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SOME REFLECTIONS ABOUT ANEKĀNTAVĀDA

MARIA LUISA TORNOTTI

The doctrine of *anekāntavāda* is an important and original contribution of Jainism not only to India, but also to human culture in general. It has in itself that characteristic of complexity connoting all Jainism, that has tried during its history to clarify and define with sharpness the different problems which invest all the ambits of existence, also the thinnest aspects of life, bringing forward doubts and questions that can arise.

What is of particular importance about *anekāntavāda*, is not to put in light the limits of the different religious philosophies that declare reality's limited views, but rather its value on the plane of human knowledge and of the development of awareness. So the positive and constructive aspects that this doctrine has in itself and that motivate it.

Anekāntavāda in fact is a cultural development of the cognitive approach in relation to reality, that, as enlightened masters have taught, doesn't by no means limit itself to what appears to our ordinary perceptions organs. Since man's last goal is *mokṣa*, *anekāntavāda* contributes to demolish obstacles, which divide him from that goal.

It starts from the assumption that what we ordinarily perceive, as I was saying, doesn't exhaust at all reality and therefore it is necessary to open our inner doors for being available to a wider and deeper knowledge.

Jainism explains that it's the accumulated karman which obscures and overshadows our world's perception and then it is necessary to stop the karmic inflow and purify oneself from the accumulated karman.

Right conduct, right knowledge and right view together pave the spiritual course. Right view is, as Umāsvāti asserts, the bent to the faith that has truth as aim and faith consists therefore in the pursuing of truth, of the real nature of things. That involves the constant

attention not to remain prisoners of ideas which we form about reality, not to stop to a mental knowledge, not to be conditioned by our perceptions and by lived experiences, but to be inwardly open towards the truth, that by faith one knows to exist.

According to Tvs. 1.33, a person, who delimits the purposes of his existence in solely worldly ambits, doesn't know how to distinguish truth from falsehood and therefore has a distorted knowledge. Instead another one, who is centred on his inner Self and pursues a right view of things in relation to it, purifying himself from attachments, has a proper cognitive approach and realises the limitations of his perception of reality. When he try to explain his view to other people, *anekāntavāda* helps him. In the case of people who are still working on themselves to find their inner Self, and are wavering between attachment and detachment, *anekāntavāda* helps them. The truths proclaimed by Jainism, *tattvas*, basically could be synthesized in few essential concepts that concern the existence of conscious (*jīva*) and then of unconscious (*ajīva*), that of the karmic bondage and then of emancipation from this bondage. These inescapable truths are, seen from the outside, the heart of a deep spirituality. Out of *tattvas*, the other remarks about reality are subject to the doctrine of *nayas*, exactly to avoid the risk of universalizing a partial, relative view of things. *Anekāntavāda* and its corollaries constitute the most correct possible modality of cognitive approach, which is more important than any model of reality, because it is the presupposition of it and stimulates to look for compatibility among the different knowledges, to harmonize them also in their acute contradictions.

Reality cannot exhaustively be represented in a logically consistent conceptual picture, because it goes beyond the logic of mind, surpasses it completely. To assert with certainty that reality is in a certain way rather than in another one is *ekāntavāda*, means to confine oneself to a partial view of things and to close oneself to their complexity. It's better to replace the Indicative mood with the Conditional, "it could be so" and then we are open to the possibility of revising our ideas.

Anekāntavāda well expresses the consciousness of the boundaries of mental knowledge, that is fundamentally binary, based on the dualistic principle, and the search of a right middle way well-represented by *syādvāda*, "it could be", "from a certain point of view it is in this way."

Reality in its complexity is better portrayed by a complex system that considers manifold aspects and different points of view, also the contradictory ones. Contradiction is in our mind, is a pattern of its; it

is necessary to learn not to be victim of this general pattern, but to disidentify oneself from that and think consciously and with detachment.

Anekāntavāda places itself further the patterns of mind, intends to show which is the best condition of mind, more suitable for being near the true reality of things, to can perceive it better, welcome it. It founds itself on the ascertainment that there are different forms of knowledge fundamentally ascribable to two types : one indirect and one direct.

The way of wisdom is the way of the direct knowledge that derives directly from the Self, that is intuitive. But in daily life people normally use forms of indirect knowledge and it is to these in particular that *anekāntavāda* with its corollaries give a fit criterion for all possible situations. It is there to remind us that any view we have of the reality of things is partial, temporary, and defective. We get better near to reality by putting the different points of view (*nayas*) together, which in their totality also shall not be anyway but a representation (imperfect as such) of the real.

The parable of the elephant into the cave suggests us the comment that if also those, who found themselves in that cave had then put together their different points of view, an imperfect collage concerning reality would be come out; only a sudden light and then the vision could have manifested the truth. In the other version of the parable, that of the blind men and the elephant, the symbols slightly change but the meaning is the same and tells us the blindness as a man's typical condition and the personal view as an uncertain groping in the dark, from which only the restitution of sight can free us.

This parable is therefore the representation of the ordinary individual knowledge and implicitly of the direct one. Since we can't normally get use of the second one, *anekāntavāda* comes to our assistance to remind us that things could be in this way – as our mind, our senses and our acquired knowledge show us – but the contrary of this could be as much true. Let us take the example of *jīva*. The variety of existing beings, with different levels of consciousness and complexity, is such from a practical point of view, from another one they are similar each other because they aren't but various manifestations of *jīvas* that, even if experimenting different stages of consciousness, also in the most limited being's form, like that unisensorial, contemporaneously they continue to exist as perfect consciousness.

Regarding the matter of manifoldness or unicity of *Jīva*, that is often been resolved by non-Jaina observers in univocal sense, in favour

of multiplicity, the doctrine of *nayas* shows as from a certain point of view, the practical one or that of the different individual characteristics, *jīvas* are countless, but from the point of view of their substance, of the conscience, *jīvas* are one, as perfectly identical and identifiable.

The doctrine of *nayas* shows the compatibility among contradictory assertions. The archetype of this compatibility can be located in Umāsvāti's famous statement asserting that reality is characterised by rising, perishing and lasting (Tvs. 5.29)

Anekāntavāda and *syādvāda* make acceptable the coexistence of contradiction and can be considered as a successful attempt of outlining a scientific model of reality as perceived by mystics, model that anticipates by far all the others. And the difficulty must have been big, especially for the inadequacy of language, the same difficulty that in times close to us physicists have met. Werner Heisenberg, for instance, states : "Every word or concept, as clear it can seem, has only a limited field of applicability". Also modern physicists found themselves in front of the limits of rational knowledge, as an abstract system of concepts and symbols, characterised by a coherent and sequential structure.

Modern physics reconfirms the value of the Jaina model. Apparently contradictory and incompatible concepts show themselves nothing but different aspects of the same thing, as for example the concepts of particle and wave which are opposite characteristics of the atom. The fact that atomic phenomena can be described only in terms of probability and that atomic particle manifests a type of physical reality between existence and non-existence confirms the validity of *syādvāda* and its sevenfold application. It shows the greatness and precision of the enormous endeavours made by Jaina masters and reconfirms the value of *anekāntavāda*.

This doctrine moreover warns against to make oneself ideas and convictions, which could be limited and also limiting in relation to spiritual progress, because on inner plane a prejudice constitutes an obstacle to the direct knowledge, that could always happen and that faith in the truth, combined with a right conduct, can make come to light. An instant of direct perception is enough to make appear spiritual reality, the being that is beyond the becoming, and to strengthen faith. False beliefs therefore constitute obstacles to spiritual progress.

In pedagogical field, *anekāntavāda* can be the foundation of an open educational system, even if firm in the pursuing of moral and spiritual values. Learning to consider things from many points of view and pondering the largest number of characteristics, develop

humanism, open mind and heart to the comprehension of others and problems, produce a bent to the sense of conciliation rather than to that of separatism, train the mind to an olystic view and then generate the ability of resolving conflicts, of finding a common sense in the discussions and controversies. It is a way to the effective and realistic building of harmony, that doesn't mean levelling and homologation but respect for differences in the identification and exploitation of what unites and in mutual enrichment.

From the individual's point of view, *anekāntavāda* is the right attitude of mind that corresponds on the planes of heart and behaviour—that means on the more complete and olystic plane—to *śamatva* value, equanimity, which is certainly more difficult to pursue but keeps up on the same course of inner search, of self's improvement.

Moreover it is definitely supplementary to *ahiṃsā dharma*. Because *ahiṃsā* is not only, like we know, limited to the outside, to external behaviour, but also it is an internal habit, of non-attachment. *Aparigraha* to be practised also towards our own ideas and opinions. Attachment to them leads to fanaticism and intolerance, which in their turn are forms and causes of violence. Jainas feel attachment as a form of violence towards oneself, towards the pure nature of one's own Self. The way of inner purification passes also through this.

Besides, the doctrine of manypointedness embodies, on the plane of philosophical approach, a high form of expression of *ahiṃsā* in relation to reality itself, that can't be possessed by man's conceptions and opinions, which always represent, in themselves, partial definitions of some aspects of the true nature of things and then are a kind of conceited appropriation of truth, that instead never will be able to be owned, for its infinite superiority on man and on other beings. It reflects a non-anthropocentric conception of the world, where the human being is an element, who is determinant in the management of environment that surrounds him, but not as owner. This conception is the only one that can save the world from the decline towards which it is set going. *Anekāntavāda* favours tolerance, respect and understanding of different points of view from one's own, even if unilateral. It is a doctrine that can make reflect very much and could constitute, in its full and positive acceptance, an ambit, a place of ideal meeting for the different religions and cultures. It is a great support for building peace, for founding dialogue with the other religions, the other cultures and keeping the dialogue inside of one's own religion.

JAINISM, MAHĀVĪRA, BUDDHA AND NIRVĀṆA

PROF. N. M. KANSARA

Jainism is a very ancient religion, and its commencement has been traced at least to the age of the First Arhat or Tīrthaṅkara Ṛṣabhadeva, who is recorded in the traditional mythological accounts to have been a son of King Nābhi and his queen Marudevī. Since then the tradition continued and in the course of time twenty-three other Arhats followed during different periods, and the last among them was Mahāvīra, who was known to have lived, reformed and preached it during the fifth century before Christ. In the period preceding the First Arhat, the Brāhmanical tradition of the Vedic religion was prevalent. On the contrary, the Buddhist religion is traced to Gautama Buddha who lived and preached in the fifth century BC, and was almost a contemporary of the last Arhat, Mahāvīra, of the Jainism.

Jainism is the Science of Salvation, propounded and practiced by Ṛṣabhanātha, first (*Ādinātha*) of the twenty-four Master Pathfinders, known as *Tīrthaṅkaras*, through thousands of years. It was preserved by Pārśvanātha, the twenty-third *Tīrthaṅkara*, and was systematized by Mahāvīra, the last *Tīrthaṅkara*.

The Jaina teaching was imparted at one time only orally. Mahāvīra's chief direct disciples known as *Gaṇadharas* later on allegorized the teaching of the Science of Salvation as taught by the *Tīrthaṅkaras*. They tried their best to preserve the oral teaching of the *Tīrthaṅkaras* in their memory and passed it on to the generations. It was a lifelong laborious pastime, which proved very fascinating; all communities and nations copied the early Jaina allegorists. The oldest compilation of allegories constitutes the Vedas as the sacred literature of the Hindus. The Jewish and the Christian sacred literature are also composed in allegorical style. At first allegory proved very attractive, but the masses insisted on misinterpreting the mythological conceptions, taking them to be real gods and goddesses. The misinformed masses managed to set up a theory of their own concerning their various religions; but they comprise mostly only perversions of the real doctrines of the Science of Salvation.¹

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1. C.R. Jain, *Jainism, Christianity and Science*, The Indian Press, Ltd., Allahabad, 1930, pp. 3-4.

Mahāvīra, the twenty-fourth and the last *Tīrthaṅkara* of Jainism, was known to his contemporary Buddhists by the name *Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta*. This name is composed of two separate epithets, *Nigaṇṭha* and *Nātaputta*, the first of which is religious and the second one secular. He was *nigaṇṭha* (*nirgrantha*) in a literal as well as in a figurative sense : outwardly he was unclothed and inwardly he was free from all worldly bonds and ties. He was *Nātaputta* because he was a scion of *Nāya*, i.e. *Nāta* (*jñātr*) clan of *Kṣatriyas*, in the same manner as the Buddha was called *Sākyaputta* because he was a scion of the *Sākya* clan of the warrior class. In the thirteenth year of his age he was married and had a daughter. The same year he lost his parents, and afterwards with the permission of his elder brother and the authorities of the kingdom, he left his house and family to fulfil his mission of establishing a universal religion of love and amity.

