Pyrrho, His Antecedents*, 18–19; Clayman, *Timon of Phlius*, 54–55; Aristocles, *Aristocles of Messene*, 26–29; Vogt, "Ancient Skepticism," 2011, 29–30; Bett, *Cambridge Companion to Ancient Scepticism*, 40–41; Long, *Hellenistic Philosophers*, 14–15.

tranquility by undertaking suspension of belief like a shadow follows its substance.<sup>386</sup>

Based on these statements, the Pyrrhonist view claims nothing, neither truth nor falsehood nor any belief, but to express the feeling of nature, which has nothing to with reason or belief. By nature or three characteristics, things are undifferentiable, unmeasurable, and undecidable.<sup>387</sup> To reach the skeptical goal of mental claim, a wise man has to suspend any belief in grasping things as they really are but to live without belief concerning nothing more than that in opposing dogmatists. The skeptics continue to investigate and inquire about things without accepting any dogmatic belief or view but only things in appearance. For example, the skeptic is willing to say that honey seems sweet by perceiving sweetness through the senses but proclaims no thoughts and belief in the essence of sweetness as neither proof nor disproof but regarding appearance.<sup>388</sup>

In other words, lack of mental unrest (*ataraxia*) is an ideal or an attitude. The equal strength of opposed assertion (*isostheneia*)<sup>389</sup> like a shadow follows a body and relation between and suspension of belief (*epoché*) and tranquility (*ataraxia*). Things or arguments are no more this than that which suspension of belief could lead to the achievement of mental tranquility. As Burnyeat points out that “living by appearance” is the solution of Pyrrhonist skeptics concerned about nature and belief in suspending belief and having tranquility.<sup>390</sup> Briefly, mental imperturbability (*ataraxia*) could be the final result of suspending belief. Overturn the mainstream philosophy, Pyrrhonists provide the ideal of living without belief and living by appearance, which is the mental attitude of

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<sup>386</sup> Machuca, “Ancient Skepticism,” 235; Diogenes and Hicks, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers II.*, 517–19; Hankinson, *Skeptics*, 2016, 135. PH I.30, DL IX.105-108

<sup>387</sup> Beckwith, *Greek Buddha*, 50–51; Bett, *Pyrrho, His Antecedents*, 18–29.

<sup>388</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 15. PH I.19-20

<sup>389</sup> In skeptic terms, equipollence refers to the equal weight of arguments and the equal balance of things; good and bad. Dancy and Sosa, *Companion to Epistemology*, 23.

<sup>390</sup> Burnyeat and Frede, *Original Sceptics*, 36.

accepting neither true nor false nor knowledge nor opinion nor reason but the restructuring of thought and cognitive relation things by appearance regardless of what things are.<sup>391</sup> In Sextus's revival account of Pyrrhonism, the Pyrrhonist view ties with the idea of determining nothing and aversion of dogmatic, choice that involves a commitment but a deliberate choice as suspension of belief, suspension of judgment, and tranquility.

As a reporter, Sextus Empiricus has reframed the Pyrrhonist perspective against dogmatic. As a revival of Pyrrhonism, Sextus's account distinguishes the Pyrrhonist skeptic from other Hellenistic schools. Sextus exclusively justifies his purpose to present Pyrrhonian in Hellenistic philosophy through skeptical methods against dogmatists. Particularly the highlight of the Pyrrhonist view aims for curing dogmatic beliefs. Moreover, the therapeutic methods or remedies highlight a life without belief but the peace of mind resulting from suspending belief. Indeed, Diogenes treats Pyrrhonist thought and views closer to Pyrrho as the founder of Pyrrhonism; otherwise, Sextus amplified Pyrrhonist idea under the label Pyrrhonian in verities of explanation and extensive version.

### **Sextus Empiricus**

According to the Outline of Pyrrhonism, Sextus describes skeptics among Greek philosophers who have found the truth known as Dogmatists<sup>392</sup> and different from Academics<sup>393</sup> who have found no truth. However, those who claim nothing but keep on searching are skeptics. Thus skeptic (*skeptikos*) asserts neither truth nor false of things

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<sup>391</sup> Ibid., 36–37.

<sup>392</sup> Those who claim that truth is found are treated as Dogmatists such as Aristotle, Epicurus, and Stoics.

<sup>393</sup> Those who claim that things are inapprehensible are treated as Academics such as Cleitomachus and Carneades and other Academics.

but undertakes to investigate, examine everything (*skeptesthai*), and search for truth.<sup>394</sup>

Skeptics, particularly Pyrrhonists, are like seekers, investigators searching or questioning (*zēteō*) for the truth. Hence, they aim for the truth as the searching object without committing any belief or assent. Truth is neither inapprehensible nor absolute but inquiring with all sorts of investigation. Especially skeptics do not hold any dogmatic view but act upon appearance regardless of belief or reason but a personal perception.

In contrast to dogmatists, skeptics hold no claim or belief as Sextus states that “the Pyrrhonian philosopher assents to nothing that is non-evident.”<sup>395</sup> In concerning non-evident, skeptics imply the formula; “no more” to determine nothing. Indeed, Pyrrhonist standpoint against dogmatists emphasizes non-assertion in favor of ordinary and detachment from beliefs that could not be the case neither agree nor disagree, proof nor disproof, reason nor logic. However, Pyrrhonists hold no beliefs or claims but keep on searching. They use their modes of inquiry as the methods of arguments (*tropes*) against dogmatists.<sup>396</sup>

Moreover, suspending belief is defined as “the ability” to justify neither rejection nor affirmation of assertion, but to imply an equal balance of all justification, either agreement or disagreement; hence, it goes beyond true and false, aiming for tranquility.<sup>397</sup> In the Pyrrhonist perspective, this ability to suspend belief is the mental attitude of non-assertion, neither absolute certainty nor beliefs nor reason throughout justification. Thus, this attitude could lead to disturbance without belief and ease our action that appears in everyday life regardless of any dogmatic criterion and beliefs.

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<sup>394</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 3. PH I.1-4

<sup>395</sup> Ibid., 9–10. PH I.13-14

<sup>396</sup> PH I.5-6

<sup>397</sup> PH I.8-10

Briefly, Sextus concludes the Pyrrhonist criterion to withhold beliefs and perform any conduct and action toward everyday life by appearance, opposite the dogmatists who made the case of things in a matter of non-evidence.<sup>398</sup> There were fourfold that could be adopted as a guide of life: the guide by nature, the constraint of passions, the tradition of laws and customs, the instruction of the arts. These are within the limits of natural capability throughout sensation, thought, and passions and a tradition of customs and laws that can be adopted without dogmatic beliefs and views.<sup>399</sup> In this case, Pyrrhonists perform everyday tasks like feeling cold and thirst but did not hold any beliefs (*dogmata*) that things are by nature bad or good, for that matter, as well as traditions that cannot be justified which one is good or bad. For example, eating with hands, forks, spoons, and chopsticks cannot be justified which one is good or bad over customs. However, it simply acts upon tradition in everyday life regardless of views, opinions, and beliefs. There is nothing to do with dogmatic beliefs but the way of life.

Therefore, Pyrrhonists can act without belief or opinion but rely on appearance or a piece of evidence. The Pyrrhonist perspective elaborates the practical orientation by non-dogmatic views or beliefs that appeal to phenomena, appearances, customs, and traditions. Pyrrhonist skeptics aim to enhance an ability to obtain un-disturbance by suspending any dogmatic beliefs or views based on things by themselves without any determination or principle or category through perception and opinion imposed by dogmatists. In contrast, suspension of belief leads to the idea of life without beliefs as the final goal of the mental state of tranquility or non-disturbance (*ataraxia*).

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<sup>398</sup> PH I.21-22

<sup>399</sup> PH I.23-25



## Pyrrhonist Perspective of Suspending Belief

Against dogmatic beliefs, Pyrrhonists use arguments and counterarguments with equal strength in contrast to the dogmatic claim and to clean up any absolute certainty. Diogenes remarks that “whenever things are at odds with each other and arguments have equal strength...for argument, a counterargument lies in the opposite.”<sup>400</sup> Skeptics use arguments as their tools.<sup>401</sup> Sedley points out that “the skeptic has up to now been motivated by just the same goal of *ataraxia*.”<sup>402</sup> Indeed, Sextus describes the goal of suspension belief as equanimity embodied in a practical mode of life without belief (*adoxastos*).<sup>403</sup> In practical ways of life, life without belief is the rival of other schools, thus Pyrrhonists concern a solution to cure dogmatic beliefs and attitude toward peace of mind. Life without belief is possible for the wise men that follow the skeptical means that the Pyrrhonist goal of tranquility can be achieved by suspending belief.

To see the case of skeptical attitude, suspending belief is to oppose any account with encounter argument due to the equivalence of puzzlements either true or false. Without a proposition or non-criterion of truth, skeptics describe things in themselves regardless of truth claims. Things appear different in human experiences and affect each individual differently. In the practical orientation of Pyrrhonism, appearance insists on an involuntary key for actions without beliefs. The idea of a life without beliefs is the consequence of suspending belief that could lead to the mental attitude of tranquility.

In this case, the Pyrrhonist therapeutic aim is to thoroughly cure the Dogmatist claim of the fundamental nature of things discovered and found that could lead to

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<sup>400</sup> Vogt et al., *Pyrrhonian skepticism in Diogenes Laertius*, 27. DL IX.76

<sup>401</sup> Ibid., 27. DL IX.77

<sup>402</sup> David Sedley, “The Motivation of Greek Skepticism” Burnyeat, *The Skeptical Tradition*, 22.

<sup>403</sup> Brunschwig et al., *Greek Thought*, 957–58; Burnyeat and Frede, *Original Sceptics*, 34–35; Kuzminski, *Pyrrhonism*, 14–15; Lessa, “Ways of Scepticism,” 517. PH I.22–23, 226, 231, II.246, 254, 258, III.235

nowhere but disturbance of mental unsettledness. The suspension of belief is the remedy to settle down the mind to see things indifferent and see things with equipollence of views. As Ramón puts it that Pyrrhonist is a philosophical therapy for curing dogmatism.<sup>404</sup> Particularly Dogmatic assertions establish the truth claims over either thing that cannot be known or things beyond its appearance as the fundamental nature of the world or reality. Indeed, many schools of Greek philosophy such as Pythagorean, Academic, and Stoics established their assumptions about truth (*aletheia*) based on nature or essence of things and beyond appearance in the accounts of reality and reason.<sup>405</sup>

In sum, the Dogmatists claim an absolute certainty or proposition that has determined the truth or the real nature things about the world. However, skeptics show that things are indifferent that what is or is not, either is or is not, neither is nor is not either. In brief, “no more this than that” is disassociated with those claims and dogmatic accounts. In the Pyrrhonist perspective, suspending belief does accept appearance and deploy an equal strength and skeptical inquiry in rejecting dogmatic claims or beliefs. By saying that is no more this than that, dissolve dogmatist opponents and lead the mind in peace by suspending those beliefs neither true nor false. Unlike dogmatics, skeptics employ equal strength of counter-argument and encounter-argument (*isostheneia*) to achieve mental stability (*stasis dianoisa*). They aim for peace of mind (*ataraxia*) by suspending beliefs and searching for truth, known as a seeker.<sup>406</sup> Simply Burnyeat put it that skeptic non-belief is to assent nothing but appearance.<sup>407</sup>

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<sup>404</sup> Ramón Román-Alcalá, “Pyrrho of Elis and Indifference as Therapy,” 119.

<sup>405</sup> *Aletheia* (ἀλήθεια) is truth or disclosure in philosophy. Groarke, *Greek Scepticism*, 19; Naess, *Scepticism*, 28–30.

<sup>406</sup> Naess, *Scepticism*, 5–6.

<sup>407</sup> Burnyeat, *Skeptical Tradition*, 42. PH I.13

## Distinctive Outlook of Pyrrhonist Skeptic

According to Timon's passages, natural guideline indicates that things by nature are interminable. Pyrrhonists keep searching and making inquiries without determination about things and the truth, unlike the Dogmatist claims, either what truth is or is not. In detail, non-skeptical philosophers have established their accounts of nature or reality that have either been found or not found. These philosophical assertions are given by asserting the only valid claim to affirm or deny things. The truth has assented from grasping through the notion of *katalêpsis*, a mental grasping of a sense impression. For example, the Stoics endorse a sense of impression or mental perception about things that cannot fail to be false if one experiences the actual knowledge associated with a *cataleptic* impression; thus, it is infallible.

Mainly Stoics deploy the apprehensive impression (*phantasiai katalēptikē*) in affirming the criterion of truth and the Zeno's conception of cognition or grasping or apprehension about things as the truth or reality.<sup>408</sup> Briefly, the notion of apprehensive impression is designated to be true in the mental grasping of sense-impression.<sup>409</sup> This account of grasping things as the truth attempts to determine what can be achieved by wise men who have gained actual knowledge. Thus, dogmatic claims are accurate by apprehension. In this case, the comprehensive knowledge of reality assent (*sunkatathesis*) about things as the truth and asserting the apprehensive impression (*phantasiai katalēptikē*) of being conceived about things imprinted on the mind.<sup>410</sup>

Otherwise, the skeptical inquiry is "to think without claim" (*noein haplos*) of the absolute

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<sup>408</sup> It refers to the impression or apprehension (*katalēptikē phantasia*) of grasping things or reality. Bevan, *Stoics and Sceptics*, 19; Cicero, Rackham, and Cicero, *De natura deorum*, 655.

<sup>409</sup> Thorsrud, "Ancient Greek Skepticism," 3.

<sup>410</sup> Fine, *The Possibility of Inquiry: Meno's Paradox from Socrates to Sextus*, 331. PH II.4

or the truth of reality (*hyparxis*).<sup>411</sup> A skeptical attitude is sufficient for one is being able to inquire without assertion neither true nor false. Thus, skeptics suspend natural or reality judgments and claims and give up all beliefs (non-doxas).

However, skeptics believe not to claim like dogmatists but have known about what appears to them, which does not imply true or false like dogmatic claims. Sextus discusses the skeptical attitude as “a result of passive impressions and clear appearance” that does not involve the reality of claiming neither true nor false, simply appearing in suspending assertion.<sup>412</sup> Thus, Pyrrhonist skeptics seem to believe in what appears but no further claim or doxastic claims, which are beliefs of having found the truth. According to the Stoic doctrine of exact knowledge of reality, their claims or knowledge are based on proof of arguments (*apodeixis*)<sup>413</sup> and philosophical discourses (*logos*)<sup>414</sup> for grasping through perception (*Phantasia*) and affection (*pathos*).<sup>415</sup> Thus “*all things are discerned using logical study.*”<sup>416</sup> The criterion of truth implies logic, nature, and ethic in proof and reason to judge reality and non-reality.

In contrast, skeptical inquiry relies on “to know” based on neither mere reflective thought nor some proof. Sextus argues that all proofs fail to “a regress ad infinitum” and “circular reasoning.” Hence, any proof turns out to be an inapprehensible knowledge in the criterion of truth.<sup>417</sup> Dogmatic view, based on Democritus, a man is an essence in common of all things.<sup>418</sup> Therefore various dogmatic assertions of truth or reality are

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<sup>411</sup> Fine, 334–35. M VIII.40

<sup>412</sup> Empiricus, Annas, and Barnes, *Outlines of Scepticism*, 157. PH II.10

<sup>413</sup> Cicero, Rackham, and Cicero, *De natura deorum ; Academica*, 501. Acad ii.26-27

<sup>414</sup> Empiricus, Annas, and Barnes, *Outlines of Scepticism*, 159; Bevan, *Stoics and Sceptics*, 36–37. PH II.13

<sup>415</sup> Fine, *Possibility of Inquiry*, 346.

<sup>416</sup> Diogenes and Hicks, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers II*, 191; DL IX.83

<sup>417</sup> Empiricus, Annas, and Barnes, *Outlines of Scepticism*, 165. PH II.19-20

<sup>418</sup> PH II.23

dogmatic judgments to determine what is true or false in the apprehension of things. The claim could not be apprehended in this case, but it falls into *ad hominem* through a personal judgment.<sup>419</sup> By contrast, Sextus marks that all inquiries do not rely upon either true or false. Pyrrhonist skeptics give no judgment and claim nothing, so they have abandoned all dogmatic beliefs but accept what appears to them. Thus having known things could be guided by appearance and abandonment of all dogmatic beliefs.

Moreover, the skeptic way of thinking and acting utilizing the natural guide, Pyrrhonists do follow appearance (*phainesthai*)<sup>420</sup> that things appear to be or go by the appearance rather than things are in reality through beliefs or doctrines or mere opinions. Sextus explains that "we use the term 'are' for the term 'appear,' and what we virtually means is 'all things appear relative.'"<sup>421</sup> In this case, the skeptic does not affirm nor deny that things are absolutely and real.<sup>422</sup> Skeptic says "it is a day" is meant at the present moment that it appears to him "day."<sup>423</sup> Indeed, Sextus indicates that "the natural guideline is that by which we are naturally capable of sensation and thought; constraint of the passions is that whereby hunger drives us to food and thirst to drink."<sup>424</sup>

By sensory experience, Pyrrhonists follow their senses of perception that things are evidently and affected by what appears to be in their impulse of affects (*pathē*).<sup>425</sup> Therefore, Sextus concludes the enunciation of skeptical formulae that "he states what appears to himself and announces his own impression in an undogmatic way, without

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<sup>419</sup> Fine, *Possibility of Inquiry*, 356–57.

<sup>420</sup> Brennan, "Ethics and Epistemology in Sextus Empiricus," 36–46.

<sup>421</sup> It refers to the impression or apprehension of grasping things or reality. Sextus used "appearance" (*phainesthai*) to describe things without an epistemic claim, such as an utterance for sensory experiences or expression. PH I.135, I.198

<sup>422</sup> PH I.134

<sup>423</sup> AM XI.18-19

<sup>424</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 17; Sextus and Mates, *Skeptical Way*, 7; PH I. 24

<sup>425</sup> Sextus and Mates, *Skeptical Way*, 8–9.

making any positive assertion regarding the external realities.”<sup>426</sup> For example, skeptics would say the honey seems sweet, so they do not make any proposition or imply any belief or take mere opinion and assent to anything like the honey is truly sweet. Without a position on things absolutely, one can avoid the mental disturbance of holding dogmatic belief either good or bad; as a result, one can achieve tranquility (*ataraxia*).<sup>427</sup>

In contrast to dogmatists who grasp things in believing that they are good or bad by nature, Pyrrhonists do not have such a belief whatsoever, so they are free from worries or suffering in believing that all things are naturally good or bad. Without grasping things or dogmatic belief, they can maintain their mind imply achieving peace of mind. Indeed, Pyrrhonist skeptics can eliminate two sorts of mental illnesses of believing and processing dogmatic view. First, all mental disturbances come from a dogmatic belief that things are good or bad by nature, so grasping this belief in a certain way while things good or bad could happen. Thus dogmatists suffer or disbelief when things happen otherwise different from their beliefs. Second, dogmatists who hold that something is naturally good or bad would be upset and unsatisfied when something is supposed to be wrong. However, it turns out to be correct, so they have suffered from processing things in opposite and unexpected things because of grasping things in a certain way.<sup>428</sup> In Pyrrho’s statements, the nature of things is indeterminate; any prospects of things could occur in various ways, either good or bad. Because things are naturally non-logical differentia, not measurable, and unjudged, thus they could not behold using senses,

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<sup>426</sup> PH I.15

<sup>427</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 21. PH I.24-28

<sup>428</sup> Wieland J.W., “Can Pyrrhonists Act Normally?” 283.

reason, belief, and opinion.<sup>429</sup> Briefly, Pyrrhonists have no such beliefs and no ill of believing as such, so they have no worries, just at least the peace of mind.

For inquiry, skeptics admit no concept of apprehension and proofs comparable to searching. However, suspension of belief is the matter of equilibrium to encounter indifference to overthrow dogmas and searching for truth. Timon restates that “things are equally indifferent, unstable, and indeterminate (*adiaphora kai astathmêta kai anepikrita*); for this reason, neither our perceptions nor beliefs tell the truth or lie (*adoxastous kai aklineis kai akradantous*).”<sup>430</sup> If these natural characteristics have presented in our perception seem to be puzzled in differences, they could not be grasped either way. Belief or knowledge could be only an opinion, so one should not trust but abandon them.<sup>431</sup>

Therefore, it is sufficient to be skeptical that knowing things or inquiring can be done without beliefs or apprehension. The abandonment of dogmatic beliefs could bring more achievement of mental settlement in pursuit of truth rather than having dogmatic beliefs or criteria of truth. Thus, one inquires no means of belief, logic, and reason but through appearance. Any judgment and proof are equally in the balance of probability and improbability.<sup>432</sup> Avoiding dogmatic belief or assertion, one can inquire and achieve mental un-disturbance from the fabrication of dogmatic belief and speculation of the truth. Sextus defines Pyrrhonist as one who adheres to appearances and lives just as everyday life, undogmatic (*adoxastos*) under the guidance of nature.<sup>433</sup> Briefly, Pyrrhonist

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<sup>429</sup> Beckwith, *Greek Buddha*, 25–27.

<sup>430</sup> Bett, *Pyrrho, His Antecedent*, 28–30; Vogt, “Ancient Skepticism,” 2011, 27; Burnyeat, “Tranquillity without a Stop,” 86–93.

<sup>431</sup> Bett, *Pyrrho, His Antecedents*, 150–51.

<sup>432</sup> Empiricus, Annas, and Barnes, *Outlines of Scepticism*, 7; PH I.9-10

<sup>433</sup> PH I.23-24

skeptics have provided nothing to understand or to grasp what truth and reality are.

However, they renounce any dogmatic view of apprehension and respond to things by an affection of differences.

### **Against Dogmatists**

Dogma is the primary character of Greek philosophy associated with inquiry and speculation about things and truth claims. Skeptics are unlike dogmatists who grasp things either true or false under their beliefs and assents; dogma what they believe and approve on their accounts against others, and dogmatize things like reality or truth utilizing approvals of logic, reason, and belief. Indeed, dogmatists assert claims on things non-evidently. Otherwise, skeptics renounce any dogmatic belief and claim and carry on investigating and searching for the truth.<sup>434</sup> They ask every issue with a question that has not yet found the answer. They approach any philosophical controversy without a fundamental assumption, either true or false but maintain their ability with skill in suspending any belief or claim for achieving the freedom of disturbance. Indeed they do follow appearance.<sup>435</sup> Thus, skepticism does not dogmatize things in the sense of dogma to determine things such as how things are by nature of reality, which are the non-evident objects.<sup>436</sup>

However, Pyrrhonist skeptic endorses appearance in which is compelled by impression. He would say about things by nature based on appearance that honey appears to him to be sweet.<sup>437</sup> In the main point of Pyrrhonist outline, dogmatic beliefs must be abandoned by opposing arguments and claims that cross out any proof or disproof

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<sup>434</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 5–7; PH I.7-8

<sup>435</sup> PH I.19-20

<sup>436</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 6–11; PH I.13-14

<sup>437</sup> Hankinson, *Skeptics*, 274; PH I.19-20



regardless of any assumption. By suspending those beliefs, skeptics can keep searching without grasping any beliefs or absolute truth and achieving the mental state of tranquility. In Timon's passage, Pyrrho's suspending belief is the foundation of Pyrrhonism, and later compiles of Sextus has shown Pyrrhonist views against dogmatists. Simply Pyrrhonist view is emphasized its critical features while using their modes of inquiry for an alternative direction adverse the rival dogmatists.

In the common ground of Greek philosophical discussion, cognitive impression or reflection, logical discourses, and comprehension (*katalêpsis*) are the primary means of understanding and making judgments about things. They are the mental procedures to achieve what thing or truth is, covering the criterion of knowledge or truth. Both skeptics and dogmatists use these methods for different means and purposes. Even though Greek philosophers seem to have their common target of looking for the truth, they define their methods in various ways. In general, Sextus defines the outline of Pyrrhonism that Pyrrhonists are the genuine inquirers (*skeptikos*) who attempt 'to investigate, 'to inquire' (*skeptesthai*) without any belief in contrast with dogmatists who either discover or deny the truth. In sum, there are three main types of philosophy; Dogmatic, Academic, and Skeptic.<sup>438</sup> In the Outlines of Pyrrhonism, Sextus explains the skeptical expressions that “skeptics do not make the universal claim about things non-evident or with dogmatic inquiries as well as an assertion or dogmatic statements, but they suspend all dogmatic beliefs.”<sup>439</sup>

Furthermore, Sextus discusses his polemical classification that the skeptic way of thought differs from the Heraclitean, Democritean, Cyrean, Protagorean, and Academic

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<sup>438</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 3. PH I.4

<sup>439</sup> Sextus and Bury, 123–25. PH I.206-209

philosophies as far as Plato, the head of school and Philo who denies an apprehensible object.<sup>440</sup> Among dogmatics, Stoic, Zeno of Tarsus defined the studies of canons and criteria using their means to discover the truth.<sup>441</sup> Otherwise, Academics redefined in following that “nothing can be known.”<sup>442</sup> Indeed, Pyrrhonist skeptics under Sextus’s classification are not quite like doubters who puzzle things around without assertion or goal but inquire by the means for the truth as well as by suspending belief for achieving the mental tranquility. In sum, the Pyrrhonist does not claim that nothing can be known nor make a truth claim but wisely suspends or abandons any belief or disbelief of grasping any position or claim to maintain tranquility.<sup>443</sup> As Bett puts it, Pyrrhonist skeptics can act mentally, suspending belief whatsoever and keep on searching without grasping things or having theories, doctrines, or absolute answers.<sup>444</sup> Unlike skeptics, dogmatists hold a specific belief or opinion that leads to mental disturbance.<sup>445</sup> Sextus concludes that extreme perturbations are the consequence of asserting things either good or evil but indifferent when things happen opposite what is of dogmatist beliefs.<sup>446</sup> In this case, Pyrrhonist skeptics do hold nothing whatsoever, so they seem to be free from assertion and keep on investigating things on both sides. A skeptic could live a simple life as ordinary people without mere opinion or pure intellectual guidance by suspending belief.<sup>447</sup>

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<sup>440</sup> Sextus and Bury, 127–45; Machuca, “New Essays on Ancient Pyrrhonism,” 14–15. PH I.201-235

<sup>441</sup> Diogenes and Hicks, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers II*, 151. DL 7.42

<sup>442</sup> Academic skeptics held a dogmatic belief in saying that they had found no truth. Cicero, Rackham, and Cicero, *De natura deorum*, 491; Aca II.29

<sup>443</sup> Trisokkas, *Pyrrhonian Scepticism*, 21.

<sup>444</sup> Bett, *Sextus Empiricus*, xii.

<sup>445</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 10.

<sup>446</sup> PH I.277-279

<sup>447</sup> Bett, *Sextus Empiricus*, xiii.

According to the *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, Sextus lays out skeptical procedure as the mental attitude of opposing dogmatic way of thought in searching for the truth, by enhancing an ability of mental procure to suspending belief; the ending consequence would be a state of tranquility.<sup>448</sup> He points out the man who participates in the skeptical ability was the Pyrrhonian philosopher, who was the skeptic who refrains from dogmatizing in judgment about things either true or false.<sup>449</sup>

In contrast, grasping a thing as what it is, a dogmatic standpoint comprehends and accepts it as truth or reality. The mental attitude of beliefs (*doxai*) is holding something as truth and rejecting something as false. Thus, this energetic attitude of proposition toward things in a certain way, either affirming or denying, could not make the reliable toward the goal through investigation.<sup>450</sup> In standard, the Pyrrhonian and Stoic views believe that beliefs do not even merit the evaluations “true” and “false.”<sup>451</sup> Under the goal is the skeptical method through free inquiry without any presupposition and assertion. Simply belief could be closed to the goal of truth, but it does not entail the truth. Otherwise, an inquiry is much related to non-judgments with appearances opposing of grasping either true or false.<sup>452</sup>

On investigation, Pyrrhonists challenge dogmatists with a similar argument or belief to suspend any absolute claim or assumption, admitting nothing. In order to think without any apprehend of reality, one should realize what things are by nature but not only one side of truth without other sides.<sup>453</sup> Thus, by not knowing the answer yet, one

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<sup>448</sup> Empiricus, Annas, and Barnes, *Outlines of Scepticism*, 7. PH I.8

<sup>449</sup> PH I.11-13

<sup>450</sup> Sextus and Mates, *Skeptic Way*, 6.

<sup>451</sup> Vogt, *Belief and Truth*, 10.

<sup>452</sup> Empiricus, Annas, and Barnes, *Outlines of Scepticism*, 9. PH I.11-13

<sup>453</sup> Sextus and Mates, *Skeptic Way*, 6.

can inquire what will come at the end of the investigation without preconception or assertion as the dogmatic beliefs. Briefly, skeptical inquiry aims to discover the truth with open-mindedness. Pyrrhonist skeptics can investigate for the truth and cure the illness of mental disturbance or freedom from worry (*ataraxia*). At some point, skeptics could have an undogmatic view or no belief (*adoxastos*) that does not go beyond evidence so that they can make an investigation with a lack of comprehensive knowledge or determined answer. Holding a side of reality, skeptics cannot see things with the whole truth. The skeptical main feature is an ability of non-doxastic attitude in holds no position either true or false but keeps searching for the truth.

The cornerstone of Pyrrhonist skeptics, no dogmatic belief or belief whatsoever plays a crucial role in the Pyrrhonist procedure that is distinct from non-skeptics or dogmatists. It indicates the skeptic's ability (*δύναμις*; *dunamis*)<sup>454</sup> for being able to withhold any judgment and to live without belief or assent by claiming nothing through suspension. The skeptical attitude toward dogmatists is to cure the illness, in which skeptics do not hold onto beliefs by committing non-judgment or replacing either affirming or rejecting an argument over another but provide a challenge with an encounter of equal arguments. In sum, skeptics can overcome dogmatic beliefs revealing the nature of equal strength (*isostheneia*) in arguments and equipollence of things. Thus, the skeptical ability provides an equal proposition to oppose every proposition in suspending dogmatic beliefs.<sup>455</sup>

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<sup>454</sup> Bett, *Sextus Empiricus*, xi; Fine, *Possibility of Inquiry*, 328–30.

<sup>455</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 9. PH I.10-13

## Skeptical Ability and Equipollence

At some point, doubt is portrayed as a skeptical point for examining things without assertion or undecidable state of mental passive that one could not act to anything. However, the skeptic standpoint emphasizes the skeptical ability and opposes things in equipollence matters. Suspension of belief emphasizes the opposite accounts by the equal strength to eliminate illness from dogmatic beliefs and achieve tranquility. Indeed, the skeptic view provides a set of arguments on equal strength to make a balanced encounter in healing the mental illness by disposing of the dogmatists' ailment, self-conceit, or dogmatic beliefs rather than persuasiveness. In sum, the benefits of the skeptical point of view, arguments, and discussion are to achieve freedom from the mental disturbance (*ataraxia*) associated with the holding of dogmatic beliefs, mere opinions, and absolute reality.

In general, skeptical doubt has a widespread recognition of un-decidability or wandering of non-agreement in any sort or holding nothing as the final result. The skeptical notion indicates philosophical disagreement or disputation (*diaphōnia*) that Pyrrhonist view of suspending beliefs reveals any contradiction of things, either good or bad of every standpoint. Skeptical arguments based on discrepancy aim to equilibrium every equation or solution integrated into Pyrrhonist discourses in treating dogmatic to reveal all possible points, either affirming or denying in searching for truth. Indeed, this ongoing discussion will be on and so on, *ad infinitum*, as Sextus points out that.

They say, for the controversy which exists amongst the physicists...all things, both sensible and intelligible: which controversy admits of no settlement because we can neither employ a sensible nor an intelligible criterion, since every criterion we may adopt is controverted and therefore discredited.<sup>456</sup>

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<sup>456</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 101. PH I.178

Among all disputes, these consequences lead to the skeptical mental attitude of un-decidability, neither accepting nor rejecting things, enhancing the suspension of belief to achieve calm or freedom from disturbance, particularly without worries from dogmatic beliefs. Sextus defines skepticism as ability (*dunamis*) as suspending belief aiming for freedom from disturbance (*ataraxia*). The Pyrrhonist method seems to make no legitimacy any desirable truth or belief but to examine issues in a similar argument of the negative statements. The skeptical anti-doctrinal method opposes what philosophers have claimed and stated their standpoints. This way of dealing with dogmatic could have an intrinsic value in examining and investigating the achievement of dogmatic assumptions.

