

**THE
CONTEMPORANEITY AND THE CHRONOLOGY
OF
MAHĀVĪRA AND BUDDHA**

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

1. *Jain Philosophy and Modern Science*
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5. *Pen Sketch of Acharya Shri Tulsi*
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7. *Glimpses of Terapanth*
8. *Glimpses of Anuvrat*

**THE
CONTEMPORANEITY AND THE CHRONOLOGY
OF
MAHĀVĪRA AND BUDDHA**

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FOREWORD

Historical scholarship in India has made considerable progress, yet many unresolved problems continue to face the students of our past history. Paucity of source material and inadequate assessment of the canonical and other literature have limited the scope and extent of enquiry. For the ancient period of Indian history, in the absence of conventional sources such as chronicles, official records and other documents, our basis of knowledge gets confined to religious writings, literature and epigraphic evidence. These data might provide adequate framework for the understanding of cultural and social developments in that age, but certainly are unable to throw sufficient light on chronology or sequence of events with any preciseness. For this reason even today we are unable to fix the dates of rulers or dynasties precisely, or to indicate definitely the age of leaders of thought and great religious reformers. Because of this handicap, the study of the history of ideas is also considerably affected and it may not be possible always to determine the relationship between one set of ideas and another with any definiteness. This drawback has led to speculations and considerable confusion and vagueness in the interpretation of history of India.

Two mighty movements flourished about the same time in one region and influenced the mind and behaviour of large masses of people both in India and abroad. Their progenitors, Mahavira and Buddha, acquired fame in later ages and have left behind them the two religions, Jainism and Buddhism, which had great impact on the life and thought of the people in India. Yet, unfortunately, our knowledge about them is still meagre and has been derived from not very direct and unimpeachable sources.

Even today there is a mysterious uncertainty about their date of birth and death and the period of their mission. It is largely believed that they were contemporaries and that their field of action was the region of Bihar. But we have no information whether they ever met and what was the attitude of the one towards the other. The philosophy which permeated their teachings is fundamentally the same, yet it is impossible now to say whether one derived inspiration from the other or both of them drew from the same source. If both of them flourished in the same period and their thought had independent origin and growth, then there must have been certain features in the contemporary society which prompted both of them to raise their voice against the common evils. History has to supply answers to these and similar other questions which arise in the mind of an enquiring devotee of the Muse of History.

Muni Shri Nagarajji has presented a well-reasoned analysis of the problem of the contemporaneity of Mahavira and Buddha. He has critically examined the existing theories propounded by foreign and Indian scholars, and on the basis of the evidence contained in canonical literature of the Jains and Buddhists, has come to the conclusion that Mahavira was the senior of the two, who was born earlier, took to his mission earlier and attained the Nirvana earlier than Buddha. His dissertation is full of critical examination and interpretation of established literary evidence. He has drawn upon Jaina source liberally and these have a richness which make them highly valuable for students of history. I congratulate Muniji on his production which I am certain will provoke scientific study of the problem of chronology of social and cultural movements and unfold the sources of inspiration and the socio-economic and other factors which gave them birth. The book fills a gap and will fulfil a great purpose. The learned Muni has brought to bear his erudition, critical

judgement and dispassionate objectivity on the exposition of a difficult problem. It is all the more creditable that he has not allowed his religious bias to affect his conclusions and has relied on logic and concrete evidence in substantiating his point. The book is a distinct contribution to knowledge.

BISHESHWAR PRASAD

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11 May 1967

PREFACE

The philosophical and historical aspects of Jain and Buddhist traditions have been my subject of interest for over a number of years. Some time ago, the editor of *Jaina Bhāratī* received a letter from Śrī Kastur Chandji Banthia, in which he had written : “I was surprised to read in Muni Śrī Nathmalji’s book, *Jaina Darśana ke Maulika Tattva*, that Mahāvīra was older than Buddha. I tried to get it clarified by some evidence but to no avail. Again, Muni Śrī Nagrāji has emphasized this viewpoint in an article entitled ‘Bhagvana Śrī Mahāvīra aur Gautama Buddha,’ in your quarterly, ‘Lord Mahāvīra was older than Gautama Buddha. When Lord Buddha started preaching, Lord Mahāvīra had already done a good deal of work in that field.’

“Lord Mahāvīra lived seventy-two years on this earth, while Gautama Buddha attained the *Nirvāṇa* at the age of eighty. No historian has so far doubted the veracity of these facts. Of course, the question, as to which of the two attained the *Nirvāṇa* first, has aroused fierce controversy amongst historians. If it is agreed that Mahāvīra was older than Buddha, then we have to accept the view that the former predeceased latter. But the late Dr. Hermann Jacobi in the last article of his life ‘The *Nirvāṇa* of Buddha and Mahāvīra and the Contemporary Political Conditions in Magadha’ had conclusively proved by citing the Jaina Āgamas (canons) that Mahāvīra lived some years (probably seven years) even after the *Nirvāṇa* of Buddha. Mahāvīra attained omniscience at the age of forty-two and after that he preached for almost thirty years. On the other hand, Buddha attained enlightenment at the age of thirty-six and *Nirvāṇa* when he was eighty years old. Thus Buddha

in all preached for over a period of forty-four years. Now if, according to Dr. Jacobi, Mahāvīra attained the *Nirvāṇa* seven years later than Buddha, how is it possible that Mahāvīra had already done a good deal of preaching even before Buddha ?

“Relying on the *Uvavai Sutra*, one of the thirty-two canons accepted by the Terapantha Sect, Dr. Jacobi has tried to refute the erroneous theory of some of the Western scholars based on (i) the *Sāmagāma Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, (ii) the *Pāsādika Suttanta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, and (iii) the *Sangītipariyaya Suttanta* of the *Digha Nikāya*. Therefore, the untenable notion of the Terapantha sect stands to scrutiny. It is not without significance that Mahāvīra himself said in the *Bhagavati Sūtra* that he would live for sixteen years after the death of Gośālaka and that the *Mahasilākaṇṭaka* and *Rathamusala* wars were fought by Konika, just after he became the king of Magadha. The first war was spoken of as a ‘finality’ by Gośālaka. Moreover, according to the Buddhists, Buddha attained the *Nirvāṇa* in the eighth year of Ajātsatru’s (Konika’s) reign.

“In spite of all these evidences to the contrary, it is beyond my comprehension how Terapanthis continue to hold to their rigid belief. It verily needs an explanation.... It will be in the fitness of things if you publish an article detailing the evidence and the reasons for the said belief.”

I received this letter during my chaturmasa at Saradarasahara in Vikrama Samvat 2019 (i.e. in 1962). At that time I was extremely busy in my usual literary pursuits and in seasonal festivities. Simultaneously, I was carrying on the onerous responsibility of giving religious instruction to 1500 Jain families of Saradarasahara. The result was that I could not give any serious thought to the above-mentioned letter. However, a copy of the same was sent to Acharya Śrī Tulsi, at Udaipur, by *Jaina Bhārati* quarterly of the Jain Svetambara Terapanthi Maha-

sabha. The Acharya asked for my opinion on the subject. Meanwhile, the pressure of work at my hand decreased and I was able to devote some time to the writing of the present book.

Śrī Banthia has expressed surprise that, in spite of much evidence, the Terāpanthi Sect continues to hold on to its particular opinion. As a matter of fact, it is not at all a question of sectarian belief. None of the fundamental principles or concepts of Terapantha will in any way be violated by accepting Mahāvīra's seniority to Buddha or *vice versa*. The view expressed by Muni Śrī Nathamalji and me, that Māhāvīra was older than Buddha, was based on the Jaina and Buddhist traditions, while Muni Śrī Nathamalji's theory as propounded in his work *Jaina Darśana ke Maulika Tattva*, that Buddha flourished forty years after Mahāvīra, was only an acceptance of someone else's conviction. However, the procedure followed in the present study has been that of unbiased investigation measured on the yardstick of pure historical facts.

The 2500th anniversary of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa* of Lord Buddha, celebrated on the full moon in May 1956, was observed on the basis of chronology as described in the Ceylonese chronicle, *Mahāvamsa*. Though various schools of Buddhism have their different systems of chronology, yet they were in unison to celebrate the festival¹. Interestingly enough, some sects consider the full moon day of the lunar month of *Vaiśākha* to be the day of Buddha's birth, enlightenment and *Nirvāṇa*, while others agree with regard to the day of Buddha's birth and enlightenment but differ from them regarding the day of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*. In their opinion, Buddha attained *Nirvāṇa* on the full moon day of the lunar month of *Kārtika*. In spite of all these differences, almost all the Buddhist countries observed the 2500th anniversary of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*

1. Cf. *2500 Years of Buddhism*, "Foreword" by Dr. Radhakrishnan, p. 1

with great enthusiasm, giving added importance to the universal glory of Buddhism.

According to the traditional *Nirvāṇa era* of Mahāvira, 2500 years from Mahāvira's *Nirvāṇa* will be completed in 1974 A.D. Since no sect or sub-sect of Jainism has any differences regarding the date of the anniversary, it is essential on the part of the whole Jain community to celebrate this occasion in a systematic and well-organized manner.

I would be failing in my duty if I were not to mention the immense help that my colleague Muni Mahendra Kumarji 'Dviteeya' rendered in the writing of the present volume. I also owe a debt of gratitude to Shri Sampat Kumar Gadh-aiya, and Muni Mahendra Kumarji, 'Pratham' for the collection and sifting of valuable material. I am equally grateful to those authors, historians and scholars whose books and articles have been liberally referred to elucidate the present work.

Bhiksu Bodhi Sthala
Rajanagara (Rajasthan)
 27 July 1963

MUNI NAGRAJ

EDITOR'S NOTE

Although Mahāvīra and Buddha shine like two resplendent luminaries on the firmament of Indian history, yet it is surprising that the computation of their contemporaneity and chronology has remained so dim. The complexity of the problem can be easily gauged by the conflicting opinion expressed by renowned scholars. Dr. R.C. Majumdar, Dr. H.C. Raychaudhuri, Dr. K.K. Datta¹ and Dr. Radha Kumud Mookerjee² assert that Mahāvīra was senior to Buddha and attained *Nirvāṇa* before the latter. However, Dr. Hermann Jacobi³ and Jarl Charpentier⁴ hold the contrary view. On the other hand, Dr. Hoernle⁵ and Dr. K.P. Jayaswal⁶ think that Mahāvīra was junior to Buddha but he attained *Nirvāṇa* before the latter.

Much more complicated, in any case, is the problem of the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*, on which historians have frequently commented. Pandit Bhagwan Lal Inderji⁷ places it in the seventh century B.C., while Dr. Vincent A. Smith⁸ and Dr. Radha Kumud Mookerjee⁹ regard this event to be occurring in the sixth century B.C. Dr. R.C. Majumdar, Dr. H.C. Ray-

1. *An Advanced History of India*, Part I, pp. 85-86.

2. *Hindu Sabhyata*, pp. 216—224.

3. Hindi translation of Dr. Jacobi's article in German in *Sramana* (Monthly), Vol. XIII, No. VII, p. 10.

4. *Indian Antiquary* 1914, pp. 195-196; *The Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I, pp. 139-140.

5. *Hastings, Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. I, p. 264.

6. *Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, Vol. XIII, p. 246.

7. Cf. Muni Kalyana Vijayaji, *Vira Nirvana Samvat aura Jaina Kalaganana*, p. 155.

8. *Early History of India*, 46-47.

9. *Hindu Sabhyata*, p. 223.

chaudhuri and Dr. K.K. Datta¹ hold that Buddha attained *Nirvāṇa* in the fifth century B.C. Dr. E.J. Thomas goes to the extent of saying that Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* took place in the fourth century B.C. and in this he has also been supported by a Japanese scholar.² An authoritative scholar of Buddhism, Dr. Rhys Davids, reviewing this subject in *The Cambridge History of India* writes:³ "Unfortunately, even after all that has been written on the subject of the early Buddhist chronology, we are still uncertain as to the exact date of Buddha's death. The date 483 B.C. which is adopted in this history must still be regarded as provisional."

Muni Śri Nagarāji, the author of this volume, has waded through the mass of canonical literature of the Jains and the Buddhists (popularly known as *Āgamas* and *Tripitakas*) to arrive at the contemporaneity of Mahāvīra and Buddha. It is unfortunate that historians had so far ignored these important works and had instead relied on later literary contributions, the veracity of which is doubted. That is why Dr. Vincent A. Smith was constrained to remark in *The Early History of India* : "The sacred books of the Jaina sect, which are still very imperfectly known, also contain numerous historical statements and allusions of considerable value.

"The *Jataka* or birth stories and other books of the Buddhist canons includes many incidental references to the political condition of India in the fifth and the sixth centuries B.C., which although not exactly contemporary with the event alluded to, certainly transmit genuine historical tradition."

1. *An Advanced History of India*, p. 88.

2. Recently Dr. E. J. Thomas has pointed out (*B. C. Law Commemoration Volume*, II, pp. 18-22) that, according to Saravastivadin, Ashoka flourished about a century after Buddha's *Nirvana*. This is even borne out in the Sinhalese chronicles and a Japanese scholar quoted by Thomas places this even in 386 B.C.