The ascetic life of this "Great Hero" (*mahāvīra*) is described in the Buddhist scriptures thus : "He wandered naked and homeless. In the winter he meditated in the shade, in the heat of summer he seated himself in the scorching sun. Often he drank no water for months. Sometimes he took only every sixth, eighth, tenth, or twelfth meal, and pursued his meditations without cravings."² After twelve years of penance and meditation, he attained omniscience at the age of forty-two, and lived thereafter for thirty years to preach his religion in Northern India.³

He was one of the great teachers of mankind, and through whom the problem of the perfection of man came to be recognized as the highest problem before progressive humanity. All the rules of religious life, which he enjoined, were intended to be a practical aid to the attainment of perfection of the Self. He himself first practiced what he later on preached. The wealth and pomp and power of the world could not buy the goal set before mankind was the blissfulness of the entire being. This happy state to be attained through patience, forbearance, self-denial, forgiveness, humanity, compassion, and consideration, in short, sufferings and sacrifice, love and kindness. If he died, he died to live as an eternal personality.⁴

Mahāvīra, like the Buddha, is included in the heterodox or *Nāstika*

2. Hajime Nakamura, *A Comparative History of Ideas*, Motilal Banarsidass Publisheres Private Limited, Delhi, 1992, p. 173., fn. 5; *Digha-nikāya*, VIII, Vol. I, p. 166.
3. Bimala Churn Law, *Mahāvīra : His Life and Teachings*, Luzac & Co., 46, Great Russell Street, London, W.C. 1, 1937, p. 21.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 54.

group, as he also like the latter does not recognize the Vedas as sacred scriptures, denies the existence of God, maintains that divinity lies potentially in a man, and it is man who reaches the greatest heights of perfection, freedom, bliss through his own efforts. Both attach immense value to Ahimsā or non-violence in moral discipline in general and in conduct in particular, and include truth speaking and non-stealing in the rules of conduct. It is in the field of ethics that there striking similarities and also sharp differences in their preaching. Both accept asceticism in the sense of removal of all desire through strenuous will and effort. But there is an essential and significant difference between the two on the nature and extent of asceticism, the one prescribed by Mahāvīra being of the extreme nature to the extent of even self-mortification. The Buddha, however, advocates the middle path, and is emphatic that self-mortification is incapable of leading to liberation as self-indulgence and thus unworthy of pursuit.⁵

Jainism is a paradigm among the Indian philosophical schools, which prescribe strict and rigid austerities. At first, the ascetic should keep the five vows (*vrata*): (1) not to injure any living being (*a-hiṃsā*); (2) to be truthful (*satya*), i.e. not to lie; (3) not to steal (*a-steya*), i.e. not to take what is not given; (4) to lead a celibate life (*brahma-carya*), i.e. to preserve chastity; and (5) to renounce pleasure in all external things (*a-parigraha*). In the case of the laymen they are nearly the same, the last two being moderated. Of the various virtues to be cultivated by the Jains, non-injury (*a-hiṃsā*) was regarded as the most essential one. Jainism carries the doctrine of non-injury of living creatures to an extreme not otherwise paralleled in Indian religions.⁶

To put in a nutshell, the teachings of Jainism are only this : man is not only a bundle matter in the form of flesh and blood, he is also a soul. In reality, the soul is the man himself; the body is only a prison in which the soul is embodied. All living beings are souls. Souls are immortal. They are composed of a simple substance, which is not matter; but which is found to exist in association with matter and this association is exceedingly harmful for the soul. Thereby it is deprived of its natural attributes in a greater or lesser degree. Its natural attributes include immortality, omniscience or unlimited knowledge, and bliss. If the soul were set free from the clutches of matter, it would enjoy all its natural perfection, and as this will only be attained after the destruction of the causes of the coming together of the soul

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5. Nilima Chakravarty : *Indian Philosophy – the Pathfinders and the System Builders (700 BC to 100 AD)*; Allied Publishers Limited, New Delhi, 1992. pp. 78-79.
 6. Nakamura, op.cit., p. 172.

substance and matter, the latter will never be able to assail it again. Liberated souls are thus set free to enjoy their attributes and perfection forever.⁷

The basic question in Jainism and Buddhism as well as in other traditions is the one pertaining to the condition of the man who has attained the ideal state, as to what will become of him. And this condition has been termed as 'Nirvāṇa'. Often in explicating the term it becomes apparent that the explanations given in the past reflect the personalities of those who held them more faithfully than they represent the ideas of Jainism, Buddhism or other philosophy of life.

When true knowledge dawns, a man attains equanimity (*sammam*) and compassion and friendliness to all. This is liberation (*nirvāṇa*). It is the stupid who do cruel acts and keep tied to the cycle of births and deaths.⁸ Ahimsā both in its negative and positive aspects is instrumental in bringing about liberation. The unbound one lives in accordance with wisdom and restraint and walks free from desire and with conquered sensuality. As a snake casts off its old skin, so is the Brāhmaṇa freed from the bed of pain.⁹

When finally the *jīva* leaves the human body he becomes his own master and is liberated from misery. Without property, without egoism, free from passions and the *āsravas*, he obtains absolute knowledge and reaches the eternal beatitude.¹⁰ The enlightened person is called an *Arhat*, i.e. worthy, and on actual liberation he becomes a *Siddha*, i.e., the perfected soul. Free from the weight of *karma* matter he travels upwards and reaches *Siddhaśilā*, the abode of the perfected being. The state of liberation is freedom from desire and action and also absolute peace. It is freedom from rebirth. *Nirvāṇa* cannot be described in words. All sounds recoil from there.¹¹ Mahāvīra further says that the liberated soul has no shape, no colour, no smell, no taste, no weight, no touch, no rebirth, no attachment. It is neither male, nor female, nor otherwise. He perceives, he knows, but there is no analogy.

7. C.R. Jain, op.cit., p. 1.

8. *Āyāraṅga-Suttam* 1.145 (Edt. Muni Jambuvijaya, Shri Mahavir Jain Vidyalay Edition, Bombay, 1977, p. 44) : *Se hu pannaṇamaṇṭe buddhe āraṇbhovarāe/Sammam etaṇ pasahā/ Jeṇa baṇḍhaṇ vahaṇ ghorāṇ paritāvaṇ ca dāruṇaṇ/*

9. *ibid.*, 2.801, p. 297 : *Se hu pariṇṇāsamayammi vaṭṭati nīrāsase uvaraya mehuṇe care / Bhujamgame juṇṇatayaṇ jahā cae vimuccati se duhasejja māhaṇe //143//*

10. *Uttarā*. 35.2 :

11. *Ācā. Sū* 1.176, p. 56: *Savve sarā niyaṭṭaṇṭi, takkā jattha ṇa vijjati, mati tatha ṇa gahiyā, oe appatihāṇassa khettaṇṇe/*

Its essence is without form (*arūvi sattā*). There is no condition of the unconditioned.¹² Yet, according to Mahāvīra, *Nirvāṇa* is the complete and full, the unobstructed, unimpeded, infinite and supreme, best knowledge and intuition. One who attains liberation is a *Kevalin*, omniscient and comprehending all objects, he knows all conditions of the world, of gods, men and demons; he sees and knows all conditions in the whole world of all living beings.¹³ It is the state of freedom from all types of obscuring *karman*, it is omniscience and infinite bliss.

A soul does not move in a straight line from undeveloped consciousness to a higher stage. Even though born as human being, it can lapse into a lower form of life. It is through continuous effort, practice of righteousness, moral discipline and philosophical enlightenment that one can ascend higher and attain to even godhead.¹⁴

Nirvāṇa or liberation is the final and highest goal. It is the realisation of perfection and omniscience. It can be attained only through personal effort expressed in strict asceticism and rigorous moral discipline. Man cannot depend on anybody, even on God to help him through. Mahāvīra lays great stress on renunciation. All these indicate an individualistic approach. Yet one cannot ignore the humanistic aspect of Mahāvīra's teachings. The very concept of right conduct (*samyak-cāritra*) emphasizes the social aspect of his moral teaching, since conduct has significance only in a man's relation with others, and the five vows (*pañca-mahāvratā*) refer to the correctness of man's dealings with the rest of the world. Mahāvīra explains *Ahiṃsā* as looking upon everybody as one's own self. It is not only a theory with Mahāvīra, he illustrates his humanism in his own life.¹⁵

It is in view of this highest human goal that in Jainism souls have been classed into two sorts : (1) those bound by the subtle body of deeds (*karma*) to the present world, sullied by contact with nonsentient matter, and (2) the perfected (*siddha*), who are at the summit of the universe, enjoying perfect happiness, incorporeal, invisible. Any soul achieving a blameless life becomes a *Paramātmān*, or supreme soul, and avoids reincarnation for a while its reward equals its merit, however, it is born into the flesh again. Only the highest and most perfect spirits, freed from *karma*, could achieve complete release; these were the Arhats, or supreme lords, who lived like deities in some distant

12. *ibid.*, 1.176, p. 57 : *Parīṇṇe, saṇṇe/Uvamā ṇa vijjati/Arūvū sattā/Apadassa padamṇatthi/*

13. *ibid.*, 2.773, p. 277 : *Se bhagavaṇ Arahā jīṇe jāṇe kevali savvaṇṇū savvabhāvadārisi sadevamaṇuyāsuraṇa paṇṇāe jāṇatī.../*

14. Chakravarty : *op.cit.*, p. 74.

15. *ibid.*, pp. 77-78.

and shadowy realm, unable to affect the affairs of men, but happily removed from all chance of rebirth.¹⁶ At any rate, the primary aim of Jainism is the perfection of the soul, disentangling it from *karma*. Jainism is largely ethical in intent rather than metaphysical. *Āsrava* or the forging of the fetter of *karma* around the soul, and *saṃvara* or the prevention of that occurrence constitutes the core of Jain teaching, the rest being only an amplification of these principles.¹⁷

On his enlightenment the Buddha announced I have gained coolness and have attained *nirvāṇa*. To found the kingdom of Truth, I go to the city of Kāśī; I will beat the drum of the immortal (*amata*) in the darkness of the world.¹⁸ He speaks of it as coming of all conformations to an end, the loosening from everything earthly, the extinction of desire, the cessation of longing, and the end. *Nirvāṇa* or the extinguishing, the ideal is perhaps the most controversial concept in the Buddha's thought. Literal meaning of the term '*nirvāṇa*' is extinction as of fire.¹⁹ The Buddha says that everything, including the senses, the body, and the mind, is burning; they are all in flames, The fuel that burns these are passion, desire, hatred or anger and ignorance.²⁰

Some of the prominent features of the Buddha's views on *nirvāṇa* are as follows : It is the annihilation of passion, hatred, stupidity, the annihilation of manifold evil and wrong states of mind.²¹ At times he regards desire or thirst resulting in clinging as the cause of bondage, at other times ignorance (*avidyā*) or taint (*āsrava*), attachment and *karma*. So *nirvāṇa* is the removal or destruction of these.²² Ignorance which is often considered as the primary cause of suffering (*dukkha*) is removed through knowledge variously described as *bodhi*, *saṃbodhi*, *vidyā*, *prajñā*, *jñāna*; it is looked upon as a direct realisation, an intuitive knowledge, and is compared to the dawn of light.²³

16. S. Radhakrishnan, : '*Indian Philosophy*' (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London), vol. I, 1923, pp. 293; 331.

17. Hajime Nakamura, *op.cit.*, pp. 151-152.

18. *Vinaya pitaka* or the Book of Discipline, Vo. IV, Mahāvagga 68; Transl. by I.B. Horner, London, 1951.

19. *Dīgha Nikāya*, or Dialogues of the Buddha, Vols. I-III, Transl. By Rhys Davids, 2.15ff; *Sutta Nipāta* 235.

20. '*Vinaya pitaka* or the Book of Discipline, Vol. IV, Mahāvagga 1.21; Transl. by I.B. Horner, London, 1951.

21. *ibid.*, *Vinaya Piṭaka* 6.31. 6-9.

22. *The Dīgha Nikāya, the Sutta Nipāta, and the Aṅguttara Nikāya* mention *bhavanīrodha*, *rāgaṅkhaṇa*, *āsavānāṃ parikkhaṇa*, etc.

23. Chakravarty : *op.cit.*, p. 111.

Nirvāṇa as all the followers of the Buddha, who has, have accepted the *summum bonum* compared it to the expiring flame which has no more any hay or wood to burn. The mind released is like the extinction of a flame; it is the extinction of the fires of lust, hatred and ignorance; and *Nirvāṇa* has been regarded as *anidarśana* and *ananta*.²⁴ When one has attained enlightenment, he is free from all errors, free from desire and clinging, no new fetters of *karma* bind him, his mind is filled with wisdom, peace, calm and compassion.²⁵ Such a man is called an *arhant* or *arhat* the holy one. This is *nirvāṇa* attained in this life itself. Though the liberated lives in this world and leads a life of activity, the pains and pleasures of this world do not affect him. His life is illumined all his remaining life with this experience, and he knows things as they are, is saved from fear and grief. This may be compared to the State of liberated while alive (*jīvaṃmukti*) accepted by Vedānta, the Bhagavadgītā, and by certain thinkers of other systems of thought.²⁶

This *nirvāṇa* is distinguished from the *parinirvāṇa*, i.e. emancipation with the disintegration of the body, i.e., death of the *arhat*. Vedānta raises the question as to what maintains life in the delivered being after enlightenment, till the moment of death comes, since the will to live has ceased, but the momentum of antecedent *karma* or action suffices to carry on the individual life, as a potter's wheel continues to revolve for some time even after the potter has stopped moving it with the momentum received earlier.²⁷ *Parinirvāṇa* is also called *nirupādhiśeṣa nibbānadhātu*, i.e., extinction not only of desire and of the fires of passion, but also of the *upādhi* and of the fivefold aggregate.²⁸

It is the Buddha's silence over the nature of various concepts that is primarily responsible for diverse and sometimes opposing interpretations offered by his followers and later by eminent scholars of the east and the west.²⁹ The Buddha himself usually speaks of the self or the perfect one or of *nirvāṇa* in negative terms. Thus, he calls it 'an unborn, unoriginated, uncreated, uninformed'³⁰ and further adds 'there would be no possible exit from the world of the born, originated,

24. *Dīgha-Nikāya*, 2.15; *Majjhima Nikāya*, 72.

25. Chakravarty : *op.cit.*, p. 111.

26. *Ibid.*

27. *Mahānidāna Sutta*, 36.32.

28. Chakravarty : *op.cit.*, p. 111.

29. *ibid.*, p. 111; 140, f.n. 137.

30. Oldenberg : *Buddha* (ref. from *Udāna*).

created, formed if there were not that unborn, unoriginated, uncreated, uninformed. His explanation of the Tathāgata, i.e. the one that is of that nature, or the perfect one, implies that it is not an ordinary being, its nature, is such that no predication can give full exhaustive description of its nature. Surely this does not mean non-being; it implies something positive. But as in the case of self (*attā*), the Buddha speaks about *nirvāṇa* also mostly in negative terms or keeps silent. This has led the thinkers particularly in the west call him an agnostic on these issues. *Nirvāṇa* is in fact conceived as so different from the material world, 'without beginning, without end'; a domain over which the law of causality has no power that it is called Nothing. What appears to be reasonable is that since *nirvāṇa* is conceived as a goal, an ideal or the *summum bonum* by the Buddha, he must have understood by it something positive, something worth attaining, though he must have also grasped the difficulty of man giving an exhaustive and adequate expression to it with his finitude and limitations.³¹

The Non-self (*anattā*) theory in early Buddhism does not mean that the Buddha completely denied the significance of the self. On the contrary, he always admitted the significance of the self in a practical and moral sense as the subject of actions. The practical postulate in early Buddhism makes it clear that "one who knows the self" was highly esteemed therein.³² The virtue of relying upon oneself was also stressed considerably. In his own case he declared : "I have taken refuge to myself."³³ The Buddha taught Ānanda, his disciple, in his last sermon : "Be you lamps to yourselves. Be you a refuge to yourself. Betake yourself to no external refuge. Hold fast to the Truth as a lamp. Hold fast as a refuge to the Truth. Don't look for refuge to any one besides yourself."³⁴

According to the Buddha, bad actions hurt oneself.³⁵ The evil done by oneself, self-begotten, self-bred, crushes the foolish, as a diamond breaks a precious stone.³⁶ The foolish man bears fruit to his own

31. Chakravarty : *op.cit.*, pp. 111-112.

32. *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, 4, p. 113; *Dīgha Nikāya*, 3, 252.

