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**CONTESTING ORTHODOXY AND NEGOTIATING EQUALITY:  
TRACING THE MARGINALIZED PHILOSOPHICAL HETERODOXY IN  
INDIA**

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**Abstract:**

*Theology is used to justify religion. There is no space for skepticism as it's a question of faith. It is absurd to inquire whether Jesus resurrected from the dead and Krishna lifted the Mountain with his small fingers, or whether the Virgin was conceived, and so on. What is a fact and absolute truth for devotees is a myth for non-believers. Philosophy, on the other hand, is a reasonable pursuit which will throw religion's base into doubt. In the domain of philosophy, nothing is sacred. Mystic experience is at the centre, like the spokes of a wheel, which converge at the centre but radiate and widen as they reach the periphery. In spiritual experience, all religions converge. It is only in their interpretation that they differ. Cultural traits like food, clothing, and mundane activities are secular in nature. This is the highly flammable material, on the other hand, that is employed in communal violence and religious riots. People ignore ethical rules in favour of frivolous matters that have no influence on religion. The worry is that when religion gets institutionalized and flirts with politics, it can lead to a slew of problems. This paper tries to read India's philosophical history as largely one of conflict between Buddhism and Brahmanism which is evident from the fact that Indian philosophy was split into two camps: one that drew influence from Hindu textuality and the other from Buddhist textuality. It also tries to historicize the parallel renaissance movement inspired by the Buddhist philosophical tradition's counter hegemonic discourse and the marginalization of such counter philosophical trends in India.*

**Keywords:** *Subaltern Consciousness, Marginalized Philosophies, Philosophies From Below, Counter Hegemony, Counter Revolution, Cultural Assimilation, Philosophical Flexibility, Insurrectionist Philosophy*

On 19th November 2021, an unprecedented incident occurred in Agra, when doctors at a hospital fixed the damaged limb of a Lord Krishna idol. A devastated priest arrived at the hospital and requested that the nurses fix the idol's arm, which he had broken while giving it a wash in the morning. In consideration of the priest's sentiments, the doctor registered the patient idol as 'Shri Krishna' and also bandaged the idol's arm, perhaps after initial hesitation. This episode of cinematic proportion, which occurred in the postmodern post-human, post-truth, new millennium, serves as a grim reminder of how closely daily life and religion are intertwined in India. In rural India, everything is constantly out in the open spaces. Cooking and dining spaces (consumption areas) as well as bathroom facilities (defecation areas) are all located in open areas. However, philosophies are always kept hidden and sacrosanct, and they are always forbidden fruit for the marginalized. The Vedic philosophy is rigid, complex, and sophisticated, but the counter-hegemonic philosophies are self-aware, spontaneous, and wildly naive.

The unsuspecting devotees were led to believe that the world's ancient sages were the true masters of achieving the ideal quantum of spirituality for a happy life. Dwelling on the umbilical link between soul and spirituality, it was thought that awakening the cosmic energies and spiritual forces required a pure pool of water, a breath of fresh air, and a tranquil and blessed milieu. Unfortunately, the confines of impurity, corruption, consumption, commercialization, and perishable comfort zones have enslaved the larger mass of society. The underlying tragedy is that they refuse to cross these lines, causing significant harm to both the body and the psyche.

Any approach to Indian philosophical traditions necessitates a review of the history and profound transformations that Western philosophies underwent. Western philosophy was always idealist until Hegel's time. Rousseau's idea of history during the Enlightenment was backward-looking, which essentially implies that he saw history as a fall from the simplicity of the pre-civilized condition. But, Hegel, in contrast to Rousseau's idea of history, established a progressive conception of history. Karl Marx believes that Hegel has flipped the relationship between philosophy (thought) and the world (matter) on its head. Hegel's technique portrays people's inhuman, irrational manner of life, attempting to portray it as the epitome of reason. The logic of this historical notion was appropriated by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, but the content was modified. The substance was spiritual for Hegel, but it was material for Marx and Engels, meaning it dealt with the world of matter rather than the realm of mind and spirit. Both agreed that man is a social animal who should only be interpreted in terms of society and not in terms of God, religion, self, or spirituality.