As a consequence of skeptical inquiry, one can eliminate the mental tendency to grasp things neither true nor false while investigating. Notably, dogmatists make claims or assertions that either thing is good or bad, true or false. However, skeptics suspend dogmatic beliefs and reveal that things are indifferent regardless of that affirmative or negative opinion; thus, things are indifferent or neither good nor bad. With free inquiry by preventing falling into dogmatic traps, skeptics hold no belief and can still investigate as inquirers without assertion things or objects either true or false but with the mental state of calm.

Moreover, the skeptic ability of opposition (*dunamis antithetikē*) is an oppositional procedure to reveal things in differences using appearance to stabilize the mind from assertion nothing neither accepting nor rejecting things as true or false. Their skeptical procedures are acquired to deal with dogmatic belief to oppose any arguments with encounter arguments. Thus, skeptical arguments are implied an anti-thesis due to things in an equal strength or equipollent argument (*isostheneia*). This expression

signifies that things are “no more” this than that (*ou mallon*) in the sense of expression of indifferences. This method could lead to non-assertion (*aphasia*) in acting or suspending beliefs. In this case, Sextus gives the reason behind the expression of equal balance: “not more this than that also indicates our feeling, whereby we come to an end in equipoise because of the equipollence of the opposed objects.” Simply skeptics express indifference to avoid dogmatic beliefs and assent through equilibrium in any arguments or objects that lead to the endpoint of what is true or false instead of what appears to them.

To some extent, the skeptical method of equipollent argument (*isostheneia*) implies a dialectical method to expressed opinion with an equal challenge, either affirming or rejecting things defined in the dogmatic tendency toward truth or reality. Diogenes' report shows Arcesilaus's arguments of both sides of the equation. This procedure aims to dispute any rival arguments for the sake of examination emerging in Academic skepticism. However, this procures well known in rhetorical tradition such as Plato, Aristotle, and Carneades. For philosophical disagreement, skeptical procedures consider each side of the account by equal opposing and contradictory arguments. As Sextus explains in the following:

To every argument, an equal argument is opposed,” we mean “to every argument” that we have investigated, and the word “argument” we use not in its simple sense, but of that which established a point dogmatically and establish something dogmatically, and which is equal to the first in respect of conviction and the lack of it.<sup>457</sup>

In detail, equipollence is regardless of claims to defend the truth but reveals the opposing propositions with equality of trustworthy and untrustworthy in every argument. One account can cross out encounters with equal strength, either affirming or rejecting each other. The possible outcome is to see that all arguments are equal to being true or

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<sup>457</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 119–21. PH I.202

false, so they are contradictory. The skeptic would say that all positions are no more this than that. Thus, the skeptical solution is like a state of balance between a truth claim and a contradiction that all accounts and arguments stand equal to indifference and cancellation. The skeptical account crosses out against dogmatic claims advocating propositions (*logos*), premises, predicate, a conclusion to negate all accounts. In the end, skeptics end up determining nothing and hold up assertion or take no judgments; thus, “the Sceptic’s End is quietude.” They have no answer due to de-dogmatization, not by refusing dogmatic beliefs but by showing the conflict between things, objects, accounts, and truth claims. By placing no claims and maintaining no position, and concerning an equal balance of objects and arguments, they suspend belief to every account in “no way more” to determine and hold neither agreement nor disagreement. The consequence afterward is the mental state of non-disturbance. After the skeptical formula, Pyrrhonists establish no claim and eliminate dogmatists and themselves, so they determine nothing.

For instance, they do not hold any dogmatic belief, so they cannot say it is hot or cool when heated or cooled, but it appears hot or cool. In other words, skeptics do not imply any dogmatic statement that 'honey is sweet,' thus sweet is not the absolute essence of honey. In other words, the premises do not entail a conclusion which means non-evidence does not infer to the approval of things, but it is subject to doubt. Instead of dogmatizing sweet as the essence of honey, the skeptic does not assent to things non-evident but renounces dogmatic views and beliefs through appearance.

In sum, Pyrrhonist skeptics' main focus indicates the skeptical ability as the key element to see things that appear through equal strength, which skeptics can elucidate some sorts of mental illness from dogmatic views and beliefs. In Timon's and Sextus's



accounts of skepticism, the primordial idea of Pyrrho indicates that skeptics could employ their suspension of belief (*epoché*) in the first step toward the de-dogmatization for the final solution as known as the freedom from disturbance (*ataraxia*). To every argument, the Pyrrhonian method implies an opposite argument against another with a similar argument through phenomenal investigation to release the mental illness of dogmatic result. This procedure remarks the skeptical investigation to free themselves from any attachments to dogmatic beliefs to achieve the freedom of mind without determination afterward. Insofar as skeptical tenets are the methodological stance for freedom of investigation, skeptical modes are the crucial collective features to be examined and identified to the skeptical framework for reconstructing suspension of belief.

It is notable that suspending belief is the first step toward the skeptical goal namely tranquility afterward from de-dogmatization to establish nothing neither affirming nor denying things as true or false. With the way to dealing dogmatists and absolute claims or beliefs, Skeptics could not see things or objects in an equal of differences without skeptical mode of dealing with dogmatic view and beliefs. To remark those features, skeptics must have to characterize their ways of encounter arguments for inquiring in accordance with appearance.

In the absence of a doctrinal content and belief, skeptics complete with other schools by using the skeptical procedures to challenge and to deal with dogmatic regardless any truth claims while approaching in favor of descriptive report. On the manner of these engaging arguments against dogmatic beliefs, indeed the ultimate claims or beliefs are not expected to be established but the dogmatic assumption is to emerge

afterward to grasp nothing, so skeptics are able to go on investigation with freedom from disturbance. Contrary to dogmatic claims and beliefs, skeptics determine nothing like a reality beyond evidence or eliminate truth but justify things according to appearance.

Particularly the skeptical tradition has been collected various tools to challenge the tendency of dogmatic beliefs and to reconstruct their polemical stances and discussions in ways to deal with non-skeptics (dogmatists). The counterarguments have engaged to challenge every argument by means of the Pyrrhonian argument against dogmatists which is characterized by the skeptical mode of inquiry. First of all, the Five Modes of Agrippa and the Ten Modes are considered to be the main features of Pyrrhonian skeptic that have been adopted and associated overtime throughout the history of Pyrrhonist skeptic and Hellenistic philosophy. In this analysis of Pyrrhonist skeptic, reconstructing Pyrrhonian perspective must have to look at the Pyrrhonist characteristic from its mode of arguments based on its relation with empirical and epistemic criterion of investigation.

In historical context of Pyrrhonist skeptic form Sextus's Outline of Pyrrhonism, the legitimate constituent characteristics of Pyrrhonist perspective can be identified and reconstructed regarding their position between Skeptic, Academic, and Dogmatic where they are traced back to Hellenistic philosophy such as Heraclitus, Democritus, the Cyrenaics, Protagoras, and the medical Empiricists.<sup>458</sup> For uniquely Pyrrhonist components, Sextus makes a classification to discuss and to distinguish non-skeptical philosophies from Pyrrhonist outlook where Pyrrhonist modes are emphasized and adopted to characterize and systematize into the skeptical mode of arguments. Indeed, the skeptical modes of inquiries are presented Pyrrhonist perspective in opposing arguments

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<sup>458</sup> Machuca, "New Essays on Ancient Pyrrhonism," 12–13.

and discussions that are collected from Agrippa mode of arguments from Pre-Socratic philosophy such as Aristotle as well as its extensive mode of relativity in the exemplify of Pyrrhonist argument from Aenesidemus who is considered to be the first revitalized Pyrrhonist skeptic.<sup>459</sup> Indeed Pyrrhonist view is much closer to the medical empiricism especially from Sextus Empiricus revival of Pyrrhonism.<sup>460</sup> Skeptical modes that are represented in Pyrrhonist tradition have accumulated the most parts from Sextus's and Aenesidemus's stances.<sup>461</sup> They are considered to be the epistemological challenge as the nature of the Pyrrhonism that is reflected to its historical context of discussion.

### **Modes of Investigation**

For investigation, Pyrrhonism has some identical aspects close to the Empiricism of the Medical school. However, the skeptic has no positive affirm about an inapprehensibility of non-evident.<sup>462</sup> In practical concern, the skeptic uses the method as a procedure for guidance caused by affection as the methodical physician guideline for the pathological affection in providing remedies. Generally speaking, skepticism and Empiricism are non-committal in an undogmatic way that both employ their procedures corresponding with affections.<sup>463</sup> Indeed, skeptics can make their philosophical investigation following logic, physics, and ethics in an undogmatic way, so all of them are subjected to critique, test, and inquire in terms of doctrines and criteria without assertion.<sup>464</sup>

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<sup>459</sup> Warren, James, and Frisbee, *Routledge Companion to Ancient Philosophy*, 583–84; Machuca, “New Essays on Ancient Pyrrhonism,” 16; Popkin, *Skepticism*, 22.

<sup>460</sup> Machuca, “New Essays on Ancient Pyrrhonism,” 1–2.

<sup>461</sup> Sextus has identified Aenesidemus, who provided the eight modes to abandon dogmatic beliefs and to dispute any claim in the sense of perplexity. Annas, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 153. PH I.180

<sup>462</sup> PH I.138

<sup>463</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 147–49. PH I.238-241

<sup>464</sup> PH II.13

To some extent, Pyrrhonists oppose all dogmatic claims without beliefs and criteria or axiom (ἀξίωμα) as rules of reference, so they have no common ground for all cases, so there is no universal claim for all cases. Notably, things seem to be such; honey seems sweet; thus, they are relative to individuals. At some point, the Pyrrhonist view is closer to Protagora's notion of relative truth that man is the criterion of everything, and "man is the measure of all things. Pyrrhonians and Protagoreans insist that things are relative and appear to individuals. In the Outline of Pyrrhonism, Sextus shows that Pyrrhonians do not hold any theorem or criterion truth, such as the flexible view of the subjective world and external world caused by existing and non-existing things. They have no assumption of all external worlds. That is simply the matter of non-evident. Therefore, to grasp realities and access the truth are not impossible by reason or belief, neither for judgments nor trusts about things or external realities, so things appear to be by their appearances that are affected in sensory experiences as the empirical evidence. In general, skeptics should hold off any reason or belief to determine things non-evident. However, they are at a standstill of the intellect through the skeptical investigation without affirmation or rejection.

Indeed, the epistemic investigation of Pyrrhonist skeptics does not provide specific criteria to claim any assumption. However, it reflects all indifferent perspectives described objects or things in an account in contrast with its encounter. Hence, there is no solution and claim for the outcome but afterward, abandon all dogmatic claims or beliefs is the way to rescue the mind from disturbance. In other words, Pyrrhonist skeptics employ a method of procedure (*hairesis*) in the sense of know-how to cure the illness of dogmatic beliefs and achieve the mental free of disturbance. They can procure their

modes of inquiries aiming for the final result regardless of whether they are non-evident but according to appearance.<sup>465</sup>

### **Non-Assertion and Way of Life**

According to Pyrrhonism, the skeptical modes of inquiry are described and identified in arguments to eliminate dogmatic beliefs and free the mind from disturbance. In this case, skeptical procedures are the means to argue with an equal balance of claims, opinions, and beliefs. Afterward, skeptics come to the final without the mental illness of dogmatic beliefs from determining things true or false. In the Pyrrhonist view, suspension of belief through determining nothing holds any truth claim neither belief nor persuasion to grasp things to be good or bad by any means such as dogmatic assumptions and persuasions.<sup>466</sup>

In Sextus's works, for arguments against dogmatists, skeptics oppose logicians, physicists, and ethicists roughly non-skeptics with indifferences of counter and encounter arguments. Hence, they have no assertion and suspend all beliefs, neither accepting nor rejecting any claim or belief. Over the matter of disagreement, particularly opposing arguments against dogmatists, Pyrrhonist skeptics suspend judgment on decided and undecided claims of controversies, while they admit no-decision in making assertion; they can keep the investigation and maintain tranquility.<sup>467</sup> Simply skeptics give no absolute answer or non-assertion on neither decided nor undecided controversies. The result does not come from the skeptical arguments over dogmatics but an equal challenge of counter and encounter arguments. In brief, skepticism enhances the ability to suspend beliefs through an equal challenge to eliminate dogmatic opinions or beliefs, neither

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<sup>465</sup> Groarke, *Greek Scepticism*, 60–61.

<sup>466</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 483–85. PH III.238

<sup>467</sup> Barnes, *Toils of Scepticism*, 20; Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 97. PH I.170

proof nor disproof even skeptical arguments, so there is nothing either agreement or disagreement but the abolishing of every argument. As Sextus demonstrates in the following:

Fire after consuming the fuel also destroys itself, similar to purgatives after driving the fluid out of body expels themselves, so the argument against proof can cancel itself after abolishing arguments.<sup>468</sup>

In addition, a simile of ladder shows that a ladder is purposely to ascend to a high place.<sup>469</sup> A skeptic cannot abolish every argument but assert a particular thing. The skeptic does not claim or assert neither affirmation (P) nor negation (not-P) based on the formulae of equal contradictory or “proof against proof.”<sup>470</sup> Sextus concludes the “proof against proof” argument through premises and inference that “therefore proof does not exist therefore the statement proof does not exist is true by reversing the argument.”<sup>471</sup> After providing an equal weight of arguments, skeptics have overturned opposing arguments without any doctrine or belief as their neither assumption nor further procedure to carry on. Hence, they utterly claim nothing or assert nothing to entail any truth or axiom that all propositions are equal affirmative and negative truth and falsehoods.

In sum, the skeptical formulae are to argue against the Dogmatics and then clean itself afterward. This notion of self-refutation shows that Pyrrhonist skeptics have

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<sup>468</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Sextus Empiricus*, 488–89.

<sup>469</sup> McPherran, “Skeptical Homeopathy and Self-Refutation,” 297; Williams, “Scepticism without Theory,” 553. AL II.481

<sup>470</sup> McPherran remarks that self-refutation is not an absolute claim but disproof against proof. Burnyeat points out that it is a reversal argument to refuse a belief or a claim instead of proof and establishment. Castagnoli redefines self-refutation as “self-bracketing expressions” that skeptic does not hold a dogmatic belief but utters things with dispositional expression, neither agreement nor disagreement. Mainly it is to suspend on both sides of the claims (what it is; “P”), and it is contradictory (what it is not; “Not-P”). McPherran, “Skeptical Homeopathy and Self-Refutation,” 290–328; Castagnoli, *Ancient Self-Refutation*, 251–307; Burnyeat, “Protagoras and Self-Refutation,” 47–48. PH I.13, II.69, 70

<sup>471</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 271. PH II.187-188

presented an equal balance of arguments against proof in the absence of dogmatic beliefs or views that barely express how things seem to them without admitting any assertion such as what things are. In Sextus's phases, "opposing appearances to judgments" and "in any way whatsoever" are employed antitheses to eliminate all dogmatic beliefs, including themselves. To this extent, skeptics intend to project both affirmative and negative aspects to demonstrate probability and improbability.<sup>472</sup> They do not determine anything that is grasped by belief or claim, but they are affected or perceived by appearance. Briefly, skeptics abandon any dogmatic belief and claim by asserting nothing, neither affirmative nor negative, conclusion that things indeed are by nature, otherwise accepting what they appear to be individual; for example, honey appears to be sweet to a person. With this descriptive expression or non-theoretical statement, skeptics only express their experiences regardless of neither judgments nor dogmatic beliefs and claim whether what is true or false and good or bad in terms of neither epistemological nor metaphysical speculation. How things are by nature in the matters of appearance based on Eusebius on Aristocles on Timon recited Pyrrho; things themselves appear to be indifferent (*adiaphora*), unstable (*astathmeta*), and indeterminate (*anepikrita*).<sup>473</sup>

On the one hand, Pyrrhonist Skeptic attributes an equal balance of arguments neither truly nor falsely justify through any dogmatic views or beliefs, so Pyrrhonist has determined nothing neither affirm nor deny. On the other hand, Pyrrhonists have described things in self-justification mode simply through appearance based on sense-perception without guaranteeing what things really are but only self-describing what appears individually. In this case, the skeptical statement of how things are by nature

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<sup>472</sup> McPherran, "Skeptical Homeopathy and Self-Refutation," 303; Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 7–9. PH I.10

<sup>473</sup> Warren, James, and Frisbee, *Routledge Companion to Ancient Philosophy*, 497.

shows an individual expression of a person relatively by appearance. Moreover, any dogmatic argument shows a proposition in conflict of affirmation and rejection. It reveals indeterminable, indefinable, and immeasurable things. Pyrrhonists point out things themselves appears to be indifferent, unstable, and indeterminate. Indeed, skeptics commit no dogmatic standpoint and absolute conclusion without holding belief but insist on searching as their method to deal with dogmatists and achieve the goal of tranquility. Skeptics would lay down all arguments with equal strength of affirmation and rejection.

In the case of holding no belief, dogmatists believe in grasping things that are by nature beyond their appearance. In the aversion of dogmatic view, skeptical standpoint indicates a non-dogmatic belief in asserting non-proposition concerning either true or false based on non-evident. Briefly, Sextus concludes that “*the man who determines nothings as to what is naturally good or bad...he is unperturbed.*”<sup>474</sup> Diogenes Laertius described Pyrrho as a man who left nothing to the guidance of senses by his way of guidance is to suspend any beliefs and opinions.<sup>475</sup> Without beliefs (*adoxastos*), a skeptic view adheres nothing to determine things above the realm of appearance.<sup>476</sup> Thus skeptics adhere to appearance distinctively from dogmatists who determine anything above appearance in the sense-presentation using reason, logic, and belief. Simply Pyrrhonists abstain from holding any opinion and asserting nothing to achieve the skeptic’s end of quietude in peace of mind without disturbance neither affirming nor rejecting things.<sup>477</sup>

According to Michael Frede, skeptics express things based on appearance without judgments. For example, Pyrrhonists could not hold any proposition that honey is good or

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<sup>474</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 19. PH I.28

<sup>475</sup> Vogt et al., *Pyrrhonian skepticism in Diogenes Laertius*, 17. DL IX.61

<sup>476</sup> Brunschwig et al., *Greek Thought*, 957–58; Burnyeat and Frede, *Original Sceptics*, 34–35; Kuzminski, *Pyrrhonism*, 14–15; Lessa, “Ways of Scepticism,” 517. PH I.23, 226, 231, II.246, 254

<sup>477</sup> Empiricus, Annas, and Barnes, *Outlines of Scepticism*, 19. PH I.25–26



bad by nature. They would say that it seems to me that honey is good. Thus, it does not mean that is the case in believing or claiming that is the universal case for all. Indeed, Pyrrhonist skeptics admit a non-epistemic sense for claiming nothing above appearance and non-evident count. They describe things as they seem or appear (*phainesthai*). In the sense of non-epistemic claim, things appear in phenomena showing how they are without any formation, neither assent nor rejection. Instead of “*what things are*,” appearance implies no belief or opinion to judge things in a certain way.<sup>478</sup> Instead of given judgment about things, Pyrrhonists suspend any dogmatic belief that is determined one way or other, either truth or false. They do not dogmatize things reflecting there is nothing more other than that in the aspects of equal balance.<sup>479</sup>

Therefore, skeptics have non-dogmatic beliefs or descriptive expressions without dogma, representing a statement of claim or dogmatic standpoint. For this reason, they determine nothing metaphysically and non-epistemic claim. An equal strength of arguments is a skeptic formula to oppose any dogmatic view of asserting things true or false. Pyrrhonists hold no belief in asserting things or dogmatizing nothing because the dogmatic beliefs are justified by affirmation or rejection to make the case. However, skeptics accept appearance as it concerns things through descriptive expression in saying what appears to them, accepting something as truth. Pyrrhonists express and describe things that have affected them involuntarily without asserting anything using appearance.<sup>480</sup> In this case, skeptics say without a truth claim and making propositions as true or false but simply describe what appears to them. By appearance, Pyrrhonists indicate what appears to them without any claim and belief of grasping things as reality,

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<sup>478</sup> Frede, *Essays in Ancient Philosophy*, 196–97.

<sup>479</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 19. PH I.27

<sup>480</sup> PH I.22

either true or false. In this sense, they deduce skeptical formulae of non-epistemic or metaphysic description regardless of the conclusion of convincingness. The matters of opinion and beliefs are “no more” this P than that not-P; they are in an equal balance, either true or false, agreeing or disagreeing. In this sense, Pyrrhonist skeptics extol a neutral attitude of non-belief in describing without assertion what is true or false but the mind still without any commitment to any things or beliefs. In order to present the dilemma of logical assumption in four propositions, tetralemma holds nothing, neither affirmative nor negative assertion to four alternatives.<sup>481</sup>

In case of having no belief (*adoxastos*), Pyrrhonian skeptics aim to eliminate all beliefs, particularly the dogmatic belief of grasping things as true or false. In some cases, skeptics present nothing as a requirement of skeptical epistemic rationality to avoid falsehoods, even a doxastic attitude to keep searching and inquiring truths (being a truth-seeker or investigator). In this case, Jan Willem Wieland argues on Sextus’s argument that “it is rational to suspend our beliefs so long as we are inquiring into their truth.”<sup>482</sup> Simply suspension of belief does entail investigation in which Pyrrhonists would have some neutral attitude as their reason and aims for seeking truths. In Sextus’s analogy of people looking for gold in a dark room, “a crowd of philosophers has passed on the search for the truth, and the person who seizes it probably does not trust that he was on target.”<sup>483</sup> Thus, suspension of belief or have non-belief about things, neither truth nor falsehood attributes to the matters investigating and searching for the truths.

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<sup>481</sup> Sion, *Buddhist Illogic*, 11–18; Siderits, “Buddha,” 19; Beckwith, *Greek Buddha*, 187; Chakravarti, “Mādhyamika Catuskoṭi or Tetralemma,” 303–6. Skeptics appeal any beliefs or claims to abandon rational or logical solution by means of equal indifferences in the case of affirmation and negation that “it no more is than is not or both is and is not or neither is nor is no” (“P” than that “Not-P”).

<sup>482</sup> Wieland, “Sceptical Rationality,” 225.

<sup>483</sup> Bett, *Pyrrho, His Antecedents, and His Legacy*. AL I.52

However, Diego E. Machuca points out that suspension of belief in a non-doxastic attitude is not motivation, and cases of searching or investigation matter.<sup>484</sup> The reason for suspending beliefs about things neither affirming nor rejecting is due to the conflicts of arguments, either belief that P or disbelief that not-P is equipollence neither agree nor disagree, trustworthy nor untrustworthy. As Sextus explains that “I suspend belief...things proposed I ought to believe and which I ought to disbelieve...objects appear to us equal in respect of credibility and lack of credibility.”<sup>485</sup>

Thus, Pyrrhonists could not develop any persuasiveness or credibility because of equal strength of arguments in favor of the contradictory views and the mental attitude of undecided ability to choose one over another. In this case, suspension of belief indicates the aim of truth-seeking with a neutral attitude reflecting things indifferent and indeterminacy. Pyrrhonists express that “no more” or “not more” or “no-more-this-than-that” (ou mallon) or “not rather P than Q” is to describe arguments or things in equal strength.<sup>486</sup> In the case of equal strength, things are possibly presented either true or false for dogmatic proofs.<sup>487</sup> However, skeptic arguments present things are indifferences either neither affirms nor denies that P is and P is not. Without assertion, the Pyrrhonist attitude of neutrality reflects a non-doxastic belief that no more is than is not reveals an equal argument to weigh in both sides, either affirming or rejecting things.<sup>488</sup>

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<sup>484</sup> Machuca, “Suspension, Equipollence, and Inquiry,” 117–83. PH I.196

<sup>485</sup> PH I.196

<sup>486</sup> Bett, *Pyrrho, His Antecedents*, 14–39.

<sup>487</sup> Barnes, *Presocratic Philosophers*, 553–54.

<sup>488</sup> Machuca discusses a strategy of neutralizing the claim that skeptics express the neutralization of arguments without dogmatic belief or assertion to affirm or deny things beyond the pieces of evidence. Indeed, the skeptical attitude of neutrality is a matter of equipollence and contradiction of arguments or claims. Machuca, “New Essays on Ancient Pyrrhonism,” 122–24.

However, skeptics express their feelings that it seems hot when they are affected by heat. Without any doubt, reason, or belief, one is involuntarily affected by his impression as a piece of evidence. Thus, skeptics could have some beliefs evidentially through their observation and experience. In the case of evidence, things appear indifferent, uncertain, and indeterminable, which cannot be guaranteed either true or false by reason, beliefs, and principle. Therefore, things could not be justified, either true or false, beyond evidence and investigation.

At this point, skeptics could have an attitude of living without dogmata: once belief is true, but others are false where things appear through experience and observation. To this extent, skeptical criteria are ordinary things without dogmatic beliefs but guide by nature, the necessity of the feelings, the tradition of laws and customs, and the instruction of arts.<sup>489</sup> Mainly, Sextus contributes Pyrrhonist outline embracing practice in everyday life.<sup>490</sup> In skepticism, appearance implies an engagement of proofs about things by opposing dogmatic claims and beliefs.<sup>491</sup> Therefore, the Pyrrhonist view shows the skeptical attitude toward dogmatic beliefs by withholding beliefs and asserting nothing for peace of mind.

### **Tranquility and Appearance**

To keep on searching in term of “*skeptikos*”, Pyrrhonist skeptic has to inquire all challenges with open-mind thoughtfully without admitting any belief to justify that something is to be true but other false, and holding an attitude of dogmatic solution. However, on one hand, keep on searching at the end of investigation after the quest for the truth is found may not be a suitable situation as well as the skeptic who could not

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<sup>489</sup> Empiricus, Annas, and Barnes, *Outlines of Scepticism*, 17. PH I.24

<sup>490</sup> Naess, *Scepticism*, 19. PH I.192

<sup>491</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 17. PH I.21

continue searching for nothing that cannot be found. On the other hand, after reaching the goal of mental tranquility, the skeptics might give up their interest in philosophical investigation and desire to search for truth which is crossed out by balance arguments for neither affirming nor denying any concerns.<sup>492</sup> Simply, suspending belief and investigation are incorporated for any action and intellectual ability of searching for the truth. In fact, skeptics put out the skeptical attitude to ensure that the skeptical inquiry is cover both sides of agreement and disagreement for equal balance. In opposing dogmatic view or belief, skeptics have to take any aspects of argument by means of an equal weight without acceptance of dogmas at least for the sake of investigation. In acting upon investigation, skeptics have suspensive state of mind for searching or seeking (*skepsis*) as ‘inquirer’ (*skeptikos*) regardless neither agreement nor disagreement.<sup>493</sup>

In this case, the state of *epoché* is considered to be the mental attitude of open-minded in advance of equal agreement and disagreement to enhance investigation without dogmatic belief or opinion defending a certain point of view over others. As Sextus points out the skeptic school (*Zetetic*) in the following:

From its activity in investigation and inquiry, and ‘Ephectic’ or Suspensive from the state of mind produced in the inquirer after his search, and ‘Aporetic’ or Dubitative either from its habit of doubting and seeking<sup>494</sup>

In sum, skeptics are seekers or inquirers who are always looking for truth or solution with the state of mind in suspending dogmatic beliefs.<sup>495</sup> The skeptical attitude of mental unwinds due to the equipollence of arguments neither to deny nor to affirm things as they really are simply by means of beliefs and opinion through our faculties to

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<sup>492</sup> Machuca, “Ancient Skepticism: Overview,” 251–53.

<sup>493</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 5. PH I.7

<sup>494</sup> PH I.7

<sup>495</sup> Diogenes and Hicks, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers II*, 483. DL IX.70

grasp things as reality.<sup>496</sup> Sextus defines suspension of belief as “a state of mental suspense” opposes appearance to judgements in the sense of equality neither negations nor affirmation.<sup>497</sup> To avoid any claims or opinions for determining things as they really are, Pyrrhonist view concludes non-assertion (*aphasia*) as the skeptical attitude in the mental sense of holding back both affirmation and negation for accepting or rejecting things that they are really true or false.<sup>498</sup> In detail this skeptical mental attitude does signified to suspense both acceptation and rejection of what it is (X is P) and what it is not (X is Not-P) and to hold up either acceptation or rejection in defending the only affirmation that something is declared to be true but other is posted to be false. Holding a statement or proposition as an absolute truth against others is considered to be disturbance anxiety of mental attitude by having any dogmatic beliefs or opinions concerning things as reality.

Otherwise, Pyrrhonist view does indicate non-assertion (*aphasia*) to suspense any worry and mental unsettle in accordance with equipollence of any statements or accounts that Pyrrhonist abstains to which of them she ought to assent and to which she ought not.<sup>499</sup> Simply the skeptical attitude is eased off any beliefs to suspend any assertion in the senses of affirmative and negative beliefs or views. Without any dogmatic views or beliefs, Pyrrhonists determine nothing that is inferred to “*a state of mind as neither to affirm dogmatically nor deny.*” To verify or validate nothing for a claim what is to be true or what is to be false, they have non-epistemic claim to begin with beliefs or opinion.

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<sup>496</sup> Bailey, *Sextus Empiricus and Pyrrhonian Scepticism*, 28; Ramón Román-Alcalá, “Pyrrho of Elis,” 113.

<sup>497</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 7. PH I.8-10

<sup>498</sup> PH I.192

<sup>499</sup> PH I.191

Therefore, skeptical attitude is not on any proposition to dogmatize things or to stand for beliefs or opinion.

Particularly, non-assertion (*aphasia*) can be understood as the neutral attitude to avoid either the metaphysical or the epistemological standpoints in any claims but to guide the mind in the imperturbable state (*ataraxia*) at the end of result. In the case of suspending beliefs, it can be seen as a neutrality of mind in abandoning of dogmatic standpoints by holding off any definite attribution regardless neither agreement nor disagreement but accepting appearance in the case of natural capable of sensation and thought. In the account of natural capability of thinking,<sup>500</sup> suspension of belief is reflected the nature guidance that things naturally are inaccessible to determine or to grasp in definite views, so abandoning those views, one is able to experience things naturally in guidance of nature.<sup>501</sup> Simply without confronted conflicts the mind is free from mental disturbance either on holding or defending a belief.

Unlikely, non-skeptics or dogmatists are those who have given a certain claim either assents or rejections things as reality in dogmatic fashion. Actually, skeptic notion of “*epochē*” is not only the mental ability of endurance to stabilize the mind while is facing different challenges both agreement and disagreement but also be able to investigate without acceptance neither dogmatic belief nor truth-claim. Thus, skeptical attitude is said to abandon dogmatic beliefs by determined nothing. As Sextus expresses that “whenever the skeptic says ‘I determine nothing’ what he means is ‘I am now in such

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<sup>500</sup> Sextus and Bury, 17. PH I.24

<sup>501</sup> Machuca, “Ancient Skepticism,” 253.

a state of mind as neither to affirm dogmatically nor deny any of the matters now in question.”<sup>502</sup> Things are subjects of investigation. It shows that:

All the matters of dogmatic inquiry which I (skeptic) examined appear to me to be such that no one of them is preferable to the one in conflict with it in respect of credibility or incredibility.<sup>503</sup>

Whether the skeptical statements are endorsed by phenomenon seems to have a descriptive statement without a dogmatic sense involving a truth-claim, the skeptical standpoints are justified nothing, so they are considered to be non-dogmatic beliefs. By appearance, skeptic expresses non-assertion (*aphasia*); “I determine nothing”<sup>504</sup> by using impression for something that one is effected (*pathētikē*) which it is uttered what is happening to him as a passive way of affection (*pathos*).<sup>505</sup> Hence, Pyrrhonist suspend any assent neither a positive way nor negative way to formulize beliefs or opinion. Skeptic mode of utterance is to be a descriptive report of the way things appear to him.<sup>506</sup> This is to be the case that Pyrrhonists present their tenets and modes of inquiries in term of subjective experience to describe their philosophical discourses without holding any affirmation and negation onto belief as well as to express what is appearing to them with an absence of dogmatic claims in beliefs.<sup>507</sup> Briefly, they reports what is appearing without beliefs or being committed to any claims by describing throughout their experiences. Thus, utterance, report, and expression of feeling are the skeptical mode to

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<sup>502</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 115. PH I.197

<sup>503</sup> PH I.199

<sup>504</sup> Empiricus, Annas, and Barnes, *Outlines of Scepticism*, 3. PH I.193

<sup>505</sup> Sextus uses “state of mind” or “mental attitude” in terms of “*pathos*” to express a particular state of mind in any sense-impression and the mental attitude of suspending assents due to an equal truth-claim based on appearances. Burnyeat, *The Skeptical Tradition*, 130–31; Barnes, “The Beliefs of a Pyrrhonist,” 4–6; Naess, *Scepticism*, 17. PH I.8-10

<sup>506</sup> Machuca discusses the subjective nature of skeptic expression as the descriptive report or utterance to refrain from using a dogmatic belief or claim. To this extent, Pyrrhonist skeptics do not hold any standpoint or entail a dogmatic claim but describe things by appearances. Machuca, “New Essays on Ancient Pyrrhonism,” 118–19.