33. *Dīgha Nikāya*, 2, p. 120 *gāthā*: *katama me saranam attano*.

34. *Mahāparinibbāna-suttaṃ* : Edited, with Hindi Translation, by Bhikṣu Kittimā of Barmī Bauddha Vihara, published by Ū. Cozan, Akyāb (Burma), 1941, 77, p. 51 : *Tasmat ih', Ānanda! attā-dīpā viharatha attā-saraṇā anañña-saraṇā/Dhamma-dīpā dhamma-saraṇā anañña-saraṇā/*

35. *Dhammapada*, 163:*asādhūni attano ahitāni ca/*

36. *ibid.*, 161 : *Attanā'va kataṃ pāpaṃ attajaṃ anasambhavaṃ/ Abhimanthati dummedhaṃ vajiraṃ 'va' smamayaṃ maṇiṃ/*

destruction,³⁷ because he whose wickedness is very great brings himself down to that state where his enemy wishes him to be, as a creeper does with a tree which it surrounds.³⁸ In Buddhism a man who is devoted to religious practice is extolled as living his life void of cravings, perfected, cool, in blissful enjoyment, his whole self ennobled.³⁹

While deliberating on the nature of *nirvāṇa*, we must not ignore the fact that in early Buddhism two kinds of self were admitted. The one is the self of ordinary daily life; a practical distinction man is led to make by the inherited concepts of language. This ordinary self has to be subdued, for man has a tendency to attach linguistic entities to feelings, which can result in such feelings, now having been given a name, being thought to be a self; and this may well be ignorance which must be overcome. The other is a latent self was called "the lord of self."⁴⁰ This clarifications should make it possible to see through the apparent contradiction in Buddhism brought about by multiple usages of the term '*attā*' or self, and in addition facilitate explanation of *Nirvāṇa* as "taking refuge to the truth of Self of one's own." Thus, one must understand that the Buddhist concepts of *anattā*, or non-self, and the *attā*, or the "true self" are not at odds with each other. On the contrary, the former is one of the Buddha's aids to understanding the latter. Through following the Buddha's path and thoroughly understanding the phenomenal nature of existence and awareness that they are altogether empty of permanent self, one finds that his true self is an expression by the Buddha of his confidence that the unobstructed events have the moral character of universal norms (*dharma*) and coincide perfectly with man's duty.⁴¹

The Buddhist life of the Perfect One is difficult for ordinary people to fathom. The ideal situation is not something concrete, or something sizable. It lies only in proceeding towards the aim of the ideal. Proceed a mile, the ideal lies further on. Go on two miles, it lies further none the less, like a shadow projected on the way forward. The ideal situation always lies in the direction of putting forth effort to the goal, and the goal should be always elevated; since effort towards the goal falls under

37. *ibid.*, 164 : *Yo sāsanaṃ arahataṃ ariānaṃ dhammajūvitaṃ/
Parikosati dummedho diṭṭhiṃ nissāya pāpikaṃ/
Phalāni kaṭṭhakasseva attahaññāya phullati//*

38. *ibid.*, 162 : *Yassaccantadussilaṃ māluvā sālami votataṃ/
Karoti so tathattānaṃ yo'taṃ icchatī diso//*

39. *Dīgha-Nikāya*, 3, pp. 232-233.

40. *Dhammapada*, 160.

41. Hajime Nakamūra, *op.cit.*, pp. 271-272.

the doctrine of *karma* the force of which persists for more than one existence. The man who has attained deliverance may continue his actions in this world, for actions do not defile him. He naturally works for the welfare of others. And, that is why he is esteemed as an *Arhat* or *Buddha* superior in the hierarchy to all other Perfect Ones, and other senior ones like an *Āyariya*, *Uvajjhāya*, and even an ordinary *Sāhu*, all of whom serve as but milestones on the path of deliverance.

Buddha's negative answers to many philosophical issues is not essentially different from Yājñavalkya's '*neti*', '*neti*'. Both accept that the state of release, whether it is called *mokṣa* or *nirvāṇa*, is incomprehensible. However, in spite of this admission, the Upaniṣadic thinkers call the ultimate reality *Brahman* or *Ātman* and describe it as unity, as *sat-cid-ānanda*. The Buddha seems to have maintained a logically more consistent position in this regard as he does not concentrate on such issues. Does not formulate any metaphysical or epistemological theories of one reality or many, of realism, idealism, etc.⁴² Since the Buddha maintained silence on queries relating to the origin of the world, or the true nature or essence of man, or on the issues of freedom, immortality, the unconditioned, etc., he has been regarded as agnostic by some, nihilist by others. Even though it is admitted that the unconditioned is beyond human comprehension, desire to know it and unravel the mysteries of nature is perhaps an inevitable aspect of man's intellectual curiosity and wonder. And yet one cannot underestimate the Buddha's ideas. Besides things that Indian thinkers usually regard as causes of bondage, the Buddha is the first one to consider holding a particular view as also the source of bondage and suffering. The Buddha's position in relation to diverse systems of thought that are referred to as the Buddhist schools of thought is comparable to the relation of the Upaniṣadic thought currents with the divergent schools of thought like the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāṃkhya-Yoga, and the Vedānta.⁴³

42. Chakravarty : *op.cit.*, p. 132.

43. *ibid.*, p. 134.

MAHĀVĪRA IN SCULPTURAL ART-TAMIL NADU

DR. A. EKAMBARANATHAN

Jaina art in Tamilnadu is noted for its simplicity and stark reality. Images of the *Tirthaṅkaras* and their attendant deities came to be commissioned on the over-hanging boulders of Jaina caverns and consecrated in structural temples since early medieval times. Generally, they are represented alone or in groups. Among them, Vardhamāna Mahāvīra, the twenty fourth *Tirthaṅkara*, occupies an important place and possesses certain distinct iconographical features. The popularity of the worship of Mahāvīra is attested to by a large number of temples dedicated to him, besides the numerous rock cut and independent sculptures. The present study brings to light as to how Mahāvīra has been portrayed in the sculptural art of Tamilnadu from an early period down to the modern times.

Absence of early Sculptures of Mahāvīra

Although Mahāvīra was considered as an object of veneration long before the advent of Christian era, his sculptures are absent in Tamilnadu till the end of the 6th century A.D. The Saṅgam classics of the early centuries of the Christian era do not contain any reference to Mahāvīra at all, even though Jaina principles are interwoven in many of their verses. Among the twin epics, the *Śilappadikāram* glorifies the characteristics of the *Jina* in general, but does not specifically refer to Mahāvīra.¹ In all probability, iconic worship of Mahāvīra received very little importance among the early adherents of Jainism and hence, the early literary compositions are silent about him. The absence of sculptural representations prior to the 7th century also corroborates the above view. Besides, archaeological spade work carried out in different parts of Tamilnadu till date have also not brought to light any icon of *Tirthaṅkaras*. Thus, literary, archaeological and sculptural evidence for iconic worship of Mahāvīra are conspicuously absent in Tamilnadu till about the end of the 6th century A.D.

Neo-Jainism and Iconic Development

Jainism received a temporary setback in the beginning of the 7th century A.D., consequent to the rapid growth of brahmanism fostered

1. *Śilappadikāram*, 10 : 176-191.

through the *bhakti*-movement spear-headed by the Śaiva Nayanmars and Vaiṣṇava Alvars on the one hand and the large scale brahmanical temple building activities of the Pallava and early Pāṇḍya Kings on the other. However, soon Jainism recovered from adversities and began to possess a fresh lease of life by adjusting itself to the changing circumstances and accommodating certain elements from brahmanism. In this process of assimilation and adjustments, neo-Jainism gave importance to iconic and ritualistic worship of the *Tīrthaṅkaras* and their attendant deities in order to make their religion colourful and, at the same time, to counter balance the growth of brahmanism. As a sequel to this, images of Mahāvīra also came to be carved on the over hanging boulders of the already existing Jaina caves. Simultaneously, structural temples dedicated to him were also built in villages, the earliest of which existed at Tirupparuttikunram near Kāñchipuram and at Valuvur near Vandavāsi, the former enshrined a stucco image and the latter a stone figure of Mahāvīra. These early images are rather simple and archaic, as iconographic standardisation had not taken place by then. The Vardhamāna temple at Tirupparuttikunram owes its origin even to the 6th century A.D. and the Pallava king Siṃhaviṣṇu (556 A.D.) made some land donations infavour of the *Munisaiṅgha* attached to the temple.²

Stone Sculptures of Mahāvīra

Mahāvīra is portrayed in sculptural art either all alone or along with other *Tīrthaṅkaras*. In the second category, his figures are sculpted in a group of two, three, four and rarely five. Such group sculptures are carved on boulders or on the facade of caves. Single sculptures, on the other hand, may be either rock-cut or loose images.

The earliest known sculpture of Mahāvīra, dated to 7th century A.D., recovered from Valuvur, is now under worship in the Jaina temple at Venkurnram near Vandavāsi. It is a low relief shown seated in *dhyāna* posture, having a slender body, flexible arms, loosely placed legs and surmounted by a *trichatra* resembling three discs kept one over the other. Its eyes are oblique, nose flat and lips protuberant. Chauri-bearers and creeper designs are conspicuous by their absence in this archaic specimen. Being the earliest image, anatomical perfection had not been achieved in modelling it. This icon has been worshipped by local Jainas as an image of Mahāvīra for well over a century.

Next in point of time, that is to say, 8th century sculptures of Mahāvīra are found at Pañchapāṇḍavamālai, Karuppaṅkunru and

2. ARE, A-10/1958-59.

Thiyagadurgam. The Pañchapāṇḍavamālai rock-cut temple which came under Jaina occupation in the 8th century A.D., was provided with a miniature depiction of Mahāvīra above its ledge.³ It is also in seated meditative posture, but some improvement could be observed in its modelling of physical features. Like the previous specimen, it also has *trichatra* as the only accessory motif.

A medium-sized low relief of Mahāvīra is carved on a boulder adjacent to the Jaina cavern at Karuppankunru near Madurāntakam. Seated in *ardhaparyāṅkāśana* with a slender and flat body, the image is accompanied by *camaradaris* and adorned with a halo and triple umbrella, thinly executed above the head.

With the above group of two rock-cut images, may be added a loose sculpture carved on a conical shaped slab, now housed inside a Jaina cave at Thiyagadurgam near Kallakurichi. It is also depicted in *ardhaparyāṅkāśana* with a flat body and flexible limbs. Although some refinement could be seen on its facial features, the arms are flexible, fingers of the toe are spread out and the *trichatra* is discular. Apart from these, flanking chauris, flame-issuing *prabhāvatī* and front-facing lions on the pedestal are additionally met with in this sculpture. Stylistically, it may be slightly later in point of time than the above specimen and be dated to the latter half of the 8th century A.D.

All the aforesaid 8th century icons of Mahāvīra have the head tonsured, body flat, limbs flexible and *trichatra* preponderantly discular. In the absence of lion emblem, their identity with Mahāvīra depends upon their proximity with that of Ādinātha sculptures⁴ and the prevailing local belief. The two rock-cut images are sculpted not far away from Ādinātha, while the loose sculptures are worshipped as Mahāvīra by the local Jains.

Under the patronage of the early Pāṇḍyas as well as Cholas, a large number of rock-cut images of Mahāvīra came to be commissioned in the 9th century A.D. at Jaina centres like Eruvadi, Kālugumālai, Chitalar, Melapparaipatti, Muttupatti, Kilavalavu, Anaimālai, Chettipodavu, Pechchipallam, Uttamapalayam, Sittannavasal, Ammachartram, Tirakkol, Tirunātharkunru, Chittamur, Chalapāṇḍipuram and Vallimālai. Single representations, among them,

3. A. Ekambaranathan, *Jaina Temples of Tondainadu*, (Tamil), p. 44.

4. At Karuppankunru, Ādinātha sculpture is carved at a distance of 12 feet from that of Mahāvīra. At Pañchapandavamālai, Ādinātha is carved above the natural cave while Mahāvīra is seen above the near by rock cut temple.

of Mahāvīra adorn the ascetic abodes at Chettipodavu, Chitaral, Tenimālai, Alagarmālai, Cholāpāṇḍipuram and Vallimālai.

The Chettipodavu specimen, (near Madurai) is a bold relief shown in *ardhaparyāṅkāśana* with a well-built body, having broad shoulders. Its smiling countenance, flaming aureola around the head, charming chauri bearers and Vidyādhara in great adoration and triple umbrella with a finial atop are aesthetically of a high order exhibiting the best traditions of the 9th century Pāṇḍya art. The bold and sturdy conception of its physique and horizontality of shoulders are true reflections of Mahāvīra's great strength. It is these qualities that sometimes help in identifying sculptures of Mahāvīra from that of others from 9th century onwards.

The cavern in the Āndimālai hillock at Cholapāṇḍipuram has a seated figure of Mahāvīra carved on the over-hanging boulder.⁵ Its stout body and horizontal shoulders reveal its identity. It was known as "*Piṇḍikadavul*", i.e., one who pursued austerities underneath the Aśoka tree. In 952 A.D., Siddhavādavan, a Chedi chieftain, granted the village Panaippadi for the conduct of worship to this Mahāvīra figure.⁶

A defaced figure of Mahāvīra seated on a throne with a *trichatra* above the head finds place on the eastern face of the Vallimālai cave. Its identity is resolved by the presence of a two armed yakṣī, believed to be Siddhayika, on the right side of the cave.⁷ These images exhibit the Western Gaṅga style of the 9th century A.D.