The basic unit of nature (cell or atom) is dialectical, according to Marx and Engels. It's both dynamic and static at the same time. They argued that there is a clash at the heart of everything with the concept of Dialectical Materialism. In confrontations, one does not cancel out the other; rather, one transforms into the other. God disappears/transforms into the devil and vice versa. The static becomes dynamic and vice versa. The same principle applies to society and history, according to Marx. The New Critics refer to the inherent struggle as ambiguity, while ST Coleridge refers to it as the reconciling of opposites. In reality, Marx adopted Hegel's phrase 'dialectic,' but he skips through the Hegelian synthesis. Society, according to Marx, is nature, and it exists in conflict. Society is dialectical as matter is dialectical. Whatever humanity has created has a dialectical nature to it. Matter is just a reflection of the mind, or the quality of the mind is reflected in matter, according to Hegel's idealism. Mind is not mirrored in matter, according to Marx's materialism; rather, matter stamped itself on the mind. Previous thinkers mixed up matter and spirit. Every stage is determined by the relationships between production processes and productive relationships, or, in other words, economic conditions and the question of who owns what. For them, history is a never-ending battle in which one stage's conditions (thesis) cause conflict (antithesis), from which a new stage emerges (synthesis). (Cassedy)

Marx and Engels claimed that we are destined to live in an unequal society. To eliminate the gap, we must use force, whether it is through bourgeois revolution or proletariat dictatorship. In the Western setting, you must first overthrow Christianity, because you are forced to obey the monarchs and Tsars in the name of allegiance to God. In the Indian context, Periyar E V Ramasamy clearly stated, "You have misled us in the name of god, religion, and sastras. We were the ruling class. ... .. , put an end to this life of betraying us. Allow rationalism and humanism to flourish" (54). He further stated that "Any opposition founded on reason, science, or experience will expose the fraud, selfishness, lies, and conspiracies one day or another."

Hegemony, across the world, has attempted to rationalize slavery throughout history. Slavery was considered natural by Aristotle, and individuals were split into two categories: masters and slaves. He stated that some individuals are born slaves to be treated as such forever. Some others were blessed to control these slaves, to exploit them as they pleased, and to treat them as an object or property. He also justified slavery by correlating one's servitude with lack of wisdom: "Natural slaves were enslaved because their souls were incomplete, lacking certain attributes such as the ability to think properly, and thus requiring masters to teach them what to do." Slavery was a result of the Fall of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, according to Augustine, and Aquinas also felt that the universe had a natural structure that allowed some persons control over others. He rationalized it by citing the hierarchical character of heaven, where some angels were superior to others.

Marx and Engels believed that individual attempts by members of the intelligentsia, particularly cultural and religious figures, to gain a deeper understanding of reality, to go beyond the framework of power relations, and to express their protest against these in some form, inevitably leads to conflicts with their own society and their departure from their oppressor society's privileged position. Jesus Christ and Lord Buddha are great examples for this. Jesus lived at a time when Rome was at its most tyrannical mood. Rulers, governors, priests, and other religious authority had invaded and abused Jesus' community. The Roman soldiers marched through the streets of Jerusalem with horses in order to demonstrate its autocratic power and might. To frighten and intimidate individuals who might consider insurgency, their weapons and arms were displayed in public. Bored of these stereotypical military parades year after year, the oppressed people viewed Jesus' procession as a display of counter-hegemony, opposing the legitimacy of the repressive authority by riding on a donkey (in the place of a horse) with people waving palm branches. His act was a public, symbolic protest by colonized people against the colonizers.

Man can achieve the status of man not by delving deeper inside himself, but only through identifying with the external realities of society. Because the external reality is filthy, the elites have chosen not to represent it. In their attempts to redefine the goal of literature/art, Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir used the word engage, and their belief in the writer's responsibility to societal values and philosophical viewpoints led them to conclude that writing must be devoted. Eric Bentley quoted Sartre's letter to Camus in support of his argument that the committed writer is one who is willing to get his hands dirty. One should take sides and cannot remain neutral. Desmond Tutu rightly says, "If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality."