<sup>507</sup> *Ibid.*, 121.



describe things through senses of experiences in which is to be the case of suspending belief neither to affirm nor to deny things just to report as “it appears to me.”<sup>508</sup> In term of utterance, Barnes describes as “avowals”<sup>509</sup> that reveals the mental states regardless any beliefs to grasp what really is but they thereby express sensory affection. Thus, utterance is not a statement to manifest a belief but it is a denouncing to express what is appearing in an individual sensory simply in non-dogmatic sense. As Sextus remarks those skeptical formulae that skeptics “give utterance to certain expression indicative of our skeptical attitude and tone of mind such as “not more,” “Nothing must be determined.”<sup>510</sup>

Therefore, a state of neutral attitude<sup>511</sup> is emphasized as the natural capable of sensation and thought that things are effected in accordance with an appearance but they are limited and cannot be trusted by means of philosophical thoughts or dogmatic beliefs.<sup>512</sup> Thus, Pyrrhonist refutes to impose the philosophical speculations or theories but suspends all dogmatic beliefs in order to achieve the peace of mind. In this case, Pyrrhonist attitude is more likely toward a practical attitude than a theoretical attitude and epistemic component but it is based on disputes of philosophical claims or dogmatic views.<sup>513</sup> As Sextus concludes suspending belief as means to rid of disturbance and to achieve the skeptical goal in the following

Hence, since there exists such a difference as this in these things, the fact that it is only the man who suspends judgement about all things who lives to the end an unperturbed life in respect of the goods and evils due to belief we have already established both in our previous discussion of the Sceptic “end.”<sup>514</sup>

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<sup>508</sup> PH I.202

<sup>509</sup> Brennan, “Ethics and Epistemology in Sextus Empiricus,” 5–6.

<sup>510</sup> PH I.187

<sup>511</sup> Long, *Hellenistic Philosophers*, 471.

<sup>512</sup> Vogt, “Appearances and Assent,” 656. PH I.23-24

<sup>513</sup> Ramón Román-Alcalá, “Pyrrho of Elis and Indifference,” 108.

<sup>514</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Sextus Empiricus*, 455; Sextus and Bett, *Against the Ethicists*, 24–25. PH I.25-28

In matters of belief and opinion, conflicts and disputes are erupted from the dogmatic imbalance arguments of holding either goods or evils. Thus, the state of mental tranquility will not occur afterward. Otherwise, the state of equipollence (*isostheneia*) is meant to balance any accepted or rejected arguments in accordance with suspending beliefs or determining nothings, so the freedom from disturbance (*ataraxia*) could come after suspension of belief (*epoché*) like shadow follows its substance.<sup>515</sup> For the skeptic, quietude is the end in contradictions arguments and in the matter of equal weight, so he is able to hold off any claims for suspending beliefs. Skeptics who hold on nothing in believing what is naturally good or bad, so they are unperturbed from contradiction of beliefs or opinions. As Sextus illustrates a skeptic like as a painter in the following

Apelles, when he was painting a horse and wished to represent in the painting the horse's foam, he was so unsuccessful that he gave up the attempt and flung at the picture the sponge on which he used to wipe the paints off his brush, and the mark of the sponge produced the effect of a horse's foam. So, too, the Sceptics were in hopes of gaining quietude by means of a decision regarding the disparity of the objects of sense and of thought, and being unable to affect this they suspended judgment; and they found that quietude.<sup>516</sup>

Hence, "the Skeptic's End is quietude"<sup>517</sup> in consequence of suspending beliefs.

The achievement of Pyrrhonist skeptic could come without intention that tranquility emerges out of abandoning everything neither beliefs nor dogmatic assumptions. In fact, skeptics are affected by unavoidable things such as cold and thirst but they are unperturbed from beliefs or opinions that are suspended in the matter of equal account of what is really good or bad. The belief or claim that something is good or bad by nature is about which to be suspended inspire of tranquility. On one hand, the dogmatists who

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<sup>515</sup> Machuca, "Ancient Skepticism," 235; Diogenes and Hicks, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers II*, 517–19. DL IX.105-108

<sup>516</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 19-20. PH II.28-29

<sup>517</sup> PH I.30

claim what things really are by nature, and who achieve the good and avoid the bad are perturbed by defending their accounts of what is to be truth. On the other hand, a person who is able to suspend beliefs about things, neither what is trustworthy nor what is untrustworthy, will achieve happiness.

However, the Skeptic's End is unintentionally without the act of will neither agreement or disagreement but it ought to be expressed in formulae phrasing "perhaps," "possibly," and "maybe" which are equally to its contradictory phrasing "perhaps not," "possibly not," and "maybe no." Simply Pyrrhonist refuses to make the positive assertion that "it is."<sup>518</sup> Thus he could be a truth seeker who rationally suspends neither belief nor disbelief based on its contradiction. As a result, the truth represents things with affirmative and negative implications. Therefore, Pyrrhonists do not have any reason to accept one belief over another as a matter of the fact that "P" appears to be the case as well as "not-P," so they are indifferent. Actually, the intellect is at a standstill by withholding any assertion due to the equal strength of arguments, not favoring a particular belief or claim.<sup>519</sup> The skeptic's end appears as tranquility at the final result. For instance, in the following story of Posidonius, once, there was a ship distressed by a storm. A pig on board was eating and being calm without worry. It reminds the passengers about Pyrrho, settling himself in peace of mind without fear or disturbance.<sup>520</sup>

To refuse dogmatists, skeptics hold back any beliefs or claims, neither affirming nor denying things by the investigation that leads to tranquility or peace of mind.<sup>521</sup> The skeptic's end is meant to be the journey of a person who suspends any beliefs or claims in

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<sup>518</sup> Bailey, *Sextus Empiricus and Pyrrhonian Scepticism*, 135. PH XXI.194

<sup>519</sup> Barnes, "Beliefs of a Pyrrhonist," 1.

<sup>520</sup> Vogt et al., *Pyrrhonian skepticism in Diogenes Laertius*, 21. DL IX.68

<sup>521</sup> Sextus and Bett, *Against the Ethicists*, 19. DL IX.110-111

the matter of equal opinions, either good or bad, that would bring tranquility at the end.<sup>522</sup>

Simply skeptics do rely on appearance without adding beliefs about things really are good or bad by nature. In the case of belief and appearance, skeptics point out that they do not hold beliefs or claims non-evidence but accept appearance as an unescapable affection. Skeptics live a normal life un-dogmatically and act in accordance with appearance.<sup>523</sup> In a quote “skeptics abolish appearance,” Sextus describes in the following:

We do not reject the things that lead us in involuntarily to assent, in accord with a passively received *phantasia* (impressions) and these are appearance. And when we question whether the external object is such as it appears, we grant that it does appear, and we are not raising a question about the appearance but rather about what is about the appearance.<sup>524</sup>

For example, skeptics would claim nothing about what really is whenever they sense the sweetness of honey only saying honey seems be sweet to them. Pyrrhonists would hold off any propositions or claims about what thing really are but utter what is appearing (*phenomenon*) to them wherein are experienced descriptively without being committed to any affirmation and rejection or to make a dogmatic assertion.

In the course of skeptical approach, Pyrrhonist skepticism is much about an ability opposing dogmatic for judgements in beliefs or opinions. The skeptic’s end is in the respect of equipollence to acquire neither affirmative nor ejective objects or reason that leads to a state of mental suspense aiming for a state of quietude. Skeptics say that “tranquility follows on suspension of judgment,”<sup>525</sup> due to the matter of things in equal account of opposition for instance, appearances of a tower that “the same tower appears

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<sup>522</sup> Sextus and Bett, *Against the Ethicists*, 24–25.

<sup>523</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 17. PH I.23-24

<sup>524</sup> Sextus and Mates, *Skeptic Way*, 12–13. PH I.19-20

<sup>525</sup> PH I.29, DL IX.107

round from a distance, but square from close at hand.”<sup>526</sup> In sum, things are subjected to inquiry in various aspects that reflect things indifference. Skeptics use formula to express those things without acceptance as true or claim. In this case, skeptical formula presents non-proposition of being true or false. Skeptics say that things really are present groundless beliefs or non-evident proofs by the indifferent standpoints, but they must be suspended and inquired an investigation. Simply things are subjected to doubt or question regarding equal valid and invalid showing in the matter of equipollence which is the case for Pyrrhonist to suspend beliefs.

**Skeptical Formula: “No More” (*Ou Mâillon*) <sup>527</sup>**

For investigation, skeptics use various modes of inquiry to deal with dogmatic beliefs and claims based on an equal balance of agreement and disagreement. The skeptical modes reflect the Pyrrhonist views about things; indifferent, unstable, and unjustifiable. Mainly, suspending belief is behind the skeptical modes to refuse any dogmatic beliefs or claims without further assumption beyond the evidence. To this extent, dogmatic defending and assumptions on subjects beyond pieces of evidence and appearance establish conflicts and disturbance over asserting beliefs such as true or false, trustworthy or untrustworthy. Sextus describes in the following that “the Dogmatists that not only proof but...accept by assumption their opposites also will appear trustworthy when accepted by assumption.”<sup>528</sup> He points out the refutation of perception and thought about things in the following “a dispute which is undecidable, since we cannot use either an object of perception or an object of thought as a standard because anything we may

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<sup>526</sup> PH I.118

<sup>527</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 271-273. PH I.188-91

<sup>528</sup> Barnes, *Toils of Scepticism*, 27; Sextus and Bury, *Sextus Empiricus*, 435. AL II.369-371

take has been disputed and so is unconvincing.”<sup>529</sup> In this case, all disputes are the point of withholding any determination following conflicts or disagreements. Pyrrhonists imply the skeptical modes of inquiries on those subjects of disputes as to the matter of suspending beliefs that is not only to suspend any belief or standpoint but also to refute any conflicts and disturbances. The skeptical attitude of suspending beliefs must be adopted since our senses and beliefs are either true or false.

Indeed, Pyrrhonists suspend any trust in them and remain without beliefs and position on neither to affirm nor to reject things. Therefore they adopt the skeptical formula saying, “no more is than is not than both is and is not than neither is nor is not.”<sup>530</sup> To express the attitude of suspending beliefs based on Diogenes’s report shows that “every saying has its corresponding opposite.”<sup>531</sup> This statement refers to the absence of all determination and withholding assent through equipollence that all statements have an equal judgment and contradiction. At the end of dogmatic beliefs, tranquility is expected after the skeptical inquiries wherein a counterargument opposes every argument.<sup>532</sup> Thus, equipollence of all arguments on both sides suggests neither what is true nor false in those arguments caused the skeptical end for quietude. By suspending dogmatic beliefs or claims, Pyrrhonists declare non-apprehensive that indicates the state of mind of avoiding affirming or denying beyond shared evidence due to the equipollence of things.

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<sup>529</sup> Empiricus, Annas, and Barnes, *Outlines of Scepticism*, 45–46. PH I.178

<sup>530</sup> Stough, *Greek Skepticism*, 27.

<sup>531</sup> Diogenes and Hicks, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers II*, 489. DL IX.74-76

<sup>532</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 119. PH I.201

Moreover, the skeptics point out the skeptical formula that “an equal argument is opposed to every argument.”<sup>533</sup> There is no further claim or belief to be made as to the result of the investigation. Each argument has an equal balance of agreement and disagreement. The skeptical formula implies every argument or account to respond to dogmatic problems such as dogmata and theoretical claims. Based on Outline of Pyrrhonism, Sextus describes an unsettled state of mind which is being held up or suspended any beliefs and assertions neither affirmation nor rejection that “the objects appear to us equal as regards credibility and incredibility.”<sup>534</sup> Things appear in equal accounts of agreement and disagreement, so the skeptic determines nothing.

In general, skeptical modes of inquiry are accumulated in the Five, Eight, and Ten Modes,<sup>535</sup> consisting of various refutation arguments that lead to suspension. Indeed, Sextus uses modes in various terms such as arguments, outlines, and positions to oppose others.<sup>536</sup> Notably, there are relatively related subjects of human knowledge and beliefs regarding the subject, object, and both through different conditions.<sup>537</sup> Sextus explores the scope of inquiry modes exposing the Dogmatists' rashness that leads to suspension of belief through opposition in conflicting beliefs, appearance, differences, and perceptual experience.<sup>538</sup> He concludes in three areas; the subject who judges, the object judged, and

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<sup>533</sup> Sextus and Bury, 119; Burnyeat, *Skeptical Tradition*, 21. PH I 12, PH I.202

<sup>534</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 115. PH I.196

<sup>535</sup> Vogt, “Ancient Skepticism,” 38-39. The Five Modes of Agrippa include disagreement (*diaphônía*), an infinite regress (*ad infinitum*), relativity, hypothesis, and circularity. The Eight and Ten Modes of Aenesidemus, the Ten Modes are the arguments based on the variety in animals, the differences in human beings, the different structures of the organs of sense, the circumstantial conditions, the positions and intervals, and locations, the intermixtures, the quantities and formations of the underlying objects, the fact of relativity, the frequency or rarity of occurrence, and the disciplines and customs and laws, the legendary beliefs and the dogmatic convictions. These modes represent the differences between subjects, objects, and perceptions of human beings and animals, meditating on conflicting appearances and thoughts. PH I.35-163, 164-177, AL II.345, DL IX.79-88, 106-7

<sup>536</sup> Long, *Hellenistic Philosophers*, 474. PH I.36

<sup>537</sup> Empiricus et al., *Stoic Six Pack 4*, 134-35.

<sup>538</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 101; Stough, *Greek Skepticism*, 67-68. PH I.177-8

both. They cover various subjects and objects in different circumstances in which things are in the relativity of differences and conditions. For example, appearance represents the relative factors of things that do not have intrinsic nature but relatively appear in differences upon a person, circumstance.<sup>539</sup>

In the objections of skeptical modes, the arguments address the various particular sets of different perceptions that things appear to us rather than what they are in nature. By the nature of things, skeptics are compelled to suspend any belief and claim for determining what things are, so they assert nothing due to the conflicts of arguments, either affirmation or rejection. Indeed, any belief and claim are indifferences and cannot be determined by one over another. In this case, skeptics overcome any conflicts and maintain the mind in a state of intellectual stillness. Sextus remarks that “nothing is apprehended either through itself or through another thing.”<sup>540</sup> In this case, skeptics could not decide one thing over another, either by itself or another. At the same time, suspension of belief is adopted to settle the controversial arguments aiming for an intellectual settlement. However, beliefs and claims about things are involved in circular reason or regress ad infinitum. They are not well-grounded but stand on fallacies as well as non-evident. As a result of the five modes of Agrippa, Sextus concludes that skeptics are unable to choose something over another but suspend beliefs.<sup>541</sup> In the modes based on relativity, things appear relatively different to different people, such as “for some people, honey seems pleasant to the tongue but unpleasant to the eye”<sup>542</sup> and “the same

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<sup>539</sup> Long, *Hellenistic Philosophers*, 487.

<sup>540</sup> Empiricus, Annas, and Barnes, *Outlines of Scepticism*, 101. PH I.178-9

<sup>541</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 95. PH I.164-9

<sup>542</sup> Ibid., 55. PH I.92



honey appears sweet to me but bitter to the jaundiced.”<sup>543</sup> On relativity, Sextus concludes that “all things are relative” and “all things appear relative” neither are they signified by evident nor appearance nor non-evident.<sup>544</sup> Thus skeptics suspend any judgment about how things are in by nature. They have no reason to choose an accuracy one over another, so they do not determine the nature of things or reality but remain without beliefs or opinions simply in a state of tranquility at the end.

In the sense of perception, the impression (*phantasiai*) does not justify what the case is or not the case; neither thing is good nor bad but relatively interminable. Pyrrhonists can live without beliefs or opinions because all controversies show indifferent arguments, either what is or what is not in controversy against each other.<sup>545</sup> Therefore, the skeptical phrase; “it no more is than is not” (*ou mállon*) is a skeptical formula deriving from the equal mode of arguments by non-assertion from disputes.<sup>546</sup> In detail, this statement presents things in the four alternative statements that “it no more (1) is, than (2) is not, or (3) both is and is not, or (4) neither is nor is not.” Sextus mentions “not more” *ou mállon* and non-assertion (*aphasia*) for the skeptical attitude and tone of mind to deny four logical possibilities.<sup>547</sup> Indeed, this statement indicates an equal weighting of balance in trustworthiness and persuasiveness. Therefore, a skeptical attitude represents the state of equal balance on any contradictory belief or

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<sup>543</sup> Ibid., PH I.101

<sup>544</sup> Ibid., 81–83. PH I.138-9

<sup>545</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Sextus Empiricus*, 241–43. PH II.1-4, To judge thing is either true or false is an controversial statement of dogmatists, skeptics avoid to abolish the criterion of truth by means of disposition (*aphasia*) to give nothing positive or negative quality for grasping things as reality.

<sup>546</sup> The Pyrrhonists argue against dogmatists establishing nothing by saying that “we determine nothing” indicates the state of equal balance, either true or false, that both are alike. Ramón Román-Alcalá, “Pyrrho of Elis and Indifference,” 6. DL IX.74

<sup>547</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 107. PH I.187-9

claim. By saying that “we determine nothing” is underlined an opposite of accounts.<sup>548</sup>

Any contrary thing has its contradictory proposition that if one is true, the other must be false. Indeed, both are indifferent and undifferentiated by logical differentia and equally persuasive or trustworthy.<sup>549</sup> To claim things are good or bad is logically contradictory and equally indifferent.<sup>550</sup>

Therefore, the skeptical modes indicate an attitude of equipollence because things are logically indifferent, neither affirmation nor negation, to refuse any judgment or assertion. Sextus concludes that skeptics remain calm without judgment due to the equipollence of things.<sup>551</sup> In the end, “what appears to us” expresses an indifferent form of assents neither true nor false, but it leads to suspending belief without any assertion. For this reason, skeptical modes aim for imperturbability by renouncing any dogmatic claims or beliefs concerning thing as it is or it is not. It is the case to cure the dogmatic disease and maintain the balance of the mind neither deny nor affirm things. In detail, “*aporetic*” and “*aporia*” are underlined the refutation to abandon dogmatic beliefs through doubting and seeking about everything regardless of our ability to assent or deny.<sup>552</sup> Thus, it appears in Aenesidemus' arguments against Academics in the following:

The Pyrrhonists are aporetic and have set themselves free from all dogma: none of them has said of all things either that they are non-graspable or that they are graspable, but that they are no more of the one kind than of the other.<sup>553</sup>

Therefore, the aporetic state is meant to expose the unsoundness of dogmatic arguments and reach the state of perplexity in refuting dogmatic claims because things are neither graspable nor non-graspable. This aporetic attitude is adopted against

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<sup>548</sup> Diogenes and Hicks, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers II*, 489. DL IX.74-76

<sup>549</sup> Beckwith, *Greek Buddha*, 51.

<sup>550</sup> Bett, *Pyrrho, His Antecedents*, 28–29.

<sup>551</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Sextus Empiricus*, 397. AP III.298

<sup>552</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 5. PH I.7, DL IX.69-71

<sup>553</sup> Annas, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 143.

dogmatic notions such as void, motion, sign that it exists or not exists, or either probative or non-probative.<sup>554</sup> If the proofs provide “either a pre-evident proof of a pre-evident thing or a non-evident of a non-evident,” as a result, they show the infinite regress of arguments.<sup>555</sup> Skeptics keep on searching in respect of equipollence and suspending any grasping things neither true nor false. By saying that “I determine nothing” is meant to avoid affirming or denying due to the fact of equipollence.<sup>556</sup>

Moreover, the formula; “no more” weighs by belief and disbelief and asserts nothing, including itself. To this extent, “no more this than that” cancels itself along with other arguments.<sup>557</sup> Even though skeptics have to express things, they utter them by appearance without any assertion. For example, honey appears sweet to some and bitter to others; thus, sweet or bitter is not what honey is by nature but what appears to different people. Whether black, white, sweet, and bitter are relatively perceived and apprehended separately on each individual. With the different perceptions, they are not an absolute substance of their own but relatively to something else.<sup>558</sup> Sextus mentions an undecidability notion that one cannot judge others because of their conflicts and relativities at the end of arguments.<sup>559</sup>

Therefore, suspension of belief (*epoché*) is an intellectual standstill to deal with dogmatists through skeptical modes in equal dispute and persuasive arguments against one another without assertion. In this sense, a neutral attitude shows that one can neither

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<sup>554</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Sextus Empiricus*, 321.

<sup>555</sup> Ibid., 445. AP I.76, 79, II.278, 391-395,

<sup>556</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 527-28. PH I.212, 214

<sup>557</sup> Ibid., 11. PH I.14

<sup>558</sup> The arguments represent their proofs (*axiom*) with endless references, so they fall in the circularity or infinite regress modes (*ad infinitum*). AP II.167-8, PH I.178

<sup>559</sup> Sextus describes the notion of undecidability in the modes of inquiry, such as a relative argument and the contrary issues. Neither a philosopher nor a sick man can take a side due to the matter of conflicts and relativity. PH I.59-61, 90, 98, 103, 112-17, 121-2, Annas, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 154-55.

affirm nor reject things as truth is indeterminate because it is no more agreement than disagreement. On the one hand, all controversial arguments are associated with theoretical and metaphysical assents derived from dogmatic standpoints or beliefs concerning the nature of things as reality. Indeed, the skeptical modes reflect an utterance about what appears through human perception without determination. According to the skeptical formula, “not more” and “nothing is to be determined” entail the suspending beliefs through skeptical modes that lead to the final achievement of tranquillity.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter presents the suspension of belief in Pyrrhonism based on the tenets and outlines. In the context of doxography, suspending belief is the central aspect of the Pyrrhonist features, including the modes of inquiry and attitude as means and aim toward tranquillity at the final goal.

The skeptical attitude attributes the strength of skeptical tropes as the modes of arguments against dogmatists. On remarking the skeptical features and standpoints starting from Pyrrho to Sextus and Diogenes, Pyrrhonists have responded to non-skeptics. One who found the truth and other who said the truth is impossible by appealing those dogmatic beliefs without commitments or claims, neither affirming nor rejecting things because things are equally indifferent, unstable, and interminable. Thus, suspending all beliefs and claims is a standstill of intellect to overcome any philosophical speculation aiming for tranquillity.

In brief, In brief, having no belief and non-assertion is not only to refrain from disturbance but also to attain peace of mind due to the balance of disputes with agreement and disagreement. Indeed, the skeptical attitude against dogmatic claims about things,

either true or false, leads to suspending beliefs about what things are by nature regardless of appearance. Pyrrhonist views and tenets are described to establish all decisive shreds of evidence to refute any assent toward things and to abandon any speculation beyond pieces of evidence by the “no more” formula (*ou mâllon*) that it is no more this (belief) than that (disbelief). In an expression of perplexity, the skeptic characteristics are integrated into the means and aim of skepticism to sort out dogmatic beliefs by the skeptical modes of inquiry with the equal strength of arguments holding non-assertion about things neither affirmation nor rejection.

## CHAPTER 5

### Buddhist and Pyrrhonist Suspending Belief by Comparison

This chapter is devoted to suspension of belief in comparing Buddhist and Pyrrhonist perspectives. It examines Buddhist and Pyrrhonist perspectives based on their tenets and outlines that reflect notable correspondence with other schools. Suspension of belief is embraced in the Buddhist and Pyrrhonist discourses, reflecting their means and aims. Indeed, suspension of belief (*epochē*) presents the modes of inquiry and path toward achievement at the end. However, the critical analysis must substantially cover all aspects of Buddhist and Pyrrhonist perspectives in this comparative approach. In this case, doxography is implied to reflect and reconstruct those aspects closely to the doctrines of schools or traditions. At the same time, it will prevent a surface comparison by applying peculiar terms of one school over another.<sup>560</sup>

However, using a philosophical pluralism is to accept a universal activity of thinking and to engage with other subjects and cultures to enrich cross-culture philosophizing of various perspectives and engagements.<sup>561</sup> Indeed, this reconstruction procedure can draw the main features of suspending belief based on their respective terms in Buddhist and Pyrrhonist thoughts. In contrast, a comparative approach could better understand diversity and distinctive perspectives either covered with categorical features or justified meanings.

In comparison, juxtaposition is not simply a side-by-side comparison but to lay down in a balanced mode for an equivalent examination. In Buddhist and Pyrrhonist perspectives, suspension of belief points to their methods of inquiry against extreme and

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<sup>560</sup> Ganeri, *Oxford Handbook of Indian Philosophy*, 56.

<sup>561</sup> Emmanuel, *Buddhist Philosophy*, 3–5.

dogmatic opinions and claims. In the Buddhist and Pyrrhonist discourses, suspension of belief contains features, attitudes, and modes of inquiry. Seeking the critical features of suspension of belief is essential to characteristics for analyzing means and aim. Indeed, suspension of belief shows in various modes of inquiry and aim in responding to extremists and dogmatists involving tranquility (*ataraxia*).

Moreover, the method in comparing both views could bring the identical vital features and the descriptive relations of those features in various criteria and the contexts of each tradition. Comparing Buddhist and Pyrrhonist aspects side by side will be a suitable approach to unfolding the core features of suspension of belief in various dimensions found within both schools. The point is to see how the suspension of belief looks when interrogated from the cross-culture philosophizing of Buddhist and Pyrrhonist perspectives. As Steven Emmanuel points out, engaging with different cross-cultural perspectives is critical interrogation to access familiar and distinctive criteria in various directions.<sup>562</sup> Moreover, Machuca recommends that “by identifying certain key differences and similarity, such comparisons make it possible to gain a better understanding and appreciation of the Pyrrhonian stance.”<sup>563</sup> To imply the cross-culture comparing both views could bring identical vital features and the descriptive relations of those features in various criteria following the contexts of those traditions where the different light comes to shine unfound subjects within its own and new territory. In sum, the aim is to show suspension of belief embedded in insignificant features of Buddhism and Pyrrhonism. Simply seeing both schools on suspending belief would bring new light

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<sup>562</sup> Ibid., 5–6.

<sup>563</sup> Machuca, “Pyrrhonism,” 10; Machuca, “New Essays on Ancient Pyrrhonism,” 3.

to shine some subjects that are found and engaged a cross-examination in the multiple territories.

The study focuses on suspending belief embedded and manifested in the discourses of Buddhist tenets and Pyrrhonist outline. A comparative approach from historical and philosophical contexts is acquired to look from within school tradition, unwrap the critical features of their characteristics, and bring out the significant parts in the similar equilibrium. In the comparative approach of Buddhist and Pyrrhonist perspectives, first exploring suspension of belief in how skeptical thought can be engaged in Buddhist discourse, second, the reflection of both traditions could identify how they resemble and are incompatible from each other.

Therefore, focusing on compiler written resources, this study is a descriptive approach across subjects and disciplines advocating diversity and common ground of human experience and knowledge about things or reality that are notably represented the various modes and characters in religious and philosophical terms.

In this case, unfolded Buddhist tenets and Pyrrhonist outline could reveal a significant viewpoint that each school standing for and undertaking on its terms. Suspension of belief is found in Buddhist perspective primarily drawing from the Pāli canon, and in Pyrrhonist perspective drawing from the Outline of Pyrrhonism. Reconstructing in the context of both traditions, suspending belief is formulated throughout key features, attitudes, and modes of inquiries in correspondence toward others simply by means and aim. In Early Buddhism, doxography reveals the outlook on suspension of belief between Buddhist standpoints to extremists. Similarly, the Pyrrhonist



standpoint on suspension of belief shows significant stances against dogmatists or non-skeptics.

In overview, for Pyrrhonist outlooks, Diogenes's account views Pyrrho's life of Pyrrhonist who has a practical life without belief and assent to nothing neither beliefs nor reason nor sense of perceptions.<sup>564</sup> Sextus's account depicts him as a Pyrrhonean. He ordinarily emphasizes the skeptical life to achieve peace of mind based on the suspension of belief or an assent to non-evident (*ᾤδηλος*) proposition. Thus, Timon says, "absence of all determination and withholding of assent" for what really is.<sup>565</sup>

From the Buddhist viewpoint, various discourses indicate the Buddha life of noble who achieves the goal of practical life to abandon (*pahīyati*) extremists and spread out the way out of distorted news. Many texts provide requirements that indicate human action and life based on beliefs and actions in various resources. Life without beliefs in searching for the truth is achievable through suspending belief. Thus, as "all things are unworthy of attachment."<sup>566</sup>

### **Historical Background**

In historical background, Buddhists and Pyrrhonists are distinguishing from extremists and dogmatists. Indeed, Buddhist teachings come from the Buddha's experience of searching for truth. In skepticism, the Pyrrhonist tenets are rooted in Pyrrho's attitude toward skeptical inquiry.

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<sup>564</sup> Diogenes and Hicks, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers II*, 479–81; Burnyeat and Frede, *Original Sceptics*, 5–9. DL IX.67-69

<sup>565</sup> Diogenes and Hicks, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers II*, 489. DL IX.74-76

<sup>566</sup> *Avijjā Sutta*, SN 35.80

The early movements of Indian ascetics, Buddhist monks or śramaṇas<sup>567</sup> were wanderers who searched for truth as the goal (*mokṣa*) or the state of freedom from disturbance. In general, wanderers were holding and defending various views such as eternity. Ideally, Buddhist sramaṇas hold no views<sup>568</sup> with the contemplation of appearances in order to achieve undisturbedness. They observe, examine, and investigate the subjective and objective things in the world of experience while relinquishing any grasping of objects, entities, or fabrications is the way to pursue liberation.

Thus, they maintain the disposition attitude neither affirms nor denies things or matters as absolute truth that determines what things really are, neither P nor not-P. Indeed, all things (*dhammā*) appear in threefold characteristics; impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*), and non-self (*anattā*). They are unfixed, unsteady, undetermined like themselves.<sup>569</sup> Even though common understanding Buddhist teachings are from what the Buddha founded or discovered.<sup>570</sup> Indeed, the core discourses of the Buddha have described things particularly the dependent arising is described intrinsic conditions of appearances; “when this is, that is, when this arises, that arises, when this is not, that is not, this ceasing, that ceases.”<sup>571</sup> Therefore, the Buddhist discourses are descriptive statements to claim without judgment, either affirmative or rejective view (*sasata*, *uccheda vada*) about all things simply renouncing the world by clinging (*upadana*) nothing neither existence (P) nor not existence (not-P). Suspending belief or claim is

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<sup>567</sup> Samaṇa is a seeker, ascetic, or wanderer who searches for liberation or peace of mind.

<sup>568</sup> A bhikkhu (monk) contemplates things' threefold characteristic: impermanent (*aniccā*), unstable or suffering (*dukkha*), unidentifiable or not-self (*anattā*), and then he gives up defilements. As a result, he will not be shaken by attachments. Buddhaghosa and Ñānamoli, *Path of Purification*, 665.

<sup>569</sup> Beckwith, *Greek Buddha*, 28–29.

<sup>570</sup> Karunadasa, *Early Buddhist Teachings*, 11.

<sup>571</sup> Bodhi Sutta (The Bodhi Tree), Ud 1.3

designated the characteristics of phenomena by their nature (*sabhāva*)<sup>572</sup> that are operated inter-dependence of cause and effect conditionally. Thus abandoning refinements is refrained from mental fabrication and speculation based on groundless.<sup>573</sup> It emphasizes the uniformity of experiences toward appearance, aiming for tranquility.

Indeed, the Buddhist modes of inquiry are used as means on the path of liberation; the Buddha advises disciples to inquire wisdom to achieve the final goal. Thus, the path is prescribed in reasoning and determining what should be developed to achieve the final goal in Buddhism. Simply the middle way is exemplified as a possible path distinctively from extremists. The Buddhist renunciation signifies things that appear in the realm of experience that affects actions.