The finest single depiction of Mahāvīra adorns the facade of a huge cave on the southern slope of Vallimālai hillock.⁸ It is a life-size masterpiece, shown majestically seated in meditative pose and surmounted by a triple umbrella set within a conically cut niche. Its button-studded arrangement of the hair style, smiling countenance, massive body with smooth flowing contour of muscles, half closed eyes suggesting contemplative calmness etc., are splendid and spectacular and illustrate the immaculate workmanship of a master-craftsman.

Sculptures of Mahāvīra commissioned along with Ādinātha are found in places like Eruvadi, Muttupatti, Melapparaipatti,

5. P.B. Desai, *Jainism in South India and some Jaina Epigraphs*, p. 49.

6. *ARE*, 252/1936-37.

7. I.K. Sharma, *Western Ganga Temples of Karnataka*, pp. 187-188 (I.K. Sharma's identification of the Yakṣī with Siddhayika is not certain).

8. K.R. Srinivasan in *Jaina Art and Architecture*, Vol. II, p. 227.

Uttamapalayam and Vallimālai. In this group, both are seated side by side with some difference in their physical composition. Eruvadi in Tirunelveli district has a rectangular panel containing miniature depictions of Ādinātha and Mahāvīra seated side by side in *dhyaṇa* posture. Iconographically, both are more or less similar except for the stout physique of Mahāvīra. Land grants were made for conducting worship to these images consecrated by the renowned recluse Ajjanandi in the 9th century A.D.⁹ The low hillock at Melapparaipatti near Koilpatti has also similar icons of Ādinātha and Mahāvīra, but are badly damaged owing to weathering of rock.

The twin rock-cut sculptures from Muttuppatti and Uttamapalayam in Madurai district are, no doubt, masterpieces of the 9th century Pāṇḍya art. At Muttuppatti, the two *Jīnas* are sculpted side by side in deeply cut niches, the former being rectangular while the latter with a curvilinear top. Mahāvīra, in this group, is shown seated in meditative posture with a massive body and horizontal shoulders. *Chamaradaris*, flaming *prabha*, and creeper design are similar in both sculptures. The difference between them lies in the sturdy nature of Mahāvīra's physique, horizontality of his shoulders, projecting triple umbrella above his head and even the shape of the niche. A definite attempt is, thus, made to differentiate Mahāvīra from that of Ādinātha in sculptural art, consequent to non-adoption of respective cognizances of the Tirthaṅkaras. The above images were commissioned by Māganandi Bhaṭṭārāka for the merit of the inhabitants of Kuyilkudi village.¹⁰

The lower cave at Vallimālai has more or less identical bold reliefs of the two Tirthaṅkaras, exhibiting the Western Gaṅga style of art. Contrary to the usual pattern, these images do not possess *prabhāvali*, *trichatra* and creeper design. A pair of miniature *camaradaris*, however, flank them at shoulder level. Besides, the whole group is flanked by Mātāṅga yakṣa and Ambikā yakṣī. In this composition also Mahāvīra's physique is sturdier than that of Ādinātha. Lithic records attribute these figures to the reign of the Western Gaṅga king Rājamalla II (877-907 A.D.).¹¹

Rock-cut sculptures of Mahāvīra in a group of three Tirthaṅkaras find place at Sittannavasal, Chitalar and Kalugumālai. The celebrated Sittannavasal rock-cut temple contains in its sanctum three seated figures of Tirthaṅkaras, surmounted by triple umbrellas. Although all

9. ARE, 603-605/1915.

10. *Ibid.*, 62/1910.

11. *Ibid.*, 91/1889.

the three are identical, the last in the group represents Mahāvīra, as he is generally assigned the last place in group sculptures.

At Chitalar, Mahāvīra is sculpted between Pārśvanātha and Ambikā yakṣī. Here, the tradition of placing Mahāvīra next to Pārśva, as of the hierarchy of *Tirthaṅkaras*, is followed. His figure is portrayed majestically in *dhyāna* posture with a conical shaped *trichatra* above the head. Lion carvings found on its pedestal have been mistaken for the *lāñchana* of Mahāvīra by some scholars.¹²

Among the "three-in-one" panels, the splendid specimen comes from Kalugamālai, where Mahāvīra is accommodated within a huge niche. He is elegantly portrayed in meditative pose on a *siṃhāsana* and flanked by gracefully standing chauri bearers and flying Vidyādharas. Its tonsured head, receding forehead, descending earlobes, half-closed eyes, smiling countenance and smooth flowing muscles of the body mirror the rich heritage of early Pāṇḍya art.

Mahāvīra in a group of five sculptures are found at Chettipodavu, Tirakkol and Chittamur. Chettipodavu has low reliefs of three *Tirthaṅkaras* flanked by two yakṣīs, equal in size. Among the *Jinas*, Mahāvīra, occupying the last place, is sculpted with a muscular body than the others. Accessory features like *prabha*, *trichatra* and *camaradaris* are thinly executed in this panel.

The oblong panel in the Malainātha temple at Chittamur contains sculptures of Gommaṭa, Pārśvanātha, Ādinātha, Mahāvīra and Ambikā yakṣī. Here also Mahāvīra occupies the place next to Ādinātha. Besides, Mahāvīra possesses a sturdy physique and horizontal shoulders, which reveal his identity. This sculptured group was consecrated during the reign of Āditya Chola I.¹³ Some endowment made for lighting a lamp before these images, when fell into disuse was revived in 888 A.D., by Āditya's Queen.¹⁴

In the case of Tirakkol near Vandavāsi, all the images are of the *Tirthaṅkaras* carved around a boulder near the Jaina Cave. In this group, Mahāvīra is sculpted at last, facing south and with the usual iconographical features. Provisions were made to light perpetual lamps before these images during the Chola period.¹⁵

Apart from the aforesaid 8th and 9th centuries sculptures of Mahāvīra, isolated images of a single *Tirthaṅkara*, datable between

12. H. Sarkar in *Jaina Art and Architecture*, Vol. II, pp. 231-232.

13. *ARE*, 201/1902

14. *Ibid.*, 203/1902.

15. *Ibid.*, 278/1916.

10th and 13th centuries, found through out Tamilnadu, are generally believed to be depictions of Mahāvīra. This popular belief cannot be summarily rejected as most of them have sturdy physique and horizontal contour of shoulders. Invariably, these are in *ardhaparyāṅkāśana* and contain the usual paraphernalia. Among such examples, those from Puliyan, Chettipatti, Tirunarungondai and Tiirumālai deserve special mention. The specimen from Puliyan, now on display in the Madurai Museum, represents Mahāvīra seated in *ardhaparyāṅkāśana* and flanked by *camaradaris* on either side. His head is surrounded by a *makara toraṇa*—like *prabhāvali* and topped by a triple umbrella. Lovely creeper designs fill up the space above. Its muscular body, broad shoulders, squarish face etc., reflect the 10th century style of the Cholas. The Chettipatti sculpture, also of the same age, is simple and devoid of all accessory motifs. Besides, it bears a smiling countenance in contrast to the calm appearance of the Puliyan image. At Tirumalai, Mahāvīra is shown seated in penance under the shade of a pipal tree with a flaming arch around his head and a *trichatra* above. Ornamental decorations on the triple umbrella and on the person of chauri bearers are minute and elaborate. This icon of Mahāvīra carries the best art tradition of the 13th century A.D.

The growing popularity of the worship of Mahāvīra is also echoed in literary compositions like *Jivakacintāmaṇi*. Jivaka, the hero of the work, is said to have offered worship to an image of Vardhamāna installed in a temple.¹⁶ Besides, the renowned ascetic Ajjanandi is stated to have attained *nirvāṇa* by meditating upon the lotus feet of Lord Mahāvīra.¹⁷ Iconographic details of the *Jina* are also given in many poems of this devotional literature.¹⁸

Fresh impetus was given to the worship of Mahāvīra from about the 15th century A.D., the beginning of which is also mirrored in *Śrīpurāṇam*, a Tamil rendering of the Sanskrit *Mahāpurāṇa*. It vividly picturises Mahāvīra's birth to Siddhārtha and Priyakaraṇī, his *janmābhīṣeka* performed by Indra, his encounters with god Saṅghama and Śulapāṇi and finally his attainment of *parinirvāṇa* at Pāvāpuri (pawaya).¹⁹ In order to gain popular appeal to the story of Mahāvīra, an interesting episode is highlighted in some poems. Accordingly, when his *janmābhīṣeka* was done by Indra on the summits of mount Meru, a few drops of water entered into the baby's nostrils, causing him

16. *Jivaka-cintāmaṇi*, verses, 3007-3011, 3552-3555.

17. *Ibid.*, verse, 409.

18. *Ibid.*, verse, 3010-3011.

19. *Śrīpurāṇam*, pp. 619-622.

sneeze violently. As a result, the devas who assembled on the mountain were thrown out in different directions. Realising the strength of the baby, the devas paid their obeisance to him and endowed him the name “*Virasvāmī*.”²⁰ Apart from this, the *upasargas* undergone by Mahāvīra during the course of his penance are also elaborately dealt with in the work.

Coinciding with the establishment of the *Jinakāñchi Mutt* at Chittamur in the 15th or 16th century A.D., there was also a spurt in building temples dedicated to Mahāvīra. Consequently, Jaina centres like Tirumālai, Tachchambadi, Tayanur, Tellaru, Tondur, Peravur, Mullippattu, Valaipandal, Vilankadupakkam, Veliyanallur, Venpakkam, Esakulattur, Kattumalaiyanur, Kilvilivanam, Koilampundi etc., came to possess Mahāvīra temples, which are under worship even at present. In all these temples, the main deity is a bold relief of Mahāvīra with the usual iconographical features. Besides, bronze images of Mahāvīra are also commonly met with in these temples, which are taken out in procession during festivals. These icons become very stiff and have angular profiles of the body and limbs. Their eyes are bulging, nose is sharp and lips are deep cut. Decorations on *cāmaradaris*, *prabhāvali* and triple umbrella are more pronounced in them. Even the earlier stucco figures of Mahāvīra as at Tirupparuttikunram, Karantai and Tirumalai, after their renovations in the 15th century and thereafter, exhibit these rigid physical features.

A majority of the stone and metal icons of Mahāvīra since the 17th or 18th century, contains the lion emblem carved on their pedestals, the practice of which is continued till date.

The events connected with the life story of Mahāvīra attracted the attention of painters also. As a result, the ceiling of the Saṅgītaṁḍapa of the Vardhamāna temple at Tirupparuttikunram was executed with two layers of paintings, one in the 14th century and the other in the 17th century. The earlier paintings, now extant only on the eastern part of the ceiling, depict the birth of Vardhamāna to Priyākarāṇī, his *janmābhīṣeka* performed by Saudharmendra, god Saṅghama as a snake entwining a tree, Vardhamāna subducing it and finally a beautiful illustration of his *samavasaraṇa*.²¹

In the second layer of painting, the life story of Mahāvīra is picturised in twenty seven panels and each one contains a label mentioning the event. In the first panel, the dream of Priyākarāṇī, its

20. *Ibid.*, pp. 619-620.

21. T.N. Ramachandran, *Tirupparuttikkunram and its Temples*, pp. 161-163.

interpretation by a *Purohita*, birth of Vardhamāna and his *janmābhīṣeka* are painted. These are followed by Saṅghama as a serpent entwining a tree, frightening Vardhamāna and his playmates, its subjugation and Saṅghama worshipping the brave prince.

The next group represents Vardhamāna renouncing his princely life, undergoing *dīkṣā*, pursuing austerities, receiving food from the king of Kulagrāma and getting enlightenment. In the concluding part, the *samavasaraṇa* of Mahāvīra is elegantly painted, around which are seen *bhavyas*, celestials, and dancing nymphs.²²

These paintings are more or less in conformity with the textual descriptions found in *Kriyākalaḥḥam* of the 17th century, which narrate events connected with the life of Mahāvīra from his birth to *nirvāṇa* in twenty five *ślokas*.²³

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 117-132.

23. *Kriyākalaḥḥam*, ślokas, 259-277.

INFLUENCE OF BHAGAVĀN MAHĀVĪRA'S TEACHINGS ON TAMILS

PROF. S. THANYA KUMAR

Jainism, the religion of Ahimsā, flourished in Tamilnadu as early as 3rd B.C. The antiquity of Jainism is established with literary and epigraphical evidences. But the Jains believe that their religion in this part is much older than the available evidences show. There is a reference to the highest religious ideal of Jainism in the earliest Tamil work *THOLKAPPIAM*. It speaks about the annihilation of Karmas and attainment of omniscience, "Lord is one who liberates his soul from the shackles of karma and becomes the omniscient self."

This is the religious ideal of the religion of Ahimsā.

The migration of Jainism under the leadership of Ācārya Bhadrabāhu gave an additional vigour to the non-violence cult which was the prominent and the dominant faith with the people in the south. The Jaina Preachers enriched the Tamil language and culture. The tolerant Tamil society entertained all faiths. The Bhakti movement which gained upperhand had led to the prosecution of the Jains. Jainism which was once the predominant faith in Tamil country by 9th cent became restricted to a few pockets in the districts of North Arcot, South Arcot, Chinglepet, and Tanjore. There are monuments and inscriptions in the southern and western districts of Tamilnadu. It is generally claimed that Saint Jñānasambanadar sang away Jainism out of Tamilnadu. It is not his songs but prosecution with the help of members of Royal family that led to disappearance of Jaina saints and conversion of śrāvakas into the Śaiva fold. This is further aggravated by the anti-Jaina propagation of Alwars—the champions of Vaiṣṇavism.

Influence of Mahāvīra's Teachings

The meticulous and militant efforts of Champions of Bhakti movement had not eradicated the principles of Ahimsā championed by the Bhagavān Mahāvīra and his disciples. The principles of Ahimsā and the correlated ethical conduct have percolated the Tamil society. Even now one can easily find them among the Tamils which indicate the influence of Bhagavān Mahāvīra.

Vegetarianism

One of the foremost Jaina principles that has rooted deeply in Tamil Society is vegetarianism. Meat eating was uniformly condemned by all. The sobriety of the mind is influenced by the purity of the food. One of the famous Tamil poets of the 19th century Thiru. V. Ka. has pointed out "The highest stage of not eating meat is Jainism."