A writer cannot absolve himself of societal responsibilities in the name of artistic freedom. He is granted the freedom to write, and society has the right to require social responsibility in what he writes. Modernist writers and intellectuals embarked on a journey from a bleak reality to a subjective reality. They become pathological as a result of their obsession with and glorification of their self. As a result, their projection of reality is an escape from reality. They were unable to face reality. Instead of lamenting their seclusion, they began to relish it. When they reacted negatively to a bad society, they should have made actions to change it. They, on the other hand, have taken recourse into their self. All of these major Indian philosophies obliterated history invariably. They gave a man who had no history. It's just a cardboard man! He isn't made of flesh and blood! The mainstream philosophers have given up on the external world in this way. They reveled in their exclusion from society. They have preserved the existing external world without changing it by silently entering their subjective reality. Buddhism and Jainism, for example, never defend man's existence in terms of his ontological emergence. These diverse secular philosophical traditions insist that a man must be connected.

The dominant and subaltern populations in India, as well as their beliefs, viewpoints, and past and present narratives, do not exist in isolation, but rather in confrontation. As a result, ideology that promotes the dominant group's interests subverts the interests of the marginalized. As a result of being denied access to the dominant ideology and history conveyed by hegemonic forces, oppressed communities around the world have developed resistance traditions. Marxists expanded the definitions of hegemony and resistance to include societal power struggles between the powerful and the powerless. Domination and subservience are social processes, according to Raymond Williams, a celebrated Marxist writer, because inequalities exist among the classes in any given society. "It is in just this recognition of the wholeness of the process that the concept of hegemony goes beyond 'ideology'" (Williams, 108). The dominant communities have an abstract concept of ideology, but the excluded groups have it embedded in their otherwise disparate consciousness. In response to the oppression of the existing one, which stems from the working class, Antonio Gramsci underlines the need to build reciprocal/counter hegemony in the form of struggle or revolutionary ideology. In India, the working class refers to the producing classes who are oppressed due to caste inferiority. Gramsci viewed hegemony as "a process... It is a realized complex of experiences, relationships, and activities, with specific and changing pressures and limits... It is continually resisted, limited, altered, and challenged by pressures not at all its own. We have then to add to the concept of hegemony the concept of counter- hegemony and alternative hegemony, which are real and persistent elements of practice" (Gramsci, 112). In his path breaking essay, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus",

Louis Althusser establishes that “ideology is the fulcrum of the state mechanism through which the dominant class is able to reproduce its class domination. Moulded into subjects through ideological state apparatuses, succeeding generations continue to conform to the norms of the existing class relations” (Althusser, 122).

The dominant ideology links hegemonic groups together while emasculating marginalized groups by denying them a basic understanding of any dissenting philosophy that could enable them to convert society into a classless/caste-free society. Hegemonic ideology seeks to generate ambiguity so that marginalised people are unable to comprehend the dominant ideology and so never rise to challenge it. The primary theme of the Marxist-Gramscian-Althusserian dialectic, on the other hand, is that the dominant ideas are never completely accepted. The oppressed and historically enslaved masses confront them in the end. This hegemony is overthrown by the counter-hegemonic forces of social protest movements. Gramsci believes that the ruling classes maintain their power through the use of consent rather than coercion. When this theory is applied to the Indian context, it is clear that most subaltern people accept intrinsically exploitative and discriminatory ideas as required to manage society, but there is a possibility that they would retaliate against these very normal processes and seek reforms. Gramsci attributes much of the credit for social reform to marginalized groups, intellectuals, and revolutionaries. Organic intellectuals, according to Gramsci, play a crucial role in the battle for hegemony between classes. In reality, only through challenging and ultimately transforming existing consciousness could social reform be achieved. According to Gramsci, the alteration of social consciousness is a prerequisite for the establishment of a counter-hegemonic class. In the new millennium, Leonard Harris, who spoke about the philosophy of struggle, and Gilman-Opalsky, who spoke about the philosophy from below, such as E P Thompson's 'history from below,' clearly assert that “all human beings should be afforded the basic liberties – the bare minimum – that all human beings should be afforded; freedoms that should be extended to all human beings, without qualification.”

