

BURDEN OF PROOF: SAÑJAYA BELAṬṬHIPUTTA, NĀGĀRJUNA AND DERRIDA'S PERSISTENCE ON NEGATION TO PROVE AFFIRMATIVE CLAIMS

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Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta, an ascetic teacher in Ancient India, was contemporaneous with Mahavira, the leader of Jainism and the Lord Buddha. Sañjaya gained much popularity due to his sceptical teaching and Ajñana school of thought. He refuses all forms of knowledge, and he was also named as eel-wrigglers (*amarāvikkhepika*). As per Hecker (1994), Sañjaya's teaching can be counted as a dialectical existentialism—a refusal to take a stand on the crucial moral and philosophical issues. He gives negative answers to all questions post to him. The Buddha left some questions unanswered, but Nāgārjuna, the 2nd Century CE Indian Buddhist philosopher, who articulated the dogma of *Sūnyatā*, made an attempt to answer certain unanswered questions formulated by the Buddha. Nāgārjuna deals with negation in his work in contrast to Lord Buddha as the Buddha is basically affirmative in his doctrine. According to Derrida's philosophical dialectical approach, the otherness of the other, negation is to be used for deconstructing logocentrism and for questioning the positivity of knowledge. Derrida's work can be interpreted as a prolongation and radicalization of Adorno's project, which rejected this positive element wherein the result was something greater than the parts that preceded and argued for a dialectics which produced something essentially negative, with *différance* as the notion that embodies this negativity most directly. The burden of proof is the obligation on a party in a dispute to provide sufficient warrant for their position. The three philosophers taken into account here unabatedly struggle with the burden of proof and resort to negation in their arguments. The hermeneutics method, an epistemic endeavor of text interpretation, was used in this research. This study is based on an interpretation of texts and other meaningful materials based on solid empirical evidence. This approach is ideal for the project as data and hard evidence are not easily available on human experience, historical, interpretive and analytical matter. *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, *Of Grammatology*, *Writing and Difference*, *Voice and Phenomenon*, *Samaññaphala Sutta* and other major Pāli canon were used here to analyze negation in the three different philosophers who lived in three different times in the world history. The objective of the study was to figure out how negation played a pivotal role in philosophical logic of the philosophers Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta, Derrida and Nāgārjuna. The hypothesis examined in the study was that the negation is one of the central logical notions in philosophies of Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta, Derrida and Nāgārjuna. The conclusion of the study is that proof is not only on the affirmative side of an argument but also in the negation, non-existence, hence Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta, Derrida and Nāgārjuna adopted negation as a determination for the burden of proof.

Keywords: Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta, Nāgārjuna, Derrida