In the context of Pyrrhonism, the Pyrrhonist discourse is laid out under the figurehead of the school of Pyrrho of Elis, who advocates skeptical attitudes toward things that are equally indifferent and unstable indeterminate. Abandoning our perceptions and beliefs that determine nothings, neither true nor false, is an intellectual standstill to abolish the freedom of disturbance. Under this prescriptive claim, the Pyrrhonist view can be interpreted in metaphysical read about things as they appear. Thus, Pyrrhonist view has a more prescriptive claim on suspending belief that reflects the appearance of reality. In contrast, the later Pyrrhonist outline in Sextus's works, the Pyrrhonist skeptic is an "inquirer" (*skeptikos*)<sup>574</sup> who keeps on searching. He does not hold a dogmatic view like things is to be good or bad by nature. Suspending belief about

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<sup>572</sup> The Buddhists are unlike absolutists and essentialists to claim things through their assumptions but by nature (the four characteristics): objectivity (*tathātā*), necessity (*avītathātā*), invariability (*ananāthātā*), and conditionality (*iddappaccayatā*). SN 12.2, SN 12.61; Tilakaratne, *Nirvana and Ineffability*, 40-44.

<sup>573</sup> Clinging to "I as self-identity" and "eternity" holds things absolutely against how things appear that causes conflicts and misunderstanding. Beckwith, *Greek Buddha*, 33.

<sup>574</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 5; Diogenes and Hicks, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers II*, 483. DL IX.70, PH I.7

things neither deny nor affirm is to get away of mental trouble at the final result of tranquil. In describing non-metaphysical claim, the skeptic does not have any opinions or beliefs (ἀδοξαστος)<sup>575</sup> or dogmatizing nothing neither affirm nor deny. Thus, Pyrrhonists do not hold beliefs that assent some unclear object of investigation or non-evident.<sup>576</sup> In brief, Pyrrhonist suspends any dogmatic belief or opinion according to appearance or non-evident scientific or theoretical beliefs. Thus, suspension of belief is the way of life without opinion or claim that enables tranquility at the end.<sup>577</sup>

Buddhism and Pyrrhonism have established their commensurabilities in various aspects of cultures, beliefs, and philosophy, reflecting their means and aims in parallel and distinguishable standpoints. A similar standpoint of grasping nothing in the world represents the mental attitude of holding back any beliefs and opinions.<sup>578</sup> On the one hand, Pyrrhonists argue in favor of equal strength and embody appearance to increase an ability to defend a neutral attitude against dogmatists. On the other hand, Buddhist teachings are constructed in the middle path away from extremists,<sup>579</sup> while Pyrrhonist tenets are outlined against dogmatists or non-skeptics. Both have laid out their tenets distinctively from others who claim or found the truth. Even though both schools have come with tranquility at the end of searching for truth, they have distinct standpoints in responding to other schools. They remain to hold back any assertion on extremist beliefs

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<sup>575</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 11. PH I.12,13,15

<sup>576</sup> Ibid., 9. PH I.13

<sup>577</sup> In the rustic interpretation presented by Barnes and Burnyeat, skeptics hold no beliefs whatsoever, particularly non-evident but behave on ordinary sense without assertion. In contrast to the urbane interpretation by Michael Frede, skeptics do have some assents of how things are by appearance but not by dogmatic or theoretical beliefs and opinions. Burnyeat and Frede, *Original Sceptics*, 58; Morison, "Sextus Empiricus," 23–25.

<sup>578</sup> Beckwith, *Greek Buddha*, 39.

<sup>579</sup> The Buddhist path of liberation is "not entering either of the two extremes" (*ubho ante anupagamma*) including spiritual eternalism (*sassatavāda*) and materialist annihilationism (*ucchedavāda*). Karunadasa, *Early Buddhist Teachings*, 1.

or dogmatic views, simply grasping nothing. Indeed, Buddhism and Pyrrhonism describe suspension of belief as a healing path corresponding to abandon of belief or having no view to advance an ability to eliminate disturbance and reach the mental un-disturbance. In voiding absolute claims, both express speechlessness about things, neither beliefs nor opinion in metaphysical assertion or approval of true or false claims.

### **Buddhist Standpoint and Pyrrhonist Outline**

Either doctrine or way of thought or school is represented their procedures on the line of arguments and teachings that are leading to an achievement as a result in the final goal of Buddhism and Pyrrhonism. Suspension of belief is on focused to begin with Buddhist standpoint and Pyrrhonist outline that lead to what can be seen as a common ground, and what is essential to suspension of belief in Buddhist and Pyrrhonist perspectives.

According to Buddhist tenets, Buddhist standpoint on suspension of belief is portrayed in the discourse to *Kalamas*' village as known as "the charter of free inquiry." In this layout, the freedom of thought is not only the way to conduct some sorts of investigation about belief or knowledge but also an experiential examination focusing on an individual realization that appeals to most ordinary people for justification of their own ethical conducts. One who liberates and reaches the cessation of suffering is said to be done and gone no more beyond.<sup>580</sup> Thus suspension of belief by means of abandoning deferments such as wrong view is the way out of detachments and troubles. The main concern of teaching (*dhamma*) is to cross over (*nittarana*) like a raft that is purposed for crossing over, not for grasping.<sup>581</sup> To let go dhamma compares to a raft, to reach the

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<sup>580</sup> *Ādittapariyāya Sutt*, SN 35.28

<sup>581</sup> "*dhammaṃ desessāmi nittaraṇatthāya, no gahaṇatthāya*," *Alagaddūpama Sutta*, MN 22

shore, one should leave a raft behind but not holding onto it. Abandoning all views or beliefs is most directly to the path of liberation (*Vimuttimagga*). Buddhist tenets are described as guidelines that followers should do what ought to be done.

Although, Buddhist standpoint on others views (*ditthitthana*) is categorized for inquiry of knowledge or wisdom in which *kammavāda* is advocated the Buddhist perspective of practical aim for the final goal. Indeed, the Buddhist idea of “nonself” is based on a denial of Vedantic orientation. This view does not hold on either metaphysical self or eternity which is relied upon materialist annihilationism and spiritual eternalism. Simply this view is avoiding both extremes toward the practical path of middle. Grasping nothing neither to affirm nor to deny thing is the right view. The Buddha said to Kaccaayana that “the world in general, inclines to two views, to existence or to non-existence... and is imprisoned by dogmas.”<sup>582</sup> Seeing the world as it appears in rising and passing does not go along with that system-grasping. Indeed, “he does not go along with that system-grasping, that mental obstinacy and dogmatic bias, does not grasp at it, does not affirm: ‘This is my self.’”<sup>583</sup> Thus, the Buddhist standpoint on the right views is based on the right path for avoiding both extremes and lead to the final goal by means of the middle. In brief, other extremes and dogmas are elaborated with the speculative and theoretical philosophy (*ditthicarita*) that is related to way of grasping things as what really are either self or soul. To avoid the pitfalls of neither theoretical fabrication nor speculation, Buddhist tenets are described nothing beyond subject and object interconnected within human experience.

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<sup>582</sup> *Kaccaayanagotto Sutta*, SN 12.15

<sup>583</sup> “*tañcāyaṃ upayupādānaṃ cetaso adhiṭṭhānaṃ abhinivesānusayaṃ na upeti na upādiyati nādhiṭṭhāti – ‘attā me’ti.*” *Kaccaayanagotto Sutta*, SN 12.15

Particularly *Kalama* discourse begins with groundless epistemological testimonies that cannot be fully relied on, the authority of self-experience is promoted as the right path to achieve the final goal. There are three kinds to be categorized with the wisdom through hearing (*suta-mayā-panyā*), the wisdom through thinking (*cinta-mayā-panyā*), and the wisdom through mental cultivation (*bhāvanā-mayā-panyā*).<sup>584</sup> In the *Sangārava Sutta*<sup>585</sup> those groups of searchers who claim the consummation and perfection of knowledge are; (1) the traditionalists (*anussavikā*), who claim the knowledge from divine revelation, scriptural tradition and interpretations based on it, such as the brahmins who upheld the authority of the Vedas; (2) the rationalists and metaphysicians or speculators (*takkavamansa*), who claim the knowledge through thinking or reasoning and speculations such as the materialists and most of the *Ajavakas* in the early Upaniads; (3) the experientialists, who do not rely upon groundless experience or reasoning or speculation about things but have direct knowledge by themselves. Therefore, Buddhist tenets are based on an individual experiential through direct knowledge and experience which is distinguished from traditionalists and materialists, and other thinkers of the Vedas and Upanisads. In brief, Buddhist standpoint is advocated an empiricist that knowledge can be known through direct personal experience. In term of direct experience, the Buddha outlines his advice that “you yourselves should do what ought to be done. The Tathagatas (only) show the way.”<sup>586</sup> Therefore the Buddhist standpoint is mainly on individual examination that wise men (*vinnu purisa*) are able to experience things by themselves and well known by wise men (*vinnuppasattha*) and reprehensible by wise men (*vinnugarahita*). Particularly Dhamma or things can be examined

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<sup>584</sup> D iii 219

<sup>585</sup> MN 100

<sup>586</sup> “*tumhehi kiccam atappam; akkhataro Tathagata.*” Dh 276

(*dhammadhipatiyya*) that is identified by unwholesome or wholesome. The Buddha pointed out to *Kalamas* that “When you know for yourselves. These things are unwholesome. These things are blamable. These things are censured by the wise. These things, fully undertaken, bring about harm and suffering.”<sup>587</sup>

In this case, the discourse to *Kalamas* can be seen as a genuine philosophical method that promotes the possibility of independent based on the final goal of liberation that one is able to examine what is advantage or disadvantage and happiness or unhappiness by reflection of on own mental effective experiences. For example, *Kalamas* know and act upon greed, the mind control, and immoral conducts like killing a living creature. As P. D. Premasiri remarks, the *Kalama Sutta* “is philosophically significant in that it draws attention to the possibility of independent inquiry into moral questions.” Simply does an action benefit for one own well-being (*attahita*) or for the well-being of others (*parahita*). Moreover, it is oriented in result of nescience (*avijjā*) that is grasping on self (*attan*) (the sense of “I,” “mine,” and any other forms of permanence) or five personality aggregates (*khandha*) in projecting things as absolute or real entities. Otherwise, “right views” (*sammādiṭṭhi*) are the vision of things as they are in the light of impermanence, selflessness, and the inevitability of suffering.<sup>588</sup> The view presents things as they appear to be (*yathabhatam*) does not stand on metaphysical speculative views (*diṭṭhi*) which clings extremist claims but relies on knowledge of seeing things without clinging anything or liberation.<sup>589</sup> In some cases, the Buddha represents “no views” at all.<sup>590</sup> At this point, Buddhist standpoint about things is advocated suspending beliefs and

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<sup>587</sup> *Kesaputti Sutta*, A iii 65

<sup>588</sup> D i 311

<sup>589</sup> Gombrich, *What the Buddha Thought*, 56–57. (S 3.170-176)

<sup>590</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.



views that are groundless, fabrication, and speculation for representing subject or object entities such as absolutists and essentialists, but it is sophisticated direct understanding about phenomena that things are inter-dependent and inter-related.<sup>591</sup> As the following statements are that “one may know how the eye is not the fetter of forms, nor are forms the fetter of the eye, but whatever desire-passion arises in dependence on the two of them” represented things as phenomena which appear to be constituted and inter-related in processes of arising and ceasing. Grasping nothing as self is like a man looking for heartwood in a large banana trunk and finding nothing.<sup>592</sup> In the Buddhist view, there is no self. Therefore suspending beliefs is to cling nothing and to achieve non disturbance which is the end of processes neither rebirth nor dead. Indeed, *nibbana*<sup>593</sup> is the extinction of craving and suffering.<sup>594</sup> According to Buddhist views and experiences of the Buddha, phenomena or things appear no more than the arising and falling flux of interrelated conditions. The mental attitude is to see things as they appear through body, speech, and mind that depicts in Dependent Origination.<sup>595</sup>

Actually, suspension of belief is implied into the path of realization or liberation as the means to achieve the goal of Buddhism. Buddhists tenets are described in the view that suspending belief does not postulate a metaphysical notion of reality or absolute nature of things. In response to other views, Buddhist standpoint is to suspend all

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<sup>591</sup> Many suttas show the dependent arising and falling of conditions. By renouncing, the Buddha did not cling to anything in the world. He is unbounded and liberated. *Koṭṭhita Sutta*, SN 35.191; Tilakaratne, *Nirvana and Ineffability*, 45–46.

<sup>592</sup> A man found no heartwood after cutting off a banana trunk. It is like a monk found nothing as self after investigating through all sensory contracts. *Udāyī Sutta*, SN 35.193

<sup>593</sup> S 2.117

<sup>594</sup> A 1.38, S 4.251, A 3.207, 3.415

<sup>595</sup> In the simile of the fire, things appear like a fire burning caused by its conditions. *Aggi-Vacchagotta Sutta*, MN 72

metaphysical speculative views which are assessed as groundless or pointless<sup>596</sup> in contrast with the direct knowledge of seeing thing as they appear (*yathā, bhūta. ñāna. dāssana*) in experience via an individual examination. Simply the objectification shows the point of beliefs or claims that are in the different means and purpose in accordance with the final goal.

Otherwise, it aims to abandon any grasping either physical forms or mental defilements. It can be identified with freedom of inquiry that embodies individual investigation and practical mode of inquiries to examine what is either good or bad but benefit to all beings. Particularly what appears to be upon experience is the conditioned nature of the perceived reality that things are dependently originated phenomena (*paṭicca-samuppāda-dhammā*). In this context, Buddhist tenets are responded other views that either proclaim existence of things or annihilate things such as Vedic tradition and Brahminical thoughts. Thus, dependent origination is correspondent to the change of interconnected events in fluxing and processing in brief that things appear to be under their conditions that “when is this that is, with arising of this, that arises” (*Imasmim sati idam hoti, imass'uppādā idam uppajjati*).<sup>597</sup> Simply Buddhist standpoint of phenomena can be distinguished from others in terms of saying that is or that is not. Things (*dhamma*) appear in such or like that based on their relations or conditions which are under experiences of changing, of becoming, and of processing. Thus, dhamma is “to be realized individually by the wise with their personal effort” (*paccattaṃ veditaṃ viññūhi*) that seeing things via personal direct experience is a practical achievement on the

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<sup>596</sup> Gombrich, *What the Buddha Thought*, 73.

<sup>597</sup> Many scholars such as Gombrich and Jurewicz point out that the Buddha responds to other beliefs opposing dogmatic beliefs or extremist claims. Ibid., 130–33. M ii.32

Buddhist path toward the cessation of suffering.<sup>598</sup> Particularly Buddhist inquiry is underlined an individual examination to pay attention to the essential of teachings or beliefs.<sup>599</sup> Suspension of belief could come in handy to direct the way thought toward the peace of mind.

In context of Pyrrhonism, Pyrrhonist Outline is laid out to be the guideline of investigation or searching for truth. Pyrrhonism can be interpreted from tentative modes of various philosophical perspectives or periods and based on its historical context and doxography. To reconstruct Pyrrhonist standpoint from skeptics and others, Hellenistic philosophy is to be considered as the beginning of Pyrrhonist tradition. According to this context, Pyrrhonist is distinguished itself from others by means of Pyrrhonist outline and perspective in Hellenistic philosophy.

On the path toward the truths, Pyrrhonist outline is laid out the skeptical investigation aiming for tranquility. Pyrrhonist skeptics describe themselves as investigators or searchers who act upon neither belief nor disbelief but keeping on searching for truths. To suspend assents, neither affirms nor denies about things, skeptics determine nothing about absolute reality and guide their skeptical method of investigation due to the equal of differences between agreement and disagreement. Indeed, skeptical standpoints are not propositions to claim truths neither what it is neither (P) nor what it is not (Not-P) withholding assents do to the matters of things indifferences and unsettled state of mind.<sup>600</sup> Thus skeptics emphasize *agōgē* (ἀγωγή) as a way of life in attitude of

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<sup>598</sup> Ñāṇārāma, *Essentials of Buddhism*, 70–71.

<sup>599</sup> *Yoniso-Manisaka* means paying attention to things with all states of consciousness or wise reflection. Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 95.

<sup>600</sup> Skeptics present both cases of negation and affirmation with equal strength of arguments. They refrain from dogmatizing in the sense of approval of assertion, either denying or affirming things. Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 7–9. PH I.10,13

non-dogmatic beliefs (*adosatos*) to obtain the state of ataraxia (*imperturbability*) as the final goal.

In this case, Pyrrhonist perspective is concerned with skepticism or Pyrrhonian skeptics that are identified as Pyrrhonists and originated from the early Pyrrhonism of Pyrrho and Timon that are available resources in the history of Pyrrhonism. Indeed, Pyrrhonian thought is based on the revival work of Aenesidemus and the later reconstructed works of Sextus Empiricus. In focus, suspension of belief can be revisited according to the history of Pyrrhonism and reconstructive view of Pyrrhonism from survival works and doxography resources. Therefore pointing out the core features in Pyrrhonist skepticism such as suspension of belief is required to address from the beginning to the late reconstructive view of Pyrrhonism.

According to Pyrrhonism of Sextus Empiricus, Pyrrhonian is distinguished from its neighboring Hellenistic philosophies by means of founding truth that knowledge cannot be found or found the truth but Pyrrhonian skeptic claims no philosophical views either affirmative or rejective truth, and keeps on searching the truth. There are the Academic and Pyrrhonian skeptics or other philosophies such as Epicureans, Cyrenaic, and Stoics. Indeed Pyrrhonist was formed in context of the Greek philosophy, so the Pyrrhonian tradition has accumulated and oriented based on its outline and tents under its philosophical and exegetical analysis of interpretation such as Aenesidemus, Sextus Empiricus that shapes its arguments and discourses. The scope of suspension of belief in Pyrrhonist perspective can be seen and traced in accordance with historical context of both early and late Pyrrhonism. To describe Pyrrhonist core features, it must have

distinguished a brief over of the history of Hellenistic and Buddhist philosophy.

However, a variety of skepticism is to be classified concerning about belief.

According to Sextus, Pyrrhonist skeptic is one who asserts no belief in the matter of claiming any philosophical views neither affirmative nor rejective proposition.

Holding a certain kind of belief with positive and negative claims is non-skepticism that one who asserts to have a kind of belief and doctrine and other one who asserts to have found impossible belief and knowledge. Indeed, skeptic claims nothing insofar neither truth or impossible belief or knowledge but keeps on searching withholding the neither truth nor impossible truth.<sup>601</sup> In the background of pre-Socratic philosophy, skeptic view is appealed to antithesis<sup>602</sup> about the nature of beliefs and ability to establish realist truth that are represented in various of dogmatic views to determine what things really are either affirmative or rejective things as the realist truth.<sup>603</sup> In common of philosophical therapy in the ancient Greek, Pyrrhonist philosophical therapy is responded to find out a good life as well as the path of achievement end that is the psychological notion of non-disturbance or the tranquility.<sup>604</sup> In the sense of imperturbability, the wise man should keep him in the state of unperturbed and calm like a little pig that was eating on the deck of the ship in a storm.<sup>605</sup> Indeed, skeptics aim to equalize any proposition among counter and encounter arguments, so they suspend any determination about things and remain free of disturbance or calm. Particularly skeptic opposes against other claims and beliefs that are grasping things as truth either positive or negative dogmatists for example, the

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<sup>601</sup> Perin, *Demands of Reason*, 2–3. PH I.4

<sup>602</sup> Groarke, *Greek Scepticism*, 31–32.

<sup>603</sup> Skeptic modes of inquiry can be seen as antitheses opposing the theoretical beliefs or claims to set a similar argument against dogmatics. Ibid., 47.

<sup>604</sup> Thorsrud, “Is the Examined Life Worth Living,” 229.

<sup>605</sup> Diogenes and Hicks, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers II*, 481. DL IX.68

schools of Aristotle, Epicurus, the Stoic, or Clitomachus, Carneades, Academics.<sup>606</sup> On the matters of belief, skeptic's suspension of belief is an ability to maintain the intellectual standstill without asserting the truth neither deny nor affirm but to engage in the search for truth and to achieve tranquility in the peace of mind without troubles.

In general, skeptics seem to show in various circumstance of Greek philosophy that indicates other kind dogmatists in rejecting or accepting things as truth as well as suspending those claims. Skeptic is compatible dogmatism in some sense. For example Parmenides, Heraclitus, and Academics had some sort of negative view about possible knowledge. Otherwise, Stoics, Aristotle and Philo had some sort of affirmative view about things. Indeed, Pyrrhonists are genuine skeptics in term of suspending both views even their own standpoint like purgative drugs that cleans out all poisons from the body as well as themselves at the sometime.<sup>607</sup> Withholding both dogmatic propositions, Pyrrhonist asserts pointless dogmatic determination with the power of opposition (*dumanis antithetike*) to set out contradictory positions.<sup>608</sup> They emphasize self-refutation that is regardless their own arguments but asserts nothings unlike both dogmatists insist their own beliefs and views either way to somethings as the truth. But Pyrrhonist skeptics do not dogmatize things, so they assert nothing or making non proposition on either side.

In detail, the tenets of withholding beliefs or claims, Pyrrhonists put attitude toward things in the way that is distanced themselves from claiming metaphysical beliefs or claims but avoid determining and asserting doctrines or beliefs in any position of beliefs or disbeliefs just the act of reflecting what appears to them withholding any positions or claims. As the point of suspension of belief is that withholding anything is an

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<sup>606</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 3. PH I.3

<sup>607</sup> Hankinson, *Sceptics*, 16–18. PH 1.206

<sup>608</sup> Brennan, "Ethics and Epistemology," 43; Hankinson, *Sceptics*, 27, 65.

ability of “a standstill of the intellect, owing to which we neither reject nor posit anything.”<sup>609</sup> Skeptic mindset is a state of mind corresponding to indeterminacy of what things really are either is or is not (P or Not-P). A belief is the state of mind to assert things to be the case either true or false as well as Pyrrhonist attitude is to determine nothing. Because either belief or disbelief does an equal conflict and indifference, the Pyrrhonist withholds any propositions, either opinions or claims about what things indeed are but reflects what appears to be without assertion. Therefore, suspension of belief is the state of mind to set out opposition among things and afterward to set aside disturbance to achieve tranquility.

In arguments, Sextus puts appearance into the account of non-metaphysical expressions to determine nothing with “*ou mallon*”, “no-more-this-than-that” as an equal sense of affirmation and negation regardless neither convincing nor unconvincing. Indeed, the Pyrrhonists keep on searching for truth and the final state of freedom from disturbance (*ataraxia*). Thus, they use the equal strength of arguments to suspend dogmatic beliefs and claims like a doctor giving remedies as the therapeutic methods to treat a patient in the following:

Skeptic wishes to cure by argument, so far as he can, the conceit and rashness of the Dogmatists. Just as the doctors who treat physical symptoms have remedies that differ in strength, and prescribe the severe ones for people with severe symptoms and milder ones for those mildly affected, so too the skeptic sets forth arguments differing in strength.<sup>610</sup>

Moreover, the Buddhist tenets are like remedies or path to end disturbance in dealing with metaphysical speculation which claims about what things really are. The Buddhist standpoint is represented in the parable of the poisoned arrow in *Cūḷamālukya*

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<sup>609</sup> Empiricus, Annas, and Barnes, *Outlines of Scepticism*, 5. PH I.15-16

<sup>610</sup> PH III.280-281

*Sutta*<sup>611</sup> shows that “a man is struck by a poisoned arrow and the doctor wishes to take out the arrow immediately.” The aim of Buddhist teaching is like the therapeutic path rather the metaphysical speculation that unanswered questions are related to what things really are such as life after death. In this case, the direct experience is an attitude toward the final goal of tranquility that has played many roles of searching and actions.<sup>612</sup> The goal as the state of claim does not go by endless of metaphysical speculation rather therapeutic path of ending suffering.

In compatibility of Pyrrhonist and Buddhist perspectives in searching for truth, the Pyrrhonist modes of inquiry rely on arguments based on an equipollence of indifferent and contradictory claims against dogmatists. In addition, the Buddhist standpoint is to liberate the mind from causes of suffering, regardless of speculations it does directly to get rid of mental disturbance and to accomplish the state of claim. It is noteworthy that the state of *ataraxia* is the final goal in Pyrrhonist and Buddhist standpoints by suspending dogmatic and extremist beliefs on the path of searching for the truth. In common ground, as the matters of opinions and beliefs, one’s attitude to which can be cured by suspending (*epochē*) dogmatic and extreme claims as their remedies to which things really are due to encounter of indifferences and to path of liberation. Actually this mode is focused intensively on the courses of insight training. Although, their modes of thought are to suspend any mental attitudes to determine nothing, but rely on appearance. Pyrrhonist modes are concerns on the matters of intellectual standstill. Buddhist methods are concerns matters of mental liberation over indecisiveness (*vicikicchā*). They are narrowed down to the therapeutic methods of accomplish in the

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<sup>611</sup> MN 63

<sup>612</sup> Evans, “Doubting the *Kālāma-Sutta*,” 103.



final goal (*ataraxia*) which can be subsequent result or surprise discovery in searching for truth.

### **Parallel Views of Suspending Belief**

Belief presents a proposition statement about things indicating a metaphysical status based on a particular proof or speculation. According to Buddhist and Pyrrhonist views, suspending belief underlines any propositional claim under dogmatic beliefs. The Buddhist standpoint on others' views (*ditthitthana*) indicates various aspects. From the Buddhist perspective, *kammavāda* advocates action in practice aiming for the final goal. Indeed, the Buddhist idea of nonself reveals the objection of Vedantic orientation. It is withholding neither metaphysical self nor eternity regardless of materialist annihilationism and spiritual eternalism. Simply this view is to avoid both extremes toward the practical modes of the middle path.<sup>613</sup> Grasping nothing, neither to affirm nor to deny things, is the right view to avoid the two extremes and aims directly to the path of liberation. The Buddha said to Kaccaayana that “the world in general, inclines to two views, the existence or non-existence... and is imprisoned by dogmas.” Seeing the world as it appears in rising and passing does not go along with that dogmatic graspings. Indeed, the mental state of grasping nothing does not affirm things as self. In brief, the Buddhist standpoint on the right views is based on the middle path avoiding both extremes and leading to the final goal.<sup>614</sup> However, other extremes and dogmas elaborated speculation, and theoretical philosophy (*ditthicarita*) reveal grasping things as self or soul.

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<sup>613</sup> S II.156.

<sup>614</sup> S 3.49

In Buddhist teachings, to overcome uncertainty or doubt, insight understanding (*vipassana*) is a kind of direct experience to known “things as they have come to be” (*yatha-bhuta-nana-dassana*).<sup>615</sup> This ability to see things refers to phenomena without clinging to any views, either existence or non-existence. Particularly the right view (*sammaditthi*) has attributed the freedom of doubt (*vicikiccha*). In this case, the path of knowing and seeing (*janto passato*) is related to achieving the state of equanimity or calm (*passaddhi*), and liberation (*vimutti*) like a man with good eyesight standing on the bank could see things in the river. However, rationalists and metaphysicians undertake the fundamental assumptions of rational thinking and metaphysical speculation (*takkapariyàhatai vāmaüsàñucaritai*) that lead to unsatisfactory for the final goal. Nevertheless, the Buddha points out the outcome of these speculations is unreliable, either truth or falsehood.<sup>616</sup> Indeed the Buddhist view of insight is an instrumental path toward the final goal that employs the knowledge or wisdom through mental cultivation for understanding the direct mental phenomenal experience of things or reality.<sup>617</sup>

In the same way, skepticism is classified between negative and positive dogmatism to engage activities of searching for truth without rushing to hold neither side of truth but to sustain the peace of mind. Skeptical standpoint on suspending belief is not only to discover the truth but also to achieve tranquility. Utilizing suspending enhances abilities to inquiry any investigation without commitment to either affirm or deny things as the absolute truth.

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<sup>615</sup> Tilakaratne, *Nirvana and Ineffability: A Study of the Buddhist Theory of Reality and Language*, 64.

<sup>616</sup> The Buddha points out that oral transmission, logic, reason, and testimony cannot entail the truth, and they are unreliable references for equanimity. *Sandaka sutta*, SN 76

<sup>617</sup> Cultivation of wisdom (*pañña*): listening (*suta*), thinking (*cinta*), and mental development (*bhavana*) that is cultivated through direct experience of reality. D 3.219, Vbh 324; Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 122–23.

According to the Outline of Pyrrhonism, Pyrrhonists suspend judgment about belief and live their lives regardless of any philosophical theory. They respond to ordinary things in the realm of appearance. “No more” is an act of renouncing without any determination. Thus, this skeptical formula concerns shreds of evidence that things appear with impression in an undogmatic way. It renounces beliefs without making any assertion about things in reality. In the Buddhist and Pyrrhonist viewpoints, the ability is a significant aspect that reflects the similar point of inquiry modes to overcome dogmatists through non-assertion to achieve peace of mind in searching for truth.

### ***Ability, Non-Assertion, and Therapeutic Aim***

In the outline of Pyrrhonism, Skepticism emphasizes an ability to set out oppositions among things based on appearance. By doing that, Pyrrhonists oppose objects and accounts due to equipollence, so he comes to hold off any beliefs and afterward to tranquility.<sup>618</sup> According to Sextus’s outline, Pyrrhonist ability is not implied any doctrine or dogmatic belief but to engage in practice due to an equal force of affirmative and negative arguments. In brief, the skeptic is someone who can see things without making any proposition, neither to affirm (P) nor to deny (not-P) but seeing things equally convincing. Suspending belief, the skeptic is the one who makes non-assertion utilizing an ability to set out the opposition of any arguments and accounts with equal convincing due to the confliction accounts either negative or positive position.<sup>619</sup>

As skeptic points to non-assertion (*aphasia*) that “I determine nothing” is indicated affection (*pathos*) based on a sense-impression withholding affirmative and negative determination about things. In some sense of passive affection, this pathos

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<sup>618</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 7. PH I.8

<sup>619</sup> Ibid., 7. PH I.10

forces skeptics to withhold any beliefs or propositions regardless of any senses of experience and mode of thought processes in believing neither p nor not-p.<sup>620</sup> Sextus explains that skeptics express non-assertion without propositional assent that “honey appears sweet” and “I think I am not warmed or chilled.”<sup>621</sup> Therefore, skeptics express their passive affection by engaging a sense-impression withholding no further thought processes due to the rational belief of argument and reason neither affirmation nor rejection. Through appearance, skeptics follow ordinary senses of natural guidance that hunger drives us for food and thirst to drink. They conduct their life empirically and undogmatically by suspending beliefs from all propositional statements.<sup>622</sup> Therefore, skeptics withhold dogmatic views and opinions about what things really are but reflect how things appear to them without taking a position.

In the Pyrrhonist view, belief is considered a psychological mode of inquiry to overcome a mental disturbance and live rightly utilizing the skeptical procedures of suspending belief and following appearances.<sup>623</sup> Living a good life aims to achieve tranquility as the final goal, which is reasonable to suspend any dogmatic beliefs as “assent to a non-evident proposition” but to follow appearances, customs, laws, and evidence of our instinctive feelings without holding a belief.<sup>624</sup> Thus, skeptics do not dogmatize things and determine nothing neither all things are true nor false.<sup>625</sup> The skeptical aim is to acquire critical examination for truth and to live without belief (*adoxastôs*).<sup>626</sup> In the practical procedure, skeptics observe everyday life following

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<sup>620</sup> Burnyeat, *Skeptical Tradition*, 130–31; Bett, *Pyrrho, His Antecedents*, 78–79.

<sup>621</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 11. PH I.13

<sup>622</sup> Sextus and Mates, *Skeptic Way*, 31. PH I.23–24, I.192–3, I.196, II.246

<sup>623</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 13. PH I.17

<sup>624</sup> Groarke, *Greek Scepticism*, 133.

<sup>625</sup> PH I.13–15, I.27–28, III.237

<sup>626</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 17, PH I.23, I.226,

appearances using the guidance of nature to follow the constraint of the passions, the tradition of laws, customs, and the instruction of the arts. Thus they assert nothing and make non-dogmatic statements.