What these intellectuals have brought in for a serious philosophical debate has long been a topic of discussion in India. On a daily level, many Indians take equality for granted. Many Indians incorrectly feel that they are entitled to a good education, reliable healthcare, and steady job. The truth is that the marginalized are subjected to a variety of types of oppression, which has hampered their social growth. To gain a deeper understanding of the difficulties, one must look into the repressive conditions that exist, especially in the context of counter Vedic movements. Self-awareness of social injustices and their causes is the starting point for any type of protest, no matter how great or petty. If required reforms are not broadly recognized, a social movement might lose momentum and finally become stagnant. A time of social unrest and strife will emerge when those on the social fringes engage in the essential debate to grasp the necessity for social change.

In India, the Brahmins were the ones who officiated the sacrifices and ceremonies in a hierarchical four-tier system—the division of tasks depending on one's birth—in a stereotypical and clichéd method of expressing Indian intellectual heritage. Kshatriyas, on the other hand, were part of the nastika traditions that denied the vedas' authority. Mahaveer Jain and Lord Buddha were Kshatriya princes. There is a defiance here; in these traditions, the Brahmin is no longer granted the position he once held. All of these ceremonies were infuriating to them. With human sacrifice and supernatural exercises, the meemamsakas' ritualism had achieved its pinnacle. Smaller clans and religious cults were scattered throughout the area. When philosopher Shankara arrived, he had to reorganise the cults and divide them into six primary groups: Shiva, Vishnu, Sakthi, Ganapathy, Muruga, and Surya worshipers. All of these different cults were brought together to worship these six great gods. Vishnu avatars such as Narasimha, Krishna, and Rama are included in Vaishnavism. The rest will go to a sashtra school. And a few others, such as Bairava, who follow Shiva's avatar, will be categorised as Shaiva. The key concern back then was which philosophy to follow in order to gain freedom from rebirth. The main focus is how to attain moksha as they aren't interested in speculative philosophy. As a result, these individuals regarded shanna as a means of attaining moksha.

The Vedantic period comes first in the history of Indian philosophy, followed by the shramana period, which encompasses Jainism and Buddhism. Then there's the Renaissance of the Vedic period—the Bhakthi movement, which fought against orthodoxy and attempted to reform it from within the Hindu fold. The movement originated in the Tamil region in the sixth and seventh centuries CE, and in the Kannada region in the 12th century, the movement led by Basavanna undermined caste system and

stretched the fabric of local society for a period. While orthodoxy reigned supreme, the Bhakti movement in this region generated a treasure of poetry known as VachanaSahitya, which was composed by Basava and his followers like Akkamahadevi, AllamaPrabhu, and DevaraDasimayya and a few others. Girish Karnad's Tale Dandais a classic demonstration of the conflict between the orthodoxy and the heterodoxy in India. Damodara Shastri in Tale Dandais trying to point out that there is inherent inequality between human beings: "One's caste is like one's home – meant for one's self and one's family. It is shaped to one's needs, one's comforts, one's traditions. And that is why the Vedic traditions can absorb and accommodate all differences" (56). Damodara Shastri prefers inequality for he feels that, "a hierarchy which accommodates difference is more humane than an equality which enforces conformity". His men laugh at the faith and beliefs of others. His follower Kalayya tells him, "Basavanna, these tribal have brought their gods with them. You should see that idol. Rolling eyes. A tongue lolling out. It's very funny" (34) Mandana Misra and Kumarila Bhatta, the Meenamsikaas, were able to take on the Buddhist challenge, and Jainism survived due to its philosophical flexibility, whereas Buddhism had to flee its birthplace due to its philosophical rigidity.

Christianity too has thrived in India, while facing one of the most serious challenges: adaptability. Assimilation of Christianity into the Hindu social order necessitated integration of Christianity into Indian cultural frameworks including trivial customs like tonsure of hair, burning camphor balls and breaking coconuts etc. The treatment of traditional attire in India is an illustration of the difficulties that the Christianity faced. One of the most visible kinds of discrimination for those of the lower caste was the prohibition of covering the upper half of the body in a culture where clothing indicates social status. A bare breast was considered a symbol of respect for individuals of greater status (Kooliman, 148-49). The top tuft and the holy thread were seen as symbols of social status. Robert de Nobilio De Nobili permitted his Brahmin converts to continue wearing their sacred thread, but with a small cross attached to it. He convinced the Pope arguing that the top tuft and the sacred thread were not religious symbols but social symbols. People who live in Puducherry or Pondicherry or visit as a tourist cannot miss the majestic Saint Paul's church. In the same church till the 19th century there was a wall separating the Tamil Christians and the Pariah Christians and it was approved by the then Pope Benedict XV.