3. Vol. I, p. 152.

"The chronicles of Ceylon in the Pāli language, of which the *Dīpavāṃsa* dating probably from the fourth century after Christ, and the *Mahāvāṃsa*, about a century and a half later in date, are the best known, offer several discrepant versions of early Indian tradition, chiefly concerning the Maurya dynasty. These Sinhalese stories, the value of which is sometimes overestimated, demand cautious criticism at least as much as do other records of popular and ecclesiastical traditions."¹

Muni Śrī Nagrājji has also proved that the Ceylonese chronicles have not been used with "cautious criticism." This lack of caution, to say the least, is responsible for the intricacy of the problem. These chronicles show obvious inconsistencies as compared to the original Buddhist canons, the *Tripitakas*. As for example, according to the *Mahāvāṃsa*, Buddha attained *Nirvāṇa* in the eighth year of Ajātaśatru's reign. The historians have accepted this belief without examining it critically. But the events of the life of Buddha, as described in the *Tripitakas*, clearly imply that Ajātaśatru's accession had already taken place during the first twenty years of Buddha's life after his enlightenment. It means that Buddha must have lived at least for another twenty-five years after the accession of Ajātaśatru. For, according to the *Sāmañña-phala Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, Ajātaśatru (King of Magadha) only once called on Buddha² during a "rainy season" passed in Rājagṛha. However, the *Aṭṭhakathā* of the *Anguttara Nikāya* tells us that Buddha passed the second, third, fourth, seventeenth and twentieth "rainy season," after the enlightenment, at Rājagṛha. Of the forty-six "rainy seasons," the remaining twenty-five were spent at Śrāvastī and the last at Vaiśālī. Then, how is it possible that Ajātaśatru's accession took place only seven or eight years before Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* and

1. Pp. 10-12

2. Cf. Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, p. 88,

that he met Buddha only seven or eight years before his *Nirvana*. The Muni in this treatise has given a critical and careful evaluation of such inconsistencies. Though the main object of the present study is to decide “the contemporaneity and chronology of Mahāvīra and Buddha,” the author has also discussed the chronology of kings right from Śiśunāga to Chandragupta Maurya. He has even refuted some of the misconceptions regarding the Nanda period. Not only that, he has also brought into light a number of unknown facts connected with the Jain and Buddhist traditions : Pāvā, where Mahāvīra attained *Nirvāṇa*, is a village situated in North Bihar and not in South Bihar ; Ajātaśatru was a follower of Māhavīra and merely a patron of Buddha ; origin of the schism in the Jain Church resulting in the creation of *Śvetāmbara* and *Digambara* sects.

The exhilaration which I have felt and the knowledge I have gained have, undoubtedly, richly compensated me for the effort involved in the editing of this volume. The task of translating was not an easy one, as there were a number of technical terms in Jainism and Buddhism, which needed a fair amount of explanation. At the same time, I had to study the English rendering of the Jain and Buddhist canons by scholars like Dr. Jacobi, Dr. Rhys Davids, Mrs. Rhys Davids, E.M. Hare, F.L. Woodward, and I.B. Horner.

I thank Muni Śrī Mahendra Kumarji ‘Pratham’ for his valuable guidance in carrying out this work. I am also thankful to Mr. Sohan Lal Gandhi of the Gulabpura High School for his commendable participation in the work of translation.

MUNI MAHENDRA KUMAR ‘DVITEEYA’

7 September 1963

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Man is curious by nature. Curiosity adds to his knowledge and knowledge increases curiosity. In this cycle of knowledge and curiosity lies the boundless joy of life. It is these two that lead unfailingly to truth. When history first took up the question of Mahāvīra and Buddha, the two were regarded as identical by some scholars.¹ Others identified Buddha with Gautma Svāmi, the chief disciple of Mahāvīra.² But a little investigation proved

1. Scholars like Prof. Lassen regarded Buddha and Mahāvīra as identical, because the Jain and Buddhist traditions are almost identical on some points (cf. the *Gaina Sūtras, Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XXII, introduction, p. XIX.)
2. According to the Jains, the chief disciple of their *Tīrhaṅkara* Mahāvīra was called Gautma Svāmi (Ward's *Hindus* II p. 247, and *Colebrooke's Essays*, Vol. II p. 279) or Gautama Indrabhūti, whose identity with Gautama Buddha was suggested both by Dr. Hamilton and Major Delamaine and was accepted by Colebrooke.

“This is what Colebrooke says in his *Essays*, Vol. II p. 276. In the *Kalpa Sūtra* and in other books of the Jains, the first of Mahāvīra's disciples is mentioned under the name of Indrabhūti, but in the inscriptions under that of Gautama Svāmi. The names of the other ten precisely agree, whence it is to be concluded that Gautama, the first one of the first list, is the same with Indrabhūti, the first of the second list. It is certainly probable, as remarked by Dr. Hamilton and Major Delamaine, that the Gautama of the Jains and the Gautama of the Buddhists is the same personage. Two out of eleven disciples of Mahāvīra survived him, viz. Sudharma and Gautama Svāmi. Sudharma's spiritual successors are the Jain priests, whereas the Gautama's followers are the Buddhists.”

—Manmath Nath Shastri, M.A.M.R.A.S., *Buddha : His life, His Teachings, His Order*, 1910 (Second Edition), p. 21-22.

very soon that Mahāvīra and Buddha, though belonging to the same generation and country, were two distinct personalities, the former having lived on this earth for 72 years¹ and latter for 80 years².

Next, curiosity led the people to ask the question : How long did Mahāvīra and Buddha live as contemporaries and who was the older of the two ? This question has drawn the attention of many a thinker and till now numerous efforts have been made to solve it. A good deal of new light has been thrown on it, but the conclusions reached are not indisputable. The various events described in the Jain Āgamas, the Buddhist Tripiṭakas and the historical works, which appear to be inconsistent with one another have led the scholars to diverse conclusions. The classification of the efforts made so far, their critical examination and a humble effort to push the subject to an indubitable stage on the basis of independent thinking, form the subject matter of the present critique (this essay).

1. *Dīgha Nikāya, Mahāparinirvāṇa Sutta*, 2-3-16.

2. *Kalpa Sūtra*, 147.

CHAPTER II

VIEWS OF FOREIGN SCHOLARS

We shall first take up the views of Dr. H. Jacobi.

Dr. Jacobi's First Approach

It was late Dr. Hermann Jacobi, who first took the lead in making a significant effort¹ in this direction. Dr. Jacobi had added greatly to his credit by having translated four of the Jain canons viz. The *Ācārāṅga Sūtra*, the *Kalpa Sūtra*, the *Sūtrakṛtāṅga Sūtra* and the *Uttarādhyayana Sūtra*. These translations were published in two volumes in the *Sacred Books of the East Series*², edited by Max Müller, an outstanding scholar of oriental learning. Besides this, Dr. Jacobi has also rendered other valuable services to Jainism. We owe the credit to him for having brought Lord Pārśva Nātha, the 23rd *Tīrthaṅkara* in the category of historical personalities³. The fallacy prevalent in the field of history that Jainism was nothing but a branch of Buddhism, was also disembroiled mainly by Dr. Jacobi⁴. He also visited India twice in order to be able to get first-

1. Although Dr. Jarl Charpentier first dealt with the subject specially with a view to decide the chronology of Buddha and Mahāvīra, but Dr. Jacobi is responsible for the primary research in this field.
2. There are 50 volumes in this series, out of these the Vol. XXII contains the translations of the *Ācārāṅga Sūtra* and the *Kalpa Sūtra*, and the Vol. XLV contains the translations of the *Sūtrakṛtāṅga Sūtra* and the *Uttarādhyayana Sūtra*.
3. *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XLV, Introduction to the *Jain Sūtras* Part II p. XXI, 1894.
4. *Sacred Books of the East* Vol. XXII, Introduction to the *Jain Sūtras* Part I, pp. IX to XIX, 1884.

hand knowledge of the Jain traditions in vogue. He established direct contact with many Jain Acharyas during his visit to this country.¹

Dr. Jacobi has referred to the controversy about the dates of the *Nirvāṇa* of Mahāvīra and Buddha at two different places and both the descriptions contradict each other. In one review he depicts Mahāvīra as having predeceased Buddha and *vice versa* in the other.

The First Review

His first review appeared in his Introduction to the *Ācārāṅga Sūtra* in 1884. Describing the events associated with the lives of Mahāvīra and Buddha he writes:² “We shall now put side by side the principal events of Buddha’s and Mahāvīra’s lives in order to demonstrate their difference. Buddha was born in Kapilavastu, Mahāvīra, in a village near Vaiśālī ; Buddha’s mother died after his birth, Mahāvīra’s parents lived to see him a grown up man ; Buddha turned ascetic during the life time and against the will of his father, Mahāvīra did so after the death of his parents and with the consent of those in power : Buddha led a life of austerties for 6 years, Mahāvīra for 12 ; Buddha thought these years wasted time, and that all his penances were useless for attaining his end, Mahāvīra was convinced of the necessity of his penances and persevered some of them even after becoming a *Tīrthaṅkara*.

Amongst Buddha’s opponents Gośāla Maṃkhaliputta is by no means so prominent as amongst Mahāvīra’s nor

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1. During his second visit to India (March 1914) he met Acharya Śrī Kālugaṇī, the 8th Acharya of Terapanth Sect and held important discussions with him for three days.
 2. *S.B.E.* Vol. XXII, Introduction, pp. XVII, XVIII.

among the former do we meet “Gāmālī, who caused the first Schism in Jain Church. All the disciples of Buddha bear different names to those of Mahāvīra. To finish this enumeration of differences, Buddha died in Kuśīnagar, whereas Mahāvīra died in ‘Pāvā’, avowedly before the former”.

Dr. Jacobi has absolutely omitted the mention of evidences supporting his belief nor has he reviewed the dates of the birth and death of both. Hence it is difficult to infer his view about the contemporaneity of Mahāvīra and Buddha.

The Date of Mahāvīra's Nirvāṇa

The allusions occurring in both the volumes of the *Jain Sūtras* edited by Dr. Jacobi bear testimony to the fact that he regarded 526 B.C. as the date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*. He writes.¹ “The recordation of the Jains canon or the *Siddhānta* took place, according to the unanimous tradition in the council of ‘Vallabhi’ under the presidency of Devardhi. The date of this event 980 (or 993) A.V.² corresponding to 454 (or 467) A.D. is incorporated in the *Kalpa Sūtra*. (§148).” “This extract confirms the fact that Dr. Jacobi has accepted 526 B.C. as the date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*, for we get 980 and 993 respectively only after adding 454 and 467 to 526. He has repeated the same fact, incidentally, in his introduction to the second volume of the *Jaina Sūtras* edited by him.³ It was written in 1894 A.D. i.e. ten years after the introduction, he wrote the first volume. We come across one more allusion in that introduction which indisputably confirms

1. *S.B.E* Vol. XXII, Introduction, p. XXXVII.

2. A.V. means “after the death of Vira” (i.e., Mahāvīra).

3. *S.B.E*. Vol. XIV, Introduction, p. XI.

526 B.C. as the date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*. Dr. Jacobi writes : "Khaluya Rohagutta of the Kausika Gotra with whom originated the six schisms of the Jains, established *Tairasika Matam* in 544 A.V. (18 A.D.)". Here too, we get 18 A.D. only after subtracting 526 from 544.

The Date of Buddha's Nirvāṇa

Similarly Dr. Jacobi has not referred to any specific date about the birth or death of Buddha in these *Introductions*, but whatever he has written there, even though in different allusions, reflect his idea about the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*. For instance, he writes quoting Max Müller's extract that¹ the latest date of Buddhist canon at the time of the Second Council was 377 B.C." It is an unanimously accepted fact that this Council was held at Vaiśālī, 100 years after the *Nirvāṇa* of Buddha.² It follows that 477 B.C. is the date of Buddha, *Nirvāṇa* in the opinion of Dr. Jacobi on the basis of his concept at that time. If these were the dates of the *Nirvāṇa* of Mahāvīra and Buddha, Mahāvīra was 41 years older than Buddha.

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1. *S.B.E.*, Vol. XLV. Introduction, p. XXXVII, quoted from *S.B.E.* Vol. X, p. XXXII ; *S.B.E.* Vol. XXII, p. XLII.
 2. See *Cullavagga* II, 12-1-1 ; *Buddha Caryā* by Rahul Sankrityayan, p. 556 ; *Political History of Ancient India*, by H.C. Raychoudhuri, (Sixth Edition) 1953. p. 228.

CHAPTER III

DR. JACOBI'S SECOND APPROACH

Dr. Jacobi had made another approach to the problem in his essay entitled as “The *Nirvāna of Mahāvīra and Buddha* published in the 26th issue of a German research magazine in the year 1930. Its Gujrati rendering was published in *Bhārtīya Vidyā*¹ and subsequently its Hindi translation, collected by Shri Kastur Chand Banthia, appeared in *Śramaṇa*², a monthly Hindi Magazine.

The conclusion of this essay is³ that Buddha died in 484 B.C. and Mahāvīra in 477 B.C. It means that Mahāvīra died 7 years after the death of Buddha and the former was fifteen years younger than the latter.

The Last Essay

According to Śri Kastura Chand Banthia,⁴ it was the last essay written by Dr. Jacobi and he has expressed an altered opinion therein. What astounds us is Dr. Jacobi's complete reticence, in this comprehensive essay, about his earlier view and the view he propounded later on, and the reasons that led him to change his opinion. The only thing he says while introducing the essay is⁵: One school of thought says that, in accordance with the historical view passed on to us by tradition and stabilized by evidences,

1. *Bhārtīya Vidyā*, Vol. III, No. I, July, 1944.

2. *Śramaṇa* Vol. XIII, No. VI-VII. 1962.

3. *Ibid.* Vol. XIII. No. VII, p. 10.

4. *Ibid.* Vol, XIII, No. VII, preface to the essay of Dr. Jacobi, p. 9.

5. *Op. cit.*, pp. 9-10.