In the standard rules of life, skeptics live the following appearance without asserting dogmatic belief and remain active in the guidance of nature.<sup>627</sup> To hold off dogmatic beliefs or non-evident things, the skeptic accepts what has come to be following an impression. This affection is equally in the sense of negation and affirmation in the respects of probability and improbability, tested, and irreversible. In perceiving a rope lying coiled up, the rope appears like a serpent to the man who did not look carefully, but it seems like a rope in immobility to the man who has examined thoroughly.<sup>628</sup> The matter of affection, skepticism is in the passive impression that he cannot accept or reject but suspends any assent to a proposition that neither affirms nor denies anything due to the equipollence. Indeed, suspending belief is indicated to things that appear to us equal as regards credibility and incredibility. In the phrase “skeptics determine nothing” is to hold off any assent to put forward something non-evident or propositional beliefs or dogmatic assumption but to reflect what appears to us and our mental state of suspending neither believe and disbelieve.<sup>629</sup> Thus, the skeptical phrase “I determine nothing” is designated a passivity or affection to express skeptical non-assertion (*aphasia*) in the circumstance of appearance due to equal force of a sense impression. Skeptic withholds assent in suspending belief or disbelief. Pyrrhonists propose an attitude of non-assertion toward things in which by nature are indifference (*adiaphora*), instability (*astathmēta*),

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II.254, III.235

<sup>627</sup> Ibid., 16. PH I.22

<sup>628</sup> Ibid., 141. PH I.227-229

<sup>629</sup> Ibid., 115. PH I.196-197

and indetermination (*anepikrita*). By equal strength, all subjects are presented in agreement and disagreement, either truth (*alētheuein*) or falsehoods (*pseudesthai*). Skeptics embrace appearance and affection. They are without opinions (*adoxastous*), without inclinations (*aklineis*), and without wavering (*akradantous*).<sup>630</sup>

In sum, skeptic tenets are meant to be a pathological detachment that refuses to accept or reject things as accurate and get rid of their theories, beliefs, and views by suspending them all.

In a similar view, Buddhist inquiries are not required faith but suspended any belief that is to be renounced neither clinging absolute certainty nor clinging of phenomena.<sup>631</sup> Based on the path of purification, the Buddhist standpoint of knowledge and vision is to contemplate all material and immaterial states that they are impermanent, painful, and not-self.<sup>632</sup> The modes of investigation or inquiries are skillful manners of developing one own ability of achievement liberation and attainment of equanimity.<sup>633</sup>

However, Buddhist inquiry can be interpreted as “the Buddha’s charter of free inquiry,”<sup>634</sup> “a rationalist teaching based on scientifically verifiable evidence,” and “a pragmatic empiricist.”<sup>635</sup> In this case, the discourse to the *Kalamas* projects the perplexed investigation that is attested by skillful means for achieving the ground knowledge to liberate oneself from dogmatic beliefs and mental disturbance. Even though faith is not required for practitioners to examine life but having experience is

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<sup>630</sup> Castagnoli, *Ancient Self-Refutation*, 256–257.

<sup>631</sup> The sutta shows the suspending of grasping that all phenomena are rising and falling, so nothing can be held, then equanimity shows that things are becoming and fading away. SN 12.52

<sup>632</sup> Buddhaghosa and Ñānamoli, *Path of Purification*. 663.

<sup>633</sup> PH I.23-24, II.246

<sup>634</sup> Soma, *Kalama Sutta*. 1.

<sup>635</sup> Nanayakkara, *How Free Is Freedom of Thought*. 5.

acquainted.<sup>636</sup> Buddha's teaching can be accepted by the wise via skillful examination.<sup>637</sup> The Buddha points out the reliable criterion of examining the life which sensible persons would have their ability to practice on the spiritual path. According to the procedure of critical examination, they would develop their minds in the right view and then be able to get rid of corrupted minds and mental unrest. So they have the wisdom of ending defilements.<sup>638</sup> However, unreliable sources of knowledge are inadequate criteria for truth based on the traditionalists (*anussavikā*), the rationalists, and speculators or metaphysicians (*takka vimagsa*). In this case, the experientialists directly experience dharma by themselves (*sāma yeva dhamma abhiyāya*), which is considered as the reliable knowledge. Unwholesome such as greed is rooted cause of unvirtue and delusion leading to blamable actions and censures by the wise. Moreover, practical wisdom is the crucial part of knowledge that emphasizes observation, examination, and investigation of subjective and objective phenomena showing that things are impermanent, unstable, and cannot be grasped as self. These phenomena appear on the condition of arising and falling, so things are in flux without a definite essence but coming and passing away.<sup>639</sup>

According to the Buddhist standpoint of having “no view,” abandoning views<sup>640</sup> or beliefs or doctrines is free from disputes aiming for the state of calm at the final goal. Holding no view or belief through direct experience<sup>641</sup> does not come upon “what is seen,

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<sup>636</sup> Evans, “Doubting the Kālāma-Sutta,” 101.

<sup>637</sup> Ibid., 91. Knowing things as they have come to be (*jāneyyātha*) means having wisdom through direct experience.

<sup>638</sup> Many teachers whose knowledge comes from traditions, scriptures, reason, and testimonies have claimed their truth of reality. SN 76

<sup>639</sup> Buddhaghosa and Ñānamoli. *Path of Purification*, 663.

<sup>640</sup> In the realization sequence, abandoning by substitution of opposites (*tadangappahana*) releases attachments due to the replacing of differences, for example, unwholesome versus wholesome, darkness versus light. Vism 22.112

<sup>641</sup> “Phenomenon (is) hard to see, hard to realize, tranquil, refined, beyond the scope of conjecture, subtle, to-be-experienced by the wise.” *Aggi-vacchagotta Sutta*, MN 72

heard or cognized, nor upon ritual observances.”<sup>642</sup> However, it is beyond disputes of holding sides or inclining either extreme for becoming or non-becoming, which comes from a fixed viewpoint or other notions. Indeed, the Buddhist view on wrong-views like extremists underlines attachment and craving acceptance about oneself and the world. The wrong views proclaim that only this is true; anything else is wrong. They rely upon faith (*saddha*), approval (*ruci*), oral tradition (*anussava*), reasoned cogitation (*akarapavivittakka*), and comparable thought (*ditthi-nijjhanakkhanti*).<sup>643</sup> Indeed, the discourse to Kalamas addresses a doubtful point that all doctrines or beliefs are to be investigated and evaluated through direct experience that “those who are seeking freedom from suffering should know for themselves that is wholesome (*kusala*) and unwholesome (*akusala*).”<sup>644</sup> Direct personal knowledge and experience could be the safeguard of the truth. Indeed, accepting any doctrine or belief by hearsay, tradition, reason, and personal preference, there is no guarantee of truth-claim that the final solution could be true or false. Simply utilizing traditionalists (*anussavikā*), rationalists, and speculators or metaphysicians (*takkavamasa*), taking a side of beliefs or doctrine without direct personal experience could be misled the truth. Therefore, to preserves truth (*saccanurakkhana*) is to hold back the definite conclusion that “only this is true, anything else is wrong.” Grasping no view is to be accepted beyond speculation; views, beliefs, and doctrines, so it is the matter of abandonment.<sup>645</sup> Suspending belief or clinging to no views is a closed

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<sup>642</sup> By abandoning, the Buddhist practices are not relied on speculations but to see things as phenomena.

*Paramatthaka Sutta*, SN 4.5

<sup>643</sup> *Pañcattaya Sutta*, M iii 28

<sup>644</sup> In this case, the ten references of beliefs or knowledge are doubtful, unreliable, and inadequate criteria for truth. They could mislead with the dogmatic claim of the only truth. *Kesaputtiya Sutta*, A 3.65

<sup>645</sup> “Tathāgata has abandoned, its root destroyed, made like a palmyra stump, deprived of the conditions of development, not destined for future arising; freed from the classification of the form.” *Aggi-vacchagotta Sutta*, MN 72



standpoint in Pyrrhonism and Buddhism to abandon any account of opinions and position of beliefs about things beyond phenomenal appearance.<sup>646</sup>

In therapeutic aim, the Buddhist view of the Four Noble Truths is like a healing analogy; the teaching aims for healing people from suffering like a medicine is given to cure disease. Mainly the final result of suffering is tranquility (*passaddhi*). Moreover, Buddhist teaching of the right view is explained as a medicine to cure mental distress and despair and free from suffering. As the Buddha said in the purgative analogy as the following:

Doctors give a purgative for warding off diseases...there is a purging there; I don't say that there's not, I will teach you the noble purgative...whereby beings subject to birth are freed from birth...beings subject to death are freed from death; beings subject to sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress & despair...one who has right view, wrong view is purged away, and the many evil, unskillful mental qualities that come into play in dependence on wrong view are purged away<sup>647</sup>

Indeed, the training of the right views is accommodated from many skillful mental qualities based on the path of dhamma as the final arrival at truth. As the holy life is fulfilled, one can be free from fetters of becoming and grasping nothings neither self nor others.<sup>648</sup> The path of realization in Buddhism is profound, hard to see and hard to understand, unattainable by mere reasoning, subtle, to be experienced by the wise.<sup>649</sup>

Regardless of groundless beliefs or speculation, the Buddhist practice of the final goal inquires the direct personal experience. The purpose is to gain a reflective acceptance of teaching, examine the meaning of teaching, and penetrate with one's wisdom, leading to the final realization of the goal.<sup>650</sup> Mainly reflecting phenomena by

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<sup>646</sup> Beckwith, *Greek Buddha*, 40.

<sup>647</sup> Purgative: "*tikicchā*" is the art of healing, a therapeutic treatment. *Tikicchā Sutta*, AN 10.108

<sup>648</sup> *Khema Sutta*, AN 6.49

<sup>649</sup> "*Dhamma deseti, gambhiro so dhammo duddaso duranubodha santo panto atakkavacaro nipuno panditavadaniyo.*" M ii 172-3

<sup>650</sup> Fuller, *Notion of Dīṭṭhi in Theravāda Buddhism*, 37.

using medicinal requisites for curing the sick is counteracted to any mental illness and arisen for freedom of disease. Fabrication of the mind should be abandoned and removed through the cultivation of the factors of enlightenment.<sup>651</sup> The parable of the raft shows the primary purpose of the Buddhist tenets that the teaching's similitude to a raft: having the goal of crossing over, not the sense of holding, so the raft is helpful to make safely across to the other side of the river. However, it is not for carrying over and not for retaining. As the Buddha said that

In the same way, monks, I have taught the Dhamma [Dharma] compared to a raft, for the purpose of crossing over, not for the purpose of holding onto. Understanding the dhamma as taught compared to a raft, you should let go even of Dhammas, to say nothing of non-Dhammas.<sup>652</sup>

The Buddhist tenets aim to get rid of grasping wrong views and abandoning all views and beliefs. Grasping the views about self or no-self is a wilderness of views and a fetter of views that are not free from suffering and stress. The purpose of Buddhist teachings is to learn and examine wisely but not for the sake of criticizing or refuting others in disputation. Grasping teachings rightly will bring harmlessly and no suffering but grasping the wrong study will bring otherwise. In this case, the Buddhist tenets are dedicated to the final goal of tranquility. Grasping the views about self or no-self is the wilderness of views and a fetter of views that are not free from suffering and stress.<sup>653</sup> A clinging-five aggregate is considered to be a stressful or mental problem. The Buddha's teachings on non-attachment include all means to be abandoned after achievement, so the raft aims only to cross the shore of freedom.

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<sup>651</sup> *Sabbasava Sutta*, MN 2

<sup>652</sup> *Alagaddupama Sutta*: The Snake Simile, MN 22

<sup>653</sup> *Silavant Sutta*: Virtuous, SN 22.122

The psychological therapeutic aim of Buddhist tenets is represented in the parable of the poisoned arrow that a man that a poisoned arrow has wounded. Any doctor tried to help him by way of asking who had attacked him and so on. He will die before answering the question, but survival is needed to cure the wound by taking the poison arrow. To answer the metaphysical questions is not the primary purpose of Buddhist tenets. The Buddha points out the reflection of appearance that “this phenomenon, hard to see, hard to realize, tranquil, refined, beyond the scope of conjecture, subtle, to-be-experienced by the wise.”<sup>654</sup> In brief, the Buddhist path is an instrument like a ladder that is purposely to climb over into the peaceful reality, but it is nothing beyond.

Remarkable parallels of psychological therapeutic aim can be found in Pyrrhonism that crossing out affirmative argument over an opposing argument is not inclined to take a side of arguments but to abolish equally both sides of an argument. Skeptics make non-assertion aiming to achieve the final goal of mental freedom from stress. Indeed, the skeptic does not claim or assert neither affirmation (P) nor negation (not-P) based on the formulae of equal contradictory or “proof against proof.” “If there is a proof, there is proof. If there is no proof, there is proof. Either there is proof, or there is no proof. Therefore, there is proof.”<sup>655</sup> As Sextus states the skeptical phrases that “just as purgative drugs donot merely drain the humours from the body but drive themselves out

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<sup>654</sup> A fire burning is an example of the direct experience of knowing things as they are by nature.

<sup>655</sup> McPherran remarks that self-refutation shows proof against disproof without a definite claim. In other cases, Burnyeat points out the logical implication of self-refutation is a reversal claim to turn around in opposite of proof refusing with contradictory arguments. Indeed, Castagnoli redefines self-refutation as “self-bracketing expressions.” Mainly, self-refutation is to suspend both judgments, neither belief nor disbelief. Sextus describes that opposing every argument is to overturn by itself and to destroy all arguments after all. PH II.69, 70, DL IX.76; McPherran, “Skeptical Homeopathy and Self-Refutation,” 290–328; Castagnoli, *Ancient Self-Refutation*, 251–307; Burnyeat, “Protagoras and Self-Refutation,” 47–48.

too along with the humours.”<sup>656</sup> A purgative simile shows that skeptical remedies remove dogmatic beliefs with refutation arguments without assertion. Thus suspending belief is no doubt and reason to way to assume without assertion. Simply skeptics have overturned opposing arguments without any doctrine or belief due to an equal indifferent argument.<sup>657</sup> They make no assumption and no further procedure to carry on.

Hence, Pyrrhonist skeptics utter nothing or assert nothing to entail neither truth nor axiom that all propositions are equal affirmative and negative truth and falsehoods. Skeptics do not abolish arguments, including their arguments. Sextus concludes the “proof against proof”<sup>658</sup> argument through premises and inference that “therefore proof does not exist therefore the statement proof does not exist is true by reversing the argument.”<sup>659</sup> Skeptic remedy is like a fire burns itself and the fuel, and a purgative drug cleans itself and the fluids out of the body.<sup>660</sup> Therefore, the primary purpose of the skeptical therapeutic method does not entail the outcome or the truth, but it comes by chance, like a horse’s painting is completed after giving up and finished a perfect horse on the picture by a single touch. So the suspension of belief is by chance as “a shadow follows its substance.”<sup>661</sup> Skeptics assent nothing in arguments. It is like a man who left a ladder behind after ascending to the higher floor.<sup>662</sup>

Skeptics intend to make their arguments lacking in power and persuasion, but they desire to cure an unpleasant belief in dogmatics and to clean up all arguments due to the equality of agreement or disagreement. They determine nothing about the external

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<sup>656</sup> Empiricus, Annas, and Barnes, *Outlines of Scepticism*, 52. PH I.206

<sup>657</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Sextus Empiricus*, 489; McPherran, “Skeptical Homeopathy and Self-Refutation,” 297; Williams, “Scepticism without Theory,” 553. AL II.481

<sup>658</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Sextus Empiricus*, 489. AL II.480-481

<sup>659</sup> Ibid., 271. PH II.187-188

<sup>660</sup> AL II.480

<sup>661</sup> PH I.29

<sup>662</sup> AL II.481

world, reality, or nature under affection impression (phantasiai)<sup>663</sup> to gain no knowledge or belief. However, they have used reason in their philosophical tenets but follow their practice guidelines.

Similarly, the Buddhist and Pyrrhonist standpoints on suspension of belief have underlined intellectual skills such as reason, logic, and skillful means such as the middle path to increase the ability to determine what is related to the goal of tranquility.

Suspending belief is not about what things really are but how things appear. Both views made the notion of non-assertion by seeing things by appearance due to their differences in nature and arguments. Buddhist and Pyrrhonist views represent the purgative analogy, fire, raft, and ladder to demonstrate the purpose of dharma as a raft and medicine in the role of instrumental aim to see things or phenomena with self-refutation that it will get rid of sick and itself. In sum, Pyrrhonist and Buddhist tenets are described as means to achieve their goals underlined the mental problems of grasping things, either true or false, which is the root cause of imperturbability. Both describe their tenets in the medical analogies that emphasize the instrumental role of arguments<sup>664</sup> in bringing about the suspension of belief and achieving the final goal by different means in philosophical and religious aims. Indeed, the medical analogies in Pyrrhonist skeptics bear to the point of suspending belief, but Buddhist tenets address the path of attaining the final goal. In general, both provide their suspending beliefs against dogmatic and extremes beliefs. They point out the mental attitude as the state of mind corresponding to denouncing the true or false case.

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<sup>663</sup> Phantasia is an impression of how things are that forces assertion by appearances. PH I.13

<sup>664</sup> Vogt et al., *Pyrrhonian skepticism in Diogenes Laertius*, 27. "The skeptics used statements (*logoi*) only as tools." DL IX.76

### *Inactivity (Apraxia)*<sup>665</sup>

According to Pyrrhonist and Buddhist points of view, life without beliefs implies various modes of inquiry to suspend beliefs for an active life to do things in everyday life. However, the objection of inactivity (*apraxia*) could result in total inactivity. In both views, practitioners should apply their philosophical tenets and teachings to guide their ways of life. Indeed, Pyrrhonist and Buddhist standpoints are rooted in their inquiries to promote their actions aiming for the outcome as tranquility.

Moreover, suspension of belief is meant to invert inactivity. It represents possible action without beliefs that acquire non-approval of things based on non-evidences but relies on how things appear to human experience.<sup>666</sup> In some cases, notable anti-theist and non-nihilist standpoints reveal the anti establishments of predecessors. Indeed, Pyrrhonist and Buddhist tenets provide some significant actions leading to the final goal in the mental state of unperturbedness. Both recognize conflicts and dilemmas of dogmatic beliefs in the way of doing things in ordinary life.

In the Pyrrhonist point of view, *agōgē* (ἀγωγή) is a way of life with an attitude to suspend judgment in the matter of non-assertion by grasping nothing. This point aims for the state of imperturbability (*ataraxia*) due to the puzzlements of determination. It is also noteworthy that Pyrrhonian skepticism is not particularly concerned with doubt insofar as doubt is a positive state of mind with an antithesis to all beliefs. Pyrrhonist standpoints are more of an activity than doctrines or rules but rather the skillful practice ability. However, suspension of belief does not lead to inactivity and dilemma of life without mere belief. Skeptics live according to appearance because things are indifferent by

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<sup>665</sup> Myles Burnyeat discusses David Hume's challenge of the inability of skeptics to act and live without beliefs. Burnyeat, *Skeptical Tradition*, 117.

<sup>666</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 17. PH I.23-24

nature, either good or bad. To live under skeptical reason is meant to undertake nothing indeterminable assumption but an ordinary guide for practices. The skeptic ways of thought imply philosophical logos that every argument is inherently indifferent by logically valid criteria, either belief or disbelief. In practice, we should be uninclined toward neither dogmatic nor extreme views. The attitude of indeterminate things is passionless (*apatheia*),<sup>667</sup> so suspending belief could bring undisturbedness because we cannot trust any perception and determine nothing. After all, things are no more this than that. Skeptics assent to things and withdraw themselves from determination, but they were affected by a passive affection (*pathos*) such as “honey appears sweet.”<sup>668</sup>

In brief, skeptics assent to appearance in which does reflect a dogmatic belief but affections. Indeed, skeptics are not troubled by things unavoidable, such as cold, thirst, and suffer various affections, and they do not have mental troubles. At the same time, ordinary people are afflicted by either good or evil that is subjected by nature. Thus skeptics do not add anything in the natural conditions; by this regard of opinion, skeptic's end of quietude can be achieved by suspending belief and then tranquility. For this example, Pyrrho's life shows that he was praised as a high priest.<sup>669</sup> This point indicates the practice of philosophy most nobly. Mainly, skeptics accept that things appear in specific ways, so they suspend any opinion, belief, or trust to determine nothing. Thus Pyrrhonists are better off than ordinary people who grasp things as truth and dogmatically believe things. Indeed, opinion or belief does have nothing related to the nature of things.

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<sup>667</sup> *Pathe*: passionlessness, Beckwith describes it as a lack of suffering that Pyrrho has lived a simple life without worry. DL IX.66; Beckwith, *Greek Buddha*, 190–93; Bett, *Pyrrho, His Antecedent*, 66.

<sup>668</sup> Sextus and Mates, *Skeptic Way*, 10. PH I.20

<sup>669</sup> In some cases, Pyrrho is saved from falling, being attacked by a dog, and running over by a chariot. However, Pyrrho is said to be free from opinion and beliefs but live upon appearance. Diogenes and Hicks, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers II*, 477. DL IX.64

Pyrrhonist skeptics reflect how things appear and determine nothings, such as how they are in their real nature. Therefore, skeptics are not inactive but reflect and follow the appearance without grasping true or false things. For Pyrrhonist objection of inactivity, they are not in the “state of inactivity or of inconsistency...because, as all life consists in desires and avoidances...rejecting life and reminding like a vegetable.”<sup>670</sup> Simply skeptics conduct their lives without any philosophical theory or belief but respond to things through appearances. Based on non-philosophical practice, Pyrrhonists can choose and avoid things in ordinary of everyday life.

According to the Buddhist view, most teachings are the practical guidelines for a moral life.<sup>671</sup> There are wrong views, including nihilism (materialism) and amoralism (*akiriyavāda*),<sup>672</sup> which reject any act of moral virtue, so no action is considered good or bad but acting upon feeling regardless of any consequence, either the past or present. However, Buddhist teachings concern three principles of moralism; efficacy of action (*kammavada*), moral action (*kiriyavada*), and moral effort (*viriyavada*).<sup>673</sup> To this extent, the Buddhist view rejects non-action (*akiriyavāda*) or amoralism because they have no practical guide for the holy life. Amoralism is based on dogmatic beliefs and opinions regardless of any action. In the growing of wisdom and moral life, the Buddhist teachings guide the more action aiming for the mental state of calmness.

Briefly, Pyrrhonist and Buddhist standpoints concerning living without belief are the keys to living according to appearance. The notion of pragmata or dhamma reveals that things are without self-identity. In the Pyrrhonist view, things are indifferent

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<sup>670</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Sextus Empiricus*. 463. AP II.162-164

<sup>671</sup> *Sandaka Sutta*, MN 76 and *Sāmaa-phala Sutta*, DN 2

<sup>672</sup> MN 76

<sup>673</sup> Karunadasa, *Early Buddhist Teachings*, 83.



(*adiaphora*), unstable (*astathmeta*), unfixed, or changing (*anepikrita*).<sup>674</sup> Thus things can be claim neither self nor no-self nor true nor false in an absolute view. The wise men do not incline toward dogmatic or extreme paths, but they are passionless and suspend beliefs on searching for truth. Both views are not determined anything about how things are in their nature but reflected how they appear. The ways things appear to them that the wise men suspend beliefs or opinions and respond to something with an investigation under appearance.

In sum, it seems impossible for all people who can act without any belief. However, it seems to practical actions by suspending beliefs to respond consciously to things based on Pyrrhonist and Buddhist daily life guidelines. Because the nature belief is distinguishable and indispensable for actions, the wise men can respond to things following appearance consciously is an immediate action that the mind can be free from grasping things in an absolute manner. A life without beliefs is an exemplar in a practical coherence that Pyrrhonist and Buddhist guidelines appear to match in remarking an unwavering attitude toward inclination of views or beliefs.

Therefore, Pyrrho and the Buddha exemplify how to live a good life and actions to reflect things either choosing or avoiding under non-dogmatic or extreme ways of practice. From an intellectual standpoint, Buddhist and Pyrrhonist views are not pessimistic or inactive on everything, but both keep searching for truth. The fundamental Buddhist teachings come from the Buddha's realization of the goal, the detachment from dogmatic and extremist views. The right view and attitudes toward all other views guide action related to the final goal. The point of seeing things as they appear is to

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<sup>674</sup> Beckwith, *Greek Buddha*, 27–44.

accommodate the nature that reflects what appears in mind. The tranquility of nirvana is said to coexist with compassion and loving-kindness for all beings.

### *Teachings and Attitudes*

The Buddhist and Pyrrhonist views are mainly concerned with the human ability to investigate things based on personal experience following appearance; religious and philosophical methods are indicated as instrumental modes to deal with hassle views of extremists and dogmatists. Mainly both are to apply the competitive philosophy and religious teachings to engage with others aiming for achievements in the final goal. In this examination, Buddhist and Pyrrhonist perspectives arose within very diverse cultural, religious, and philosophical paradigms in which are remarkable similarities and differences aspects of tenets and attitudes. According to Pyrrhonist and Buddhist standpoint on the mental attitude that motivates actions and its consequences in giving value and meaning to things and grasping things either negative or positive proposition. Thus, the teachings as their modes of inquiry indicate the mental attitude of withholding beliefs about things in both traditions.

In Buddhist teaching, the final goal is to escape the cycle of rebirth (*samsara*), which is the soteriological strategy to achieve peace of mind. Buddhist teachings are the empirical formulae; especially the course to *Kalamas* represents the modes of inquiries that a wise man can examine life with direct experience beyond dubitation.<sup>675</sup> Moreover Buddhist view of beliefs is parable to the final goal, but it is not substantial to the way of realization; in abandon or detachment things under their nature. The attitude toward others is reflected in the healing path by the path of realization. The *Kesaputtiya Sutta*

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<sup>675</sup> The Buddhist teachings consist of the doctrine-and-discipline (*dhamma-vinaya*); particularly dhamma can be seen as the nature of things, the facts of wisdom (truth), and the practical training (the middle path).

presents the discourse in the Buddhist epistemology underlined wisdom or knowledge and investigation in personal ability to advance knowledge-based on individual experience and insight meditation. The Buddhist inquiry emphasizes an individual investigation to examine the life and search for truth beyond indubitable knowledge and absolute claims resulting at the end of the problems and the state of freedom. The mental attitude could be in a state of calmness. This type of inquiry does not come through groundless searching for the absolute answer or the metaphysical claim, but it relies on the direct experience toward all phenomena. The discourse to abandon grasping things is essential to the Buddhist teachings and attitude of searching for truth. In brief, knowledge or wisdom (*panyā*) is a procedure to develop in “full understanding” (*paripayā*) which can liberate an individual by means of direct knowledge, value, and the end of suffering. The view of understanding is conducive to the key of mental training and moral training in providing an integration path for the final goal of refinishing all defilements. This practice mode is based on the therapeutic aim to embody the human ability to do this over the wrong view, craving, and ignorance.

According to Sextus’s accounts, the Pyrrhonist approach is quite different regarding the skeptical problem: his suspense or perplexity of what is true and false regarding contradictory, non-evident metaphysical claims. He first seeks to remedy it ordinarily: investigation. This training is purely cognitive or dialectical in method and requires no modification of other behaviors such as livelihood, chastity, or nonviolence.

In contrast, Pyrrhonist tenets are responded in many senses of Greek philosophy while Buddhist teachings are justified against Vedic beliefs, which are implied in many

modes of inquiry. The claim of the final goal is the endpoint of the practical path to reach the goal.

### **Critical Concerns and Emphases**

According to Buddhist and Pyrrhonist traditions, outlines and tenets aim to achieve the final goal. The critical concerns and emphases show their responses to beliefs and claims practically: Buddhists and Pyrrhonists attempt to describe appearance through the courses of action in a minimal sense and involuntary. On the one hand, skeptics explain that their actions without beliefs are far better than dogmatists. On the other hand, Buddhist's modes of action are to avoid extremes but rely upon the right view and path toward the final goal of tranquility. Both underline appearance on the course of suspending beliefs regardless of the doctrinal criteria. Indeed, Buddhists describe a quest of wisdom that belief does not entail the outcome. Otherwise, Pyrrhonists refuse to describe their actions in terms of beliefs. In this case, beliefs are to be concerned with either obstacle or abandonment.

Notably, any belief is subjected in philosophical discussions and investigations linked to various criteria of truth, justification, and appearances. Indeed, the notion of skeptical attitude is found in Greek philosophy. According to Pyrrho's passage, "things are equally indifferent, unmeasurable, and inarbitrable."<sup>676</sup> Pyrrhonists have an attitude of suspending belief to hold any beliefs or opinions with the refutation phrase that "no more" Pyrrhonists have a skeptical attitude to withhold any thoughts or opinions with the refutation phrase that "no more" presents tetralemma; "it no more is than is not, or both is and is not, or neither is nor is not."<sup>677</sup> Therefore, they are speechless (*aphasia*) but then

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<sup>676</sup> Beckwith, *Greek Buddha*, 186.

<sup>677</sup> Beckwith, *Greek Buddha*, 187; Bett, *Pyrrho, His Antecedents*, 135.

hope for tranquility (*ataraxia*). In this case, their critical concerns and emphases on belief and attitude are the scope of study to see behind those terms and characteristics in Buddhist and Pyrrhonist perspectives. The characteristics are to be examined under similar circumstances to see the points of concern and emphasis.

### ***Buddhist and Pyrrhonist Characteristics***

According to the Buddhist discourses, the Buddha did not engage in a public debate with Indian contemplatives and philosophers but only joined the discussions where the arguments were not about the absolute truth. Many discourses show that the Buddha engaged in the discussions that led to liberation as the goal.<sup>678</sup> Buddhist attitudes toward criticism and praise are focused on the practical path. Mainly the Buddhist standpoints are based on non-speculation beyond all views and absoluteness. As the following points out that

Tathāgata has realized within himself the state of perfect peace. Having understood as they really are, the origin and the passing away of feelings, their satisfaction, their unsatisfactoriness, and the escape from them...is emancipated through non-clinging.<sup>679</sup>

Indeed, the Buddha's standpoint for debates; only if that person conducts the discussion with truthful and ethical ways to develop the path of liberation without clinging to absolute truth or eternity. It is to search for the path of the final release, but it is not groundless beliefs and claims. In sum, Buddhist teachings did not emphasize an absolute belief but a practice following a direct personal knowledge of seeing things as they have come to be. The discussion is to be concerned with groundless speculations and the mental attitude of tranquility.

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<sup>678</sup> AN 3.68

<sup>679</sup> AN 3.68

Moreover, in the Pali discourses, the Buddhist teachings present the core concepts to characterize beliefs and teachings in criteria of suspending belief, tranquility, and appearances. The dependent origination does not rely upon determinism or indeterminism but rather correlations of things. There are much coordination of phenomena, including human effort as the factors of things; moral actions and consequences. In phenomena, practitioners have a focus on the practical guidelines in the path of renunciation.<sup>680</sup> The guideline of the first sermon shows there is a way out of suffering that human beings can recognize the relation of suffering and its cause of grasping things such as “I” and “self” in the positions of positive, negative, and neutral sensations and thoughts. Thus, suffering is appeared to be mental unsatisfactoriness. In brief, suspending beliefs or grasping attachments is the key to mindfulness according to the independent coordination of phenomena or things that appear to become.

Indeed, the mental state of tranquility does come after thorough examination on the path toward the sensation of suffering. However, the quest for a way out of suffering is based on personal experience that requires no belief but seeing the truth through a thorough inspection and preserving truth. According to the criterion of truth, the Buddhist quest of examination does not rely on resources and origin of truth but deep-seeing things as they appear to be. Therefore, wisdom inquiry is much need for investigation.

On Pyrrhonist skeptics, the disposition stand of belief makes the practical beliefs distinguishable from theoretical or philosophical beliefs, so skeptics give non-theoretical commitments or determine nothing. This characteristic is the point that skeptics have implied onto the practical concerns which one can live in the skeptical way of life aiming for the end of quietude. Skeptics can live their lives following appearance, so they do not

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<sup>680</sup> Karunadasa, *Early Buddhist Teachings*, 83–84.

make dogmatic assent onto the beliefs. Getting rid of dogmatic beliefs, Pyrrhonists adopt the therapeutic advance in an ethical position that suspension of belief is an offering guideline for disposition of beliefs in a neutral attitude due to an equal strength of arguments.