Buddha challenged the Vedas' authority, promoted good actions as a path to nirvana, and condemned the caste system as well as the horrifying, costly ritual of animal sacrifice. Knowledge was not seen as a monopoly of the twice-born during the Buddhist movement. The Shudras were welcomed into the sangha, Buddha's monastic order, and offered the opportunity to train as bhikkus, Buddhist priests. Though Buddha's efforts to emancipate and integrate women in the Sanghas failed to achieve unity, women who had their own order, the bhikkhuni sangha, were not excluded from salvation. Under the Mauryan era, not only was Brahmin hegemony challenged, but they also lost their status. B R Ambedkar in his radical text Revolution and Counter-Revolution states that the "biggest blow to Brahmanism" was the political act of "Ashoka proclaiming Buddhism the state religion." Following that, the Brahmins were stripped of all state favour and consigned to a second-class status.

According to Ambedkar, the loss of governmental patronage had an adverse impact on Brahmins' earnings since Ashoka outlawed animal sacrifice, which could only be presided over by them in exchange for extravagant gifts. "During the Mauryan Empire, the Brahmins therefore lived as the oppressed and downtrodden classes for about 140 years," he says. The Brahmins' only hope of escaping their humiliation was to thwart the revolution. Pushyamitra, the leader of the Mauryan army, led the battle against Buddhism by assassinating King Brihadratha, usurping the throne, and founding the Shunga dynasty. Pushyamitra's goal as a Brahmin was to "eliminate Buddhism as a state religion" and use state power to support Brahmanism in defeating Buddhism. Ambedkar backs up his counter-revolutionary argument: "The entire history of India is presented as though the only essential thing in it is a record of Muslim invasion." "Just as Hindu India was besieged by Muslim invaders, Buddhist India was invaded by Brahmanic India," he states categorically. There are numerous similarities between the two invasions, but one important distinction leaps out: Islam hadn't completely replaced Hinduism, whereas Brahmanism wiped Buddhism out and replaced it.

With the expulsion of the Buddhists from India, it has spread beyond the territories like Nepal, China, Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Bhutan, among others. The important idea of Buddha is that knowledge, not blind ritual performance, is the means and ethics. There is no such thing as a god. The philosophy of the self, according to which your own good deeds will help you

achieve Nirvana, the highest aim of existence. These people paved the path for challenging traditions and emphasizing the importance of behavioral ethics. The sashtangamaarga was created by Buddha using the three Jain gems and moral standards. Right knowledge leads to Right livelihood, which leads to right understanding. Theistic and atheistic philosophies are the two main groups of Indian philosophy. Samkhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vaishesika, Mimamsa, and Vedanta are theistic philosophies that recognise the authority of the Vedas. The collection of these practices is known as sadadharshan. Carvaka, Buddhist, and Jain ideologies are atheistic because they do not believe in the Vedas. Despite the lack of a concept of God, the religious promise of paradise and the accomplishment of moksha, defined as the absence of pain and suffering, are one and the same. Buddhists ask how humans know paradise, heaven, or vaikundaskailasa exist after death when mainstream philosophies offer them paradise, heaven, or vaikunda's kailasa, and urge them to reach the highest objective while they are still living. The dead don't come back to tell you tales. As a result, Buddhism assures us of attaining that enlightened condition even while we are still alive. As a result, Knowledge was able to be employed as a tool for liberation-sadhana-ethical code. The notion of Mahakarunamahapragya - Compassion and sympathy for those who are suffering was insisted. That's why Buddha says he won't go to paradise until the last man has been redeemed. Sarvamukthi appears in the scene. Everyone is eligible for liberation, and liberation is available to all. Here comes Shankara, who was thought to be a Buddhist posing as a Hindu since he took Buddhist ideas and experimented with Hinduism. Nastika and astika traditions are merged. He proceeded to convey the idea that mukthi can be gained via knowledge, just as Buddha did. Shankararecognises the shoonya of the madhyama Buddhists as nirguna Brahmin.