Gautama Buddha had died many years before Mahāvīra. Another school of thought holds that, on the basis of the allusion found in the Buddhist scriptures, Mahāvīra died perhaps only a little earlier than Buddha. This critique is being written to discover the extent of the truth underlying this obviously discernible contradiction.”

It is worth noting that Dr. Jacobi had already expressed his earlier view in the *introductions* to the volumes edited by him and they were published also during his life time. Nevertheless, why does not he again say his earlier statement in the last essay? It might have happened under some circumstances and we have not to go deep with its complications now. Here we have only to see on what grounds he has based his novel theory and how far they are true. It is beyond doubt that Dr. Jacobi was a profound critic, yet, as the discoverers of truth, it is our duty to examine and re-examine, any fact on various touch-stones, before accepting it.

The Quintessence of Dr. Jacobi's Essay

After studying this essay thoroughly one comes to know that this essay was not written only with reference to the date of *Nirvāṇa* of Mahāvīra and Buddha, but one of the principal objects behind the writing of this essay was to bring to light the contemporary, political and royal conditions. The actual title of this essay, the *Nirvāṇa of Mahāvīra and Buddha and the contemporary Political Condition of Magadha* also signifies the same fact. Also whatever he has written about the dates of the *Nirvāṇa* is not only insufficient to lead the present controversy to a decisive stage, but it is a little unnatural too. The main evidence, which Dr. Jacobi has advanced in support of his renovated belief that Buddha was older than Mahāvīra and that

Mahāvīra survived Buddha by a few years, can be stated as follows :

‘The Jain scriptures furnish us with a further account of the later events connected with the wars fought between Ajātsatru (Koṇika), the king of Magadha and the Vajjis (or Ceṭaka, the king of Vaiśālī), etc. than what the Buddhist scriptures do.

In the Buddhist scriptures, Vassakāra, the Prime Minister of Ajātsatru only lays down a plan of the victory over Vajjis before Buddha, whereas the Jain scriptures bear a picturesque description not only of the *Mahā-Śilā-Kaṇṭaka* war and *Rath-Mūsala* war that took place between Ceṭaka and Koṇika, but also of the demolition of the rampart of Vaiśālī and finally of the victory of the king of Magadha over the Vajjis.’

On the basis of this evidence, Dr. Jacobi concludes,¹ “It proves that Mahāvīra survived Buddha by several years (probably seven years).”

The extent to which the compilers of the scriptures collected contemporary events in the scriptures, depended upon the nature of their selection and needs. Even if we accept that the compilation made by the Jains is more extensive and exhaustive in comparison to that made by the Buddhists, it does not prove that Mahāvīra lived for some years even after the death of Buddha.

Ajātsatru in the Buddhist Piṭakas

It is a fact that the Jain scriptures have recorded more events or reminiscences about Koṇika. This has happened probably because of Koṇika's intimate association with

1. Śrmaṇa, Vol. XIII, No. VII, p. 35.

the Jain religion. According to Dr. Rhys Davids, a distinguish scholar, who carried out a first rate research on the Buddhist literature, however extensive the delineation of Ajātsātru in the Buddhist *Piṭakas* may be, it only proves that he was a mere sympathizer of Buddha, and not a follower. Ajātsātru had once called on Buddha and asked him what the fruits of monkhood were ?¹ With reference to that event Rhys Davids writes.² At the close of the discourse the king is stated to have openly taken the Buddha as his guide in future, and to have given expression to the remorse he felt at the murder of his father. But it is also distinctively stated that he was not converted. There is no evidence that he really, after the moment when his heart was touched, continued to follow Buddha's teaching. He never, so far as we know, waited again either upon the Buddha, or upon any member of the order, to discuss ethical matters. And we hear of no material support given by him to the order during the Buddha's lifetime.

“We are told however, that, after the Buddha's death, he asked (on the ground that he, like the Buddha, was a *Kṣatriya*) for a portion of the relics; that he obtained them; and built a *Stūpa* or burial-mound over them. And though the oldest authority says nothing about it, younger works state that on the convocation of the First Council at Rajagṛaha, shortly after the decease, it was the King who provided and prepared the hall at the entrance to the Saptaparnī cave, where the rehearsal of the doctrine took place. He may well have thus showed favour to the Buddhists without at all belonging to their party. He would only, in so doing, be following the usual habit so

1. Dīgha Nikāya Samannya-phal Sutta, 1—2.

2. *Buddhist India*, pp. 15-16.

characteristic of Indian monarchs, of patronage towards all schools.”

Dr. Radha Kumud Mukherjee, the renowned historian, has also proved on the basis of the *Samannya—phala Sutta* that Ajātsatru was a mere sympathizer, and not a follower of Buddha.¹

Koṇika in the Jain Tradition

According to the Jain tradition, Koṇika was a staunch and devoted follower of Mahāvīra. He went so far as to establish a separate department headed by a special officer exclusively for the purpose of keeping himself informed of the activities of Mahāvīra's daily life. The officer was called *Pravṛttivāduka*, one who speaks of the activities. He was assisted by a number of subordinates, who used to communicate the news to him. The *Pravṛttivāduka* after editing the news, finally conveyed it to king Koṇika.² No sooner³ did king Koṇika receive the news of Mahāvīra's arrival in the suburb of Campā, capital of his state, while sitting in his court assembly, than he stood up

1. Hindu Sabhyatā, P. 191.

2. Tassaṇam Koṇiyassa ekke purise viulakae vihie bhagvau pavittivāue, bhagvau taddevasiyam pavitti ṇivei !

Tassaṇam purisassa bahave aṇegapurisā diṇabhatti bhattaveyaṇā bhagvato pavittivāuya bhagvato taddevasiyam pavittim nivedaṃti !

Aupapātika Sūtra, Samavasaraṇa Adhikāra, 10.

3. Teṇaṃ kālēṇaṃ teṇaṃ samaeṇaṃ koṇie rāyā bhaṃbhasāraputte bāhārīyā uvatthāṇasālāe aṇega gaṇanāyaka damḍanāyaga..... Saddhiṃ samparivuḍe viharai ! Teṇaṃ kālēṇaṃ teṇaṃ samayeṇaṃ Samaṇe bhayavam Mahāvīre.....Suhaṃsuhe Viharaṃaṇe caṃpāeṇayarie bahiyā uvaṇagaragāmaṃ uvāgae ! Campānagarī puṇṇabhadda ceiyam samosariokāme ! Tatteṇaṃ se pavittivāue imise kahāe laddhatthe samaṇe.....campānayarīe majjhaṃmajjheṇaṃ.....jeṇeva koṇiyassaraṇeṇiḥe....jeṇeva koṇiyarāyā bhaṃbhasāraputte teneva uvāgcchai,

Contd. on next page

and came seven or eight steps ahead of the throne, in a blissful state ; in the *uttarasāṅga* position¹ he masked his mouth by a scarf ; and chanting ' *Namotthūṇam*², he said³, 'To thee, O Mahāvīra, who first sowed the seeds of religion in my soul, my religious preceptor, I bow down in reverence from this move place, for thou art yet staying away (in the garden)'' After this, when Mahāvīra had arrived. at Campā, Koṇika also presented himself in the religious assembly of Mahāvīra.⁴ Not only Koṇika had visited Mahāvīra more than once, but also, after Mahāvīra's

uvāgacchittā.....evam vayāsī.....jassañam devānuppiyā damsañṇam
kamkhanti, jassañam devānuppiyā damsañṇam patthanti, jassañam
devā dṛasaṇam abhilaṇṇanti jassañam devā nābhagottassavi savaṇ-
attāe haṭṭhatuṭṭha jāva hiyayā bhavanti seṇam samaṇe bhagavaṇ
Mahāvīre.....campāenayarie uvanagaraṅgāmam uvāgae, caṇ-
pānagarī puṇṇabhaddacceie samāsariākāme ! Taṇṇam devānu-
ppiyāṇam piyataṭṭhāyāe piyaṇi vedemī piyaṇbhe bhavao !
Tatteṇaṇ se Koṇie rāyā bhambhasāraputte tassa pavitti vāuyassa
antie eyayaṭṭham soccāṇisaṇṇamahatṭhatuṭṭhe jāva hiyaye.....
siṇhāsāṇāo abbhūṭṭhe.....egasāḍiya uttarāsamgam karei.....
amjali maulya hatthe tiththayarābhimūhe sattaṭṭha payāi aṇugacitti
.....tikatṭu evam vayāsī.....namotthūṇam arihaṇṭāṇam
.....sappattāṇam.....*Ibid*, 11-18.

1. The *uttarasāṅga* position is the one, in which a Jain layman bows down ; he has to mask his mouth with a scarf, which should be a single piece of cloth without any joints, in order not to kill the lives of air.
2. *Namotthūṇam*, which is also known as *Sakkathuī*, (*Śakrastuti*), is a hymn to pay homage to the *Tirthaṅkaras*. This also indicates that Koṇika was a Jain '*Śrāvaka*'.
3. *Namotthūṇam samaṇassa bhagavao Mahāvīrassa ādīkarassa, titha-karassa Jāva sappāviokāmassa mamadhammaigarassa dhammova-desagassa vaṇḍāmīṇam bhagavaṇ tathagayaṇ ihagate pāsaume bhagavaṇ tathagae iahgayam tikaṭṭu, vaṇḍamīti ṇamam saṇṭi*'.
—*Aupapātika Sūtra, Samavasaraṇa Adhikāra*, 18.
4. *Ibid*, 102—137.

Nirvāṇa, he attended a meeting arranged by Suddharma Svāmi, the immediate successor of Mahāvīra, and put serious questions to him.¹ In addition to these, we find a number of such conclusions in the Jain scriptures, which make it crystal clear that Koṇika was a staunch follower of Mahāvīra and Jain religion.

While, on the other hand, as Rhys Davids writes², “When the king of Magadha, the famous (and infamous) Ajātsatru, made his *only* call upon the Buddha, he is said to have put a puzzle to the teacher to test him.....,” and as we have already quoted Rhys Davids,³ “he (Ajātsatru) never, so far as we know, waited again either upon Buddha or upon any member of the order to discuss ethical matters.....,” Ajātsatru had little inclination towards Buddhism. What opinion, Buddha had for Ajātsatru becomes clear from his own words, he uttered :⁴ “O Bhikṣus ! the king of Magadha Ajātsatru is a friend to, an intimate of, mixed up with, *whatever is evil*.” According to the Buddhist texts, Ajātsatru was, *inter alia*, a parricide, and a supporter of Devadatta, the great schismatic⁵. Again it was Ajātsatru according to the Buddhist canons, who incited by Devadatta, ordered his men to deprive Buddha of his life.⁶

A similar is the case of Ceṭaka, the king of Vaiśālī. He was not only a maternal uncle of Mahāvīra⁷, but also a

1. *Parīṣiṣaṭa Parva of Hema-Candrācārya*, cantos IV v. v. 15—54.

2. *Buddhist India*, p. 88.

3. *Ibid*, pp. 15-16.

4. *Samyukata Nikāya*, 1-81 (*The Book of Kindred Sayings*, Tr. by Mrs. Rhys Davids, Vol. I, p. 109.

5. *Ibid*, vol. I, p. 109.

6. *Vinaya Piṭaka, Culla Vagga*, VII 3-6 (*The Book of Discipline*, Tr. by I.B. Horner, vol. V, p. 268). Cf. also “*Shri Chand Rampuria*” in chapter V of this Book.

7. *Āvaśyaka Cūrṇi*, part 1, leaf 245.

staunch follower of Mahāvīra¹. The Buddhist *Tripiṭakas* do not even mention the name of Ceṭaka, though they bear a long description of the Vajjis². Dr. Jacobi, himself, has observed³ that the reason of taciturnity of the Buddhist canonical texts about Ceṭaka is that Buddha's rival (*i.e.* Mahāvīra) was benefited by the great influence of Ceṭaka and that the Jains give respect to Ceṭaka, the maternal uncle of Mahāvīra, because Vaiśālī became a strong supporter of Jainism on account of Ceṭaka, whereas the Buddhists call it (Vaiśālī) a 'monastery of heretics'. Hence, if, according to Dr. Jacobi, the Jain *Āgamas* bear more extensive account of the events concerning Koṇika and Ceṭaka than the Buddhist *Tripiṭakas*, its natural and consistent reason is that they (Koṇika and Ceṭaka) were eminent disciples of Mahāvīra and Jain religion and 'heretics' in the view of Buddha and not, as Dr. Jacobi has inferred, that Mahāvīra survived Buddha. Dr. Jacobi's inference is based only on misunderstanding and misinterpretation, for we find that the Buddhist *Tripiṭakas* are replete with many such brilliant and candid descriptions, which show that Mahāvīra predeceased Buddha, while the Jain *Āgamas* say nothing about Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*.

In the light of the aforesaid discussion, the true inference should have been that Mahāvīra attained the *Nirvāṇa* before Buddha and Buddha later than Mahāvīra, for the Jain scriptures maintain no record of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* and the Buddhist scriptures distinctly state that Mahāvīra died earlier than Buddha. The greatest flaw in

1. *Ibid*, uttarārdha, leaf 164 ; *Triṣaṣṭiśālākāpuruṣa Caritra* of Hema-Candrācārya, parva, X, cantos VI, v. 183 ; *Upadeśamāla*, (with commentary) leaf 238 ; *Uttarapurāṇa*, p. 483.
2. *Dīgha Nikāya*, *Mahā-Pārinivvāṇa Sutta*.
3. *S.B.E.*, (Vol. XXII, Introduction, p. XIII.