Particularly the Skeptic's End of quietude is the achievement of living the skeptical life that one does not worry much about the trouble of defending arguments due to encounters of indifference. Moreover, this point of neutral attitude utilizing suspending beliefs is the key to making the mind achieve tranquility (*ataraxia*). Skeptics keep searching for the truth in which is the main character identifying Pyrrhonist skeptic from other dogmatists. They employ the modes of inquiries instead of the dogmatic claims of knowledge, beliefs, and opinions representing things in various modes of investigation and experience, such as relativity. In sum, the skeptical modes of inquiry provide the reason for suspending beliefs with an indifferent argument. The skeptical skill is to see things without establishing any belief in a particular proposition. Briefly, both have their intellectual standpoints, modes of inquiry, and disposition of beliefs. They promote the steady mental ability of mind as their concerns and emphases, either philosophical or religious methods.

The following comparison of suspending beliefs lays down the core features of Pyrrhonist tenets and Buddhist teachings. In comparison, both accounts are to be identified the parts of core feature, attitude, and modes of inquiries that can be drawn from the similar circumstance in comparing their similarity and dissimilarity and point out the ways of thought underline condition. To find out the answers, teachings, or tenets of Pyrrhonist and Buddhist standpoints must be articulated into the remarkable criteria

that can be reflected in the ways of dealing with the focus point of view. Suspension of belief is characterized in contradiction, confrontation against extremists and dogmatists, corresponding, and achievement indicated to the matter of both standpoints. In sum, various formulae, terms, parables, and discussions are underlined and presented in comparing suspending beliefs in Pyrrhonist and Buddhist perspectives

### ***Against Extremists and Dogmatists***

The right view is the main focus of Buddhist teaching based on liberation to grasp nothing in the world. Otherwise, the main point of dogmatic beliefs is to claim things as truth by adhering to the mindset that “this alone is true, all else is false,” in which the dogmatism is based on the groundlessness speculation or non-evidence following non-appearance speculation. Things are determined by the mindsets that reflect a specific proposition based on beliefs and opinions. Buddha points out the contradictory views of eternalism and annihilationism; both views are incompatible.<sup>681</sup> Indeed, the extremist views are associated with the intellectual thought on eternalism and annihilationism. They hold various proposition beliefs and opinions on the groundless speculation.<sup>682</sup> Indeed, any speculative theory or claim is a body of thought and attitude with dogmatic judgments. Although, the Buddhist notion of dependent arising is implied neither spiritual Eternalist nor materialist annihilationism. However, “dependent arising” came to be rightly introduced as “the middle path doctrine.” In the early Buddhist discourses, the “middle path” is enhanced in practical guidelines toward the final goal of liberation following the dependent arising of phenomena. Therefore, the Buddhist stand of the middle position provokes the avoidance of two extremes. The Buddha shows that

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<sup>681</sup> MN 160-165

<sup>682</sup> Karunadasa, *Early Buddhist Teachings*, 81–82.



“without entering either of the two extremes” (*ubho ante anupagamma*) avoids the two extremist practices. Holding eternalism and annihilationism serve as the theoretical background of dogmatic beliefs or opinions.<sup>683</sup>

Moreover, the Buddhist position embodies the practical responses and consequences that are derived from neither an absolute identity nor absolute diversity. Thus, experience knowledge results from self-entity grasping any proposition of eternity (*sassataṃ etaṃ pareti*). Otherwise, the knowledge of experience is a consequence of annihilation ground (*ucchedaṃ etaṃ pareti*). In clinging of belief: “self” or “not-self” leads to suffering.<sup>684</sup> In the point of *Kalama* discourse, the wise abandons things that are unwholesome, blamable, harm and suffering appealing to “full understanding” (*pariyā*), and “direct knowledge” (*annā*). Thus the mental state of tranquility is to be cleared from a view (*ditthi*), fetter (*samyojanā*) grounding on evident phenomena.<sup>685</sup> In this case, the Buddhist teachings are the practical mode under evident rather non-evident.<sup>686</sup> Therefore the course of action can be realized via the recognition of our sensations.<sup>687</sup>

In the case of groundlessness, it shows in the parable of the blind men describe an elephant that all blind men observed and claimed about elephant were like a tusk, robe.<sup>688</sup> They disputed following their opinions. Each claimed absolute right, but others were wrong. Like the parable of searching for gold in the darkroom, it shows that knowledge is required to grasp in the light of sound reason, but holding truth with groundless

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<sup>683</sup> M i 65

<sup>684</sup> The four kinds of grasping are clinging to sensuous desire, views, mere rules or rituals, and self-entity. Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 184.

<sup>685</sup> In the final goal, the enlightenment can be declared without self and freed from fetters. *Khema Sutta*, AN 6.49

<sup>686</sup> In the parables of the staircase for an unknown place, the Buddhist view of practices contrasts with speculations that are the pointless actions in searching for truth. *Poṭṭhapāda Sutta*, DN 9

<sup>687</sup> Kuzminski, *Pyrrhonism*, 104–5.

<sup>688</sup> “Some recluses and Brahmins, so called, are deeply attached to their own views; People who only see one side of things engage in quarrels and disputes.” *Tittha Sutta*, Ud 6.4

knowledge should be indifferent to doubt and reason. One cannot know for sure of grasping a real gold. Thus, searching for gold in a dark room denotes the groundless experience of searching for truth that one cannot know when one has found it.<sup>689</sup> Therefore, the Pyrrhonist view against dogmatists is to beware of knowledge, reason, belief, and opinion based on groundlessness in claiming things as the truth, so they must be examined and evaluated. It is better off to hold off belief or opinion. Indeed, any dispute of grasping things without realization is caused by dissatisfaction with an imperturbable mental state. In the same manner, Buddhist teachings are distinguished from the extremists and cautioned about belief and reason in grasping things with groundlessness that causes disputes of claiming the truth. Pyrrhonist tenet is to avoid dogmatic beliefs in grasping things uncertain or without unreliable knowledge.<sup>690</sup>

In brief, Buddhism and Pyrrhonism promote non-absolute truth or exclusive claims that rely on sensory perceptions, thoughts, and beliefs that are limited, in-differed, and caused controversy. In Kalamas's discussion, unreliable sources of knowledge are inadequate criteria for truth claims that are not entailed the truth but are either right or wrong.

### **Equipollence**

According to Pyrrhonist skeptics, equipollence is a genuine foundation of skepticism to hold no beliefs<sup>691</sup> by opposing every account with an equal account. In controversy, the equal weight principle requires the strength of all opinions, either affirm or deny. Pyrrhonists do not claim anything but emphasize the equal amount of

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<sup>689</sup> AL I.52

<sup>690</sup> The ten doubtfulworthy points (*dasa kakhāniya-thāna*)

<sup>691</sup> Aenesidemus' skeptical elements consist of appearances, opposition, and equipollence (equal weight of arguments). PH I.12

contradiction to overthrowing beliefs or dogmas. In sum, “to every argument, encounter argument is opposed,”<sup>692</sup> so Pyrrhonists do not admit dogmas; theories, beliefs, and views against the other schools neither establishing a certainty nor laying down anything. The formulae of “not more this than that”<sup>693</sup> expresses a skeptical utterance to determine nothing, either true or false. It reveals what appears to be on their views regardless of what is meant to be the case. For example, “the same tower appears round from a distance but square from close up.”<sup>694</sup> Uttering nothing more reflects the sense of pathos: an involuntary feeling of the mind and made no claim or assent to determine things. Simply the contradictory things, appearances, and thoughts could lead to suspension and then tranquility.<sup>695</sup>

Moreover, skeptical concern about things individually represents a logical formula as known as the tetralemma: “every single thing that it no more is than is not or both is and is not or neither is nor not.”<sup>696</sup> To project things without beliefs, opinions, and wavering, skeptics present things in the form of the tetralemma without any affirmation and negation because things are equally indifferent, unstable, and indeterminate. Based on this response without determine or withholding assent, there are speechlessness and imperturbability.

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<sup>692</sup> Sextus and Mates, *Skeptic Way*, 255. PH I.187

<sup>693</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 109. PH I.188

<sup>694</sup> PH I.33

<sup>695</sup> DL IX.62, 78, 106–7

<sup>696</sup> Bett, *Pyrrho, His Antecedents*, 16.

According to nature, things are equally represented themselves in their ways. In this case, tetralemma reflects *aphasia*, speechlessness, and passionlessness.<sup>697</sup> It is similar to the Buddhist teachings in responding to metaphysical theories and extremist beliefs.

In the statement of Aristocles in Timon's outline, *aphasia* speechlessness is used to present non-assertion. Things are equipollence due to the suspension of belief that Pyrrhonists claim to achieve the goal of tranquility. Non-assertion based on Sextus<sup>698</sup> that Pyrrhonists refuse to commit any solid solution or absolute certainty, so the response of non-reaction of silence "speechlessness" is presented as the consequent of standstill intellectual neither affirmation nor negation. Particularly the 'non-assertion uncovers the quests of metaphysical or epistemological search of the truth about things cannot be achieved but come to the end of no views or suspending belief then tranquility. Due to the equipollence of things, Pyrrhonists use antithesis to oppose every proposition with an equal proposition. They lay out a refutation statement that "it no more is than is not, or it both is and is not, or it neither is nor is not" is for a reason to have no belief or no view or no determine about things. Thus, skeptics commit no theory, view, and belief by refusing any determination about things. Without any definite determination, they can lead their minds to the freedom of worries and then the state of mental calmness. In this case, *aphasia* speechlessness indicates suspending belief by means to the state of mental perplexity without any assertion to anything neither rejection nor affirmation.<sup>699</sup> Indeed, equipollence is an antithesis form that Pyrrhonists advocate a practical mode in achieving an attitude of non-proposition without judgment by using neither theories nor beliefs nor

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<sup>697</sup> Beckwith discusses that lack of passion (*apatheia*) is not often used in Pyrrhonist tenets, but it refers to Pyrrho's untroubled attitude without assertion or holding nothing. Beckwith, *Greek Buddha*, 188–90.

<sup>698</sup> Diogenes and Hicks, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers II*, 491. DL IX.76-79

<sup>699</sup> Pullman, "Reconsidering Sophistic," 62.

views. For this reason, holding opinion, commitment, and wavering can lead to aphasia and then to *ataraxia*.

However, *apatheia* (ἀπάθεια) passionlessness remarks the state of mind via revelatory of things. It attributes the passion (*pathe*) or emotion that leads to the freedom from worry. In this case, things are equally indifferent, unstable, and indeterminate. Simply things are certainly indefinite features, and by their nature, so skeptics should withdraw trust as a guide to determine the nature of things. Indeed, “*apatheia*” passionlessness can be interpreted in advance of antithesis using proof against proof. Things are indeterminable and unspecified entities. Things are indeterminacy and equivalent in conflicting judgment and equality of probability and improbability.<sup>700</sup>

In sum, suspension of belief will bring to the end of dogmatic, thus without beliefs or non-assertion, skeptics “men of talent,” who are not perturbed by the contradictions in things and in defending of arguments what is true in things and what is false, so they found quietude through equipollence.<sup>701</sup>

According to the Buddhist notion of preserving truth (*saccānurakkhaṇa*), the person does not define that “only this is true, everything else is false.”<sup>702</sup> In any preferences: faith (*saddhā*), preference (*ruci*), oral tradition (*anussavo*), argument and evidence (*ākarā-parivittakko*) and pondering a view (*ditṭhinijjhānakhanti*), the statements of truth are not enabled or guarantee to the outcome of truth claims, but they may be hollow, empty and false, otherwise, without those preferences, some beliefs may be factual and turn out to be true. Indeed, the Buddhist preservation of truth reveals the equal validity of preferences that the results of those preferences are the factors of truth,

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<sup>700</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 7–8. PH I.10

<sup>701</sup> Pullman, “Reconsidering Sophistic,” 63. PH I.12

<sup>702</sup> *Caṅki Sutta*, MN 95

either affirmation (P) or rejection (Not-P). However, there is not sufficient reason to guarantee the definite truth. Therefore, the statement of protecting truth is not a definite result but a verifiable outcome. In the Buddhist view, any preferences have equal validity,<sup>703</sup> so beliefs must be investigated, evaluated, and realized with wisdom to preserve and attain the truth. In this case, doubt is a worthy point of Kalamas showing all inferences of tradition, reasoning, and authority. The result turns out to have two possible outcomes, either true or false, so one should hold back a definite conclusion but directly know the truth and usefulness of teachings or beliefs.<sup>704</sup>

In the same way, a Pyrrhonist stand of suspending belief is to be without opinions and beliefs due to the equally indifferent, unstable, and indeterminate.<sup>705</sup> The Buddhist and Pyrrhonist views underlined any total views, beliefs, and opinions that can tell either truth or falsehood; therefore, we should not put any determination or judgment but remain without opinions or beliefs. In brief, suspending beliefs is based on neutrality because things are indifferent and equipollent, either good or bad. Particularly both declare the dilemma of dogmatic and extreme statements projecting the tetralemma inform of speechlessness.

On the challenge of dogmatic or extremist beliefs, the Buddha does not answer the undecided questions (*avyākātāni*) based on the ill-direct views that are to be avoided put aside. Hence, he remained silent for a similar reason since they would only misunderstand anything he said. Mainly, beliefs and arguments are discussed in

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<sup>703</sup> The Buddha describes that things are dual by nature “whatever is subject to origination is all subject to cessation.” *Kuṭṭhi Sutta*, Ud 5.3

<sup>704</sup> Fuller, *Notion of Diṭṭhi in Theravāda Buddhism*, 36. The references include faith, approval, oral tradition, reasoned cogitation, and acceptance of a view resulting from reflection. *Canki Sutta*, MN 95

<sup>705</sup> Extremists, absolutists, and dogmatists determine things following their beliefs as the truth but blame others as false. Beckwith, *Greek Buddha*, 152–53.

*Brahmajala Sutta* as a form or formula of tetralemma in the analysis of the various ditthis.<sup>706</sup> This rejection of all propositions appears not to be concerned with the supposed truthfulness or falseness of the various ditthis. All the viewpoints (*ditthitthana*) are regarded as dangerous. The Buddha implies speechlessness to represent the outcome of inappropriate, ill-directed views, whether these views or beliefs are true or false.

However, they lead to freedom of mind or tranquility.<sup>707</sup> The point of holding beliefs is not a standpoint view, but it is about a practical mean. This kind of analytical analysis of these eighteen ditthis is part of the dialectical means to speculations that purposely represents a means (*upaya*) as an instrumental and therapeutical aid to lead to the attitude of non-clinging in the freedom mind. In a general sense, both try to point out the limit of the mind to understand things using beliefs, logic, and reason. Speechlessness is in the sense of gnosis on the contradiction of views or beliefs clinging either true or false falsehood. On the narrow point, both employed the different modes of thought with no views or beliefs for granted as the final result, but both recognized no answer to reveal the outcome of mind free of worries or claim. A sage attains freedom of desires; all views are to be abandoned which the mind is liberated from mental ills and renounced from dogmas. As it said, a man without greed and possessiveness; is a man who, as a man of wisdom, does not consider himself superior, inferior, or equal. It is a man who does not enter speculation, a man who is free from speculations. Simply a sage has no beliefs or opinions and passionlessness without disputes; this is true, and that is false. Similarly,

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<sup>706</sup> The Madhyamika uses catuskoti (*tetralemma*) as the total refutation, presenting the fourfold position of affirmative and negative points to the zero of probability. Ruegg, *Three Studies in the History of Indian*, 256; Chakravarti, “*Mādhyamika Catuṣkoṭi or Tetralemma*,” 306.

<sup>707</sup> The Buddha also responds to questions with cross-examination answers to insist individual investigation for one’s own understanding and the final goal of liberation. SN 12.15

Pyrrhonists suspend opinions or beliefs due to the equality of contradictory, so because of this, then to achieve undisturbedness.

To reply to unanswered questions, the Buddha implies no standpoint view through speechlessness, which emphasizes the means of wise men to achieve undisturbedness without clinging to anything. The way out of suffering is not associated with annihilationism and eternalism. To get rid of any proposition, either affirmative or rejective tendencies, requires suspending beliefs. In the Buddhist view, suspending belief is due to the relinquishment attitude, while the Pyrrhonist view is due to the equipollence of beliefs, views, and opinions.

In some sense speechlessness (*aphasia*) underlines dogmatists and extremists with no further determination without grasping things true or false. This formula, “no more this than that,” indicates to tetralemma of all statements aiming for the final goal of tranquility.<sup>708</sup> Belief, reason, logic, or persuasiveness is not appealing to the practical approach, which is based on the direct experience showing a wise man who can achieve the final goal regardless of metaphysical assumption. Neither Buddhist nor Pyrrhonist standing point is grasping nothing with the mindset of let go of things. In the Buddhist view, abandoning worldly desires is to set a mind free and pure of being doubt or being ill, being in prison, and being a slave of five hindrances.<sup>709</sup> In this case, *pathê* is the state of mind affected the destructive ones. However, *ataraxia* is something only achievable by the sage. To down the metaphysical topics, Non-determination and non-assertion are the common ground of both views to demonstrate controversial aspects of beliefs or

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<sup>708</sup> The phrase “no more” (*ou mallon*), Timon describes as determining nothing and withholding of assent. DL IX.76

<sup>709</sup> Abandoning worldly desires is to let go of five hindrances in which the wise can realize for themselves by seeing dhamma directly. *Samaññaphala Sutta*, DN 2



opinions. On the one hand, the Pyrrhonist view is about everything due to the equipollence of issues; on the other hand, the Buddhist view advocates the practical approach of finding the truth at a different level of issues.

### ***Attitudes***

The mental attitude is defined as the ability of skeptics to reflect their views and actions about beliefs and judgments because our sensations and opinions tell the truth or lie, without trust and beliefs are better off with passionlessness and unwavering on anything that is “no more this than that.” This Pyrrhonist attitude reflects things that are equally undifferentiated, unstable, and indeterminate. Indeed, the cognitive and mental aspects attribute Pyrrho’s standpoint that either our sensations or beliefs tell the truth or lie. Pyrrhonists refuse to determine things either affirmative or rejective assertions.

In Pyrrhonism, the attitude toward beliefs is at a loss viewpoint that arguments are equally solid and weak, showing either affirmation or negation.<sup>710</sup> In some sense, skeptics make a disposition to suspend a dogma, “in the broader sense of approval of a thing.” Even though Pyrrhonists do give assent to the feeling using an impression, any object is affected by pieces of evidence but not by beliefs or theories.<sup>711</sup> Briefly, Diogenes Laertius describes an attitude of freedom from emotion.<sup>712</sup> How things are by themselves, so Pyrrhonists reflect things without cognitive determination.

### ***About How Things Are by Nature***

The notion of how things are by nature is eminent in Buddhist and Pyrrhonist perspectives. In Buddhist teachings, the understanding of dhamma is known as the way

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<sup>710</sup> Sextus and Mates, *Skeptic Way*, 30–31. PH I.202

<sup>711</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 9–11. PH I.13–15

<sup>712</sup> Diogenes and Hicks, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers II*, 475. DL IX.60

things are by nature. In the Pyrrhonist view, attitude reflects how things appear by nature which is attributed to Pyrrhonist response toward things by suspending beliefs.

On the one hand, the Pyrrhonist view, “things are indeterminable” is underlined that things are by their conditions in themselves based on their intrinsic characters, so skeptics determine nothing.<sup>713</sup> On the other hand, in the Buddhist view, an attitude toward beliefs and nature does not come upon duality; dualistic things come upon existence and non-existence. The Buddhist view of phenomena shows things in condition and relation without any essence of eternity or self but the flow of phenomena; “there is no moment, no instant, and no particle of time when the river stops flowing.”<sup>714</sup> By nature, there are three characteristics of things; impermanence, suffering, nonself. These characteristics reflect that things are by themselves, uncontrollable, indeterminable, neither existence nor non-existence, nor self. Regarding arising and passing away, the Buddha dresses to *Kaccāna* that the most attitude of the world depends on a duality by the notion of existence and non-existence. For the one who sees the world under the dependent origination, the world is an influx of conditions that arise and fall. Simply this view does not come upon dogmatics or extremes, namely the middle path.

According to the Buddhist view, things are by their processes based on five natural laws. Things are arising and passing away without entity of existence, impermanent, unsatisfactory. The right attitude does come by seeing things as they come to be in the mindset of relinquishment.<sup>715</sup>

The conditioned genesis (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) is described as the correlations of subjective and objective things in a phenomenon that appears in individual

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<sup>713</sup> Bett, *Pyrrho, His Antecedents*, 19.

<sup>714</sup> Karunadasa, *Early Buddhist Teachings*, 37.

<sup>715</sup> The Buddha's view of things is a lack of clinging to any substance but non-self. DN 1

experiences.<sup>716</sup> The Buddha outlines his teaching in phenomena that “When this exists, that is; due to the arising of this, that arises. When this does not exist, that is not; due to the cessation of this, that ceases.”<sup>717</sup> One who sees things in terms of the nature of causation sees the dhamma.<sup>718</sup> In this case, the attitude toward things by nature is significantly corresponding to seeing things as such (*yathābhutam*). The attitude toward things (*dhamma*) is not assumed to be true or false but a disposition of seeing things without attachments at the final state of passionlessness (*nibbāna*). In brief, the Buddha’s statements are the pragmatic orientation rather than the determination of things.<sup>719</sup> In meditation practice, for example, observing is an act of seeing and noticing through the direct knowledge of experiences that body-mind is rising and falling movements appearing through perceptions without determining.<sup>720</sup>

In a comparable sense, skeptics point out things by appearances. They respond to things via feeling and thinking, following the natural guidance. They feel thirsty for a drink and hungry for food. However, they act upon customs, laws, and arts without assertion. They are not inactive in responding to undogmatic assertion. Remarkably, things (*pragmata*) are in common by nature; no different, unstable, and indeterminable.<sup>721</sup> No matter whether our sensations and opinions are either true or false, there is no truth value. Thus nothing in the world is determined as absolute truth through our sensations and opinions. The point of things by themselves indicates an intrinsic character of things. Based on appearance, things are perceived through individual experience. Various

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<sup>716</sup> At some point, the Buddhist teachings are concluded by the appearance of events that “whatever phenomena arise from cause: their cause and their cessation.” M i 23

<sup>717</sup> “*imasmim sati idam hoti, imassuppādā idam uppajjati; imasmim asati idam na hoti, imassa nirodhā idam nirujjhatī’ti*” *Cūḷasakuludāyī Sutta*, M 79

<sup>718</sup> M i 191

<sup>719</sup> Jayatilleke, *Contemporary Relevance of Buddhist Philosophy*, 4.

<sup>720</sup> Sobhana, *Progress of Insight*, 6.

<sup>721</sup> Beckwith, *Greek Buddha*, 193.

experiences through senses can cause our opinions or beliefs, either true or false. Things turn out to be neither true nor false through our feelings, thoughts, and interpretation. The fundamental nature is indeterminate, so things cannot be determined. To this extent, Pyrrhonists cannot come to an absolute result but keeping the mind without belief or opinion and then tranquility.

In similarity of both views, the attitude is the ability or mindset of seeing things through appearance. What comes to being is by nature of things themselves. In Pyrrhonism, the outcome is indeterminable, speechless, and calm for those who have this attitude. In parallel to Buddhism, the Buddhist understanding promotes seeing things as such by nature.

### *Non-Speculation and Direct Experience*

The Pyrrhonist view does not commit any determination but responds to things in a non-doxastic way based on appearance. On the one hand, Pyrrhonists renounce any claims or beliefs about things as absolute truth. They reflect things without justification but come upon individual experience of investigations of the subjects. On the other hand, in Buddhism, the teachings are subjected to various modes of inquiry rather than the truth claims based on tradition, scripture, reason, theory, and authority.<sup>722</sup> In this case, a personal investigation is a criterion to compare both schools reflecting things without speculation but focusing on the direct experience.

According to Kalamas, one can verify all criteria of truth either valid (*sutakkitaṃ*) or invalid (*duttakkitaṃ*); as a result, things may turn out to be true (*tathā*) or false, (*aññathā*).<sup>723</sup> However, by one's own experience, the truth must be verifiable

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<sup>722</sup> Jayatilleke, *Contemporary Relevance of Buddhist Philosophy*, 5.

<sup>723</sup> Ibid., 4–5.

(*ehipassika*) in the sense of corresponds with true nature (*yathābhutaṃ*); thus, one can verify things that are unwholesome or wholesome which brings about harm and suffering or good and happiness. The turning point of Buddhist teaching is confidence based on reason and experience (*akarawathi saddha*).<sup>724</sup> Knowing the Dharma for themselves (*sāmayeva dhamma abhiyāya*) is crucial to the direct personal knowledge and experience. Otherwise, knowing things by all sorts of speculations (*ditthis*) is unreliable and groundless knowledge. It is mentioned to Vaccha that phenomena are hard to see, hard to realize, tranquil, refined, beyond the scope of conjecture, subtle, to-be-experienced by the wise. The Buddha's silence shows a reversal view of Brāhmanism on the ground of direct knowledge.<sup>725</sup> From the Buddhist standpoint of truth, experiential knowledge directly realizes how things are in themselves and goes beyond personal fabrication (*papañca*). The experience of seeing things as they come to be (*yathabhutadassana*) reveals the perceptual proliferation (*papañca*) in arising concepts of identity as a cause of defending and holding things which is not the end of rebirth and ignorance but the tendencies aversion, views, doubt, and conceit.<sup>726</sup> Particularly seeing things in arising dependence (*patīccasamuppāda*) results from discovering and insight into the experiential observation in which things appear in sense perceptions.

Moreover, all speculations are groundless, unreliable, and not advance (*na attha samhitam*) of learning dhamma (*na dhamma samhitam*), leading to troubles. The Buddha remarks undetermination of all phenomena in the following “all phenomena that can be seen, heard, sensed, and cognized is such...there is no other such higher or more

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<sup>724</sup> *Akarawathi saddha* is a faith-based on understanding and experience in contrast to baseless faith (*amulika saddha*). Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 154.

<sup>725</sup> The Buddha criticizes the All-Embracing Net of Views that the sixty-two religious and philosophical views are based on the theoretical speculations about the nature of things.

<sup>726</sup> Hanner, *Buddhism and Scepticism*, 96–97. *Madhupiṇḍika Sutta*, MN 18

sublime...not further claim to be true or even false.”<sup>727</sup> Notably, the direct knowledge of seeing things in the mind of one who achieves the final point does not grasp and determine things but seeing as is what it is:

Knowing earth as earth, he does not suppose things about earth, does not suppose things in earth, does not suppose things coming out of the earth, does not suppose earth as 'mine,' does not delight in earth.<sup>728</sup>

In the Buddhist perspective, the knowledge of realization is reflected things by nature beyond doubt, so doubt is a perturbable mind in fabricating things as truth.

However, seeing things with discernment is to see all phenomena are not-self.

Significantly, the safeguards of truth are without the definite conclusion that only this is true, but anything else is worthless. One abandons all attachments, such as beliefs, and can attain the final achievement.

In *Kalamas* passage, any reference is to be criticized and not an absolute result. In Buddhist teachings, self-cultivation emphasizes the direct experience of wholesome or unwholesome things. This approach has underlined understanding everyday life. Indeed, any reference does not entail the truth but is means to reach the final goal. The Buddha points out that

The path leading to unbinding is there, and I am there as the guide...when my disciples are thus exhorted and instructed by me, some attain unbinding, the absolute conclusion, and some do not...the Tathagata is the one who shows the way.<sup>729</sup>

In a comparable stand, Buddhist and Pyrrhonist views indicate an individual experience with determination. To this extent, the Buddhist view renounces all speculation and groundless knowledge but embraces the indeterminacy of grasping things

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<sup>727</sup> In the duality of things, the notion of non-self presents the rejection of essences or eternity. Unlike, suchness (*tathata*) and thusness (*yathabhutam*) denote the nature of things as they have come to be. Both describe two sides of things against dogmatic views.

<sup>728</sup> *Mūlapariyāya Sutta*, MN 1

<sup>729</sup> In abandoning, the Buddha points to the freedom of attachments. MN 107

as absolute truth. Like Pyrrhonist statement that “I determine nothing” due to the opposition of arguments, therefore, everything is undetermined either grasping as good or bad.<sup>730</sup> It reflects that nothing can be grasped in the metaphysical sense. As the result of suspending beliefs, quietude (*ataraxia*) is the final goal. Buddhist and Pyrrhonist views of suspending beliefs neither deny nor affirm anything are regarding a state of mental calm. The Buddhist stand appeals to the moral well-being of wholesome and unwholesome, but the Pyrrhonist view shows controversial views. However, the Buddhist standpoint of direct experience appeals to an individual approach by seeing things through nature or phenomenon. In the Pyrrhonist view, individual preference is indeterminacy, showing a balance of belief and disbelief.

### ***Life without Belief***

To live without belief (*adoxastôs*) is a practical point in Sextus’s Pyrrhonist Outline; skeptics do not hold onto any beliefs or doctrines.<sup>731</sup> However, they engage in actions and live by suspending beliefs and opinions, neither denying nor asserting anything. Indeed, they adhere to appearances with the intellectual standstill due to an equal reason or convincing. In practice, skeptics live without belief in everyday response using the guidance of nature, the necessity of the feelings, the transmissions of laws and customs.

In contrast, the Buddhist view of teaching is standing by teachings and sets of beliefs. At some point, the Buddhist views of non-dogmatic beliefs stand by avoiding belief that some action without belief is associated with the path toward the final goal of tranquility. However, the Buddhist standpoint of wisdom is not entailed by faith, rational

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<sup>730</sup> PH I.197

<sup>731</sup> Belief, in this case, refers to the dogma that comes from determination about things through non-evidence and testimonies. Morison, “Sextus Empiricus,” 10.

speculation, views, or theories.<sup>732</sup> In some sense, the Buddha's teaching indicates one's state of mind along the path to insight liberation.<sup>733</sup> The practice of the Eightfold path designates the renunciation of clinging things as existence or non-existence away from the wrong views and actions. In brief, the practical path does not stand by speculating, forming opinions but is directly conducted by the nature of reality.

According to the objection of living without belief, inactivity (*apraxia*)<sup>734</sup> is an objection that skeptics cannot live according to everyday life without choosing things inapplicable to philosophical logos, beliefs, or something non-evident. Even though things appear either good or bad due to an equal proposition, choosing one thing over another is not applicable in action.<sup>735</sup>

However, the Pyrrhonist skeptic does not live following philosophical logos or tenets, or beliefs. He can choose some things and avoid others without grasping things as reality but appearance in which he assents to the "feelings forced upon him by appearances."<sup>736</sup> Without judgment and any set of tenets or beliefs, Pyrrhonists can choose or avoid things without beliefs or opinions that are by nature good or bad. In this case, appearance is the criterion of action that is guided by affection, such as being hungry or thirsty or following the impression of laws and customs without suspending judgment. Therefore, Pyrrhonists can eliminate any disputation and then remain calm.

In a similar point, the Buddhist view of practical guidance is based on the understanding of the phenomenon that realization is to see, to hear, and to think there is

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<sup>732</sup> *Atthinukhopariyaayo Sutta*, SN 35

<sup>733</sup> Hamilton, *Early Buddhism*, 67.

<sup>734</sup> AP II.162

<sup>735</sup> In this case, skeptics are not the total inactivity like a vegetable but act under shreds of evidence by appearance. AP II.162

<sup>736</sup> Morison, "Sextus Empiricus," 60. PH I.13



not to be ultimately true or false but non-attachment and clinging nothing. Seeing things reveals that “one sees what is to be seen, but does not identify with what is seen, does not identify with what is unseen, does not identify with what is to be seen, and does not identify with a seer.”<sup>737</sup> This realization depicts the recognition of three accounts of phenomena about experiencing subject, object itself, and experience of appearance. Simply this is appeared to be three characteristic marks of existence; impermanence (*aniccā*), non-self (*anattā*), and suffering (*duḥkha*).<sup>738</sup> Therefore, seeing all phenomena as suchness claims about things no further to be true or false. For example, “right-view is an insight into the nature of reality that leads to calm.”<sup>739</sup> To act upon the practical guidance is inquired no views or beliefs but the affection of profitable, blameless, wisely understandable as *Kalamas* can know by themselves.<sup>740</sup>

Both are noticeable that attitude toward a life without beliefs is to suspend all beliefs or opinions of grasping things as an absolute reality. They adhere to things by natural guidance for the practical purpose of aiming for tranquility. Non-attachment procedures recognize them to avoid the disputes of dogmatic claims at the end of mental clam. Buddhist teaching can be seen as the paths or practical guidelines toward the final goal that holds onto seeing phenomena with an attitude of renunciation rather than dogmatic beliefs or absolute truth. Similarly, Pyrrhonist tenets are an antithesis to oppose every proposition with an equal account.<sup>741</sup> Thus, antithesis is a primary means by which one “opposes appearances to judgments.” Without proposition or belief, Pyrrhonist asserts nothing, either good or bad, so he is unperturbed by any belief that determines

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<sup>737</sup> *Kāḷaka Sutta*, AN 4.24

<sup>738</sup> In Buddhist terminology, things are described in the three characteristics (*ti-lakkhana*).