The vegetarian food, which is presently called "Śaiva food" in olden days referred to as "Aarugāthā food" — the food of the Jains. Even now in Ceylon it is called by this old name. The Tamils who acquired meat eating as a secondary habit, avoid it on the important religious festival days. Generally the original customs and practices of a society are reflected in the festivals. Most of the customs and practices not observed by the people in their day to day life are observed at least on festival days. This points out the fact that the Tamils influenced by the religion of Ahimsā were all vegetarians.

Animal Sacrifice

In ancient Tamilnadu even the hunters offered only millets and honey to their deities. But later on due to misguidance animals were sacrificed to appease minor deities. This cruel act of Tamils was condemned by the Jains from the beginning. Ancient Tamil literature contains Kāvyaas that are composed on this subject (Nilakeśi, Yaśodharakāvyam, Jīvasambothanai).

Jainism condemned it from pre-historic days. This fact is further supported by the fact that in Tamilnadu the "South Indian Humanitarian League" a society formed by the Jains and others spearheaded the move to bring in legislation banning animal sacrifices in temples. Late C.S. Mallinātha Jain and Late T.S. Sreepal, both Tamil Jains, carried out wide publicity condemning the animal sacrifice. Late T.S. Sreepal was called "Jīvabandhu" for his services. All fair-minded Tamils irrespective of their religious affiliations helped for this just cause and to-day animal sacrifice is legally banned in Tamilnadu temples. Thus in Tamilnadu Jain influence bid-good bye to this barbaric practice.

Social Customs

There are a number of social customs peculiar to the Jains that find their place among Tamils irrespective of their religious belief. Jainism preaches to avoid hot discussions and hilarious conversation and rively on the dinning table. This is to avoid physiological effects that follow. Conversation and discussions while eating affects one's digesting capacity and there is every possibility for suffocation.

Avoiding taking food after sunset is yet another influence of the Jains of Tamils. Even now some saivaites in Tirunelveli district do not take food at night.

Festivals like Dīpāvali, Śivarātri and Sarasvatī pūja are introduced by the Jains among Tamils.

Karma

One of the important principles of Jainism is the Karma theory. In ancient Tamil literature there are references to Karma theory of the Jains. In PURANANOORU, a Sanga Tamil work, there is a poem that reflects the Jaina Karma theory :

“As the raft moves along the current of the river
So the Soul along the fate”

“Evil and good are not given by others”
(results from our own activities)

When Tamils were exposed to faith that approved of atonements, the ethics and self confidence of Tamils deteriorated. Tamils were duped by a group of people that they can cast away the effects of their bad deeds by the offerings to the deities.

Religious Tolerance

The Syādvāda or Anekāntavāda also had a profound influence on Tamils. The religious tolerance widely prevalent in Tamil Society is the echo of the Syādvāda. The Jaina theory that every statement or view is neither fully correct nor wrong taught the Tamils to develop tolerance and respect others' views even if they are enemies.

The Jaina author review only the views of other faiths and never touch personalities associated with the faiths. This had its effects and Tamils developed religious tolerance.

Parimita Parigraha

Parimita Parigraha is yet another virtue endowed upon Tamils by the Jains. Though Jainism does not restrict one's earnings beyond one's need, it condemns its accumulation in one hand. While enthusiastically working in his own field of occupation whatever accrues to him beyond his self imposed limit must be set apart for the benefit of the whole society. For this Jainism advocated 'Caturvidha Dāna'. These dānas are not restricted to any particular community. To give alms without caste distinction by Tamils is a legacy of Jaina thinking. This principle is being dealt in detail by the ancient Tamil works, of which Thirukural is the foremost.

"The wealth that is acquired by the householder by toil and effort must set apart for helping those that are fit to be recipients." (212)

"Share your meal with the needy. Protect every living being. This is the chief of all the moral precepts formulated by those well-versed in scriptures." (322)

Thirukural is a scale of Jaina influence on Tamils. It is the social expression of Bhagavān Mahāvīra's teaching.

Equality

When Tamils were suppressed on the basis of cast and creed Jainism advocated equality. Ancient Jaina Tamil works reflect this. Some of them go to the extent of condemning Varṇāśrama Dharma based on caste system.

Jainism infused self-confidence and self-respect in Tamils who were isolated from the main stream of life. Jainism points out that it is the conduct and character of an individual that are important." One's birth in a particular caste or community has no relevance. When Tamils were suppressed on the basis of caste, Jaina thinking created confidence in them. Arugalacheppu, a Tamil work, says.

"Even a low casteman, if possesses right faith, is divine."

In another Tamil work it is stated that

"All are equal in birth and differ in their excellence by their profession"

These Jaina works and Lord Mahāvīra's preaching instilled in Tamils self-confidence and forced those who preached caste differences special status based on birth to a particular caste, to recognize them and accept the social equality.

Education

The response to education by Tamils without any caste difference is yet another influence of the Jains. The Jains taught all people without caste or sex difference. Jaina ascetics taught children all aspects of education. The centres of learning are called Pallis. The term palli refers to the abodes of Jain Munis. Even today the school in Tamilnadu are known as Pallis. From this one can judge the influence in the field of education. The children before they start their lessons pay homage to the Siddhas. Every child would say "Namostu Siddham". This was followed even in Karnataka where the children say "Siddham Namah".

This obeisance to the Siddhas was a secular prayer in those days which, later on, lost significance. But the term Palli still remains.

The Jains and Jaina ascetics were responsible for the enrichment of Tamil literature. They popularised palmscript writing and literary activities.

“Jains had been great students and copyists of books”¹

“It was through the fostering care of the Jains that the South seems to have been inspired with new ideals and literature enriched with new forms and expressions.”²

The contribution of the Jains to Tamil literature is inestimable. They have enriched the Tamil language in an organised manner. There are Jaina works on grammar, Kāvya, linguistics, lexicography, ethics, maths, music and philosophy. Most of these are contributed by ascetics who never mentioned their names. In many of the Purāṇas and Kāvya some of the modern scientific principles are explained in clear terms. (‘Nīlakeśī’ – a Tamil Kāvya speaks how Rainbow is formed, plants are living beings-evolution-clinical tests of faces and urine etc.)

“That what is known as Augustanage of Tamil literature was also the age of the predominance of the Jains.”³

Equality of women to education is first established by the Jains. There are many inscriptional evidences that support this. The Jaina women were well-versed in scriptures and other fields. They spread their knowledge to other women irrespective of caste and creed. Jain nuns conducted schools and colleges exclusively for women. When the women are forbidden from the field of education, it is the Jaina influence that created many women stalwarts among Tamils. AVVAL, KURATHI, KAUNTI etc. are the terms that refer to the learned women of Tamilnadu. There are many Tamil works that are addressed to women. This also shows the concern of the Jains towards the education of Tamil women which is an influence of Bhagavān Mahāvīra's teachings.

Equality of women for religious study spread among Tamils due to Jaina influence.

Arts and Architecture

The influence of the Jains in the fields of Arts and Architecture is

1. Burnell; South Indian Palaeography.
2. Literary History of India.
3. M.S. Ramasamy Iyengar : “Studies in South Indian Jainism”.

remarkable. The Jains were the pioneers in the field of Temple architecture. The Jaina conception of divinity and prayer paved the way for temples for Arhats. The earlier forms of place of workshop are cave temples, bas-reliefs and monolithic granite idols. Later massive temples with distinct *gopurams* and *maṇḍapas* were constructed. The earliest extant temples of grandeur are the Jain temples. Temple worship paved the way for iconography, wall-paintings and sculpturing. The cave paintings at Sithannavasal in Pudukottai district and at Tirumalai in North Arcot district show the Jains interest in paintings. The Jains standardised the temple architecture. This has inspired and influenced the Tamils of other religious faiths also to construct massive temples.

In the Jaina temple architecture, a sthamba, called Mānasthambha, is a unique feature. This is installed in the front of the *muhamāṇḍapa* and generally taller than the Vimāna above the Garbhagriha.

Patronage of fine arts by the Jains influenced and encouraged Tamils to develop these arts. There are many Jaina Tamil works that speak about them.

The Jains, the followers of Lord Mahāvīra and his teaching's, by their presence in Tamil country, influenced Tamils to a larger extent in diverse fields like culture, language, literature and social ethics.

RELEVANCE OF JAIN PRINCIPLES OF MAHĀVĪRA IN MODERN CONTEXT

DR. BINOD KUMAR TIWARY

During the 6th century B.C., India witnessed a very important socio-religious movement and in that very background, it got the honour of producing two great progressive spiritual leaders-Tirthaṅkara Mahāvīra and Gautama the Buddha. They left their palaces at a very young age, performed severe *tapas*, got supreme knowledge and devoted their whole lives in the service and welfare of mankind. They travelled and spread their religio-ethical and moral preachings throughout the country and succeeded in giving a new and rational light to the society. Their teachings were taken as the guidelines by the then people and those are even no less important for the present society and culture.

Tirthaṅkara Mahāvīra was not the founder or originator of the faith of Jainism, but only a crusader of the existing one held by a series of twentyfour Tirthaṅkaras. Nevertheless, it was undoubtedly he, who put the teachings of Jainism on a solid footings and systematised and crystalised them as an independent school of thought. He added much to it and gave sociological, philosophic and scientific justifications for the rules of conduct propounded by his predecessors. Before and during the time of his advent, the whole of society was plunged in corruption, selfishness, economic inequality, exploitation, immorality and casteism. While in one hand, a particular class of society was considered as untouchable, on the other, the women were taken to be a thing of exploitation and entertainment and thus, all traditions of humanity and compassion had been forgotten. The society was deteriorating very fast and no ethical or religious force could become so strong to have a control on it. In such a crucial time, we find the advent of Tirthaṅkara Mahāvīra, the last Jina teacher of the series, who took the great task and did what could be possible not only to make the society an ideal one, but to purify the soul of each and every member of it internally as well. He introduced such changes in the existing Jain religion in order to meet the needs of the time. He organised religious conferences called *samavasaraṇa* and delivered his sermons in the prevalent language of the common men of his time, which has been termed as *Ardhamāgadhi* or *Māgadhi*. He was such an ideal personality that he did not preach to others what he

had not practised himself. He showed the path of patience, forbearance, self denial, pity, forgiveness, humanitarianism and consideration. In other words, he asked the people to follow the message of love, kindness and sacrifice.

In Jainism, *nirvāṇa* was the ultimate object of life and according to Mahāvīra, it consists in the attainment of peace and infinite bliss. The harmonious combination of three jewels (*tri-ratna*)—right faith, right knowledge and right conduct—were the essential points, which lead to perfection by the destruction of *karma*. *Mokṣa* or salvation is a function neither only of faith nor only of knowledge, nor again of morality alone. It is a joint product of all the three. Again, the three are interconnected. Without right faith, there is no knowledge; without right knowledge, there is no virtuous conduct; without virtues, there is no deliverance and without deliverance, there is no perfection.

For the realisation of absolute happiness, Mahāvīra taught five vows (*pañcamahāvratā*), which were *ahiṃsā* (non-violence), *satya* (truthfulness), *asteya* (non stealing or honesty), *aparigraha* (non possession) and *brahmacarya* (celibacy). Among the five, he gave much importance to his first *vrata*, non-violence or *ahiṃsā* and that is why, he has been called in the Jain world 'the apostle of non-violence'. His teaching of *ahiṃsā* was no doubt a revolutionary step with regard to the socio-economic condition of that period, when the violent practices were very much in use in all the socio-religious sacraments and functions in the forms of various *yajñas*. The non-violence of Mahāvīra was not only preached against killing of animals in religious sacrifices, but it was preached in its minute form and was much more extensive in scope. Keeping ill will against someone in thought or speaking harsh words to anyone is as good as an example of *hiṃsā* as inflicting any bodily injury to anybody. In other words, Mahāvīra believed in non-violence not merely in action, but also in word and thought. So, mere avoidance of killing somebody is not *ahiṃsā*, rather it is much more than this. It was a terrific challenge to social inequalities and was a protest against mutual jealousies, hatred, conflict and pride, resulting from wealth and the feeling of high and low. The non-violence of Jainism has been considered as the greatest rule of conduct of this cult to the world and great personalities as well as champions of peace, from Asoka to Akbar to Mahatma Gandhi, who accepted it as the sole way of their lives.

The meaning of truth (*satya*) does not specify that one should abstain from falsehood only, but its concept is to see the world in its real and natural form. Truth, if it is harmful to others, should be

avoided. Exaggeration of facts, finding faults with others, delivering indecent speech are all examples of falsehood or untruth. Speaking in a noble, beneficent and balanced manner and with a peaceful mind upholds truth and hence it must be practised. The absence of artificiality is the observance of truth. According to Mahāvīra, truthfulness lies in the heart of non-violence. Those, who speak untruth, hurt all, which is a pure act of violence. Several characteristics like confidence, gravity, bravery and selflessness can be found only in a truthful person (*satya puruṣa*).

Likewise, Mahāvīra advocated restraint and penance and for this, renunciation and non-possession are essential. The literal meaning of *asteya* (non-stealing) is abstention from taking a thing of someone else which is not given. But, in Jainism, it is much more comprehensive and includes within it, the avoidance of all sorts of dishonesty and conceit. This *vrata* leads to the path of social equality. Jainism wishes that one should get only his due and everybody has got the right to get his own part in the society. It very clearly advises its followers to voluntarily sacrifice as many things as possible. Jainism regards stealing as a severe kind of violence.

The principle of non-possession (*aparigraha*) is one of the ethical conceits of Tirthaṅkara Mahāvīra. According to him, craving brings greed and this greed gives birth to our desires. Craving, as the Jain texts say, never ends, rather it turns into lust and attachment, which is the main cause for possession. Mahāvīra not only preached the principles of non-possession, but denounced possession in his hardest words and asked the people to accept the vow of *aparigraha* if they wished harmony and peace in their social organisations. *Aparigraha* does not merely mean discarding household things, but it refers to non-accumulation of wealth and simplicity of life. From the *śramaṇic* perspective, wealth cannot give what is necessary to a man. An aversion to possession to keep down one's requirements is a primary condition of the non-violent way of life. Jain teachers were free from fear and want. According to Mahāvīra, the root of all the sufferings was attachment towards the objects of worldly enjoyment. He advised that wisemen should not develop attachments with the worldly things, not even with his/her own body. He has preached that it is only when attachment is vanished that the human mind becomes free from mental tensions and emotional disorders. Possession is just against the idea of purification and both cannot go together side by side. Non-possession is the foundation for spiritual and humanistic contemplation. The lust for possession instigates several social sins, like injustice, greed, hatred, bitterness and socio-economic inequality. Against all such things,

Jainism preaches that if the habit of possession is dropped, there would everywhere prevail peace and prosperity, in which the poor and helpless downtrodden would certainly get a chance to come in the mainstream of the society. According to Mahāvīra, the vow of strict and complete non-possession was to be obeyed by the ascetics, but for the householders, it is defined in a very liberal tone as 'accepting the most essential thing in the smallest proportion needed.'