Dr. Jacobi's essay is that he has striven to prove *the three allusions of the Buddhist Tripiṭakās* which refer to Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*¹, false and fictitious with a view to stabilize his own farfetched interpretation. He says that² as these allusions occur in varying forms at different places, they are not credible. On the other hand, he also says that³ despite the variance in these allusions, they have one and the same objective in common, viz. giving the order of monks a message of love and unity by referring to Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* indirectly. It is worth noting that in spite of these three allusions being slightly variant from one another, the reference to Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* in all of them remains absolutely the same. The compilers of the scriptures might have embellished the prefaces with whatever style they choose, but it would be entirely unreasonable to think that they might have gone so far as to commit a blunder of calling, living Mahāvīra dead one.

Pāvā, the Place of Mahāvīra's Nirvāṇa ?

Another argument placed forth by Dr. Jacobi in this context is that the city Pāvā depicted as the place of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* in the Buddhist scriptures lay in the land of Mallas, where Buddha sojourned in his last days, whereas in accordance with the traditional belief of the Jains, Mahāvīra attained the *Nirvāṇa* in another Pāvā, situated near Rājagṛha in Patna district. Hence, like the fictitious Pāvā, according to Dr. Jacobi, the whole story of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* seems to be nothing but a mere fabri-

1. See, for these allusions, 'The Event of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* in Buddhist Tripiṭakās' in chapter VII of this Book.

2. *Śramaṇa*, Vol. XIII, No. VI, pp. 14-15.

3. *Ibid*, p. 15.

cation. Dr. Jacobi also holds that¹ it is not justifiable to doubt the Jain traditions about the sacred place of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*. Even if we may assume that the Buddhists had made this mistake on account of the identical name of Pāvā allotted by them, for such mistakes are liable to be committed, it can not be interpreted that the whole story about Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* is completely forged. As a matter of fact, Dr. Jacobi's caution against our expressing even the slightest possible doubt regarding the Pāvā accepted in the Jain tradition, has not only been rendered dubious on historical grounds, but it has also become baseless.

Often there happens to be a striking contrast between history and tradition. The traditional Kṣatriyakunḍa situated near Lichchhuad is supposed to be the birth-place of Mahāvīra but the research carried into it by modern history has proved it wholly un-authentic. According to the historical concept, the village Basādh, situated in Mujjaffarpur District, 27 miles away to the North of Patna is no other than the Kṣatriyakunḍa, the birth-place of Mahāvīra. Thus the traditional birth-place lies far off to South of the Ganges, while the historically accepted place is situated to the North of the Ganges.

So is the case of Pāvā. Traditionally accepted Pāvā lies in the South Bihar and the splendid temples standing there have made it to be the place of pilgrimage for the Jains. But history does not share the belief that it is the true place of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*. According to the modern view, the Pāvā of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* should be in the North of the Ganges, for the 18 kings of the republics of Mallas and Licchavis were present in Pāvā at the time of

1. *Ibid*, p. 16.

Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*¹, and this can be more true only with regard to the Pāvā, situated in the North of the Ganges, since their kingdom lay stretched towards the North side, while the Pāvā situated in the South of the Ganges (near Rājagṛha), lay entirely in the land of their enemy Ajātsatru, the king of Magadha. How could they be expected to be present in the land of their sworn enemy? Many thinkers and historians such as Pt. Rahul Sankrityayana,² Dr. Rajbali Pandey,³ M.A. D. Litt, Nathuram Premi,⁴ Dr. Nalinakṣa Dutt⁵, Shri Ranjan Suri Deo⁶, Shri Shrichand Ramपुरia⁷ Acharya Vijyendra Suri,⁸ etc. have confirmed this fact. All of them agree to the fact that Mahāvīra had died in the Pāvā of Mallas, that this Pāvā should be on the North of the Ganges⁹ and that the Pāvā situated in the South of the Ganges (near Rājagṛha in Patna district) and tradi-

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1. *Kalpa Sūtra*, 128 ; cf, *S.B.E.* Vol. XXII.
 2. *Darśana Digdarśana*, p 444n.
 3. *Bhagwāna Mahāvīra kī Nirvāṇa Bhūmi Pāvā kī Sthiti*, an artical In *Mahāvīra commemoration volume*, Vol I 1948-49, pp 45-9, and *Bhārtiya Itihāsa kī Bhūmikā* (Prācīn Bhārata), part I, p. 83.
 4. *Jain Sāhitya Aura Itihāsa*, p. 189.
 5. *Uttara Pradeśa Mem Buddha Dharma kā Vikāsa*, p. 10.
 6. *Śramaṇa*, Vol. XIII, no. VI. p. 26.
 7. *Jaina Bhāratī*, Vol. Jan. 1951 p. 17.
 8. *Vaiśālī*, pp. 85-87.
 9. Pt. Rahul Sankrityanaya identifies it with the present Papahura, a village near Ramkola Rly. station in Gorakhpur Distt. (*Loc. cit.*) ; Cuunningham identifies it with Padarauna in Devaria Distt ; while Dr. Rajbali Pandey (*cf. op. cit.* pp. 47-8) and Acharya Vijayendra Suri (*cf. op cit.* pp. 85-7) refute both these views on the basis of the geographical reasons and identify Pāvā, the place of Nirvāṇa with the ruins of Sathiyāmva Fazilanagara, 9 miles south east of Kuśīnagara in Meveria District. They have corroborated their views by quoting an archaeologist named Karlayle, who, on the basis of his archaeological survey, had identified Pāvā with the above place.

tionally believed to be the place of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* has erroneously been adopted by the Jains, being oblivious of the true Pāvā.

Thus, it becomes clear that the Pāvā, on the basis of which Dr. Jacobi rejects the Buddhist allusion about Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* by ascertaining them as false and unreal, happens to be the historically accepted Pāvā and confirms the authenticity of those allusions.

Āgamas and Tripiṭakas in Relation to the Contemporary Conditions.

Dr. Jacobi's view that the Jain Āgamas give a more comprehensive account of the contemporary conditions than what the Buddhist *Tripiṭakas* do, is also not trustworthy for, the events cited by Dr. Jacobi are not all contained in the original *Āgamas*. The whole event of "The victory over vaiśālī which ensued after the *Mahāśilā-Kaṇṭaka* war and the *Ratha-Mūsala* war and wherein the monk Kūlavālaya became the cause of the demolition of the ramparts of Vaiśālī, has been quoted by Dr. Jacobi himself from a later Jain work, *Āvaśyaka Kathā*. The *Āgamas* and the *Tripiṭakas*, which are the original canonical texts of the Jains and the Buddhists respectively, in fact, do not differ much regarding the description of the contemporary political conditions. Now, if we consider the later works of both traditions, the work of the Buddhist traditions like *Mahāvamśa* contain as much vivid descriptions as we find in those of the Jain traditions. *Mahāvamśa* contains even the chronology of the kings up to Aśoka¹. This by no means testifies to the fact that Buddha died later than Mahāvīra.

1. *Mahāvamśa, Pariccheḍa*, IV-V.

The Date of Mahāvīra's Nirvāṇa

Dr. Jacobi regards 477 B.C. as the date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* and 484 B.C. as that of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*. But he refrains from giving any specific indication throughout his essay why it became inevitable for him to accept these dates. He simply says¹, "Though according to the unanimous traditions of the Jains, Candragupta's accession took place 215 years A.V. (after the death of Mahāvīra), in accordance with the view propounded by Hemacandra, (*Parīṣiṣṭa Parva*, 8-339) Candragupta acceded to the throne 155 A.V." Dr. Jacobi has supported his view by citing another Jain work, *Kahāvalī*, of Bhadreśvara.

Now, the fact is that, as stated by Dr. Jacobi, it is unanimously accepted in all the Jain traditions that Candragupta's accession took place only 215 years after the *Nirvāṇa* of Mahāvīra² and not 155 years, as accepted by Ācārya Hemacandra³. The view of Ācārya Hemacandra would prove baseless, if tested on the touchstone of history. Also, the scholars have regarded it as a great blunder committed by Ācārya Hemacandra. The most substantiated opinion in this regard is that,⁴ a king named Pālaka was enthroned at Ujjain the very day on which Mahāvīra attained the *Nirvāṇa*. He (or his dynasty) reigned for 60 years. After this, Nandas ruled for 155 years. Then ensued the Mauryan rule, that is to say Candragupta Maurya was enthroned 215 years after the death of Mahāvīra. This allusion has been extracted from

1. *Op. cit.* p. 10.

2. See, "*Date of Mahāvīra's Nirvāṇa*" in Chapter VII of this book.

3. *Evam ca śrī Mahāvīramuktervarṣaśate gate !*

Pañc pñcasadadhike Candragupto bhavennṛpaḥ !!

—*Parīṣiṣṭa Parva*, VIII, V. 339.

4. *Titthogālī Painnaya*, 620-21.

'*Titthogālī Painnaya*, which is supposed to be much older than both the books viz. *Kahāvalī* of Bhadrēśavara and *Parīṣiṣṭa Parva* of Hemacandra.

It seems that the period of 60 years of the reign of Pālaka has completely been omitted in the calculation of Hemacandra's *Parīṣiṣṭa Parva*. Mr. Purna Chandra Nahar, M.A., B.L., M.S., and Mr. Krishna Chandra Gosh, Vedantachintamani write¹, "Hem Chandra-charaya must have omitted by oversight to count the period of 60 years of King Pālaka after Mahāvīra's Nirvāṇa."¹

Dr. Jacobi has edited *Parīṣiṣṭa Parva*². He has observed in the preface to it that Hemacandrācārya had composed that work in haste, as a consequence of which the work is studded with errors. Elaborating the subject in the preface itself, Dr. Jacobi has illustrated several compositional and grammatical errors comitted by Hemacandra with concrete evidences. It is quite probable that the verse on the basis of which Dr. Jacobi has inferred the date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*, might have also been composed with the same carelessness. The date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* accepted by Hemacandrācārya himself, while stating the period of his own contemporary king Kumārapāla is 527 B.C., and not 477 B.C. Hemacandrācārya writes in *Triṣaṣṭīśa-lakāpurūscaritra*³ : "When 1669 years will have been completed after the death of Mahāvīra, there will flourish a king named Kumārapāla who will shine like a moon of Caulu-

1. *Epitome of Jainism*, Appendix A, IV.

2. Published by Asiatic Society, Calcutta.

3. Asmin nirvāṇato varṣaśatyā (tā) nyāmayaṣoḍaśa !
Navaṣaṣṭīśca yāsyanti yadā tatra pure tadā !!
Kumārapālābhūpālo, caulukyakula—candramāḥ !
Bhaviṣyati mahābāhuḥ pracandakhaṇḍaśāśanaḥ !!

—*Triṣaṣṭīśalakāpurūṣacaritra*, parva X cantos XII, vv. 45—46

kya dynasty." Now it is unanimously accepted that Kumārapāla's accession took place in 1142 A.D.¹ But according to Hemacandrācārya, the interval between this event and the date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* is 1669 years. In this way, Hemacandrācārya himself has also accepted 1669—1142=527 B.C., as the date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*.

The Date of Buddha's Nirvāṇa

Dr. Jacobi regards 484 B.C., as the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*, for according to him², "The southern Buddhists hold that Candragupta's accession took place 162 years after the death of Buddha. And the uncontroversial date of Candragupta's enthronement is 322 B.C. Hence (322+162)=484 B.C. is the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*." The fact regarding Candragupta's accession gleaned by Dr. Jacobi referring to the tradition of Southern Buddhists is taken from the Ceylonese chronicle—*Mahāvamsā*³. But

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1. *An Advanced History of India* by R.C. Majumdar, H.C. Raychaurdhuri, and K.K. Datta, p. 202.
 2. *Śāramaṇa*, vol. XIII No. VI. p. 10.
 3. Ajātasattuputto tam, ghātetvādāyabhaddako !
 Rajjam solasavassāni, kāresi mittadubbhiko !! 1 !!
 Udayabhaddaputto tam, ghātetvā anuruddako !
 Anuruddhassa putto tam, ghatevā muṇḍanāmako !! 2 !!
 Mittadduno dummatino, te pi rajjam akārayum !
 Tesam ubhinnam rajjesu, aṭṭhavassānatikkamum !! 3 !!
 Muṇḍassa putto pitaram, ghātefavā nāgadāsako !
 Catuvīsati vassāni, rajjam kāresi pāpako !! 4 !!
 Pitughātakavamsosyam, iti kuddhātha nāgarā !
 Nāgadāsakarājānam, apnetvā samāgatā !! 5 !!
 Susunāgoti paññātam amaccam sādhu saṁmatam !
 Rajje samabhisiñcisum, savvesim hitamānasā !! 6 !!
 So aṭṭhārassa vassāni rājā rajjam akāryi ; !
 Kālāsoko tassa putto aṭṭhavisati kāryi : !! 7 !!

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on one hand the *Mahāvamśa* state that Candragupta's accession took place 162 years after Buddha's death, while on the other hand it shows 543 B.C. as the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*.¹ Dr. Jacobi, too has hold it as the most popular date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* accepted by the traditions². Now if *Mahāvamśa* considering 543 B.C. as the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*, places Candragupta's enthronement 162 years after the death of Buddha, we get 381 B.C. as the date of Candragupta's accession. But it does not agree with the uncontroversial historical data of Candragupta's accession viz. 322 B.C. Hence, it is obvious that the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* fixed by Dr. Jacobi on the basis of the suspicious evidence of *Mahāvamśa*³ is not compatible.

Inconsistencies

The acceptances of the date of the *Nirvāṇa* of Mahāvīra

Atīte dasame vasse, kālāsokassa rājino !