F.W Ellis, who was in the administrative service of Tamilnadu in the last decade of the eighteenth century and contributed a lot to the Tamil language and literature, has clearly outlined the uniqueness of siddhars and their songs in his book Tirukkural: Ellis' Commentary and Memorandum respecting Tamil Poetry. Through his quotes, we may see Ellis's social reformatory thoughts and religious perspectives: "This book, Siva Vaakiyam whose title literally means "discussion on God," contains sublime notions of the deity and instilled the greatest reverence towards Him, discards the figurative mythology, subtle philosophy, and never-ending ceremonies of the Brahmans, rebukes the vanity of their pretensions to superior sanctity, dismisses the notion that the almighty could have made an inherent difference between his creatures, denies metamorphosis, and exposes the futility of The author's name is said to be Sivavaakiyar, but I believe it was an epithet derived from the title of the work: Siva Vakkiyam means the discourse concerning the deity. This work's style, which is devoid of any mysterious or artificial beauty, is far more straightforward and understandable than any other book on religious subjects I've ever read in Tamil. The language is notable for its purity as well as its understandability."

Siddhar philosophy deviates from orthodoxy and attempts to challenge the irrational techniques by which purity is preserved and discrimination is justified: "What is the object on which you believe you wasted all the water you took up for fitting the water in completing the Sandhya and other rights?" It also claims that the ostensibly many god-oriented tradition is fundamental in despising all other faiths and Gods, and that there is only one path, despite the many deceptive forms: "When you can only think about the root, the seed, and the benefit that comes from the seed, you will be able to approach God's feet. It's not Ari, it's not Sivan, it's not Ayan... ... for beyond the black the colour of Vishnu The white the colour of Sivan or the red the colour of Brahma stays the everlasting cause it is not great it is not small neither is it male nor female beyond every state of corporeal existence it is farther and farther still."

It is a fallacy that the ancient period of Indian history was characterised by communal harmony and the absence of religious conflicts. This purportedly tranquil time enabled the right wing ideologues to paint the Middle Ages as a reign of terror perpetrated on Hindus by Muslim rulers, cleverly obscuring the period of Hindu violence. Religious factions in ancient India were unquestionably respectful of one another. However, the period saw a bloody conflict between orthodoxy Brahminical sects which harboured deep hostility towards heterodoxy, Buddhism, and Jainism. The plural unorthodox and accommodating belief system challenged the unitary authoritative established norm-oriented belief system. Sanskrit grammarian Patanjali compares the tumultuous relationship between "Shramanas [Buddhists and Jains] and Brahmanas" to that of a snake and a mongoose in his book Mahabhashya. Basava, the Lingayat saint, mentions the massacre of Jains and

the appropriation of their temples by his followers in his hagiographies. Similarly in Tamilnadu, the impalement of 8000 Jains was commanded by Koon Pandyan of the Pandya Dynasty (7th century AD), according to mythological references. Although the account is still contested, there were rituals in Madurai temples that pointed to a comparable massacre. Effigies were impaled on poles and dragged around at the annual Meenakshi temple festival as part of a ceremony known as “Samanar Madam Adakkal.” However, in 1974, the rite was abolished. Temples also had murals representing the legend, although they were whitewashed during repairs. A built heritage monument in Avudaiyarkoil, Tamil Nadu's Pudukkottai district, has murals depicting episodes of impalement. The stone impalement devices (kazhumaram) are visibly available in Govindhankoil temple near Pallapacheri in Ramanthapuram district of Tamilnadu.

South Asian society, notably Indian society, is described by Karl Marx as a “fossil society” that refuses to accept fundamental changes. India's history is largely one of conflict between Buddhism and Brahmanism and this is evident from the fact that Indian philosophy was split into two camps: one that drew influence from Hindu textuality and the other from Buddhist textuality. The mainstream Vedantic philosophy's hegemonic discourse was challenged by the Siddhar tradition: What oh wretch is caste? Is not water an accumulation of fluid particles? Are not the five elements and the five senses one? Are not the several ornaments for the neck and the breasts and the feet equally gold? what then is the peculiar quality supposed to result from a difference in caste? As milk once drawn cannot again enter the udder/ Nor milk churned be recombined with milk/ As a sound cannot be produced from the broken conch nor the life be restored to its body As a fallen leaf cannot be reunited to the flowering tree so a man once dead is subject to no future birth.”