The fifth vow *Brahmacarya* (celibacy) was almost included within the *aparigraha vrata*. But Mahāvīra separated the two to define the meaning of celibacy in a clearer way than what was needed of the time, as people had become the slave of the sensual pleasures and they had indulged in several unsocial activities. He gave ten conditions for the realisation of *Brahmacarya*. In general terms, celibacy means abstinence from excessive desire for any sort of sense enjoyment or even thinking about such objects. The observance of this doctrine protected the people from committing many crimes and evils. It created healthy atmosphere in the society and made the people virtuous.

According to Tirthāṅkara Mahāvīra, *Brahmacarya* was the prime element for character making. Luxurious life makes the members of the nation lazy, weak, corrupt and diseased and in such an atmosphere, nobody would think for the welfare of the society, about uplifting the position of women and check on mental and physical sensual desires. Celibacy is the self developed idea of co-ordination or equality of men and women. It is regarded as the highest point of purification, where the sexual distinction vanishes and passions die. It symbolises sacrifice of all kinds of lust and attachment. As celibacy and nudity are closely related from the point of view of controlling the senses and the non-attachment to bodily pleasure and external needs. Another point apart from the five, which Mahāvīra added in his religion, was making confession compulsory instead of optional for the monks and his followers.

For the people, who obeyed him, Tirthāṅkara Mahāvīra prescribed certain rules of conduct also. He tried to bring changes in the existing social order and preached that it was the *karma* and not *varṇa*, which made a man a member of the then four classes of the society. According to him, none was born as a *Brahman* or *Śūdra*. He opened the door of his religious order for all irrespective of one's caste or creed or status. He allowed women also to enter into the *saṃgha*, who were called as *sādhvīs*. We have textual evidence to show that the *bhikṣuṇī saṃgha* consisted of 36000 women followers, whose head was also a *bhikṣuṇī* named Āryā Candanā. Out of the four orders of Jain community, the

last one consisted of devout laywomen or *śravikās*, who were three hundred and fiftyeight thousand in number. In this way, the women for the first time were considered equal to their male counterparts in the prevailing society and religion. Mahāvīra's philosophical teachings include Syādvāda, Anekānta, Āsrava, Ajīva, Bandha, Saṃvara, Nirjarā and Mokṣa and all these are related somehow or other with morality, patience, satisfaction, equality, purity, brotherhood and socialism.

The teachings of Mahāvīra had a direct and blissful effects on the Indian social structure and it helped in its upliftment. He did his utmost for the welfare and salvation of the entire humanity, without any distinction of sex, class, caste, colour and nationality. If we examine and define his ideas and teachings, particularly his five vows, we very much feel that the rational and logical teachings of Mahāvīra are still relevant in the present circumstances in so many respects. His teachings showed the path of economic equality through non-possession and tried to eradicate corruption through the law of celibacy. According to him, the human beings should try to elivate themselves by keeping restraints on their senses. Man is his own biggest friend and biggest enemy. Those, who do not keep their sensual desires in control, are bound to suffer. He brought a socio-religious revolution, in which welfare of mankind and respect for each other's rights were his main goal. With such objectives, he exhorted people to eschew slavery. During his wanderings, he propagated a religion in which there would be no exploitation and feeling of high and low and in which every individual would get sufficient opportunities for progress. In that background, when we analyse the contents of the *pañcavrata* and moral principles propagated by Mahāvīra, we find that these were not concerned merely with the Jain religion as well as culture of a particular period and place, but were more related to the social, national and human feelings and needs of every time to come. While there are moral and spiritual sentiments and emotions in the background of the teachings of Mahāvīra, the same may be helpful in bringing peace, unity and brotherhood in our present world. The simple life style and the generous attitude promoted by him is a sole step to meet the challenges of the contemporary world of consumerism and hoarding mentality. In the present global environment, violence, corruption, adultery and bitterness are growing very rapidly. The materialistic attitude is destroying not only the religious and spiritual sentiments, but even the humanity and our whole culture as well. Every part of the world is suffering from the bad effects of massacres, exploitations and selfishness on the name of peace, friendship and social justice, while morality has gone to its lowest ebb. We are not able to be acquainted with our neighbouring surroundings, resulting that our

relative doubts are not being removed. In such a condition, neither we can avert the miseries of a conflict, nor can prepare the real atmosphere of co-operation and co-existence. Everybody is so much fed up and tired of the present tense life that people are really in great need of such a society, in which there would be no exploitation, discrimination and malice. If we want to get rid of all prevailing evils, miseries and pains, we will have to abandon the materialistic attitudes and develop the spiritual ones, in which there would be no lust for getting only worldly comforts as the last goal of human achievement. To obtain the real truth of the life, we have no other option but to think of the solution in the very background of the principles of Jainism and Mahāvīra which could be effective in providing us peace, happiness and prosperity.

THE RELEVANCE OF THE TEACHINGS OF LORD MAHĀVĪRA IN THE MODERN AGE

DULI CHAND JAIN

Problems encountering the modern world

The present age is called the age of Science and Technology. There is a virtual explosion of Information Technology which has brought nations and people closer to each other. New scientific thoughts have influenced every person's life provides him more amenities and facilities. But the question arises whether science has made man's life happier and harmonious? The answer to this question is in the negative. Today man's life is full of tension, anxieties and disorders. In the race of progress and growth, man has forgotten the real purpose of his life. To-day man knows much more about the external world but very little about his own self. He is leading a life full of disharmony and conflicts.

On the International level we find that man has conquered all the agencies of nature and made ordinary person's life more comfortable than it was earlier. But, on the other hand, we find alarming growth of Armament Industries and production of powerful Bombs and explosive materials. If unfortunately there is another nuclear war it will be most dangerous and will result in the destruction of the whole humanity. Another problem that mankind is facing today is that inequality is increasing amongst the nations and peoples. The world is divided into 'haves' and 'have-nots'. The U.S.A. which has just 6% of the world's population consumes 30% of the world's resources, whereas the majority of the people of the Globe are suffering from scarcity, wants and impoverishment. Life in advanced countries is also not harmonious. Families are broken up and relationships snapped. Individual feels isolated and alienated with a sense of vacuum and boredom. The economic growth alone as the yard stick for measuring standard of life to the exclusion of all other values has verily led to the destruction of human personality.

Last year, a report appeared in the "Economist" which presented a grim picture of the so-called advanced western society—quite a large number of people were involved in the misuse of drugs and guns resulting in violent crimes and unbecoming behaviour in public life. The caption of the report is "Broken family life."

It states

- * The importance of marriage has become irrelevant in the management of family and growing up of children.
- * The rate of divorce has doubled between 1960 and 1996.
- * In 1960 the percentage of unmarried mothers was only 5% , it has gone up to 32% in 1996.
- * In 1972, 28% children were living with either father or mother (one of them) of their married parents, in 1998 52% of the children live with either mother or father (one of them) of their married parents.
- * Even married couple do not want to beget children in America. In 1972, 45% parents did not have any child, their percentage has gone up to 62% in 1996.

Mr. F.L. Lucas, an English critic, has given a graphic representation of our age as follows : "Many a times, after pondering, I am amazed that some day the human civilisation will come to an end, not by an atom bomb, or famines or any such means, but it would come to an end by man's own intellect and deterioration of self-control in the midst of the tension of the highly artificial civilisation."

The question, therefore, arises whether religion and particularly Jain religion can meet the need of our times and solve the problems of present day humanity. Jaina thinkers have stated clearly that religion does not mean mere rituals and dogmas. It has eternal values which have validity for all times to come. Jainism is a living religion propounded by Lord Mahāvīra in the present era and it is practised by lakhs of people even to-day.

The essence of religion

First of all, let us understand what is the meaning of religion ? According to Jainism, the real nature of any substance is religion – "*dhammo vatthusahāvo*".¹ If it is so, the question arises what is the real nature of a human being ? Lord Mahāvīra says, "the real nature of every soul is equanimity". It is said in *Mūlācāra* that the oneness of the soul with right faith, right knowledge, self-restraint and austerity is *Samaya*. Know this as *Sāmāyika* (equanimity).² In Jainism, religion is not different from the practice for the realisation of our own essential nature of *sva-svabhāva*. In this state the consciousness is completely

1. Dvādaśānuprekṣā, 478.

2. Mūlācāra, 519.

free from constant flickering, excitements, disharmony and disorders. In reality, the soul is different from the body and it should remain away from *vibhāvas* or impure state of mind. The object of religion is to achieve equanimity of mind and therefore soul and get real peace and blissfulness.

Integral view of life

Jainism takes an integral view of life. Either faith or knowledge by itself cannot take us to the path of salvation. We should have a combination of right faith, right knowledge and right conduct to tread the path of salvation.”³ These three – *Samyag-darśana* (right faith), *Samyag-jñāna* (right knowledge) and *Samyak-cāritra* (right conduct) are the three jewels of Jainism. “Without right faith, there is no right knowledge and without right knowledge there is no virtuous conduct.”⁴ Detachment from the objects of worldly pleasures, a balanced state of mind and the feeling of equanimity are considered as right faith or attitude. “A person having right faith knows what is to be relinquished and what is to be accomplished.”⁵ Through right knowledge a person understands the true nature of the soul and the non-living substances. It is said by Lord Mahāvīra, “He who knows the self to be wholly different from the impure body and comprehends it to be the knower of all substances, is said to be a master of all scriptures.”⁶ According to the *Mūlācāra* right knowledge is that which helps one to understand the truth, controls the mind and purifies the soul.⁷ According to Jaina thinkers, equanimity of body, mind and soul should be a directive principal of religious life. The equanimity of mind is non-attachment (*Aparigraha*), equanimity of body is non-violence (*Ahimsā*) and the equanimity of thought is non-absolutism (*Anekānta*). These three are the pillars of Jainism and the observance of these results in peace and harmony in the life of the individual and the society.

Reverence for All Life

The cardinal principle of Jainism is non-violence. It means giving respect or reverence to all forms of life. All life formation including human beings, animals, plants, trees, insects etc. have the same life source of energy. This energy is available even in invisible creatures in air, water, wind and ether. Lord Mahāvīra says, “Not to kill any living

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3. Tattvārtha-sūtra, 1.1.
 4. Uttarādhyayana-sūtra, 28.30.
 5. Sūtra-pāhuḍa, 5.
 6. Kārtikeyānuprekṣā, 465.
 7. Mūlācāra, 585.

being is the quintessence of all wisdom. Certainly, one has to understand that non-violence and equality of all living beings are essentials of Dharma.”⁸ In Jainism non-violence is the pivot on which its whole ethics revolves. Non-violence is not a single virtue, but it is a combination of all virtues. Lord Mahāvīra says that non-violence is equated with sixty virtuous qualities like peace, harmony, welfare, trust, fearlessness etc.⁹ Jainism believes in the principle of “Live and Let live”.

Today when we see cruelties on animals on a large scale in mechanical slaughter-houses and the use of animals for leather products, in food industries, in producing medicines, in cosmetics and so on, we can understand how important it is to adhere to non-violence so as to save the life on this planet. The extensive development of meat Industries has brought environmental degradation on a large scale and to-day environmentalists are worried about how to stop it to make life of people healthy and happy.

Recognising that total adherence to the strictest form of non-violence is impractical for a house holder, Jaina preachers have drawn a distinction between violent activities totally forbidden and those which may be tolerated within strict guidelines. From this stand point, violence has been classified into the following four categories :

1. Deliberate or aggressive violence i.e. intentional killing.
2. Protective violence resulting in opposing attack on one's life, property or country.
3. Occupational violence resulting in Industrial or Agricultural activity of the individuals for earning their livelihood.
4. Unintentional but indirect injury to living beings from acts necessary for normal life like cooking or cleaning etc.

The saints or nuns abjure all the four types, but the layman can renounce only the first type, while he has to indulge in the other three categories, but after observing proper vigilance.

The positive side of non-violence is as important as the negative side, but this is sometimes not fully appreciated. The positive side implies kindness, forgiveness, charity and service. This has been beautifully explained in a verse by the renowned Ācārya Amitagati of the 11th century. A.D. as follows : “Friendship towards all beings, respect for the qualities of virtuous people, utmost compassion for the

8. Sūtrakṛtāṅga-sūtra, 1.11.10.

9. Praśnavyākaraṇa-sūtra, 2.1.21.

afflicted beings and equanimity towards those who are not well-disposed towards me—may my soul have these dispositions for ever.”¹⁰

A non-violent person should be full of benevolence towards all living beings. Also he should avoid food, clothing and other requirements which involves the slaughter of animals. He should also not indulge in trades like brewing, fishing and butchering. Non-violence is the greatest need of the present day. Faced with the danger of ecological disaster and nuclear holocaust on the one hand and unrestrained materialistic pursuit on the other, humanity is groping in the dark for the ray of light which can save its very existence. Such light is provided by shunning violence at all levels by practicing non-violence.

Equality

Mahāvīra laid great stress on the equality of all human beings. Stressing action and not birth as a determining factor of superiority was a radical step in the teachings of Mahāvīra. He proclaimed, “A person does not become a monk by merely tonsuring, nor a *Brāhmaṇa* by reciting *Oṅkāra Mantra*, nor a *Muni* by living in the forest, nor a hermit by wearing cloths woven out of *Kuśa* grass. One becomes a monk by equanimity, *Brāhmaṇa* by celibacy, a *Muni* by his knowledge and a hermit by his austerities.”¹¹

Lord Mahāvīra had great regard for women. He said that both men and women were eligible to attain emancipation after destroying the passions and *Karmas*. He declared, “There are many virtuous women who are famous for their purity and chastity. They are like the goddesses before whom even the celestials bow.”¹² According to Jainism, all barriers of caste, creed and colour are artificial and must be removed. The principle of equality propounds that every one has a right to live. The directive principle of living is not “Living on others” or “living by killing” but “living with and for others” (*parasparopagraho jīvānām*).¹³

So, for as the welfare of human society is concerned it depends on mutual co-operation, sacrifice of our own interest for the sake of our fellow beings and regard for other's life. If above mentioned elements are essential for our social life, then non-violence is absolutely necessary for human life. Society exists not on violence but on non-violence, not on fulfilment of self-interest but on sacrifice of self-interest, not on

10. Sāmāyika-pāṭha, 1.

11. Uttarādhyayana-sūtra, 25.31, 32.

12. Bhagavatī Ārādhana, 995.

13. Tattvārtha-sūtra, 5.21.

claiming for our own rights but accepting the rights of others too. Thus we can say that non-violence is an inevitable principle of existence of human society.