Sambuddha parinivvāṇā, evam vassasatam ahu !! 8 !!

—*Mahāvamśa*, *Pariccheda*, IV, 1—8

Kālāsokass puttā tu, ahesum dasa bhātukā !

Dvāvisati te vassāni, rajjam samanūsāsīsū !! 14 !!

Nava naṃdātatoāsū, kameneva narādhipā !

Tepi dvāvīsa vassāni, rajjam samanūsāsīsū !! 15 !!

Moriyaṇam khatiyaṇam vanaṣe jātam sirīdharam !

Candaguttoti pañātam, cāṇakko brāhmaṇe tatto !! 16 !!

Navamam dhananamdam tam, ghātetvā caṇḍakodhavā !

Sakale jambudīpamsmim, rajje samabhi siñciso !! 17 !!

—*Mahāvamśa*, *Pariccheda*, V, vv. 14—17.

1. Cf. *Political History of Ancient India*, by Dr. H.C. Raychaudhuri, p. 225 ; *Bhārata Kā Itihāsa*, by Prof. Shrinetra Pandey, Part I, (4th edition), p. 243.
2. *Op. cit.* p. 10.
3. It may be noted here that the chronology discribed in *Mahāvamśa* the ceylonese chronicle has been found, in general, to be erroneous on historical tests ; see, for the detailed discussion of this, '*Inconsistencies in Ceylonese Chronology*' in chapter I of this book.

and Buddha inferred by Dr. Jacobi also gives rise to many inconsistencies. In the *Bhagavati Sūtra*, Gośālaka speaks of eight finalities in his last days and *Mahāśilā-Kaṇṭaka* war was also one of them¹. We deduce from it that Gośālaka died after the *Mahāśilā-kaṇṭaka* war had taken place. Again seven days before the death of Gośālaka, Mahāvīra had announced². "I shall remain alive yet 16 years from today without any hinderance like a supremely puissant elephant." In other words, even if we assume that *Mahāśilā-Kaṇṭaka* war broke out immediately after Koṇika's accession to the throne, there elapsed at least 17 years between Koṇika's accession and Mahāvīra's death. But this, by no means, goes beyond 15 years, according to the date fixed by Dr. Jacobi.³ Another inconsistency arising from Jacobi's findings becomes clear from the following event described in Jain literature :

Once⁴ upon a time, the king Śreṇika asked Mahāvīra:

1. Tassaviṇa vajjassa pacchāṇaṭṭhāimāim aṭṭha carimaim paṇṇavei, tamjahā—carime pāṇe, charime geye, carime ṇaṭṭe, carime añjalikamme, carime pokkhalassa sam-vaṭṭae mahāmehe, carime seyaṇae gandhahatthi, carime Mahāśilā Kamṭae Sāmgāme. —*Bhagvati Sūtra*, *Śataka*, XV.
2. Taṇṇam samaṇe bhagvam Mahāvīre Gośālam mamkhliputtam evam vayāsi—no khalu aham, Gosālā! Tava taveṇa teeṇam anāṭṭhe samāṇe anto chaṇṇam māsāṇam jāvakālam krissāmi! Ahāṃ ṇam aṇṇāim solasavassāim jiṇe suhatthi viharissāmi." *Ibid*, *Śataka*. XV.
3. For, taking 484 B.C., as the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*, Koṇika's accession, which according to Dr. Jacobi took place 7 or 8 years before the *Nirvāṇa* of Buddha, falls in 491-2 B.C., and the date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* is 477 B.C. Hence, the maximum possible interval is 15 years.
4. *Punarvijñāpayāmāsa Jinendram magdhādhipaḥ !
Bhagvan kevaljñānam kasmin uvycchedameṣyati !!*

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“Who will be the last *Kevalin* (omniscient)?” Mahāvīra, answering the king’s question, said to him : “On the seventh day from today, this good named Vidyunmālī, will be conceived in the womb of the wife of Ṛṣabhadatta, a businessman in your city Rājagṛha. That child will be named as Jambū-Kumāra, and he will be the last *Kevalin*.”

Now, all the Jain traditions unanimously accept the fact that when Jambū-Kumāra was 16 years old, he was initiated into monkhood by Sudharmā Svāmi¹ the successor of Mahāvīra, in the same year in which Mahāvīra died.² This means that Jambū-Kumāra was conceived in the womb of his mother nearly 17 years before the *Nirvāṇa* of Mahāvīra. At that time, king ‘Śreṇika’ was alive. But as we have seen, the reign of Koṇika began more than 16 years before the *Nirvāṇa* of Mahāvīra. Therefore, we infer that the end of ‘Śreṇika’s’ rule and the beginning of Koṇika’s rule took place nearly 17 years before the *Nirvāṇa*

*Nāthapyakathayat paśya vidyunmālī surohyasau !
 Sāmāniko brahmendrasya caturdevī Samāvyṛtaḥ !!
 Ahnomuṣmāt saptamehni cyutvā bhāvī pure tava !
 Śreṣṭhi-rṣabhadattasya Jambū hutrontyakevalī !!
 — Pariśiṣṭa Parva, cantos I, vv. 262-64.*

1. *Sudharmā Svāminah pādānāpādambhodhitārakān !
 Pañcāṅgasprṣṭa-bhūpiṭhaḥ sa praṇmya vyajijñapat !!
 Saṁsārasāgaratarim pravajyām parmeśvara !
 Mama sasvajansyāpi dehi dhehi kṛpām mayi !!
 Pañcamah śrigaṇadharo pyevamabhyarthitastadā !!
 Tasmai saparivārāya dadau dikṣāṁ yathāvidhi !!
 Ibid, cantos III, vv. 287-89.*
2. The total age of Jambu Svāmi was 80 years, out of which 16 years were spent in the household life, the next 20 years as a monk in non-omniscient stage, and the last 44 years in the omniscient stage. Also, he attained the *Nirvāṇa* 64 years after Mahāvīra’s *Nirvāṇa*. It means that he was initiated into monkhood in the same year in which Mahāvīra attained the *Nirvāṇa*.

of Mahāvīra. But, the chronology proposed by Dr. Jacobi, allow a maximum interval of 15 years between these events. In this way the acceptance of these dates involves many objections.

Conclusion

The opinion that Mahāvīra attained the *Nirvāṇa* in 527 B.C. has remained almost uncontroversial and unique. No date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* has been taken to be so indubitable. A number of opinions about the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* were in vogue in ancient time and they continue to exist even now.¹ Nevertheless, in this essay, Dr. Jacobi has gone so far as to ascertain (484 B.C.), the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* as almost unique and has tried to reconcile the events of Mahāvīra's life with it through far-fetched interpretations. By doing so, Dr. Jacobi has stirred up a new polemic with regard to the contemporaneity of Mahāvīra and Buddha. The view expressed by Dr. Jacobi has also been rendered obsolete for more than 33 years have elapsed since what he wrote.² In the mean time history has also renovated and modified to a very great extent. Hence it will not at all be reasonable to accept Dr. Jacobi's findings as final.

Pandit Sukh Lal ji and Other Scholars

Some thinkers of our age have accepted Dr. Jacobi's view regarding the chronology of Mahāvīra and Buddha. The famous Jain scholar Pandit Sukh Lal ji writes:³ "Prof. Jacobi has found out on the basis of a comparative study

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1. See, *Traditional Dates of Buddha's Nirvāṇa*, in chapter VII of this book.
 2. The essay of Dr. Jacobi was published originally in 1930.
 3. *Darśana Aura Cintana*, Part II, pp. 47, 48.

of the Jain and the Buddhist texts in the light of history that Mahāvīra attained the *Nirvāṇa* decidedly certain years later than Buddha. Jacobi has made it clear by his deep research work that the war of the Licchavis and the Vajjis with Koṇika took place only after Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* and during the life-time of Mahāvīra. For, the description of the war is found only in the Jain Scriptures, though the Licchavis and the Vajjis are mentioned in both the Jain and the Buddhist texts."

The above quotation shows that Pt. Sukh Lal ji has accepted Dr. Jacobi's view as it is. He has not deliberated over the subject independently. Often we all do so, when a particular subject is not ours or when we do not get an occasion to go deep into it, we generally accept the view of some scholar of that subject regarding it. It is also quite natural that many scholars are required to solve many problems. There is, then, always a mutual exchange of views between the different scholars of different subjects.

Pt. Sukh Lal ji has given importance to two things—one is that while the Buddhist scriptures do not bear any description of the war of the Vajjis with Koṇika, the Jain Scriptures do. But, as we have already discussed, this is not at all important in deciding the present issue.

The other thing is that the above war was precedent to the *Nirvāṇa* of Buddha and antecedent to that of Mahāvīra. This view is based on the general belief that the *Mahā-Parinivvāṇa Sutta* contains only those events of Buddha's life that happened in his last days. The first event referred to by this *Sutta*, is the meeting of Vassakāra, the chief minister of the king Ajātsatru (Koṇika) with Buddha. Their, Vassakāra lays forth a plan of victory over the Vajjis before Buddha. This event, therefore, is believed to have been associated with the last days of Buddha.

That most of the events described in the *Mahā-Parinivvāṇa Sutta*, are connected with the last days of Buddha's life is understandable, but that all the events contained in above *Sutta* are so, can not be accepted as a fact. It is to be noted that Sāriputta's conversation with Buddha is also one of the subjects of the *Mahā-Parinivvāṇa Sutta*,¹ whereas

1. The following is the translation of that chapter of the *Mahā-parinivvāṇa Sutta* :

"Now, when the Blessed one had stayed as long as was convenient at Ambalatthikā, he addressed the venerable Ānanda, and said : Come Ānanda, let us go on to Nalandā."

"So be it Lord !" said Ānanda, in assent, to the Blessed one.

Then the Blessed one proceeded, with a great company of the brethren of Nalandā, and there at Nalandā, the Blessed one stayed in the Pavarika mango grove.

Now the venerable Sāriputta came to the place where the Blessed one was, and having saluted him, took his seat respectfully at his side and said : "Lord ! Such faith have I in the Blessed one, that me thinks there never has been, nor will there be, nor is there now any other, whether Samaṇa or Brahmana, who is greater and wiser than the Blessed one, that is to say, as regards the higher wisdom."

"Grand and bold are the words of thy mouth, Sāriputta ! Verily, thou hast burst forth in a song of ecstasy ! Of course then thou hast known all the Blessed ones who in the long ages of the past have been Arahāt Buddhas, comprehending their minds with yours, and aware what their conduct was, what their doctrine, what their wisdom, what their mode of life, and what salvation they attained to ?"

"Not so, O Lord !"

"But at last then, O Sāriputta ! thou knowest me as the Arhat-Buddha now alive, and hast penetrated my mind (in the manner I have mentioned)."

"Not even that, O Lord !"

"You see then, Sāriputta ! that you know the hearts of the Arahāt Buddhas of the past and of the future. Why, therefore, are your words so grand and bold ? Why do you burst forth into such a song of ecstasy ?"

"O Lord ! I have not the Knowledge of the heart of the Arahāt Buddhas that have been, and are to come, and now are. I only know the

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it is unanimously believed that Sāriputta, had died long before Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*.

The fact appears to be that Vassakāra had called on Buddha, when, after *Maha-Silā-Kaṇṭaka* and the *Ratha-Mūsala* wars, Koṇika had besieged the city of Vaiśālī, and he and his minister had been further devising the various plans to devastate the walls of Vaiśālī. This belief is also substantiated by the fact that according to the Jain sources, Koṇika was advised to employ the insidious strategies to enable him to enter into the city of Vaiśālī and also according to the Buddhist Scriptures, Vassakāra, the chief minister of Ajātaśatru, after having talked with Buddha and having

lineage of the faith just, Lord ! as a king might have a border city, strong in its foundations, strong in its ramparts and *torāṇas*, and with one gate alone ; and the king might have a watchman there, clever, expert, and wise, to stop all strangers and admit only friends. And he, on going over the approaches all round the city, might not so observe all the joints and crevices in the ramparts of that city as to know where even a cat could get out. That might well be. Yet all living things of larger size that entered or left the city, would have to do so by that gate. Thus only is it, Lord, that I know the lineage of the faith. I know that the Arhat Buddhas of the past putting away all lust, ill will, sloth, pride, and doubt; knowing all those mental faults which make men weak; training their minds in the four kind of mental activity, thoroughly exercising themselves in the sevenfold higher wisdom, received the full fruition of Enlightenment. And I know that the Arahāt Buddhas of the times to come will (do the same). And I know that the Blessed one the Arahāt Buddha of today, has (done so) now."

Tr. by T. W. Rhy Davids, *Buddhist Sutta the Sacred Books of the East Series*, Vol. X, pp. 12-14.

The renowned Buddhist Scholar Rahul Sankrityayana commenting on this chapter of *Mahā-Parinivāṇa-Sutta* writes that the name of Sāriputta has been referred to here on account of the error committed by the *Bhānakas* (the persons who used to learn the Scriptures by heart) *Buddha Caryā*, p. 525). If we suppose so, can it not be probable that the whole event of Vassakāra is also compiled in the *Mahā-Parinivāṇa-Sutta* only erroneously ?

known about the invincibility of the Vajjis, decided to play the crooked trick of *bribing* the Vajjis, and thus creating a rupture in their unity.

In the same way, both the traditions consider the honour paid by the Vajjis to the *stūpas* and temples standing inside the walled city, to be the chief cause of their impregnability.