The Siddhars also ridicules the claim of superior status by members of the upper rung of the social ladder: One who cries that one is greater one is lesser... out of these six religions if they argue one is good and the other bad... they resemble the dog which barks at its own echo standing on the molehill. Philosophical treatises such as Siddhar literature attempt to reaffirm that rescuing oneself from the clutches of Vedantic traditions' hypocritical and vain practices is the true social liberation. During the Kalabhra period, which was actually a period of progress, these Siddhars lived and participated in extreme counter-hegemonic discourses? Chera, Chola, and Pandya rulers took a backseat to their rule. Tamil literature, Jainism, and Buddhism flourished during this time. In history, the Kalabras' reign is referred to as KalappirarKalam and irundakalam-the gloomy period. For the first time, Kalabrasrevolutionised numerous systems in society, administration, and literature, and unified Thamizhagam under a single major authority, yet when orthodox historians state there was no advancement during the Kalabras period, they are just referring to the decline of Brahminism. According to Burton Stein, the Kalabhra interregnum may reflect a powerful attempt by non-peasant tribal warriors to gain dominance over the fertile plains of Tamil region, with support from the heterodox Indian religious tradition (Buddhism and Jainism.) This may have resulted in the persecution of Brahmanical religious traditions, who then worked to topple the Kalabhras and then retaliated against their persecutors once they regained power.(76–84)R.S. Sharma, on the other hand, advocates the opposite hypothesis, citing the “Kalabhras as an example of peasant revolt to the state” - albeit one with tribal overtones and set in the 6th century (Sharma, 8). According to Rebecca Darley, all of these explanations are plagued by a “deep lack of evidence for the events or nature of Kalabhra reign” (Darley, 68). Some regard the Kalabhras as a militant sect of the Jinas who challenged the historical Vedic faith, leading to their eventual vilification.

Insurrectionist philosophers Jyotiba Phule, Ayothee Thass, Ayyan Kali, and Periyar EVR were dedicated to universal human freedom. They were willing to violate convention because they were aware of the social context's systemic violence and unfairness. They called into question established communal norms and authority, which were most likely produced through democratic processes. They were protesting cruel treatment and unjust laws. They gave permission for deception, protest, civil disobedience, and, in certain cases, violence against the ruling class. These insurrectionists understood personhood and basic human dignity in a way that warranted radical action on behalf of the downtrodden. The insurrectionists risked their reputation and livelihood in order to attain this goal. In the Indian scenario, the spirit of self-assertion of those who have been reduced to insignificance/pushed to the margins/voluntarily departed the mainstream space by rejecting Brahmanism's dogmas asserts itself in the symbolic, social, and intellectual domains. They attempt to create and settle conflicts in order to dismantle discriminatory hierarchies and allow themselves to be

treated as fellow beings by others. By utilizing methods of assimilation, transference, and revolt in connection to repressive system actors, they maintain their assertive agency even within the constrained socio-political space. Their ethical discourses are exploratory in nature, moving to egalitarianism through a matrix of rationality, social freedom, and historical concreteness. If the yearning for a communal identity is at the heart of modern subjectivity, then Buddhism and its regional forums' emancipatory project has something to give. Under colonially valorized Brahmanical casteism, Dalit subalterns were considered as inferior beings incapable of self-reflexivity, articulation, and autonomous self-actualization. If self-respect and dignity were demanded as a right for the country as a whole, ensuring equality from within was not considered a logical necessity. "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it. Ambedkar while endorsing the Marxist dialectic "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness" prefers Buddha to Marx considering the peculiar Indian social condition with caste replacing class. Subalterns' right to self-representation as having a stake in the creation of a casteless society was bitterly challenged and resisted. The word philosophy means love of wisdom. Ironically there cannot be wisdom in the philosophies that propagate unequal codes for humans. Whenever humanity is facing a crisis it is literature and Philosophy that come for its rescue. Let us make literature more and more humane and philosophy more and more rational. Subaltern is a constructed identity. We should challenge and demolish the construct and create an egalitarian space where all voices are heard.

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