<sup>739</sup> Fuller, *Notion of Diṭṭhi in Theravāda Buddhism*, 150.

<sup>740</sup> Tilakaratne, *Nirvana and Ineffability*, 58.

<sup>741</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 1. PH I.6.12

things by nature, good or bad. In a matter of beliefs or opinion, affection is not the case of grasping things as reality but tranquility.<sup>742</sup> Acting upon appearance makes Pyrrhonists live without beliefs, theories, and views due to unavoidable pain and suffering but less mental disturbance from controversy and frustration from grasping beliefs or reality. Simply Pyrrhonists use appearances for practice guidance without the philosophical criteria. Likewise, the Buddhist path of liberation is the step toward purification of view such as the fetter of personality belief in self-I for realizations of mental and physical phenomena.<sup>743</sup> Indeed, seeing things “directly knows water as water... fire as fire... wind as wind...because the *Tathāgata* (Buddha) has comprehended it to the end.”<sup>744</sup> Therefore, both views are assigned a similar procedure to suspend any dogmatic belief or opinion involving non-evident or accepting things as truth.<sup>745</sup> Without metaphysical determination, Buddhism and Pyrrhonism are focus on appearance with the practical guidance aiming for tranquility. Both underline that beliefs in something by nature, good and bad, could make an unhappy living but suspending beliefs could define living free from disturbance.

### ***Formulae against Extremists and Dogmatists***

The responses to other beliefs and teachings show how Pyrrhonists and Buddhists utilize their modes of inquiry to investigate the truth. Indeed, Pyrrhonist modes are against dogmatists or non-skeptics due to the equipollence of accounts.<sup>746</sup> Similarly, the Buddhist modes appeal to extremists with the middle path of the final liberation.

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<sup>742</sup> Empiricus, Annas, and Barnes, *Outlines of Scepticism*, 21. PH I.29–30

<sup>743</sup> *Kosambī Sutta*, SN 12.68

<sup>744</sup> *Mūlapariyāya Sutta*, MN 1

<sup>745</sup> Perin, *Demands of Reason*, 69.

<sup>746</sup> Bett, *Pyrrho, His Antecedents*, 169–70.

In objection, tetralemma is a formula showing the point of “no more this than that” (*ou molen*) in the form of “P,” “not-P,” “P and not-P,” “neither P nor not-P.” It is found to reject dogmatic claims in several Buddhist discourses<sup>747</sup> and Sextus’s Outline of Pyrrhonism.

According to the Buddhist discourses, the tetralemma represents in the Buddha’s “unanswered question to remark the problem of metaphysical inquiries where the Buddha did not answer those questions for searching the truth.”<sup>748</sup> Notably, tetralemma is employed in Sextus’s revival works of Pyrrhonism against dogmatists advocating the alternative propositions-in-themselves. Instead of affirmation and rejection, Pyrrhonists do not determine or hold onto any propositions.

In propositionlessness, tetralemma is a remarkable parallel to both views. The Buddhist standpoint on the all-embracing net of views was a refutation in response to tetralemmas that reveal the extremist or dogmatic proposition in affirmation or rejection about things as the statement of truth or truth-claims. This negation procedure underlines the contradiction of beliefs or views, and the Buddha’s silence is a critical rejection of the Brāhmanistic views presenting the four dilemmas. Indeed, Buddhist actions show freedom from nescience and speculation where beliefs or opinions are determined, but the end of all attachments comes after suspending all propositions.

Moreover, the tetralemma reveals a proposition to withhold beliefs by balancing logical principles, laws, or theories. In some sense, abandonment is an attempt to make logical sense of the tetralemma on the point of logical refutation that declares the

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<sup>747</sup> *Brahmajala Sutta*, DN 34

<sup>748</sup> Rigopoulos, “Avyākatāni and Catuṣkoṭi,” 8.

impossible proofs of beliefs or theoretical assertions, for none of the claims can hold definite specific affirmation or rejection or both or either about things.<sup>749</sup>

Similarly, the Pyrrhonist procedure represents tetralemma in a logical indeterminate form of things inherent in the “no more” (*ou mallon*) formula. Particular “no more” formula based on Python Timon embodies the point of determining nothing where all beliefs or claims correspond to all dogmatic assertions. Thus, pragmata or things indicate any human perception; our sense perceptions, theories, views, or beliefs that cannot tell the definite truth or falsehood. They appear to be untrustworthy, not more true than false. Therefore, we should set our mind or attitude of the intellectual standstill without wavering either affirmation or rejection.<sup>750</sup>

Notably, tetralemma is a formula to demonstrate logical invalidity showing an absence of absolute determination. In Buddhist concerning against extremists, tetralemma shows the way to refuse (*patikkhitta*)<sup>751</sup> speculation. Particularly the metaphysical questions without answers underline invalidity and groundless references.<sup>752</sup> In a similar point in Pyrrhonist modes of inquiries, tetralemma remarks the contradiction of claims due to the equal strength of arguments showing nothing “is no more this than that.” Although Pyrrhonists insist on various modes of inquires with a passionlessness mindset. Indeed, Buddhists provide the path of freedom as the guidance for practical application toward the final goal of calm. At this point, the Pyrrhonist formula is more epistemological than practical. The Buddha’s silence of unanswered questions is a

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<sup>749</sup> Beckwith, *Greek Buddha*, 202–3.

<sup>750</sup> PH I.10

<sup>751</sup> The Buddha's ways of answering questions include no answering (*avyakata*), set-aside (*thapita*), cross-questioning, and rejecting (*patikkhitta*). Karunadasa, *Early Buddhist Teachings*, 148–49. MN 80

<sup>752</sup> The quadrilemmatic questions present metaphysics or dogmatic beliefs. They are inexpressible or undeterminable (*avyākātāni*). The Buddha did not answer because they led to an endless contradiction. Bett, *Pyrrho, His Antecedents*, 172–73.

refutation formula against dogmatic claims and extremist views. It verifies things beneficially to the practical path rather than the metaphysical and epistemological solution.

### ***Modes of Arguments***

Suspension of belief is identified as preserving truth in the Buddhist modes of inquiry and the Pyrrhonist modes of investigation, which contributes to dealing with beliefs, philosophical questions, and arguments. In various teachings, many Buddhist discourses are substantial to the critical methods of searching for truth. In revival Pyrrhonist tenets, Sextus provides various modes such as older skeptics and later skeptics. Both advocate their sophisticated methods of inquiries in the attitude of withholding belief. In remarking suspending beliefs, the following focus in Buddhist and Pyrrhonist inquiries represents the modes of thought and reason in exploring various points such as groundless claims, logical fallacies, and references.

In skeptic modes of inquiry, the Five Modes are from Agrippa's arguments and the Ten Modes present in the Sextus's Outline of Pyrrhonism.<sup>753</sup> The point of these modes is to oppose things due to the equal strength in the opposing accounts and to make no truth claims.<sup>754</sup> The skeptical procedures are cover disagreement, infinite regression, reciprocity, and hypotheses as well as they can be found in the Buddhist modes of arguments.

According to the Pyrrhonist view, suspension of belief (*epochē*) requires the state of neutrality due to the refutation of all beliefs or claims in the equal matter of accepting and rejecting things. In this case, disagreement is the point of inquiry that rejects beliefs

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<sup>753</sup> The Five Modes; PH I.164–77, The Ten Modes; DL IX.88

<sup>754</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 7. PH I.10

in recognizing opposition of objects or accounts. Therefore the point of dispute has opened the criterion of equipollence to oppose every argument that can be seen the most arguments either from common assumption or theoretical controversy.<sup>755</sup> The Pyrrhonist stand on refutation reveals “*conflicting judgments*” following equipollence that “*to every argument an equal argument is opposed,*” thus believe or disbelieve could not be made regarding an equal of proof and disproof. For example, the variations among animals and the differences among humans are indicated the point of disputation and differences.<sup>756</sup> Arguments are subjects of equal positions of things that illustrate the contradiction of counter and encounter arguments. In anti-thesis based on Aenesidemus, the Pyrrhonist standpoint in refutation shows that Pyrrho determined nothing. It is due to the opposition of arguments (*antilogia*)<sup>757</sup> because conflicting claims on both sides are equally trustworthy and untrustworthy (*equipollence*).<sup>758</sup>

In the narrow point of disagreement or refutation, Buddha makes non-determination neither existence (*bhava*) nor non-existence (*vibhava*), where the rejection is related to unanswered questions. Particularly the fourfold negation (*quadrilemmas*) refers to “confusion” (*musa*), where these truth claims are impossible in any proposition. Therefore, the Buddha’s silence is the form of refutation that shows a paradoxical position of meaningless and unfruitful questions to discover the truth.

It is similar noticeable modes of arguments that both underlined the non-proposition of claiming about things due to the logical invalidity and empirical verification that negation of claims is not only the case of true or false but also confusing.

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<sup>755</sup> PH II.18

<sup>756</sup> PH I.40-90

<sup>757</sup> DL IX.106

<sup>758</sup> Bett, *Pyrrho, His Antecedents*, 28.

Indeed, Pyrrhonist modes of arguments reveal things equally indifferent. However, the Buddhist standpoint on refutation is to avoid extremists withholding beliefs either true what is P or false what is not-P. Both have come with the procedures and arguments under empirical accounts and logical forms.<sup>759</sup> Indeed, disagreement reflects the equal plausibility of beliefs or claims that waving on one side or other is not reasonable and inadequate but suspending beliefs is preferable and able to reach the final goal of tranquility.<sup>760</sup>

According to the Outline, Pyrrhonists criticize the criterion that is justified by an endless number of proofs as an infinite regression (*ad infinitum*). The criterion requires an approved demonstration with circular reasoning.<sup>761</sup> In the Buddhist view of argument, the parable of blind men reflects an infinite proof of speculation that the claims are indifferent on the groundless proofs. The controversy is endless with unlimited proofs and reasoning. Therefore, definite claims or dogmatic beliefs are not to be the case to achieve tranquility.

However, both criticize the criterion or support given a proposition to establish an absolute certainty where things are justified as truth. In Buddhist guidelines of knowledge, references are means that cannot guarantee the truth as the outcome, so rejecting that “only this is true, any other (view) is false” is not the case of practical guideline without disturbance and to the path of equanimity. Likewise, Pyrrhonists do not make any further inference to establish the definite result where proof can be justified

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<sup>759</sup> The middle path presents an alternative mode out of the positions between grasping existence and non-existence. The four positions (*quadrilemma*) show that the extreme paths are inadequate for liberation. McEvilley, *Shape of Ancient Thoughts*, 431.

<sup>760</sup> The Buddhist teachings are the means to the final goal. Giving answers to questions must lead to disenchantment, direct knowledge, and unbinding. *Cula-Malunkya Sutta*, MN 63

<sup>761</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 165. PH II.20-21

with an infinite proof or claim, so they suspend beliefs based on infinite regression, which withholds undecided disagreement and remains calm.<sup>762</sup>

Moreover, the reciprocal mode of suspending belief appeals to inconceivable accounts or proofs related back and forward. To this extent, Pyrrhonists withhold any conviction due to cause and effect.<sup>763</sup> Because things are inapprehensible and unobtainable causes, they are divergent in the different opinions. In the Buddhist modes of inquiry, all reciprocal claims show an endless equivocation that cannot determine anything<sup>764</sup> but the dependent origination shows the interconnection of things by conditions. In addition, the hypotheses mode of suspending beliefs presents things without a certain kind of proposition. However, it expresses things hypothetically utterance in the phrase “let it be supposed” or saying “let it be granted.”<sup>765</sup> Presumably, things are under suspicion that true and false are possible in doubt. Particularly the nature of things in theoretical principles will turn out to be true and false. Therefore Pyrrhonist determines nothing but withholds beliefs and opinions.

In the Buddhist view of nature, things are to arise and are all of nature to pass away, so things appear under certain circumstances. The Buddhist teachings are from on human experiences and recognitions in processes of nature without an absolute principle. The dhamma is described as the Buddha’s experience of the origin and cessation of all phenomena. His teachings or dhamma are the potential components of experiences that reflect the constituent of things or reality.<sup>766</sup> Therefore things as they have come to be

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<sup>762</sup> Barnes, *Toils of Scepticism*, 44–45.

<sup>763</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 339. PH III.20-23

<sup>764</sup> Doctrines of Endless Equivocation (*Amarāvikkhepavāda*): *Brahmajāla Sutta*, DN 34

<sup>765</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Sextus Empiricus*, 253. AP III.17-18

<sup>766</sup> Gombrich, *What the Buddha Thought*, 128–29.



(*yatha-bhuta-nana-dassana*) are simply what appear through our perceptions.<sup>767</sup> Mainly, the three characters (*tilakkhaṇa*) of dhamma are impermanence (*aniccā*), non-self (*anattā*), and unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*). Things appear without an absolute entity, indifferent and imperfect.<sup>768</sup> They are dependent on and related to others. Therefore they cannot be determined in absolute assumption but a variation. Like the modes of arguments, Pyrrhonists withhold assent to a thing to believe or is not to believe due to equal indifference and variant by modes of arguments, so they are intellect holding back neither belief nor belief disbelief.<sup>769</sup>

In sum, disagreement is the most argument among philosophers and ordinary people. Disputation discloses an undecidable state of mind due to the equal strength of arguments. Thus, skeptics do not choose things but determine nothings. According to the realities of subjects and objects, things are varieties in appearance upon other such-and-such differently, so skeptic withholds any determination, not every particular but relatively connecting to one and others.<sup>770</sup> Sextus mainly uses hypothesis to express some sort of “laying down” or “supposing, “presenting things as a hypothetical utterance. By hypothesis, any proofs or theorems say that “let it be granted' or let it be the case that...” Therefore, things can be granted absolute certainty, so there is no proposition in skeptic statements without qualification, so things appear to be relative and depend upon others. Things are under investigation and established no assumption. Thus skeptic suspends any determination, reports things without commit a dogmatic belief.

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<sup>767</sup> Tilakaratne, *Nirvana and Ineffability*, 64.

<sup>768</sup> Beckwith, *Greek Buddha*, 153.

<sup>769</sup> Sextus and Mates, *Skeptic Way*, 115. PH I.196

<sup>770</sup> Annas and Barnes, *Modes of Scepticism*, 142–43. PH I.167, I.39

### ***Therapeutic Path and Achievement***

What can be reaching in the final goal determines the path of achievements in Buddhist and Pyrrhonist practices. Tranquility is an attainable achievement in both. There is the case that people admired Pyrrho as a high priest in his native city where Pyrrhonist skeptics established an achievement toward the final goal of calm. Alike the Buddha was the great teacher and the great physician who treated the ill or sick with the path of liberation.

In similarity, the notion of therapeutic modes that Pyrrhonist and Buddhist ways of thought undertakes their paths reading to the final goal of tranquility. Even though the Pyrrhonist methods of the investigation were epistemological rather than practical, the suspension of beliefs as a mode of examining things without affirming and denying brings about a mental standstill and calm that dogmatist who believes something good or evil by nature could not achieve.<sup>771</sup>

In the purification of the mind, the Buddha points out that abandoning restlessness and worry even from doubt can bring a peaceful mind. In the parable of the poison arrow, the Buddhist path is treated like urgent healing of a wounded person. In the parable of raft, the Buddhist teaching is to release suffering like the purpose of the raft for crossing a river. Thus, grasping things as ultimate truth is pointless. These parables remark the soteriological teaching of the Buddha that unanswered questions are rooted in the groundless assumptions and the pointless ways to achieve liberation.<sup>772</sup> The Buddhist teachings are intended for practices rather than theoretical or metaphysical claims. Like

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<sup>771</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Sextus Empiricus*, 439–41. APE 111, 118

<sup>772</sup> The parables of a man who loves the most beautiful woman but knows nothing about her; a man who builds a staircase to an unknown place present groundless and pointless manners, so his approach is not sound convincing. *Pothapada sutta*, DN 9

one uses a raft for crosses over safely, carrying it is not the purpose of crossing over.<sup>773</sup>

Even though grasping nothing must be the case of misunderstanding of Buddhist teaching like grasping a poisonous snake on the tail rather than the head. Similarly, the core of Pyrrhonist skeptic is that determination nothing can bring peace of mind rather than dogmatic claims with disputation.

The achievement of tranquility is intended to be the case. In both standpoints, the outcome affects the practitioners who follow those paths of healing. Pyrrhonist is “being a lover of his kind, desires to cure by speech, as the best he can, the self-conceit and rashness of the Dogmatists...like a physician who cures bodily ailments have remedies which differ in strength.” Even though Pyrrhonists employed skeptical modes of arguments against proofs, they claim and abolish every argument, either proof or disproof, just as purgative drugs that have driven the fluids out of bodies and removes themselves.<sup>774</sup> The point of parables of purgative drugs, fire, and a step-ladder shows that Pyrrhonists have imposed arguments against dogmatists and left no proofs or claims after all. They detach all arguments, even their own, and then the calm of disturbance.

However, Buddhist view that the final goal as the attitude of mental experience reveals the personal experience of nonattachment likes a slave. He was free after being released indecently, so he becomes a free man and experiences joy.<sup>775</sup> In sum, Buddhist tenets are intended to be the therapeutic remedy for healing illness. In the parable of the arrow, taking out the poisonous arrow and curing it is urgent to a man’s survival regardless of who did and so on, is pointless or purposeless for his life. As a doctor, the Buddha could help a man who got shot regardless of investigating who shot him.

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<sup>773</sup> Sextus and Bury, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 511–13. PH III.280

<sup>774</sup> AL II.480–81

<sup>775</sup> *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*, DN 2

Similarly, the dhamma is taught to renounce the mind from attachments but not for claiming things as a definite truth, also like a purgative drug that cures one who has dhamma such as the right view from being subject of sorrow, distress, and despair.<sup>776</sup> It is like a raft for crossing over but not for carrying on.<sup>777</sup>

According to the Buddhist view, to answer questions such as a metaphysical problem is not comparable with the path of liberation. Similarly, Pyrrhonist tropes are not required in practice to reach the final goal of calm but a practical benefit of grasping nothing in which is better off those who hold on somethings by nature, good and bad. For one who suspends those beliefs, he will live in a flourishing way and without disturbance.<sup>778</sup>

In common, the point of achievement in Pyrrhonist and Buddhist views indicates the psychosocial notion of a therapeutic path where the state of calm can be achieved following their inquiries of investigation that the intellect standstill and detachment could bring about the mental calm and happiness. For Pyrrhonists, the calm state of mind is illustrated as a little pig that went on eating with calm while a ship was in a storm. For Buddhists, having a mind free from disturbance reveals a non-perversion of perception, a non-perversion of mind, and a non-perversion of view (*saññā- citta-ditthi vipallāsa*) where the mental disturbance is linked to dogmatic beliefs about things such as self (*attā*).<sup>779</sup>

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<sup>776</sup> Hanner, *Buddhism and Scepticism*, 104. AN 10.108

<sup>777</sup> Williams, Tribe, and Wynne, *Buddhist Thought*, 26–27.

<sup>778</sup> APE 118

<sup>779</sup> In *Milindapañha*, some similes of the pure practice of liberation demonstrate like fire burns the whole forest (immorality), and medicines cure all the diseases of the depravities. *Vipallāsa Sutta*, AN 4; Karunadasa, *Early Buddhist Teachings*, 151.

In both views, the achievement as undisturbedness comes after the therapeutic mode of suspending beliefs. Pyrrhonist states that *ataraxia* is discovered by chance like Apelles paints the effect of a horse's foam; tranquility follows upon suspending beliefs like a shadow follows its substance.<sup>780</sup> In brief, Pyrrhonists do not endorse any practice procedure. However, it promotes a practical benefit of suspending beliefs that he suffers from various affections such as cold or thirst but does not suffer by the belief of things good or bad by nature. Thus, having no beliefs, he pursues nothing eagerly, and the consequence is unperturbed.<sup>781</sup> In a similar circumstance, the Buddhist view of the final goal is comparable to the middle path for liberation that renouncing things as an absolute certainty such as self and its beliefs or claims, so responding to metaphysical questions is based on proposition-lessness. The healing path is beneficial and purposeful to a mind free of attachments.

## Conclusion

In general, suspension of belief in Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism can be seen from their discourses in the different means and aims that indicate the characteristics to understand both views in searching for truth. The comparable features are from the procedures responding to others such as dogmatists and extremists. The notion of suspension is the main focus of this comparative study to distinguish the similarities and differences. Notable parallel features can be found in Buddhist and Pyrrhonist tenets.

The Pyrrhonist perspective of suspending belief is drawn from the revival texts of Sextus Empiricus. The main focus is to outline the key characteristics of Pyrrhonist skeptics against dogmatists in various contexts of Hellenistic Greek. Suspension of belief

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<sup>780</sup> Brunschwig and Nussbaum, *Passions and Perceptions*, 300–301. PH I.29, DL IX.107

<sup>781</sup> PH I.30

is established by its components and criterion such as attitude, core features, and characters. Similarly, the Buddhist perspective of suspending belief is a part of the Buddha's teaching showing in *Kālāma Sutta* as a tipping point of teaching.

According to the Outline of Pyrrhonism, suspension of belief is an ability to oppose an argument with equal strength. In this case, the point of inquiry does not require faith to achieve tranquility but individual investigation of knowledge or wisdom. Both schools criticize through free inquiry that absolute certainty is not the outcome but the mental attitude of calm. They adopt appearance to their approaches aiming for tranquility as a well-balanced state of mind. Notably, they have established their modes of inquiry to formulate their points of view against extremists and dogmatists.

The Pyrrhonist view opposes every argument with equipollence to describe and explain the characteristics of suspension of belief. In the Buddhist view, teachings promote an experiential method without belief to find out with one's own experience what is beneficial toward a happy life. Similarly, Buddhists and Pyrrhonists describe their modes of thought to investigate things or dhamma that can bring the state of undisturbance to the final goal. Both emphasize the therapeutic path for their practical guideline. For Buddhists is to advocate the course of action and moral life and to avoid both strict determinism and strict indeterminism<sup>782</sup> but for Pyrrhonists is to suspend belief due to the equal arguments.

In suspending belief, Buddhist tenets can be seen as the way out of doubt and suffering, which is possible employing grasping nothing even beliefs. However, Pyrrhonist guidance of living with a belief is possible inaction which the final goal of tranquility comes squealy after determining nothing.

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<sup>782</sup> Karunadasa, *Early Buddhist Teachings*, 82–83.

It seems reasonable to assume that both emphasize the pragmatic inquiries to advance their procedures, avoiding the absolute claims or beliefs; the only this is true other is worthless and what things really are. In brief, their therapeutic paths are the ground for possible living without grasping things as the absolute truth. The suspension of belief is underneath the Pyrrhonist and Buddhist inquiries of searching for truth. It conducts the modes of thought with an intellectual exercise against dogmatists and extremists that requires neither beliefs nor claims. Notably, suspending belief is a practical implication toward the final goal of free disturbance.

## CHAPTER 6

### Conclusion and Further Research

This study attempts to explore and compare the suspension of belief in Buddhism and Pyrrhonism. It identifies noticeable aspects of suspending belief in the survival sources of Pyrrhonist skepticism and the early Buddhist discourses by a comparative approach from historical and philosophical contexts. Essentially, the main features of suspending belief are evolved and characterized in both views designating in similar modes and approaches versus dogmatists and extremists.

In this case, the primary concern of both views is beliefs as the pivotal point in various procedures in Pyrrhonist features and Buddhist teachings. In analyzing Pyrrhonist and Buddhist resources, suspending belief is founded in the characteristics and the genuine components of Pyrrhonist and Buddhist modes of inquiry in searching for truth. This result reveals that suspending belief is comparable in Buddhist and Pyrrhonist aspects in features, attitudes, and modes of inquiry. There are noticeable similarities and differences based on their outlooks and standpoints. The Buddhist perspective constitutes various aspects of dhamma, grasping nothing and the absence of an absolute claim. The dhamma is the pragmatic inquiry of the path toward the final goal of human faculties of senses, whereby understanding is an inquiry of developing the path of liberation based on the human experience.<sup>783</sup> A particular remarkable subject is to be reconstructed and drawn from the contexts of culture, religion, and philosophy that reflect the main characteristics within Buddhist and Pyrrhonist perspectives.

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<sup>783</sup> The establishing of mindfulness is to contemplate the body, feeling, consciousness, and mental objects. *Satipatthana Sutta*, MN 10



In general, Buddhism describes beliefs and teachings related to the path of liberation aiming for tranquility and cessation of suffering by breaking free from the cycle of rebirth (*samsara*). This soteriological term is a bona fide feature comparable to the religious goal of liberation but is not to other philosophical schools. Mainly Pyrrhonist skeptics have approached the truth without any doctrines or beliefs but assent nothing. Both seem to be incommensurable as a whole. Nevertheless, the particular Buddhist and Pyrrhonist aspects require the common ground to outline suspending beliefs aiming for the final goal. This teleological term is commensurable in Buddhist and Pyrrhonist tenets. Therefore this study has intended to identify those core features, attitudes, and modes of inquiry comparing the suspension of belief in Pyrrhonist and Buddhist perspectives.

### **Historical Context**

This study began with the historical context but did not conclude any connection between Buddhist and Pyrrhonist views. Indeed, in the early Buddhist view, the suspending belief is elaborated some sort of non-attachment against extremists. Similarly, the Pyrrhonist thought of suspending belief formulates various modes of inquiry against dogmatists. Both come up with their ways of thought and modes of inquiries for suspending belief that amplifies the path toward the final goal by means and aims to search for the truth.

In pursuit of tranquility, Buddhist contemplatives are among non-Vedic groups or ascetics who have followed the path of peaceful mind and liberation by spiritual exercises to experience phenomena directly. The notion of peace is the character of practitioners as well as sages in Buddhism. In a similar view, Pyrrho, who is described as the high priest

and has lived the most blameless life, showing the point of living in seeking calm regardless of any disturbance. The Buddha and Pyrrho show their lives of sages who have detached themselves from wavering beliefs or theories. On Pyrrhonist approach is to hold off dogmatic beliefs by arguments. On Buddhist approach is to refrain from extremists based on the path of renunciation. Suspending beliefs are identified in various standpoints of Buddhist and Pyrrhonist thought integrated into letting go of things.

In Hellenic philosophy, Pyrrhonists distinguished themselves from dogmatists as skeptikós (σκεπτικός) inquirers or investigators who go on searching without the assertion of beliefs.<sup>784</sup> According to the Outline of Pyrrhonism, Pyrrhonist skeptics engage both sides of arguments to withhold any determination due to the equipollence of beliefs or opinions. In brief, Pyrrhonist is an “ability to set out oppositions” “because of the equipollence in the opposed objects and accounts.”<sup>785</sup>

However, the Pyrrhonist skeptic has established its course that is distinguishable from Greek Hellenic philosophy but in close to the Early Buddhism by attitude and aim of suspending belief. On the one hand, the Pyrrhonist view has recognized the equipollence of things to embody the suspending belief for the attainment of tranquility. On the other hand, the Buddhist view has emphasized the relinquishment of extremists with the middle path to liberate the mind for the final state of tranquility. Buddhist and Pyrrhonist modes of inquiry acquire non-assertion for the truth but abandon any absolute truth to claim nothing following their disclaimers; no answer or silence and “no more this than that”<sup>786</sup> withholding opinions or beliefs. Thus, one can reach the mental state of calm or the intellectual standstill without disturbance.

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<sup>784</sup> PH I.1–4

<sup>785</sup> PH I.8

<sup>786</sup> PH I.188–191, DL IX.61

## Noticeable Parallel Features

The Buddhist aspects of searching for truth have presented much closer to Pyrrhonist investigation. Methods and attitudes of searching for truth are found in various aspects of Buddhism and Pyrrhonism that are juxtaposed whether they are compatible and commensurable characters by the notion of suspending belief. To withdraw our trust in sense perceptions (evidence) and beliefs (non-evidence) is a key procedure to suspend opinions and determinations due to the assumption that things are indeterminable unstable and no inherent self-identity. Without any intention and assertion about things, peace of mind can be achieved at the final goal because things are equally indifferent either by perception or reason.

On the one hand, Pyrrhonists focus on an ability to overcome dogmatists. On the other hand, Buddhists embody pedagogy (*upāya*)<sup>787</sup> as the guidance along the path to liberation. Each implies the investigations to search for the truth. Both recognize the mental state of disturbance caused by dogmatic beliefs by grasping things as an absolute reality. Therefore the psychological state of a peaceful mind is the aim of Pyrrhonist and Buddhist perspectives of suspending beliefs.<sup>788</sup> Both have provided their therapeutic way out of mental disturbances following their attitude and means.

In general, the final goal of the mental state of being imperturbable is a cornerstone of Pyrrhonist and Buddhist views. Buddhist liberation goes beyond what is right or wrong and existent or non-existent. According to Sextus's Outline of Pyrrhonism, Pyrrho's route of free mental unrest or tranquility shows that arguments or beliefs are due to equipollence (*isostheneia*) and suspending beliefs (*epochē*).

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<sup>787</sup> Upāya: way, means, expedient, and skillful means; Buswell and Lopez, *Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, 942. SN 181, M iii 25

<sup>788</sup> McEvilley, "Pyrrhonism and Mādhyamika," 25.

Refutation is common to Pyrrhonist and Buddhist characters. The rejection of opposing arguments indicates the Pyrrhonist rejection of positive and negative dogmatic views. It is similar to the Buddhist refutation of extremes, either eternalism or annihilationism. To avoid traps of viewpoints caused by troubles or mental unrest, Pyrrhonists and Buddhists provide their examinations against those dogmatists and extremists in which their ways of thought reveal an antithesis mode against neither affirmation nor negation.

Based on antithesis, briefly “dogmatic beliefs” that have established some sort of dogmatic determination or extreme ways of practices, Pyrrhonists do not accept any belief that have not been relied upon evident. Thus, holding no beliefs or opinions about things good or bad by nature,<sup>789</sup> Pyrrhonist asserts nothing but promotes the modes of inquiries that are associated with the freedom of the mind from disturbance. However, Buddhist freedom of inquiry is not inherited resources of references. The absolute truth is that the only beliefs or truth claims are true and entailed by the source of references. Indeed, the Buddhist search for truth cannot be without direct experience. The Pyrrhonist modes of inquiry are based on the empiricism of phenomena. Like the direct experience of things or phenomena, the Buddhist path of liberation emphasizes dhamma in a practical sense to examine things with individual experience of realization.

Mainly, the understanding of things by nature is the main focus of investigation using evidence and non-evidence. Indeed, the Pyrrhonist view of appearance is close to the individual experience of things throughout the Buddhist investigation. What things are by nature represents things; impermanence (*aniccā*), non-self (*anattā*), and suffering (*duḥkha*) in order to release the mind of grasping things but equanimity. In the Buddhist

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<sup>789</sup> APE 118

view, things are arising and passing away with no self but the conditioned origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*); in these cases, things cannot be determined either true or false. Therefore grasping nothing is the central theme in Buddhist teaching. In a similar case, the Pyrrhonist notion of non-assertion is a closed view of suspending beliefs that things are indifferences but equally in their nature; indifferent and unstable and indeterminate. Therefore, Pyrrhonists do not make any assertion but remain without beliefs, either affirmative or rejective. As the result of suspending belief, they hope for imperturbability<sup>790</sup> that is close to the Buddhist view of equanimity at the final goal.

The renunciation is to grasp nothing but brings about peace of mind. Therefore, holding beliefs and views leads to mental unrest or suffering but grasping nothing releases the mind from views and opinions by seeing things as phenomena. Thus, grasping nothing good or bad leaves the mind in peace.<sup>791</sup> In the matter of beliefs or opinions, skeptics, unlike dogmatists, are not forced by reason but living without deciding whether a thing is by nature good or bad.