In the Jain source¹, it has been said that as long as the *stūpa* of *Mallinātha* remained standing, Koṇika would not be able to win Vaiśālī. According to the Buddhist text², Buddha says to Ānanda “.....so long as the Vajjis honour and esteem and revere and support the Vajjian shrines in town and country and allow not the proper offerings and rites, as formerly given and performed, to fall into destitute.....may the Vajjins be expected not to decline, but to prosper.” Then he addressed Vassakāra, the Brahmana, and said, “So long as those conditions shall continue to exist among the Vajjins,.....so long may we expect them not to decline but to prosper”.

There are many more such points which make it crystal clear that the opinion of Dr. Jacobi that Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* was antecedent to the Vaiśālī war, is not correct.

We find that like Pt. Sukh Lal ji the scholars such as Kasturmalji Banthia have accepted Dr. Jacobi's view firmly, but this has happened only on account of their partial consideration.

Dr. Charpentier

Another independent effort to solve the present enigma

1. *Āvaśyaka Kathāṅka*.

2. *Mahā Parinivvāṇa Sutta*, Tr. By T.W. Rhys Davids ; S.B.E. Vol. XI, p. 3.

was made by Dr. Jarl Charpentier in 1914¹ (i.e. in between the first and the second approaches of Dr. Jacobi.) Dr. Charpentier's conclusion is that Mahāvīra attained the *Nirvāṇa* after Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*. According to him, the dates of the *Nirvāṇa* of Buddha and Mahāvīra are 477 B.C. and 467 B.C. respectively. Dr. Charpentier's conclusion is mainly based on the following two assumptions : 1. Buddha died in 477 B.C. 2. Pāvā, the place of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*, is different from Pāvā recorded in the Buddhist *Piṭakas*. Now we find that these two fundamental notions have totally changed in the course of historical investigations. In past, at some time, 477 B.C. was considered by the historians to be the exact date of Buddha's decease. But in the modern history, the above date has no place at all. Secondly, Dr. Charpentier has tried to falsify the Buddhist account of the predecease of Mahāvīra on the basis that Mahāvīra died at Pāvā in South Bihar, whereas the Buddhist texts speak of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* at Pāvā in North Bihar. But, as we have seen, almost all the modern scholars and historians are of the view that Pāvā situated in North Bihar, is the true place of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*². Dr. Jacobi has quoted in his second approach, the above belief of Dr. Charpentier in support of his own view, but it is remarkable that Dr. Jacobi has not accepted the date of Mahāvīra's and Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*, proposed by Dr. Charpentier. Actually it seems that the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* which was popularly accepted in the history at the time of Dr. Charpentier's writing was made by Charpentier the basis of his research work. Sixteen

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1. *Indian Antiquary*, 'The date of Mahāvīra' Vol. XLIII, 1914, pp. 118 ff. 125 ff. 167 ff.
 2. See, 'Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* in which Pāvā', in the Chapter III of this book.

years after this, when Dr. Jacobi made his second approach, the historical view regarding the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* had undergone a change, and hence, Dr. Jacobi accepted the new date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*. But we should not forget that Dr. Jacobi's second approach has become nearly thirty-two years old, and that during this long period new views about the chronology of Mahāvīra and Buddha, have come to light in the field of history. It is, therefore, necessary to reconsider the whole issue in the light of the new facts.

CHAPTER IV

Dr. K. P. JAYASWAL

A renowned historian and editor of the *Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, Dr. K.P. Jayaswal has made a remarkable effort to solve this problem.¹ Dr. Jayaswal's view on the present subject, in short, can be summarised thus : The allusions about Mahāvīra's death found in the Buddhist texts should not be neglected. According to the *Sāmagāma Sutta*, Buddha had heard about Mahāvīra's death in his life-time and the popular belief is that Buddha died two years after this event. According to the Southern Buddhists, Buddha died in 544 B.C. Therefore, Mahāvīra should have attained the *Nirvāṇa* in 546 B.C.

Mahāvīra's Nirvāṇa and Vikramāditya

In order to reconcile this date (546 B.C.) of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* Dr. Jayaswal has tried to give a new interpretation to the traditional belief that Vikramāditya flourished 470 years after Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*. Dr. Jayaswal's argument is² : "The view of the Jain-traditional chronology that the interval between Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* and the Vikram era is 470 years, is, in reality the one, which is given in the *Paṭṭāvalī* of *Śrāvastī Gaccha*, and which states the above period to be the interval between Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* and the birth of Vikrma. Vikrma's enthronement is stated to have

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1. *Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, XIII, pp. 240-246.
 2. See, 'The Chronology of Mahāvīra' in Chapter VII of this book.
 3. *Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, XIII, p. 246.

taken place when he was 18 years old, and the event was marked by the beginning of the Vikrma era. Thus $(470+18=)$ 488 years after Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* commenced the Vikrma era (58 B.C.). But the above 18 years were left out in the Jain Chronology. Thus, it was clearly a mistake to count a lapse of 470 years between Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* and the commencement of Vikrma era".

In this way, according to Dr. Jayaswal : Mahāvīra attained the *Nirvāṇa* in $488+58=546$ B.C.

A Critique

Dr. Jayaswal's view that the Buddhist allusions about Mahāvīra's predecease should not be neglected, is really justifiable. But his assuming an interval of two years between the deaths of Mahāvīra and Buddha on the basis of the popular belief about the *Sāmgāma Suttānta*, and his computing the interval between Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* and the Vikrma era by adding 18 years to the traditional number 470, are not based at all on confirmed sources. The famous historians¹, commenting on the view, write : "The suggestion can hardly be said to rest on any reliable tradition—Merutuṅga² places the death of the last *Jina* or *Tīrthaṅkara* 470 years before the end of Śaka rule and the victory and not birth of the traditional Vikrma." Also the belief that Buddha had heard about Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* in *Sāmagāma* exactly two years before his own death, is a mere speculation.

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1. Dr. R.C. Majumdar, Dr. H.C. Raychaudhari and Dr. K.K. Datta, *An Advanced History of India*, p. 85.
 2. *Vikrmarajjārambhā parao siri vīra nivvui māṇiyā ! Sunna muṇi veyā jutto vikkama-kālau Jīṇa-kāla !! Vicāra Sreṇī pp. 3, 4.*

Dr. Raddha Kumud Mukherjee

A prominent historian Dr. Raddha Kumud Mukherjee, M.A., Ph.D., D. Litt., has treated the problem in a similar way. He, in his famous work, *Hindu Civilization*,¹ has clearly accepted the seniority and the predecease of Mahāvīra with respect to Buddha on the basis of the Buddhist *Tripiṭakas*. According to Dr. Mukherjee, these two facts are quite unequivocal. It is remarkable that he has approved his view of Mahāvīra's seniority to Buddha by citing several authoritative Buddhist works.²

As far as the dates of Mahāvīra and Buddha are concerned, he has wholly accepted the view of Dr. Jayaswal, according to which Mahāvīra died in 546 B.C. and Buddha in 544 B.C. But it should be noted that by accepting these dates for the *Nirvāṇa* of Mahāvīra and Buddha, Dr. Mukherjee has created self-contradiction in his view of Mahāvīra's seniority to Buddha. For the total age of Mahāvīra's was 72, and that of Buddha was 80, so that, if the above chronology is accepted, Buddha would become six years older than Mahāvīra.

Thus, we can conclude that though Dr. Mukherjee has succeeded in proving Mahāvīra's seniority and predecease with respect to Buddha, he has failed to reconcile his chronology with these facts.

Dr. Kamta Prasad Jain

Dr. Kamta Prasad Jain, a Jain Digambara scholar and the editor of *Ahimsā Vāṇī*, has also accepted the above date of Mahāvīra and Buddha. Though he is of the view that Mahāvīra predeceased Buddha, he clearly denies the belief

1. *Hindu Sabhyatā* (Tr. by Dr. V.S. Aggrawal) pp. 210-224.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 216, 223, 224.

that Mahāvīra was older than Buddha.¹ In order to support his view, Dr. K.P. Jain has tried to falsify a Buddhist allusion that Buddha was younger than Mahāvīra, by interpreting it as an 'irony'². But his effort is a good example of far-fetched and unnatural interpretation. Also he has taken no account of other explicit references³, found in the Buddhist texts, showing Buddha's juniority to Mahāvīra.

Dharmānanda Kauśāmbi

A well-known Buddhist scholar, Dharmānanda Kauśāmbi has discussed the contemporaneity of Mahāvīra and Buddha in some of his books. It is his belief that Buddha was definitely the youngest amongst the seven religious teachers of his time⁴, and, that his order (Saṅgha) was the smallest of all. Śrī Kauśāmbi has, however, neglected the chronological aspect of the problem. His argument is⁵: "Even if Buddha's birth-date is taken back or forth by a few years, it would not deteriorate his character. The importance should be given not to the date of his birth, but to the circumstances existing before his birth, and to how he found out a new path in them."

The main reason of his neglecting the chronology seems to be that it is too equivocal to be determined.

Dr. Hoernle and Muni Jina Vijayji

Dr. Hoernle has also discussed this problem in the

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1. *Bhagavāna Mahāvīra Aura Mahātmā Buddha*, pp. 110-115.
 2. *Ibid*, pp. 114, 115.
 3. See, 'The Seniority of Mahāvīra' in Chapter VII of this book.
 4. *Bhagavāna Buddha*, pp. 33, 155.
 5. *Ibid*., preface, p. XII.

same way.¹ According to him, Buddha died five years after Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* (484 B.C.). This makes Buddha three years senior to Mahāvīra. The main bases of Dr. Hoernle's view are almost the same as those which are already discussed in the present chapter in context of other scholars and hence need no further discussion.

A well-known archaeologist Muni Jina Vijayji has accepted Mahāvīra to have predeceased Buddha on the basis of Dr. Jayaswal's view².

1. *Hesting's Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, p. 261.

2. *Vīra Nirvāṇa Samvat Aura Jaina Kālagāṇā*, preface, p. 1.

CHAPTER V

MUNI KALYANA VIJAYAJI

An extensive effort has been made by a famous Jain historian, Muni Kalyana Vijayaji to solve the present problem. His work on the subject, titled, *Vīra Nirvāṇa Samvat Aura Jaina Kālagāṇanā* is really a treasure book for the research-workers. He has presented an independent solution to the problem of choronology of Mahāvīra and Buddha. His conclusion is that Buddha predeceased Mahāvīra by 14 years 5 months and 15 days. In other words, Buddha was 22 years older than Mahāvīra. The dates of the *Nirvāṇa* given by Muni Kalyana Vijayaji is as follows :

Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*542 B.C. (May)

Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*528 B.C. (November)

The date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*—527 B.C.¹, which is accepted by Muni Kalyana Vijayaji, is based on a reliable tradition as well as direct evidences. Muniji has proved this date by citing various authorities and giving many reasons.

Muni Kalyana Vijayaji has tried to prove that Buddha attained the *Nirvāṇa* nearly fifteen years before Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*. He has argued that the story related in the *Sāmagāma Suttānta*, that Buddha had heard about the

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1. The date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*, though precisely is November 528 B.C., is usually written as 527 B.C., the reason being that there is only an interval of two months between January, 528 B.C. and November 528 B.C. Muni Kalyana Vijayaji has also used the date (527 B.C.) frequently in his book.

Mahāvīra's death, is not correct. According to Muniji, the event should have happened thus : When Mahāvīra was seriously injured by the *Tejo-leśyā* of his Ājivaka rival, Gośālaka, there prevailed a rumour that Mahāvīra would die within six months, as foretold by Gośālaka.¹ This rumour would have reached Buddha, and consequently the story about Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* would have become prevalent.

Developing his line of argument, Muni Kalyana Vijayaji writes :² "The belief of the Buddhist that Buddha died just one year after he had heard about Mahāvīra's death (precisely speaking, the rumour of the Mahāvīra's death) gives us a clue to find out the exact interval between the death of Mahāvīra and Buddha." Further, he states that according to the *Bhagavatī Sūtra*³, Mahāvīra died 16 years after having been injured by the *Tejo-leśyā* of Gośālaka. On this basis, he has fixed the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*. Muni Kalyana Vijayaji also claims that⁴ the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* inferred by him, is coincident with the Ceylonese date of Buddha's death.

A Critique

As far as the date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* is concerned, Muni Kalyana Vijayaji's view seems to be quite correct. But it appears that in deciding Buddha's date, he has nearly depended on guesswork. The allusions of the Buddhist scriptures, which relate the event of Mahāvīra's death, have been much distorted by him. Such far-fetched inter-

1. See, *Bhagavatī Sūtra*, Śataka, p. 15.

2. *Vīra—Nirvāṇa Samvat Aura Jaina Kālagāṇanā*, p. 15.

3. *Śataka*, p. 15.

4. *Op. cit.* p. 160.

pretations can never be regarded as historical facts. To call the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* decided by him (542 B.C.), to be coincident with the Ceylonese date of the Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* (544 B.C.)¹ is a good example of far-fetching technique used by him. There is a clear difference of two years, which can not be regarded negligible, as he has asked us to do so.²

One of the evidence, adduced by him to show Buddha's seniority to Mahāvīra, is³ : "In the Buddhist texts, wherever the rival teachers of Buddha are enumerated, the name of Niggantha Nātaputta (*i.e.* Mahāvīra) appears in the end of the lists. This has also happened, perhaps, because Mahāvīra was the youngest amongst the rivals of Buddha". The weakness of argument is obvious. Even Mahāvīra's name appears in the end of the list of Buddha's rivals, it does not at all mean that Mahāvīra was younger than Buddha. On the contrary, such references clearly indicate that all the six rivals (including Mahāvīra) of Buddha had already earned fame and influence long before Buddha appeared on the stage. As a matter of fact, it is also not true, that Mahāvīra's name appears in the end everywhere in such lists, as argued by Muni Kalyana Vijayaji. We find several such references in the Buddhist texts where Niggantha Nātaputta is not the last⁴.