Aparigraha : Limiting the desires and passions

Aparigraha is the fifth vow of monks and nuns in the Jaina code of ethics (*Mahāvratā*). For householders also it is the fifth vow in their code of ethics known as *Anuvratā*. This principle has great importance in the present world when we are going on increasing our requirements and desires to the maximum. Jaina preachers say that the source of happiness and peace lies within the human self and not in the external things. The cause for mental worries and tensions are due to our attachment towards worldly objects. Lord Mahāvīra says that desires are endless like the sky and they will never satisfy any person fully. In his words, "If there were numberless mountains of gold and silver as big as mount Kailāśa they would not satisfy an avaricious man; for avarice is boundless like the sky."¹⁴ He further says, "The more you get, the more you want, desires increase with every gain."¹⁵ If mankind is to be freed from mental tensions, the possessions have to be limited. To-day we find over-exploitation of natural resources which are available in limited quantity only. Jainism believes that the lesser the attachment, the greater will be the mental peace. It is only when attachment vanishes, the human mind will be free from mental and emotional disorders. For this Jainism preaches the vow of complete non-possession for the ascetics and the vow to limit one's possessions for the householders.

Types of Parigraha

According to Jainism, Parigraha is of two types : internal and external. These include all external objects of attachment which hinder liberation and also all inner attitudes in different forms and stages such as false faith (*mithyātva*), vowlessness (*avirati*), passions (*kaṣāya*) etc. All human passions such as anger, pride, deceit and greed, attachment and aversion have their roots in external objects or possessions which create disturbance in the mind of the individual. The householder, according to Jainism, should limit his possessions consequently curbing his limitless desires to consume and possess things. According to Dr. Kamala Jain, "Aparigraha is not merely an abstract philosophy, it is a vision of life with the solution to a number of problems that society is facing-economic, social, political, familial

14. Uttarādhyayana-sūtra, 9.48.

15. Uttarādhyayana-sūtra, 8.17.

and personal. For social reconstruction, in fact, for the survival of the society, voluntary limitation of desires and personal possessions is the only solution. Environmental degeneration due to too much spread of consumeristic way of life can be checked only by the self-imposed discipline of limited desires and limited possessions. Amassing of wealth for the sake of accumulation will not help the individual nor the society, it is harmful for both, with increase in disparities leading to consequent evils of mental restlessness, jealousy, envy, corruption etc. The middle path of *icchā-parimāṇa* (limiting of desires) would check both poverty and luxury with the motto that 'possessions are only a means and not the end in themselves.'¹⁶

Anekant : Regard for other's Ideologies & Faiths

Today it is due to the progress of science and technology, the world has practically become a single family. Hence, we should have broadness of our thoughts also. We cannot solve world problems with parochial outlook and sectarian thoughts. According to Dr. Ramji Singh, "Inter-existence is the positive option for mankind. Either there is organic growth of mankind or there is organic destruction of human civilisation. The growth of scientific knowledge and outlook has destroyed most of our false dogmas and superstitions, but it has failed to provide us knowledge that could sublimate our animal and selfish nature. Animality has been dominating our individual as well as social behaviour. Hence, our life has become full of tensions, turmoils and disorders. Therefore, although we are outwardly pleading for worldpeace and non-violence, we have been preparing for war. Humanity is tottering to-day upon the brink of the principle of self-annihilation due to the lack of proper understanding which includes understanding ourselves and understanding the views of others."¹⁷

Jaina preachers say that the knowledge which determines full meaning of an object through the employment of one-sided knowledge is partial knowledge. Reality has got innumerable characteristics. A valid knowledge is defined as that which gives us knowledge of things in their various aspects. All objects have innumerable characters, hence all things are multi-dimensional or *Anekāntik*. Though every angle or view point can claim that it gives a true picture of reality, it gives only a partial and relative picture of reality. One who knows only partial truth must not discard the views of others as totally false. We must accept that the views of others have also validity from some other angles. Jaina theory of *Anekāntavāda* emphasises that all the

16. Aparigraha – the human solution, p. 92.

17. Jaina Perspective in Philosophy and Religion, 215.

approaches to understand the reality give partial but true picture of reality and it is due to their truth-value from certain angle, we should treat other ideologies and faiths with equal regard.

The virtue of understanding is very much needed in the present day society. Jainism maintains regard for other's thoughts and ideologies from time immemorial. Lord Mahāvīra says, "Those who praise their own ideologies and faiths and blame that of their opponents and thus distort the truth will remain confined to the cycle of birth and death." Jaina saints tried to maintain the harmony in different religious thoughts thus avoiding religious conflicts. *Anekānta* can solve the problems of conflict in ideologies and faiths. *Ācārya* Hemacandra says : "I bow to all those who have overcome attachment and aversion, which are causes of worldly bondage, be they *Brahmā*, *Viṣṇu*, *Śiva* or *Jina*."

Lastly I again quote Dr. Ramji Singh, who has nicely explained the importance of *Anekānta* in the modern context : "Jaina logic of *Anekānta* is based not on abstract intellectualism but on experience and realism leading to a non-absolutistic attitude of mind. Multiplicity and unity, definability and non-definability which apparently seem to be contradictory characteristics of reality are interpreted to co-exist in the same object from different points of view without any offence to logic. They seem to be contradictory characteristics of reality are interpreted to co-exist in the same object from different points of view without any offence to logic. They seem to be contradictory of each other, simply because one of them is mistaken to be the whole truth. In fact, integrity of truth consists in this very variety of its aspects, without the rational unity of an all comprehensive and ramifying principle. The charge of contradiction against the co-presence of being and non-being in the real is a figment of a *priori* logic."¹⁹

The Doctrine of Karma

The significant achievement of *Tirthaṅkara Mahāvīra*'s revolution in the spiritual field was the upholding of the concept of *Karma* in place of the creator God. He says that man is the architect of his own destiny and he can rise only by his own efforts and not by the grace of any external agency. God is devoid of attachment, hence there is no need for him to create this universe, which is beginningless and endless. Every inexplicable event in the life of an individual occurs due to *Karmas* accumulated in his previous birth. *Karma* is conceived as something

18. *Sūtrakṛtāṅga-sūtra*, 1.1.2.23.

19. *Jaina Perspective in Philosophy and Religion*, 223.

essentially material which gets interlinked with immaterial soul. As particles of dust get attached to the body smeared with oil, so does *Karma* with the soul. It is on account of *Karma* that the soul has to suffer and undergo various births and rebirths in the diverse spheres of life as gods, men or animals. Lord *Mahāvīra* says, "Attachment and aversion are the root causes of *Karma* and *Karma* originates from infatuation, *Karma* is the root cause of birth and death and these (birth and death) are said to be the source of misery." He further aids, "None can escape the effect of their own past *Karmas*."²⁰

Relevance of Jaina Ethics

Dr. Radhakrishnan has rightly observed that the name Jainism indicates the predominantly ethical character of the system.²¹ Although Jainism is much more than a code of ethics, but it is true to say that ethics occupies here the most important place. Some thinkers say that metaphysics has divided Indian philosophers, but ethics has united them. Sometimes it is said that Jaina ethics is extremely ascetic in character but this is actually not true. The fact that there is clear-cut distinction between the code of the monks and the code of the householders and there is a marked relaxation of virtues and vows meant for commoners. The present generation lacks proper moral guidance. Hence the five vows of truth, non-violence, non-stealing, chastity and non-possession are really of great significance today. That is why, Mahatma Gandhi practised the ideals of truth and non-violence in social and national life. Thus these ethical values have great relevance in politics, economics and in International affairs. Nation can be peaceful and prosperous if it follows non-violence seriously and sincerely. The principle of non-violence can contribute a great deal in fostering relationship of peaceful co-existence among different warring nations. Similarly non-possession and other virtues practised by Jaina community are significant and relevant in the present era. The ideal of non-possession and non-hoarding can be really useful to-day as we are very much concerned with the problem of economic inequality.

Mahāvīra delivered his message in the language of the common people. He established a simple code of conduct which is practised by millions of people even to-day. Hence we can say that Mahāvīra's contribution was most significant and sizable. This is relevant even to-day and following his message we can realise harmony and peace in our own life and in the society at large.

20. Uttarādhyayana-sūtra, 32.7.

21. Indian Philosophy, Vol. I. 286.

HARIBHADRA'S VIEWS ON SVABHĀVAVĀDA AND THE LOKĀYATA

RAMKRISHNA BHATTACHARYA

The relation between the doctrine of *svabhāva* (inherent nature) and the Indian school of materialism called the Cārvāka/Lokāyata is not easy to determine. Quite a few writers beginning with the anonymous commentator of the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* (sixth century CE) have linked them.¹ Vidyāraṇya (fourteenth century CE) in his *Vivaraṇa-prameya-saṃgraha* went to the extent of declaring that the Lokāyatika-s considered the doctrine of *svabhāva* to be the supreme reality (*pāramārthika*).²

However, there are reasons to believe that such a connection proposed between the two is purely conjectural, having no real evidence to support it. Excepting a few verses of dubious origin, absolutely nothing is known about the doctrine of *svabhāva*.³ As to the Cārvāka/Lokāyata, we are not much better placed. In addition to some *ābhāṇaka*-s and *lokagathā*-s (popular verses) we only have a number

1. *Suvarṇasaptati*. 'The Sāṃkhyakārikā. Studied in the light of the Chinese Version [of Paramārtha]', rendered from the French translation into English by S.S. Suryanarayana Sastri, *Bulletin of the Department of Indian Philosophy*, University of Madras, 1933. In his commentary on the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* (SK), v. 27, the anonymous author writes (apropos of *svabhāva*) : 'This verse is found in the work of the Lokāyata-s : "What produces the white colour of the haṃsas-s [swans or ducks], the green colour of the parrots and the variegated colour of the peacocks, it is from that I, too, am created."' (p. 36). The same verse is also quoted by him *ad* v. 61 without, however, any reference to the Lokāyatika-s (p. 74). It has been quoted partly by Gauḍapāda (*ad* sk, v.61) and Māṭhara (*ad* sk, v.27).

The commentary has been restored into Sanskrit by N. Aiyaswami Sastri as *Suvarṇasaptatīśāstra* (Tirupati, 1944) which, unfortunately, is not available to me.

2. Vidyāraṇya, *Vivaraṇa-prameya-saṃgraha*, ed. R. Tailanga, Benares : E.J. Lazarus and Co., 1893, p. 211.
3. The first known verse containing an exposition of the doctrine of *svabhāva* is found in Āśvaghoṣa's *Buddhacarita*, 9. 59-62. A few more verses lie scattered in various works. A collection of these fragments has long been a desideratum. I am presently engaged in this project.

of aphorisms and extracts from their commentaries.⁴ The fragmentary nature of our knowledge regarding both does not provide any clue to the connection between the two. However, we hope to show, following Haribhadra's lead, that from a purely philosophical point of view the doctrines of *svabhāva* and the Cārvaka/Lokāyata have nothing or little to do with each other.

Right from the commentators of the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (c. sixth century BCE), down to Guṇaratna's *Tarkarahasyadīpikā* (fifteenth century CE) and beyond, we read of several conflicting interpretations of the term,⁵ *svabhāva*. It is sometimes conceived as a mysterious agency outside nature, akin to *kāla* (time), *niyati* (destiny), *īśvara* (God), etc. Sometimes again it is projected as a special property of every object, animate or inanimate, and so there is nothing supernatural about it. The sharpness of the thorn is the oft-cited example of *svabhāva* (see no. 3 below).

This very example, however, is referred to as an instance of *ākasmikatva* (randomness) by the Naiyāyika-s.⁶ In the writings of the Buddhists, however, the same example is an instance of chance or accident, but is nevertheless called *svabhāva*.⁷

Lastly, on the ethical plane, the doctrine of *svabhāva* in the *Mahābhārata* is supposed to promote inactivity (*akriyā*) since human effort is bound to be fruitless in the face of the inevitable consequences

4. Such a collection was first made by Dakshināranjan Shastri (1944) and more recently by Mamoru Namai (1976). For details see 'Svabhāvavāda vis-à-vis Materialism : A Review in the Light of some Mahābhārata Passages', *Anvikṣā*, (Journal of the Department of Sanskrit, Jadavpur University, Calcutta) Vol. xviii, 1999, p. 94n 5.
5. See Pseudo-Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (1.2) and Śaṅkarānanda's *Dīpikā; Tarkarahasyadīpikā* (commentary on Haribhadra's *Ṣaḍdarśana-samuccaya*), ed. Luigi Sualì, Calcutta : The Asiatic Society, 1905-14, pp. 10-16.
6. For a detailed discussion see Phanibhūṣaṇa Tarkavāgīśa's Bengali commentary on the *Nyāyasūtra*, 4, 1, 22-24. *Nyāyadarśana o Vātsyāyana Bhāṣya*, vol. 4 (1333 BS), Calcutta : Pascimavaṅga Rājya Pustaka Paśad, 1988, pp. 177-92. For a free and abridged translation of the Elucidation of Tarkavāgīśa's commentary see *Nyāya Philosophy*, Part IV by Mrinalkanti Gangopadhyaya, Calcutta : Indian Studies Past & Present, 1973, pp. 27-31.
7. Dharmakīrti, *Pramāṇavārttikam*, Varanasi : Bauddha Bharati, 1968, p. 64; Śāntaraksita, *Tattvasaṅgraha*, ed. Dvārikadasa Shastri, Varanasi : Bauddha Bharati, Vol. I, 1968, Ch. 4, VV. 110-27, pp. 78-85; Āryaśūra, *Jātakamālā*, ed. P.L. Vaidya, Darbhanga : Mithila Institute, 1959, 23.24-29, pp. 154-55.

determined by *svabhāva* (presumably considered to be a supernatural, omnipotent entity).⁸ On the contrary, in a Jain work, *Yaśastilakacampū* (tenth century CE) a Cārvāka is made to preach the superiority of endeavour to slavish submission to fate.⁹

Why are there so many divergent views on *svabhāva*? The only possible answer is that, at least in the Christian era, nobody knew what exactly the doctrine of *svabhāva* was. It had been already outmoded by the formation of the philosophical systems, both Orthodox (pro-Vedic) and heterodox (anti-Vedic). Although there were more than two dozens of claimants for the first cause (*jagatkāraṇa*) only a few continued to be mentioned.¹⁰ Thus among the Buddhists, both Nāgārjuna (second century CE) and Śāntarakṣita (eight century CE) found it necessary to contend with the doctrines of *svabhāva* (meaning, however, accident) along with those of God, atom, etc.¹¹

Here Haribhadra (eighth century CE), the Jain philosopher comes to aid. He was a man of encyclopedic erudition and well-versed in all systems of philosophy prevalent in his times. To him we owe the first known compendium of six philosophical systems, called *Ṣaḍdarśana-samuccaya*.¹² He refers to many more doctrines in another work, *Lokatattva-nirṇaya*.¹³ And in his *Śāstravārtā-samuccaya* he first expounds and then sets himself to refute the Lokāyata, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāṃkhya, Advaita-Vedānta, Mīmāṃsā and several schools and tenets of the Buddhists.¹⁴ It is to be noted that he deals with four

8. For details see my article mentioned in n 4.

9. Somadevasūri, *Yaśastilaka*, ed. M.M. Pandit Sivadatta and Vāsudeva Laxman Śāstrī, Paṇaśīkar, Bombay : Nirnay Sagar Prakashan, 1916, 3.61, p. 382.