Either grasping nothing or non-assertion is not an empty attitude but reflects things that Pyrrhonist phrases as “no more this than that,” thus things are equally undifferentiated. Particularly Pyrrhonist view about things is complete without determination or judgment. However, it is only just a sense of involuntary reflection on phenomena such as feelings of hunger, thirst, and pain.<sup>792</sup> Similarly, the Buddhist renunciation shows that the Buddha does not grasp anything but responds primarily to some sense of affection. Both acknowledge an involuntary affection without opinions or

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<sup>790</sup> Tranquility is the goal (*telos*) of Pyrrhonism. Because beliefs and opinions cause mental unrest, withholding them, Pyrrhonists hope to achieve the goal. PH I.25, 30

<sup>791</sup> PH III.238

<sup>792</sup> DL IX.108

beliefs. Briefly, Pyrrhonists and Buddhists do not rely on logic, reason, or reference but reflect things under appearance without grasping them, either good or bad.

According to the Outline of Pyrrhonism, equipollence (*isostheneia*) can be interpreted as an experience of equal strength that one sees things as equally good and bad. Hence, the mental state of being with equal force, either positive or negative position against each other reveals the contradictory beliefs or opinions. To this extent, the standstill of intellect is a better choice of any solution: suspending beliefs is the way out of contradictory beliefs or claims with equal strength of arguments on both sides. Indeed, acting upon reason and controversy is crucial to achieving the skeptic's *ataraxia* goal. One can overcome disturbance and obtain a mental state of calm.

The therapeutic notion is implied by Pyrrhonist and Buddhist thoughts that avoiding traps of dogmatic beliefs is urgent to achieve the mental state of indisturbance. Pyrrhonist stand on their equal strength is a psychological standstill with rational no choices of persuasion, but the confliction claims, leading to suspend judgment about beliefs or opinions. Therefore tranquility is to be seen after the mind is free from disturbance. Like Buddhist views of releasing views or dogmatic beliefs is the direct experience of seeing things as phenomena that things are arising and passing away without affirmative or rejective views. The mind without determination is the path to maintain the mind free from worries and suffering. The path of liberation is considered to be the remedy of mind in the state of peace.

Both imply the therapeutic sense, like a drug or remedy to expel any disease and itself from the body. It is similar to curing the mind of conflicts or battles of arguments

for the mental state of calm.<sup>793</sup> In this case, the Pyrrhonist point of non-assertion is like a purgative drug that expels poison and itself out of the body. The Pyrrhonist argument is not only opposite side but also releases itself from the equation.

In Buddhism, the right view is instrumental to the path of liberation. In the simile of the raft, Buddhist teaching is like a raft that is proposed for crossing a river. However, carrying a raft is a disadvantage, and grasping things such as beliefs and teachings is not advancing in the path of renunciation that liberates the mind from affirmation (what is, P) and negation (what is not-P). Indeed, Pyrrhonist and Buddhist modes of inquiry are an urgent remedy for curing mental problems. Any dogmatic beliefs and extremist practices are ineffective ways of releasing the mind from disturbances.

Moreover, Pyrrhonists accept that things are equally good and evil, so they cannot be the only position without contradiction. Thus suspending belief comes to play without assertion utilizing equipollence that things are equal in arguments of pros and cons. Pyrrhonists put it on the phrase “no more this than that.” According to the unanswered questions, Buddhists recognize the law of contradiction with the silence of the Buddha to refuse any contradictory statements represented in the four possible statements (*tetralemma*).<sup>794</sup> Indeed, the statements are based on speculations and determination of absolute certainty that things are definite and indefinite. However, the Buddhist view of searching for truth relies on references and logical proofs but direct experience.

The practical emphasis is in common with the Buddhist path of liberation. Indeed, Pyrrhonist tenets are weighted on arguments and inquiries. Both reflect things in nature by appearance. Pyrrhonist assents nothing neither affirm nor denies to be true or false but

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<sup>793</sup> Unperturbedness comes after withholding beliefs or opinions like a shadow follows its body. PH I.31

<sup>794</sup> For example, the Buddha dismisses Sanjaya's statements that commit the pointless assents or the infinite positions like “eel-wrigglers” (*amarāvikkhepa*).

assents only to how things appear. Unlike the Pyrrhonist standpoint, the Buddhist notion of things describes things by nature condition that comes to the view of an individual employing appearance in terms of dependent origination. In both views, suspending belief is the matter of beliefs or opinions to determine nothing neither reject nor posit anything but achieve tranquility as the final goal of disturbance-lessness.<sup>795</sup> In the Buddhist view, suspending beliefs is a part of the practical pathway to liberate the mind from mental unrest and achieve tranquility. Moreover, the right view is purged away the mental illness for releasing the mind from distress, despair, and sorrow.<sup>796</sup>

On the contrary, Pyrrhonist tenets are concluded various argumentations and modes of inquiries as part of skeptical methods against dogmatists where suspending beliefs is meant to be the standstill intellect to determine nothing but clam. Indeed, Buddhist teachings provide the methods of realization beyond doubt and speculation to grasping nothings along the path of renunciation aiming for peace of mind. Even though Pyrrhonists do not offer any sets of practices, the attitude toward tranquility is quite similar to the Buddhist aims to cure the mind of disturbances and distresses.

In the detail of application toward actions, both emphasize aspects of Pyrrhonist ability and the skillful means of Buddhist knowledge. In overview, Buddhist teachings are more descriptive than Pyrrhonist tenets. However, the therapeutic notion reveals the urgent attitude toward the final goal of tranquility<sup>797</sup> that renouncing all views or opinions is the right attitude to bring about quietude as the outcome.

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<sup>795</sup> PH I.10

<sup>796</sup> *Tikicchā Sutta*, AN 10.108

<sup>797</sup> The Buddhist teachings embody the pragmatic orientation that dhamma is helpful to achieve liberation or to obtain equanimity. *Sandaka Sutta*, M i 171



However, Pyrrhonist tenets are not about putting forward and defending arguments or claims, but are advanced to oppose every argument with counter arguments that lead to withholding any beliefs or claims and then attaining peace of mind.

Even though the Buddhist teachings, in general, have more descriptive guideline than Pyrrhonist tenets, the path to liberation aims for unbinding (*nibbāna*). Thus, things are not categories but in the condition of rising and passing away phenomena. In brief, Buddhist teachings advocate detachment that things cannot be grasped either existence (P) or non-existence (not-P), but impermanence (*anicca*), dissatisfactions such as worries (*dukkha*), absence of a self (*anatta*). In a similar view, Pyrrhonists' view of things reveals by an appearance that things are equally indifferent, unstable, and indeterminate (*adiaphora kai astathmêta kai anepikrita*).<sup>798</sup> Both project things in similar equilibrium that things cannot be determined as an absolute certainty but can be understood by experience regardless of beliefs or opinions.

### **Comparative Result: Attitudes, Means, and Aims**

The result of this study reveals various significant features of searching for truth in Buddhist discourses and Pyrrhonist tents of suspending beliefs, appearance, and the final goal of tranquility. In Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism, the suspension of belief is identified in various modes of inquiry that are comparable and commensurable to each other, so they are considered significant features in both views.

In this case, suspending belief is embedded in the Buddhist teachings and Pyrrhonist tenets, in which they promote an anti-establishment against extremists and dogmatists. The modes of inquiry are in common to withhold any assent about things,

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<sup>798</sup> In this case, the three characteristics reflect the comparable thought and concern about things by nature in Buddhist and Pyrrhonist views. Beckwith, *Greek Buddha*, 8–13.

whether true or false, regardless of all dogmatists' establishments. Buddhism and Pyrrhonism stand against establishments that beliefs are committed to propositions and claims of things further than evidence.

The Buddhist notion of renouncing plays a pivotal role in inquiries and ethical means or practical implication that beliefs and reason are granted the truth or advance to the final goal of liberation. The Buddhist discourses indicate that clinging to views (*ditthi*) by tradition, beliefs, and opinions is to grasp things in affirmative or rejective categories. Notably, the Buddhist modes of inquiries for Kalamas do not appeal to references of resources, reason but direct experience.

The Pyrrhonist view of suspending belief provides non-assertion about things due to an equal weight of arguments or beliefs, so without determination, neither affirmation nor negation, the mental state of tranquility follows the intellectual standstill regarding the nature of indifference.

In this case, the Buddhist and Pyrrhonist views are recognized in two criteria. One is a sense of the standard verification of belief in reality or unreality that requires critical investigation to choose for one thing over others. Another one is the guidance of life that comes upon feeling and involuntary affection for things as they appear to be.

In practice, the Buddhist standpoint of suspending beliefs is defined as part of renunciation to guide for living with less trouble or peaceful that aims to be possible and obtainable in Buddhism. However, the Pyrrhonist point of life without beliefs is worth living as life in peace. The skeptical way of living with non-assertion is possible and desirable without ethical guidance. However, Buddhist and Pyrrhonist views adapt their modes of inquiry that appeal to the final goal following appearance.

According to Outline of Pyrrhonism, skepticism is an ability or mental attitude to set forth opposite arguments in contrast to appearance, leading to suspending beliefs on neither side of the argument. Indeed, Pyrrhonist skeptic assents to nothing determination compelling by equipollence to remain passionless-ness (*aphasia*). Thus it is undecidability to grasp things by beliefs, opinions, and theories about how things are by nature. However, it is the mental state of equilibrium that the mind is unsettling in grasping things as what is (P) or what is not (Not-P), and withholding to determine things positively or negatively, so Pyrrhonists determine nothing.

Similarly, the Buddhist attitude of grasping nothing is a crucial path of liberation to avoid dogmatic or wrong beliefs and release the mind from proliferation (*papancha*). Perceiving things via senses of experiences leads to the mental state of evaluation in the matter of existent and non-existent views and claims such as wrong view (*ditthi*).<sup>799</sup> In avoiding extremes, Buddhist inquiry modes for wisdom come from proper discernment without clinging to attachments of existence and non-existence, but to see things arise and pass away, and see things by what has come to be is the out of reach of reference, logic, reason, and theory.<sup>800</sup>

For this reason, Buddhist and Pyrrhonist views determine nothing since the mind is liberated from dogmatic or extremist beliefs or claims by seeing how things are by nature. After all, the mental state of peace does not arise from fabrication or speculation, but things appear to be without clinging to substances or things. Remarkably, the Buddhist view of proliferation (*papancha*) that clinging to things involves consciousness

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<sup>799</sup> The inner drives of craving (*tanha*), conceit (*mana*), and wrong view (*ditthi*) lead through the six senses of perception for grasping things as "I" or "mine."

<sup>800</sup> In the Buddhist view, the dogmatic beliefs of existence or non-existence are the mental fabrication based on speculation.

(*vinnana*), sense-impression (*sampassa*), feeling (*vedana*), perception (*sanna*), thinking (*vitakka*). Thus Buddhist attitude of grasping nothing does aware these conditions of fabrication that attributes to grasping things affirmative or rejective.<sup>801</sup>

In the Pyrrhonist view, a skeptical attitude can oppose arguments that indicate various modes of inquiries and the mental process of standstill intellect to withhold any determination. However, the Buddhist attitude of free inquiry endorses the direct experience to see how things are by nature (*yathā-bhūtaṃ*). It indicates the mental state of equanimity, showing the mind is free of any defilement based on existence or non-existence.<sup>802</sup>

It is noticeable that Buddhist teaching has underlined the point of suspending belief heavily in the criteria of psychological investigation about things from an insight mode of searching for truth. Therefore, grasping nothing is a cornerstone of Buddhist and Pyrrhonist features to achieve the final goal of tranquility. To some extent, the skeptical result of equipollence is a response of balance to defending beliefs and contradictory claims. The act of *epochē* to suspend beliefs is the way out of perplexity aiming for the mental state of peace without determination like a shadow follows its body.

It is noticeable that Buddhist teachings promote ethical implications that the liberation path is related to the moral guidelines for wholesome to benefit life and actions. As a result of individual search in *Kalamas'* inquiries, one can know what appears to be beneficial regardless of the speculation. In other words, seeing dhamma is

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<sup>801</sup> Grasping the five aggregates, the wrong view (*ditthi*) shows the fabricative holding of things as “this is mine,” “this I am,” and “this is myself.” *Anuruddha Sutta*, AN 8.30

<sup>802</sup> In mental cultivation, the knowledge of equanimity regarding mental and physical phenomena (*sankharupekha ñāna*) occurs as an even-mindedness detaching neither pleasure nor pain due to things are opposing indifferences.

not a result of logical proof or truth claims but the realization of processes from the indirect experience of phenomena.

In the analogy of a rope-like snake, a man steps over a rope-like snake and conceives it with no eyesight to be a snake. Without any motion of a snake, so he realizes it as a rope.<sup>803</sup> The Buddhist soteriological goal of liberation or *Nibbana* is the knowledge or understanding about things (*dhamma*) by nature of reality. The notion of the right view is a crucial element of the Eightfold Path to reach the final goal. The point of the correct path is to avoid all wrong views that the right view is opposed to wrong views.

Renouncing all views, beliefs, and theories is found in the Buddhist goal of non-attachment whereby the Buddhist practice of seeing things that have come to be (*yathā-bhūtaṃ*) does not rely on ultimate reality and beliefs. Indeed, to let go of all views is an urgent remedy to avoid any traps of wrong views for the final goal. The skeptics do not hold all dogmatic beliefs due to an equal of contradictory and bring nothing forward or set down neither positive nor negative claims. They assert nothing because two things are alike. Pyrrhonists suspension of beliefs does not describe the significant role on the course of actions. It associates the mental attitude that skeptic is better off than dogmatists who claim on opinions or beliefs; even they do not entail the final goal of tranquility.

On the other hand, Buddhists suspending beliefs is the primary guidance of practical ways to achieve the final goal. It is not only preserving the truth, but it is also an intellectual quest toward the outcome at the ending of suffering and the purified attitude toward others. Therefore, the suspending belief comes after the modes of inquiries based on the Early Buddhist and Pyrrhonist means to reach their final goals.

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<sup>803</sup> AL I.184-188

## Criteria of Belief and Practice

In practice, Buddhism advocates some kinds of suspending belief. The Buddhists teachings did not deploy opposing arguments but engaged in methods and references to preserve the truth and underline the dogmatic beliefs that “the only this is true, but other is worthless.” However, Pyrrhonists have scoped their searching for truth based on their skeptical modes of inquiry by the opposition of arguments (*antilogia*), but they have adhered to the appearance; in this case, Pyrrho determined nothing dogmatically.<sup>804</sup>

Both have exercised their modes of inquiry differently, but they have extended some anti-thesis methods to overcome dogmatic beliefs or extremist claims. Pyrrhonist skeptic ability could be the best solution of practice in everyday life to confront beliefs and opinions with equipollence. By skeptical means, a purgative drug, Pyrrhonist pragmatic, could leave nothing behind arguments. However, the Buddhist path of renunciation includes the ethical guidelines and methods of religious practice. Indeed, the mental attitude of suspending beliefs defines the path of liberation, withholding all extremists and absolutists. Because things are unsatisfied, unstable, and unfixed, the Buddhist path is grasping nothings, either what is (P) or what is not (Not-P).<sup>805</sup>

Even though the practical orientation in Pyrrhonism is grounded in undogmatic beliefs or views, Pyrrhonists live following the usual rule of life, customs, and act in responding to things through appearance. In Buddhism, the practical orientation is based on the path of liberation that the mental state of mind is seated on the reflection of any physical and mental actions in the contract of consciousness (*vinnana*), sense-impression (*sampassa*), feeling (*vedana*), perception (*sanna*), and thinking (*vitakka*). To this extent,

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<sup>804</sup> Hankinson, *Sceptics*, 65. DL IX.106

<sup>805</sup> Beckwith, *Greek Buddha*, 157–158.

the Buddhist origination of proliferation (*papancha*) indicates the fabricated mind of grasping things mentally and physically. Simply the unpurified mind is not reliable through evidence and non-evidence. However, the Pyrrhonist view accepts things by appearance without dogmatic beliefs but the sense of impression. No one can be sure of knowledge with perceptions and thoughts because things are equally indifferent, either good or bad. There is an opposite account on every account in Sextus's words, so Pyrrhonists suspend any judgment. For example, finding gold in the darkroom, no one can be sure of gold without reliable knowledge.

In the Buddhist view, evidence or non-evidence does not designate any extreme determination or dogmatic belief. However, the affection of mind and matter (*nama-rupa*) in an opposite of renunciation or grasping nothing is a clue to see things by condition. In this case, the Pyrrhonist view of involuntary impressions such as hungry or thirst is unavoidable, and evidence labels it as non-dogmatic beliefs.

However, the Buddhist view of indeterminate things neither-good-nor-bad covers things in physical and mental phenomena apart from wholesome and unwholesome. Therefore Buddhists and Pyrrhonists are in standard of physical feelings such as thirst. For example, stepping on a robe-like snake is determined by perception or belief. The Pyrrhonist skeptic can be tricked in compelling evidence like a realistic snake. Indeed, Buddhists can sort out the right thing with evidence and non-evidence, in other words, the thoughtful reflection (*manasikāra*). Truth claims based on events and well-reflected upon theories are considered unreliable and baseless because well or ill reasoning can bring true and false results. Therefore, Buddhist inquiries are combined with a personal

investigation under the direct experience of phenomena concerning the pragmatic orientation to achieve the final goal.

In purgative analogy, both have the motivation for healing. Pyrrhonist view in Sextus works promotes the love of human beings by skeptical inquiries for curing the rashness of dogmatists. Likewise, the Buddhist view of renunciation is delivered by the great compassion (*Mahakarunika*) by the path of liberation to cure the suffering of sentient beings. Pyrrhonist simile illustrates an analogy as a physician who gives a purgative drug to clean out disease and itself from the body like the Buddhist simile describes as a surgeon who uses their skills and remedy for therapeutic purpose. Both have guided their ways of suspending beliefs by their modes of inquiry, either philosophical arguments or the religious path of wisdom. In some sense of Buddhist and Pyrrhonist views, suspending beliefs is an instrumental guideline for practical purposes.

The Pyrrhonist view is about withholding beliefs of something either true or false in puzzlement of being a loss due to the equipollence of things. It emphasizes an individual inquiry in searching for truth. Especially, appearances are evident and an involuntary sense of impression for a direct individual experiencing the truth that is undebatable to reflect things in reality of one's experience without beliefs, opinion, and theories. In the Pyrrhonist mind, searching for truth is a tendency toward a personal investigation following appearances.

In the direct experience of an individual inquiry, the Buddhist view of examination promotes *ehipassiko* "encourages investigation" that welcomes all practitioners to make their tests and directly experience teachings (*dhamma*) for themselves. Indeed, the encouragement to search for truth establishes an individual mode



of inquiry that does not rely upon resources from traditionalists, rationalists, and revelationists. Knowing by themselves is not blamable and benefit in avoiding dogmatic beliefs and achieving the final goal of equanimity. The final goal is described beyond what is<sup>806</sup> and what is not,<sup>807</sup> which is the resolution of fabrication and speculation. In this case, the final goal of Pyrrhonism and Buddhism seems to have an intrinsic value that all paths or inquiries do not entail or make up the final goal,<sup>808</sup> but it appears like an extinguishing of fire, and the shadow follows the body. In the Buddhist case of enlightenment, it suddenly appeared without assertion. For example, Ananda found liberation after his exertion when he wanted to rest in the early morning.<sup>809</sup> In the Pyrrhonist case of *ataraxia*, Pyrrhonists hope to achieve the final goal of tranquility after suspending beliefs or claims neither true nor false. As a matter of evidence, they endorse appearance to express things without beliefs or claims. Thus, *ataraxia* could come by chance and involuntary after searching for truth as like Apelles' painting was not completed after searching for truth, as Apelles' painting was not completed after the exertion of the image. However, it was perfectly finished after the painter gave up with a striking of the sponge by accident.

For Buddhists and Pyrrhonists, the final goal could come after withholding beliefs or claims due to the intrinsic nature of tranquility. Having beliefs about good and bad could hold the mind from liberation. However, the final goal could come after giving up any assertion or grasping nothings. Both seem to have ways to promote the tranquility of individuals.

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<sup>806</sup> *Nibbana*: peace, exquisite, and the ending of craving. AN 3.32

<sup>807</sup> *Nibbana*: unborn, unbecome, unfabrication. Ud 8.3

<sup>808</sup> Some speculation is well-thought-out and reliable, but it is baseless, unfounded, and false. *Sandak Sutta*, M i 171

<sup>809</sup> Hecker, *Ananda*, 51.

In reflecting things (*dhamma*), Buddhist and Pyrrhonist standpoints include what appears by nature as a piece of evidence for all phenomena.<sup>810</sup> In the Pyrrhonist view, suspending beliefs is without grasping things inherently good or bad but being passionate about them. The right view of the Buddhist path of renunciation does not weigh on any side of extreme beliefs or practices. However, it promotes an open mind of preserving truth without proclamation that “only this is true, anything else is wrong.” The open-mindedness is typical in both views that an individual investigator could untie any dominant worldview or belief but withholding theoretical doctrines, tents, and principles.

According to Buddhist views, to avoid dogmatic and extremist beliefs or claims, a *catuskoti* or *tetralemma* is given the four propositions of claims or arguments that all four options are rejected in the Buddhist critique of searching for truth that is beyond fabrication and speculation. A practice-oriented in Buddhism and Pyrrhonism has signified the interrelation between the modes of inquiries and solutions. Especially, the therapeutic mode of mind free is empirically-based techniques to emphasize the direct observation in understanding things as well as diseases.<sup>811</sup>

In contrast, Pyrrhonian skeptic modes of inquiries purposely oppose every dogmatic argument with encounter arguments, resulting of standstill intellect or being passionlessness regardless of any beliefs or claims. Pyrrhonist tropes make an equal balance of arguments and imply no further claims or proofs. However, the Buddhist inquiries reveal things through the dependent origination, and guide an individual investigation for mental development on the path of liberation. The direct experience is the key to understanding and releasing the mind from grasping things neither existence

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<sup>810</sup> Hankinson, *Skeptics*, 65. DL IX.106

<sup>811</sup> Gowans, “Medical Analogies,” 15.

nor non-existence. In brief, the Buddhist view is more likely to imply the modes of inquiries in the practical guideline against dogmatists and extremists and toward the final goal. Thus Buddhist modes of inquiry are more ethical implications than Pyrrhonist modes.

### **Further Research**

Many studies have attempted to combine multi-disciplinary approaches to study religions and philosophies, given various methodologies beyond the boundaries of traditions and schools in Buddhist and Pyrrhonist topics. A comparative study is one approach that opens to different perspectives, terms, and criteria. It could not be narrow to textual analysis in such a case that using different terminology could result in misinterpretation and misunderstanding of terms out of context.

This study did not intend to prove the influence between Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism where neither primary nor secondary resources could not identify the historical interaction. However, comparing across cultures and subjects can reveal the modes of thought from the different points of views. Notably, the study has demonstrated the similarities and differences providing significant understanding of subjects in various dimensions based on terms and scopes of suspending belief in Buddhist and Pyrrhonist perspectives.

Even though there are many hypotheses between Pyrrhonism and Buddhism, notably Madhyamaka Buddhism, the contents of suspending beliefs can be found in Pali Canon. The narrow study of Buddhist schools could be interesting in philosophical and religious approaches concentrated in the textual analytical survey. In the massive texts of Buddhism, exciting issues can be compared and looked at in wider and narrow areas of

study. In recent years, beliefs are not about religious aspects, but they cover much skeptical doubt on everything involving a dogmatic determination to withhold any fact or view. Therefore, many issues are interesting to approach in various criteria of studies. Particularly dogmatic beliefs and claims are the crisis of phenomena in media platforms and mindsets in social networks. The prescriptive claims assert what things are good or bad.

According to Buddhist and Pyrrhonist standpoints, grasping nothing is the key to advance in tranquility and to inquire the modes of understanding about things. In brief, Buddhist and Pyrrhonist aspects can be seen in multi-disciplinary approaches in textual study and field study, especially the roles of beliefs and inquiries. In some cases, Buddhism and Pyrrhonism are vast criteria of searching for truth that can be integrated aspects of Buddhist teachings such as secular Buddhism, Buddhist skeptics, Buddhist phenomenological practice. However, Buddhism and Pyrrhonism have much to offer regarding thinking and inquiries of beliefs or claims. In this case, suspend beliefs in which this study can be correct and improve in various criteria of further research. Notably, a comparative study of multi-culture subjects could not reveal the subjects or the core elements, either religion or philosophy. At this point, the intent is to discover whether or not they are commensurable. It is appropriate to study the problem in different aspects and subjects. However, new studies should attempt to understand and look closer to new analyses or discoveries even though materials or frameworks distinguish the subjects. Research cannot avoid any claim or judgment to make no mistake, but it can be more descriptive. In the end, the study should reflect our knowledge about subjects that cannot be either true or false but open to the different points of view.

## Summary

This study has explored suspending belief based on its contexts and accounts of Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism. In the discourse to *Kalamas*, there are religious proclaimers; traditionalists (*anussavika*), thinkers, logicians, and philosophers (*takki, vimamsi*), experimentalists (*sāma yeva dhamma abhiāya*).<sup>812</sup> These claims refer to hearsays, tradition, rumor, scripture, axiom, reason, theory, respective teacher as their references of truth.<sup>813</sup> However, the Buddhist path of renunciation endorses the direct knowledge (*bhiñña*) based on seeing things as they appear to be (*yathābhūta ñānadassana*) regardless of any speculation or fabrication that is oriented by existence (*bhava*) and non-existence (*vibhava*). Indeed the right path of liberation is kin to the direct experience that a wise man can know by himself that things are wholesome or unwholesome, and blamable or harmful.<sup>814</sup> In skeptical inquiries, the Pyrrhonist view of suspending beliefs is a sense of remedy to get rid of dogmatic beliefs. In the Outline of Pyrrhonism, the state of calmness appears as the result that a wise man can keep himself out of mental disturbance by suspending belief.

Many Buddhist discourses advocate suspension of beliefs in some sorts of thoughtful inquiries whether the modes of inquiry are in different subjects, means, and aims in parallel to Pyrrhonist modes of inquiry. Indeed, the Buddhists put together the arguments to present the anti-theses standpoint, which is noticeable to the later Pyrrhonists in Sextus survival works. Particularly both establish suspending beliefs to withhold dogmatic or extremist beliefs or claims aiming for the final goal of equanimity.

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<sup>812</sup> *Saṅgārava Sutta*, AN 3.60

<sup>813</sup> *Kesamutti Sutta*, AN 3.65

<sup>814</sup> *Channa Sutta*, SN 22.90

To achieve the mental state of standstill intellect, Pyrrhonists use argument for healing the harshness of dogmatic beliefs.

The Buddhist modes of inquiry are not only to preserve the truth but also to enhance all human faculties to learn (*sutamayā paññā*), to think (*cintāmayā paññā*), and to develop the mental state of mind (*bhāvanāmayā paññā*) for wisdom<sup>815</sup> that is crucial to the path of renunciation. Indeed, faith (*saddhā*), personal preference (*ruci*), repeated hearing (*anussava*), mere reason (*ākāra, parivittakka*), and convicted view by mere thoughts (*ditthinijjhānakkhanti*)<sup>816</sup> do not guarantee the truth claim. However, they are subjects of the thoughtful examination. In brief, Buddhist inquiries cover most knowledge criteria by evident and non-evident as a matter of grasping nothing, neither what is nor what is not. The Buddhist path of liberation implies suspending all speculations and theories of grasping things, either with annihilistic or eternalistic views. Thus, the mental development aims to purify the mind to reach the final goal of equanimity effectively.

In the Pyrrhonist attitude of suspending beliefs, opposing arguments can withhold all dogmatic beliefs and see what things are by nature. Pyrrhonists describe the nature of things that appear by nature as indifferent, unmeasurable, and indeterminable. Thus, they assert nothing but barely report things by appearance. To every argument opposes with encounter arguments, Pyrrhonists are not passionate (*aphasia*) to choose one thing over another. They suspend any dogmatic beliefs about non-evident based on beliefs, opinions, and theories because they are equally indifferent. Therefore skeptic withholds any determination. Saying “no more this than that,” skeptics present things indifferent views.

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<sup>815</sup> *Saṅgīti Sutta*, DN 33; Davids and Stede, *Pali-English Dictionary*, 122.

<sup>816</sup> *Pañcattaya Sutta*, M iii 28

Similarly, “saying about every single one that is no more is than it is not, or it both is and is not, or it neither is nor is not.”<sup>817</sup> A formula of tetralemma illustrates the nature of things with indifferent beliefs or arguments. Mainly, Pyrrhonists follow the intellect of opposition that things are equally in negative and affirmative positions. In parallel to the four Buddhist reference possibilities, the tetralemma shows the unanswered questions that reflect the contradiction of dogmatic and extremist views. The Buddha responds with silence or speechless to drop those questions. Mainly, Buddhist inquiries are not only to suspend beliefs or opinions but also to proceed the mental development beyond speculations by using purification to overcome doubt (*kankha-vitarana-visuddhi*) and purify view (*ditthi-visuddhi*) aiming for equanimity (*upekkhā*). At the final goal, Buddhism and Pyrrhonism recognize the mental state of tranquility resulting from suspending beliefs and opinions after reflective thinking and understanding.

According to modes of inquiry, Buddhist and Pyrrhonist perspectives emphasize their arguments based on the relativity of things. Exceptionally, the Buddhist doctrine of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) is closed to the skeptical mode of relativity that thing appears to be by its nature and condition. Indeed, both are aware of differences in customs, laws, beliefs, and opinions; in some cases, the Buddhist teaching has recognized the adherence to mere rule and ritual that practices are involved the ethical proposition toward the final goal. Otherwise, Pyrrhonist does not conclude any doctrine or philosophical theory to conduct his life, but to live with the non-philosophic conducts following appearance. However, Buddhist and Pyrrhonist modes of inquiry have distinguished from the historical contexts of wandering ascetics and Hellenistic philosophers. In the Pyrrhonist view, withholding assent is noticeable with belief or

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<sup>817</sup> McEvilley, “Pyrrhonism and Mādhyamika,” 4.

opinion (*doxa*), and understanding under non-evident but impression is involuntary cognition (*katalepsis*) based on evidence.

In the therapeutic aim of suspending beliefs, Buddhist and Pyrrhonist analogies represent the love of humanity or compassion to prevent the mind from grasping absolute certainty. Both underline the hassle of dogmatic beliefs and opinions holding and defending the absolute claims causing trouble. In Buddhist teaching, renunciation indicates the main point of suspending belief that all things must be abandoned and subjected to investigation, either true or false. In the path of liberation, the relinquishment mode (*vossagga*) establishes nothing into nature. However, it implies the mental state of letting go of hindrances linked to dogmatic beliefs and extreme practices. In parallel, the analogy of purgatives drugs shows that Pyrrhonists use equipollence of arguments like a drug to cure illness of the sick. Using an opposing argument to every argument is like an instrumental remedy to eliminate dogmatic beliefs by withholding beliefs or opinions about things by nature, good or bad. Both views represent suspending belief in the psychological therapeutic sense for the practical purpose of the inquiry. Indeed, Buddhist and Pyrrhonist inquiries are applicable methods to heal the mind from grasping things good or bad by nature using suspending beliefs or opinions to achieve the final goal of tranquility. Avoiding a mental illness, Buddha and Pyrrho showed their teachings and exemplary life of wise men that lived without grasping things good or bad by nature but attaining equanimity like a high priest.

In this study of suspending beliefs in the Early Buddhism and Pyrrhonism, there are various distinguishable aspects of Indian thought and Greek philosophy following historical contexts and remained works. It is noticeable in this case that belief is a



cornerstone in Buddhism and Pyrrhonism; with this, suspending beliefs promotes to encounter the dogmatic beliefs about what is good or bad by nature. The Buddhist inquiries endorse the freedom of individual examination to preserve the truth with a remedy to avoid the polarity of beliefs and practices for the final achievement of equanimity. Similarly, the Pyrrhonist inquiries promote an opposing argument due to the equipollent nature of things or statements. In this sense, the skeptical aim designates the therapeutic sense of healing the mind from dogmatic beliefs. Hence, the mental state of equilibrium is a possible solution to prevent the mind from troubles and achieve a mental state of calm. Buddhism and Pyrrhonism have implied their methods characterized by the different guidelines and features to liberate the mind from dogmatically grasping things, good or bad. Both provide their modes of inquiry to make a better choice through the thoughtful examination and arguments by suspending belief to achieve the final goal of tranquility.

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