Mahāvīra Middle aged, Buddha—young

In order to support his view, Muni Kalyana Vijayaji

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1. See, *The date of Buddha's Nirvāṇa*, in Chapter VII of this book.
 2. *Op. cit.* p. 160.
 3. *Ibid*, p. 3.
 4. For example, in the *Saṃyukta Nikāya*, *Dahar Sutta*, 3—1—1, the name of Niggantha Nātaputta appears in the third place ; in the *Dīgha Nikāya Samānyaphala Sutta*, 1—2, it occurs in the fifth place (See the Hindi translation by Rahul Sankrityayana, p. 21).

has tried to misinterpret the *Sammānnyaphala Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*. Presenting his argument, he writes¹ : “The minister of the king Ajātaśatru tells² him ‘O king ! This Niggantha Nātaputta is having an assembly (of Bhikkhus) and a crowd (of followers), and is the pontiff of the order, a well known teacher, a famous leader and considered excellent by the multitude. He is long-ordained and middle-aged³. This shows that Mahāvīra was middle-aged (*i.e.* fifty years old), while Buddha was old.” Now, if we study the above chapter with its fullest context, we find that it clearly describes Mahāvīra as middle-aged, and Buddha as young. For, the minister, here, intends to narrate the merits of Mahāvīra, and the word ‘middle-aged’, when used to exhibit a merit, should imply seniority. Secondly, in the above chapter of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, all the other rival teachers of Buddha viz. Gośālaka, Sañjya Balatthiputta, etc. are also described as “long ordained” and, ‘middle-aged’, while in the context of Buddha, no such adjectives are

1. *Op. cit.* p. 4.

2. Avyam deva nigantho nātaputto saṃghī ceva gaṇī ca gaṇācāriyo ca ñāto yasassī tīthakaro sādhusmmano bahujaṇassa rattassū cirapavvajito addhagatavayo anupattāti.

—*Dīgha Nikāya*, Vol. 1, pp. 48, 49 (Quoted from *ibid*, p. 4).

3. In the original Pāli text, here, two words—‘*addhagato*’ and ‘*Vayo-anupattā*’ are used. We find a frequent use of these words in the Pāli texts. See, for example, the *Culla-vagga*, *Saṃgha Bhedaka Khaṇḍaka*, *Sutta Nipāta*, *Sābhiya Sutta* ; Rhys Davids has translated these words as ‘he’ has accomplished a long journey ; and ‘his term of life is nearly run.’ (S.B.E. Vol. XVII, p.); V. Fousboll has translated them as ‘advanced in years’ and ‘having reached old age’ (S.B.E. Vol X. p. 16) Rahul Sankrityayana translates them as ‘*adhvagata*, and *vaych anuprāpta*’ (See, his Hindi Translation).

used. This also proves that Buddha was younger than all the six rivals of him.

In connection with the above occasion the *Sāmmannya-phala-Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* further states that the king Ajātsatru, after having heard from his ministers about the merits of all the teachers went to Buddha for passing his time in religious discussion. There he asked Buddha what the direct fruit of monkhood was, and also informed Buddha that he had asked the same question to the six religious teachers before. This was the first contact of Ajātsatru with Buddha. Are not all these facts enough to show that Mahāvīra and other five religious teachers were older than Buddha ?

Testimony of the Later Works

One of the testimonies advocated by Muni Kalyana Vijayaji to defend his view is¹ : “The Jain traditional record of Śreṇika and his queen Cellana shows that Śreṇika was first a follower of Buddha and afterwards was converted to Jain faith. “But, as a matter of fact, this account is based only on later Jain stories and hence it has no historical importance. Moreover, Muni Kalyana Vijayaji has not mentioned in which authoritative work, the said account is recorded. In a similar way, he has chosen five statements from the later Buddhist work to show the seniority of Buddha, and that too without mentioning the original references.² Most of those beliefs seems to have no connection with the Buddhist *Piṭakas*. Some of them even contradict the facts of the Buddhist *Piṭakas*.

1. *Op. cit.*, p. 2.

2. *Op. cit.*, p. 2.

Contradictions.

The argument advanced by Muni Kalyana Vijayaji are not at all sufficient to prove the seniority of Buddha to Mahāvīra. In his effort to reconcile his view, he has contradicted some fundamental and well-established facts. For example, the Buddhist *Tripiṭakas* state Mahāvīra to have died earlier than Buddha. They also elucidate that Buddha himself had accepted his juniority to all the six religious teachers of his time. In addition to this, at several places Buddha's juniority is clearly indicated in them¹. Muni Kalyana Vijayaji has not been able to reconcile his view with all these facts. He has called everywhere such events as fabrication and falsifying. His trend regarding the Buddhist *Tripiṭakas* can not be called proper and justifying. It is to be noted that the historians—Eastern as well as Western, have recognised these scriptural evidences as fundamental facts in deciding the contemporaneity of Mahāvīra and Buddha. At some places Muni Kalyana Vijayaji has contradicted his own arguments. For example, in the beginning of his book, he has accepted the belief of the later Buddhist works that Buddha died in the 8th year of Ajātsatru's reign, as the basis of his view. Later on, he, on the basis of the fact that Gośāla's enumeration of the eight finalities (*Caramas*) at the time of his death, was made sixteen years before the Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*, concludes.² "Mahavira lived for more than sixteen years after the accession of Ajātsatru while Buddha died in the eighth year of Ajātsatru's reign."

1. See for detailed discussion of all these references, '*Seniority of Mahāvīra*' in Chapter VII of this book.

2. *Op. cit.* p. 7.

Now, as we have already seen, the belief that Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* took place in the eighth year of the Ajātsatru's reign, is quite legendary and only based on later works.¹ Even if we assume it to be correct for the sake of argument, it could not be reconciled with the fact that Śreṇika had died seventeen years before Mahavira's *Nirvāṇa*.² For if we assume Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* to have taken place in the eighth year of Ajātsatru's reign, the interval between Buddha's and Mahāvira's *Nirvāṇa* could not exceed nine years. But we have seen that Muni Kalyana Vijayaji himself states this interval to be 14½ years. Thus, there is a self-contradiction in his views. If there are such inconsistencies, how the solution put forward by Muni Kalyana Vijayaji can be considered acceptable? In the field of history, one has always to think from a historian's point of view.

Shri Vijayendra Suri

Recently, a valuable effort was made by Shri Vijayendra Suri to simplify the problem of contemporaneity and chronology of Mahāvira and Buddha. His novel treatise³, dealing with the life of Mahāvira, is really a treasure of historical facts. Shri Vijayendra Suri has proved in this book by adducing a lot of authoritative references that the date of Mahāvira's *Nirvāṇa* is 527 B.C.⁴ Without making any critical remarks, he has accepted 544 B.C. as the date

1. See also the Editor's Notes for the contradiction between the belief and the Buddhist Scriptures.
2. See, for the establishment of this fact,—‘Contradictions’ in chapter III of this book.
3. *Tirthaṅkar Mahāvira* (in two Volumes) published by Kāśīnātha Saraka Yasodharma Mandira, Bombay, 1963.
4. *Tirthaṅker Mahāvira*, Vol. II, pp. 319—324.

of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*. Thus, it can be said that Shri Vijayendra Suri has almost wholly supported the view of Muni Kalyana Vijayaji except the following modification. Regarding the allusion of Mahāvīra's death in the Buddhist texts, Shri Vijayendra Suri has accepted the view of Dr. A.L. Basham¹ that it was really the death of Gośālaka, and by mistake the Buddhist texts described it as Mahavira's death.² This assumption of Shri Vijayendra Suri and Dr. Basham, is more speculative rather than logical. For, it is possible that for a while such misunderstanding could have prevailed, but how is it possible that it was retained by the Buddhists, in spite of the fact that Mahāvīra had lived for 16 years even after the death of Gośālka ? Again, as Shri Vijayendra Suri indicated³, the scholars believe that the Buddhist *Piṭakas* were compiled two or three centuries after Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*. Then, how could the above misunderstanding could have continued to exist for such a long time, even though both Mahāvīra and Buddha had lived contemporarily, preaching in the same limited area and both were the leaders of the same *sramaṇic* tradition ?

There is also a self-contradiction in the view of Shri Vijayendra Suri. On one the hand he writes⁴ "Buddha, in fact, should have received the news of Gośāla's death in the form of Mahāvīra's death." While on the other hand he states⁵, both Buddha and Gośālaka had died sixteen years before Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*. But the Buddhist texts indicate that Buddha had heard about Mahāvīra's death long before he (Buddha) died, then how is it possible that

1. *Ājīvikas*, p. 75.

2. *Tīrthaṅkara Mahāvīra*, Vol. II, p. 32.

3. *Ibid.* p. 326.

4. *Ibid.* p. 326.

5. *Ibid.* p. 326.

he would have really received the news of Gośāla's death ? If one accepts the veracity of the *Piṭakas*' evidence that the above event had really taken place, it is not reasonable to believe another testimony of the *Piṭakas* that the event had happened years before Buddha's death ?

Dr. Shanti Lal Shah

A valuable work, titled '*Chronological Problems*,' written by Dr. Shanti Lal Shah, has been published in 1934 from Bonn (Germany)¹. The object of this book, in the words of the author himself, is² : Not alone to fix the death-years of Buddha or Mahāvīra or the coronation date of Candragupta and Aśoka, nor to authenticate the Jain traditional account, but also to reconstruct the chronology of the whole history of Northern India from Ajātsatru to Kaniṣka is the aim of this book". The author has strived much to reconstruct the chronology of the kings from Ajātsatru to Kaniṣka to fulfil his object. He has also succeeded in giving historical form to some beliefs, but his effort to authenticate the Jain traditional belief here and there, shows rather his opinionated tendencies.

According to Dr. Shah, the dates of Mahāvīra's and Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*, are 527 B.C. and 543 B.C. respectively. He has accepted these dates only by saying³, "According to the traditional dates of the *Nirvāṇa* of both Mahāvīra and Buddha, the former died 16 years after the later, (543-527)." The traditional belief cannot be accepted as historical facts, unless they are substantiated by authentic evidences. But it seems that Dr. Shah has given no impor-

1. Publisher's name is not printed on the book.

2. *Chronological Problems*, Preface, p. I.

3. *Op. cit.*, p. 23

tance to this necessity. He has tried to reconstruct the whole chronology from Ajātsatru to Kaniṣka, only on the basis of these two traditional beliefs, without having attested their authenticity.

Also, he has accepted some beliefs of the later Buddhist works, without having considered their veracity. Consequently, many a unanimous historical facts have been contradicted in his new chronology. As for example, it is now almost undisputable that Candragupta's accession took place in 322 B.C. and also this date serves as a 'light-house' in that dark period of Indian history. But, according to Dr. Shah's chronology the date of Candragupta's accession is 316 B.C.¹ Regarding the date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*, it should be noted that 527 B.C. is traditionally as well as historically accepted date. But, the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* 543 B.C. is only based on the Ceylonese tradition and is found to be unauthentic in the historical investigations.²

Shri Shrichand Rampuria

Shri Shrichand Rampuria, a well-known literateur, has collected a good deal of data on the present problem, in his article titled '*A Discussion on the age of Mahāvīra and Buddha*.'³ He has elucidated both the sides of the controversy and criticized the prevalent views on the issue, but he has not reached a definite conclusion. However he seems to be more inclined to the view that Mahāvīra was older than Buddha. He has successfully refuted the arguments

1. *Op. cit.* p. 68.

2. See, '*Date of Buddha's Nirvāṇa in Traditions*' in Chapter VII of this Book.

3. *Jain Bhārtī* (Weekly), year 12, No. I, Jan. 1951 ; pp. 5—21.

of Dr. Jacobi as well as Muni Kalyana Vijayaji, which they advocated to prove Buddha's seniority to Mahāvīra.

Another remarkable point in the above article is that according to Shri Rampuria, there are only two allusions found in the Buddhist *Piṭakas*, which make the seniority of Mahāvīra a little dubious. Citing the first allusion, he writes¹: "The Buddhist scriptures clearly show that Mahāvīra was alive when Ajātsatru acceded to the throne of Magdha.

"Again, they also state that once Mahāvīra had asked Abhaya Kumāra (The minister of Magdha) to see Buddha and to have a discussion with him². The subject of discussion was connected with the following event.³

"Then Devadatta, rising from his seat, having arranged his upper robe over one shoulder, having saluted the Lord with joined palms, spoke to the Lord; "Lord, the Lord is now old, worn, stricken in years, he has lived his span and is at the close of his life; Lord, let the Lord now be content to live devoted to abiding in ease here and now, let him hand over the order of monks to me. It is I who will lead the order of monks."

"Enough, Devadatta, please do not lead the order of monks. And a second time.....And a third time Devadatta spoke thus to the Lord: "Lord the Lord is now old, worn, stricken in years.....It is I who will lead the order of monks.

"I, Devadatta, would not hand over the order of

1. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

2. *Majjhima Nikāya, Abhaya Kumāra Suttānta*.

3. *Vinaya Piṭaka, Cullavagga*, VII, 3—41. Translated by Oldenberg, S.B.E., Vol, XVIII.

monks even to Sāriputta and Moggallana. How then could I to you, a wretched one to be vomited like spittle?

Then Devadatta, thinking : ‘The Lord in an assembly which included a king disparaged me by (using) the term, ‘one to be vomited like spittle,’ while he extolled Sāriputta and Moggallana, angry, displeased, having greeted the Lord, departed keeping his right side towards him.

“And this was the first time that Devadatta felt malice towards the Lord.”