10. *kāla* (time), *śvabhāva* (inherent nature), *niyati* (destiny) and *yadṛcchā* (accident) found place in many such lists. There are other claimants like *viññāna* (consciousness) and Skandha-s (constituent elements of being) which are mentioned only by the Buddhists. The doctrine of *adṛṣṭa/karman* found favour with the Naiyāyikas-s; the Jains also considered it to be 'the cornerstone of their philosophy'. See V.M. Kulkarni, 'Svabhāvavāda (Naturalism) : A Study' in : *Sri Mahavira Jaina Vidyalyaya Suvarna Mahotsava Grantha*, ed. A.M. Upadhye et al, Bombay : Sri Mahavira Jain Vidyalyaya, 1968, pp. 10-20.

11. Nāgārjuna, *Madhyamakaśāstra* (or -*kārikā* or/ -*sūtra*), ed. D.D. Shastri, Varanasi : Bauddha Bharati, 1983, Ch. 15 and Śāntarakṣita (n 7), Ch. 4.

12. See n. 5.

13. Ahmedabad (Amedabad) : Sri Haṃsavijayaji Jaina Free Library, Vikramasamvat 1978 (1922 CE).

14. Ed. K.K. Dixit, Ahmedabad : Lalbhai Dalpatbhai Bharatiya Sanskriti Vidyamandir, 1969.

other doctrines, viz. *kāla-*, *svabhāva-*, *niyati-* and *karma-vāda-*s and devotes a whole section to them.¹⁵ However, he never associates *bhūtavāda* (materialism) with *svabhāvavāda*. Śāntarakṣita, too, it should be remembered, dealt with the doctrines of *svabhāva* and Lokāyata in two distinct chapters, separated by sixteen chapters between them (*Tattvasaṅgraha*, Chs. 4 and 22 respectively). But Śāntarakṣita, like all Buddhist philosophers, makes *svabhāva* appear as identical with accident. Haribhadra does nothing of the kind, although there seems to be a rejection of free will.¹⁶ Let us look at Haribhadra's exposition of *svabhāva* first :

*na svabhāvātirekeṇa garbha-bālaśubhā-dikam/
yat kiñcijjāyate loke tadasau kāraṇaṃ kila// 2. (?) 169
sarvabhāvāḥ svabhāvena svasvabhāve tathā tathā/
varttante'tha nivarttante kāmācāra-parāṇmukhāḥ/ / 2.170
na vineha svabhāvena mudgapaktira-piṣyate/
tathākālādibhāve'pi nāśvamāśasya sā yataḥ/ / 2.171
atatsvabhāvāt tadbhāve' tiprasaṃgo'nivā-ritāḥ/
tulye tatra mṛdaḥ kumbho na paṭādītyayuktimat//¹⁷ 2.172*

Without inherent nature, there is no conception, boyhood and (the understanding of) what is beneficial, etc. (i.e., manhood). It (sc. inherent nature) is the cause of whatever is born in this world.

All entities exist in their own being and cease to exist due to their inherent nature, irrespective of (free) will.

Without this inherent nature even *mudga* (a kind of bean) cannot be cooked, just as notwithstanding the presence of (all other necessary elements like) time, etc. *āśvamāśa* (?) is not (cooked).

Acceptance of an effect even in the absence of inherent nature (as

15. See *ibid.*, *stavaka* 2, vv. 164-93, pp. 45-53.

16. See *ibid.*, v. 170 cd.

17. Cf. Guṇaratna (n5), p. 11 : 'Moreover, in ordinary life as well, even the cooking of *mudga* is not found to be possible without (the action of) time, but only in course of time'. (Translated in *Cārvāka/Lokāyata*, ed. Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya and Mrinalkanti Gangopadhyaya, New Delhi : Indian Council of Philosophical Research, 1990, p. 294). Guṇaratna also cites four verses from *Śāstravārtā*. 2.165, 167, 168 and 166 (in this order) after the passage referred to above (p. 11). Haribhadra polemicizes against the view of the *kālavādin* in 2.171 (cf. Guṇaratna, pp. 13-17) which again is controverted in v. 175 by the *niyativādin* and in v. 179 by the *karmavādin*. The meanings of *āśvamāśa* and *kaṅkaduka-mudga* (Guṇaratna, p. 13, 15) are not clear. Dixit renders (in Hindi) *mudga* as *mūṅga* and *āśvamāśa* as *mūṅga ka kuṭa*. They seem to refer to some kinds of bean, *Phaseolus mungo* (L), black gram and *Phaseolus radiatus* (L) respectively.

the cause) makes way for an undesired conclusion. Then it will not be reasonable to say that the pot is made of earth, (but) not the cloth.

Haribhadra then does not consider *svabhāva* to be a synonym of *ahetu* (absence of cause, i.e. randomness) on even *nirnimittatā* (absence of any efficient cause, though the *presence* of material cause is not denied).¹⁸

In the introductory part of his commentary on *Ṣaḍdarśana-samuccaya*, Guṇaratna expatiates on the distinction between *svabhāva* and *yadṛcchā* in the following way : All entities are born due to the influence of *svabhāva* which involves a fixed rule. There is no room for free will of man. *Yadṛcchā*, on the other hand, signifies the denial of any fixed causal relation in respect to objects. Old age and death are all accidental. Any attempt to find cause-effect relation involves the fallacy of *post hoc ergo propter hoc* (*kākatāliya-nyāya*).¹⁹

Svabhāvavāda thus signifies rigid predetermination, but not accidentalism. At the same time, by attributing the cause of all transformation to the inherent nature of every object, Guṇaratna also dispenses with the supernatural view of *svabhāva*. Since right from the time of the *Śvetāśvatara upaniṣad*, *svabhāva* and *yadṛcchā* have been treated as two distinct categories, we may safely infer that Haribhadra's interpretation is truer to the tradition than those of the Buddhists and Naiyāyikas-s. They preferred to explain the sharpness of a thorn as an evidence of mere chance, obliterating thereby any difference between *svabhāva* and *yadṛcchā*.²⁰

Haribhadra, too, has presented the doctrine of Cārvāka/Lokāyata. In his *Śāstravārtā-samuccaya* he summarises it in the following way:

*prṥiviyādimahābhūlakāryamātram idaṃ jagat/
na cātmādr̥ṣṭasadbhāvaṃ manyante bhūtavādinah// 1.30
acetanāni bhūtāni na taddharṃ na tatphalam/
cetanā'sti ca yasyeyaṃ sa evātmēti cāpare// 1.31
yadiyaṃ bhūtadharṃ syāt pratyekaṃ teṣu sarvadā/
upalabhyeta sattvādikaṭhinatvādayo yathā// 1.32
śaktirūpeṇa sā teṣu sadā'to nopalabhyate/
na ca tenāpi rūpeṇa satyasatyeva cenna tat//²¹ 1.33*

18. *Nyāyasūtra*, 4.1.22-24 (see also n 6 above).

19. Guṇaratna (n5), p. 15.5-21.

20. See nn 6 and 7. Interestingly enough, Ḍaḥlaṇa in his commentary on the *Suśrutasaṃhitā*, Śārīrasthāna, 1.11 explains *yadṛcchā* as some sort of causality. Phaṇibhūṣaṇa Tarkavāgīśa (n6 above) positively refers to accept this odd interpretation (p. 178n).

21. Ibid., pp. 31-32. See *Śāstra* (n14), pp. 9-10. The translation that follows is mine.

The materialists consider this world to be the effect of the great elements, earth and the rest (i.e. air, fire and water) and there is no existence of the self and *adr̥ṣṭa* (merit and demerit of action).

Others (hold) that the elements are unconscious; consciousness is neither the property nor the outcome of the elements; the self is that which is endowed with consciousness (either as its property or as its outcome).

[Objection to the view :] If consciousness is the property of the elements, then it should have always been found in every element, like the being, etc. (the general property) and hardness, etc. (the special property).

[Reply :] Consciousness is there as the force of the elements which is why it is not found always; but in this form (i.e. as the force) it is there and cannot be said that it is not.

Haribhadra then proceeds to assert the existence of the self, *adr̥ṣṭa* (merit and demerit of action) and consciousness independent of matter. He tries to prove the existence of the self even by dint of sense perception. After dealing with the Buddhist views on the self and *karman*, he returns to the refutation of *bhūtavāda* :

*lokāyatamatam prajñairjñeyam pāpaughakā ranam/
ittham tattvaviḷomaṃ yat tanna jñāna-vivardhanam// 1.110
indrapratāraṇāyedaṃ cakre kila bṛhaspatiḥ/
ado'pi yuktiśūnyam yannetthamindraḥ pratāryate// 1.111
tasmād dr̥ṣṭāśyakaram kliṣṭasattvavicintitam/
pāpaśrūtaṃ sadā dhīrairvarjyam nāstikadarśanam//²² 1.112*

This Lokāyata doctrine is to be known by the wise as the root cause of a lot of sins. It does not augment knowledge; on the contrary, it goes against truth.

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 31-32. It is interesting to note that a Jain, who is also called *nāstika* by the brahminical law-givers because he does not believe in the supreme authority of the Vedas (see *Manusmṛti*, 2.11 : *nāstiko vedanindakaḥ*) also calls the Cārvāka philosophy '*nāstikadarśanam*' ! Apparently Haribhadra follows the tradition of the Sanskrit Grammarians (e.g. Bhattoji Dikṣita and Vāmāna-Jayāditta) who explain *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, 4.4.60 (*asti-nāsti-diṣṭam matīḥ*) in this way. According to them, one who believes in the existence of the other-world is an *āstika* and one who does not, is a *nāstika*.

The Buddhists, too, refer to the Cārvāka-s by the same appellation, *nāstika*. See Āryaśūra, *Jātakamālā* (n7), 23.57, p. 151. J.S. Speyer translates the word, *nāstika* as 'the materialist'. *The Garland of Birth-stories of Āryaśūra* (1895), Delhi : MLBD, 1982, p. 215.

[Some say that] this doctrine was manufactured by Br̥haspati in order to deceive Indra. [Such a view] is bereft of reason because Indra was not deceived by it.

So intelligent men should abandon this heterodox philosophy since it vitiates intellect and is conceived by unholy men; it is a sin to listen to it.

In addition to what is said in *Śāstravārtā-samuccaya*, Haribhadra in his *Śaḍdarśana-samuccaya*, refers to a few more characteristics of the Lokāyata, viz., the Cārvāka-s do not believe in gods, release (*nirvṛti*), religious and irreligious deeds and the consequences of virtue and vice; and finally they deny the validity of such inference as it not preceded by perception.²³

Nowhere does Haribhadra refer to *svabhāva* in connection with the Lokāyata. It will, therefore, be more appropriate to view *svabhāvavāda* and the Lokāyata as originally unrelated to each other. The opinion of the author of *Suvarṇasaptati* and others²⁴ appears to be mere figments of their imagination or a product of wishful thinking, based on mere hearsay.

23. *Śaḍdarśana* (n 12), 6. 80-86, pp. 301-08. For an English translation of the verses, see *Cārvāka/Lokāyata* (n 17), pp. 67-76.

24. Besides the anonymous author of *Suvarṇasaptati* (see n 1), Śīlāṅka (ninth century CE), Utpalabhaṭṭa (tenth cent.), Jñāna-śrībhadrā (eleventh cent.), Varadarāja (twelfth cent.), Ānandagiri (thirteenth/fourteenth cent.), Sāyaṇamādhava (also called Vidyāranya, fourteenth cent.), Nṛsiṃhāśrama (sixteenth cent.), Rāmatīrtha, Agnicit Puruṣottama Sarasvatī and Nilakaṇṭha (all belonging to the seventeenth cent.) associate *svabhāvavāda* with the Cārvāka/Lokāyata without, however, adducing any evidence or reason in support of their contention.

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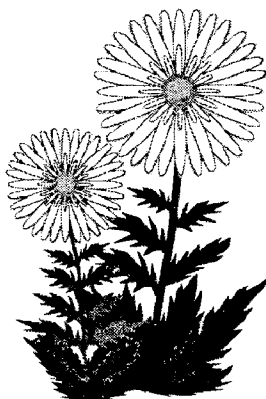
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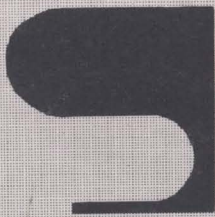
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