“Then Devadatta approached Prince Ajātsatru; having approached, he spoke thus to prince, Ajātsatru “Formerly prince, people were long-lived, now-a-days they are short-lived, and it is possible that you, while still a prince, might pass away. Well now, do you, prince, having slain your father, become king. I having slain the Lord, will become the Awakened One. And Prince Ajātsatru, thinking : Now, master Devadatta is of great psychic power, of great majesty; master Devadatta must know (what is right), having fastened a dagger against his thigh, at an early hour (although) afraid, anxious, fearful, alarmed, entered the (King’s) private quarters forcibly. But the chief ministers in attendance in the private quarters saw him. Seeing him, they laid hold of him. These examining him, and having seen the dagger bound against his thigh, spoke thus to Prince Ajātsatru : What is it that you, prince, want to do ?

“I want to slay my father.”

“By whom are you being incited?”

“By master Devadatta”.

Then King Seniya Bimbisāra of Magadha spoke thus to Prince Ajātsatru.

“Why do you, prince, want to slay me?”

“Sire, I have need of a kingdom.”

“If it be that you, prince, have need of a kingdom this kingdom is yours and handed over the kingdom to prince Ajātsatru.

Then Devadatta approached prince Ajātsatru; having approached, he spoke thus to prince Ajātsatru :

“Your majesty, command your men so that they deprive the recluse Gotama of life.” Then prince Ajātsatru commanded his men saying : “My good men, do whatever master Devadatta says.” Then Devadatta enjoined the men, saying : “Go along, friend, the recluse Gotama is staying at a certain road,” and he set two men on that road, saying : “Whatever man comes alone along this road, having deprived him of life, come back by this road.”

“Then that one man approached Devadatta; having approached, he spoke thus to Devadatta : Honoured sir, I am not able to deprive that Lord of life, that Lord of great psychic power, of great might.”

“All right, friend, do not you deprive the recluse Gotma of life. I myself will deprive the recluse Gotama of life.”

“Now at that time the Lord was pacing up and down in the shade of Mount Vulture Peak. Then Devadatta, having climbed Mount Vulture Peak, hurled down a great stone, thinking : With this I will deprive the recluse Gotama of life.’ But two mountain peaks, having met, crushed that stone, and (only) a fragment of it, having fallen down, drew blood on the Lord’s foot. Then the Lord, having looked upwards, spoke thus to Devadatta : ‘You have produced great demerit, foolish man, in that you, with your mind maligant, your mind on murder, drew the Truth finder’s blood.’ Then the Lord addressed the monks,

saying : ‘This, monks, is the first deed whose fruit comes with no delay accumulated by Devadatta since he, with his mind malignant, his mind on murder, drew the Truth-finder’s blood.’”

“Now at that time there was a fierce elephant in Rājagṛha, a man-slayer, called Nālāgīri. Then Devadatta, having entered Rājagṛha, having gone to the elephant stable, spoke thus to the mahout : “We, my good fellows, are relations of the kings. We are competent to put in a high position one occupying a lowly position and to bring about an increases in food and wages. Well now, good fellows, when the recluse Gotama is coming along this carriage road, then, having let loose this elephant, Nālāgīri, bring him down this carriage road.”

“Then the elephant Nālāgīri, suffused by the Lord with loving-kindness of mind, having put down his trunk, approached the Lord; having approached, he stood in front of the Lord.

“Then the elephant Nālāgīri, having taken the dust of the Lord’s feet with his trunk, having scattered it over his head, moved back bowing while he gazed upon the Lord.

“People looked down upon, criticised, spread it about, saving : How evil is this Devadatta, how inauspicious, in that he tried to murder the recluse Gotama who is of such great psychic power, of such great might, and Devadatta’s gains and honours declined; the Lord’s gains and honours increased.

“Then Devadatta approached Kokālikā, Katamorakattissaka, the son of the lady Khanda, and Samuddadatta; having approached, he spoke thus to Kokālikā, Katamorakattissaka, the son of the lady Khanda, and Sammudda-

datta : "Come, we, your reverences, will make a schism in the recluse Gotama's Order a breaking of the concord."

"Then Devadatta together with his friends approached the Lord; having approached, having greeted the Lord, he set down at a respectful distance, Devadatta spoke thus to the Lord : Lord the 'Lord in many a figure speaks in praise of desiring little.....whoever should eat fish and flesh, sin would besmirch him."

"'Enough, Devadatta', he said. 'Whoever wishes, let him be a forest dweller; whoever wishes; let him stay in the neighbourhood of a village whoever wishes, let him be a beggar for alms; whoever wishes, let him accept an invitation; whoever wishes, let him be a reg-robe wearer; whoever wishes, let him accept a householder's robes. For eight months Devadatta, lodging at the root of a tree is permitted by me. Fish and flesh are pure in respect of three points : if they are not seen, heard or suspected (to have been killed on purpose for him)."

Then Devadatta, thinking "The Lord does not permit these five items joyful, elated, rising from his seat with his friends, having greeted the Lord, departed keeping his right side towards him. Then Davadatta having entered Rajagṛha with his friends, taught the people by means of the five items, saying : 'We, friends, having approached the recluse Gotama, asked for five items, saying: 'Lord, the Lord in many a figure speaks in praise of desiring little.'.....'

"Monks heard these people who.....spread it about. Those who were modest monks.....spread it about, saying :

"How can this Devadatta go forward with a schism in the Order, a breaking of the concord?" Then these monks told this matter to the Lord. He said : 'is it true, as is

said, that you, Devadatta, went forward with a schism in the Order, a breaking of the concord ?

“It is true, Lord.”

“Enough, Devadatta, do not let there be a schism in the Order, for a schism in the Order is a serious matter, Devadatta. Whoever, Devadatta, splits an Order that is united, he sets up demerit that endures for an aeon ; he is boiled in hell for an aeon.

“Devadatta saw the venerable Ānanda walking in Rājagṛha for alms-food ; seeing him, he approached the venerable Ānanda ; having approached, he spoke thus to the venerable Ānanda : ‘Now from this day forth will I, reverend Ānanda, carry out observance both in contradistinction to the Lord and in contradistinction to the Order of monks and will (so) carry out (formal) acts of the Order.’”

“As he was sitting down at a respectful distance, the venerable Ānanda spoke thus to the Lord :

“Just now, Lord, I, having dressed in the morning, taking my bowl and robe, entered Rājagṛha for almsfood. Devadatta, Lord, saw me walking in Rājagṛha for almsfood ; seeing me, he came up ; having come up, he spoke thus to me : ‘Now from this day forth will I..... (so) carry out (formal) acts of the Order. To-day, Lord, Devadatta will split the Order. Then the Lord having understood this matter, at that time uttered this utterance :

“Easy is good for the good, good for the evil is hard, Evil for the evil is easy, evil for the noble ones is hard.”

Now at that time as many as five hundred monks, Vajjis of Veśālī, were newly ordained and were not properly versed ; and these thinking : This is the rule, this is discipline, this is the Teacher’s instruction, took voting tickets.

Then Devadatta, having split the Order, set out for Gayā Head taking as many as the five hundred monks. Then Sāriputta and Moggallāna approached the Lord ;

“Can there not be for you, Sāriputta and Moggallāna compassion for these newly ordained monks? Go you along, Sāriputta and Moggallāna, before these monks fall into trouble and distress.”

“Very well, Lord,” and Sāriputta and Moggallāna having answered the Lord in assent, rising from their seats, having greeted the Lord, keeping their right sides towards him, approached Gayā Head.

Then Sāriputta and Moggallāna, taking those five hundred monks approached the Bamboo Grove.

“Then the Lord addressed the monks, saying :... Monks because he is possessed of these eight qualities, Sāriputta is fit to go a message.

“Monks, Devadatta, overcome and his mind controlled by eight wrong conditions, is doomed to the Downfall, to *Niraya* Hell, staying there for an aeon, incurable.

Mahāvīra had asked Abhaya Kumāra to question Buddha regarding the propriety of the harsh words spoken by Buddha to Devadatta. The question to be asked by Abhaya Kumāra was framed thus : ‘Can the Blessed One (Buddha) utter the words which are unpleasant to others?’ If Buddha would have answered in negative, the cross-question was going to be : ‘Then, why did the Blessed One utter harsh words to Devadatta?’ On the other hand, if Buddha would have replied to the above question in affirmative, the cross question would have been : ‘Then, what is the difference between a layman and the Blessed One?’

“The above occasion points out that Mahāvīra should

have lived at least for some years after the event of Buddha's utterance of harsh words to Devadatta. It should also be noted that Devadatta had made the schism in Buddha's order after Ajātaśatru's accession and that the news of Mahāvīra's death had reached Buddha during the life time of Sāriputta. The Buddhist writers are unanimous about the fact that Sāriputta had died during the life time of Buddha.¹

“Now, all these fragments of truth, supplied by the Buddhist texts, when joined together, at once manifest that the event of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* must have taken place in between the event of utterance of harsh words by Buddha and that of the death of Sāriputta. Again, it is believed that Buddha died in the eighth year of Ajātaśatru's reign. *If this is true*, Mahāvīra's death should have taken place not later than this period of Ajātaśatru's reign, and not earlier than the commencement of his reign.

“Let us see, what conclusion we reach if we assume that Mahāvīra attained the *Nirvāṇa* in the first year of Ajātaśatru's reign. This would mean that when Mahāvīra died at the age of 72, Buddha was 73 years old. Secondly, when Mahāvīra attained omniscience at the age of 42, Buddha was 43, and when Mahāvīra was initiated into the ascetic life at 30, Buddha was 31. Lastly, when Mahāvīra was born, Buddha was one year old.”

The conclusion drawn by Shri Rampuria in the above passage holds good only if the belief that *Buddha died in the eighth year of Ajātaśatru* reign, is true. But Shri Rampuria has himself based his calculation on the dubious, statement ‘*If this is true*’. As already shown before, the above belief

1. *The Life of Buddha*, by Edward J. Thomas, pp. 140, 141.

of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* in the 8th year of Ajātaśatru's reign is based on the erroneous chronology¹ adopted in the Ceylonese Chronicle, *Mahāvamsā*.² Thus, the whole mention of the above conclusion that Mahāvīra was younger than Buddha, shatters down.

The second allusion giving rise to ambiguity with respect to Mahāvīra's seniority to Buddha, is described by Shri Rampuria as follows³ : When Buddha was lying on the death-bed, the following event took place⁴ : "Now at that time, a mendicant named Subhadda, who was not a believer, was dwelling at Kuśīnara. And the mendicant Subhadda heard the news : 'This is very day, they say, in the third watch of the night, will take place the final passing away of the Samaṇa Gotama.'"

Then thought the mendicant Subhadda.....Now a certain feeling of uncertainty has sprung up in my mind and this faith have I in the Samaṇa Gotama, that he, me thinks, is able so to present the truth that I may get rid of this feeling of uncertainty.'

"Then the mendicant Subhadda went to the Śāla Grove of the Mallas, to the Upavattana of Kuśīnara, to the place where the venerable Ānanda was."

"And when he had come there he said to the venerable Ānanda :.....

1. For the detailed discussion of this, see, 'The Chronology' in chapter VII of this Book.
2. *Ajātaśatru Mathame Yasse Buddhē Parinivvaute. Mahāvamsā.*
3. *Op. cit.* p. 17.
4. *Mahā-Parinivvāṇa Sutta, Dīgha Nikāya Tr. by T.W. Rhys Davids S.B.E. Vol XI, p.p. 103 To 106.*

“Now the Blessed one overheard this conversation of the venerable Ānanda with the mendicant Subhadda. And the Blessed One called the venerable Ānanda, and said ‘It is enough, Ānanda : Do not keep out, Subhadda, Subhadda, Ānanda, may be allowed to see the Tathāgata. Whatever Subhadda may ask of me, he will ask from a desire for knowledge, and not to annoy me. And whatever I may say in answer to this question, that he will quickly understand.”

“Then Subhadda, the mendicant, went into the place where the Blessed One was.....And, when he was thus seated, Subhadda, the mendicant, said the Blessed One : ‘The Śramaṇas and the Brahmanas by saintliness of life, Gotama, who are heads of companies of disciples and students, teachers of students, well-known, renowned, founders of schools of doctrine, esteemed as good man by the multitude to wit, Puraṇa Kassapa, Makkhali of the cattla-pen, Ajita of the garment of hair, Kakkayana of the Pakhuda tree, Sanāya the son of the Belatth slave girl, Nigantha of the Nātha clan—have they all according to their own assertion, thoroughly understood things ? Or have they not ? or are there some of them who have understood, and some have not ?”

“Enough Subhadda : Let this matter rest whether they, according to their own assertion have thoroughly understood things, or whether they have not, or whether some of them have understood and some have not ! The truth, Ānanda will I teach you. Listen well to that and give ear attentively, and I will speak.’

“‘Even so, Lord !’ said the mendicant Subhadda in assent, to the Blessed One.

“The above event raises a question in our mind

whether Mahāvīra was alive up to the last day of Buddha's life. But again we may ask whether the question of Subhadda was about the living *Tīrthaṅkaras* or merely a discussion of the views of deceased *Tīrthaṅkaras*?"

The above question shows that Shri Rampuria has vigilantly reflected upon the situation. It often happens that such questions are put up only in the form a 'wont'. The above question of Subhadda definitely seems to be a customary usage of speaking together the names of all the six *Tīrthaṅkaras*. This is also proved by the fact that the names of Mankhali Gośālaka and Puraṇa Kassapa also appear in the above list of Subhadda, whereas it is unanimously believed and definitely known that both of them had died long before Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*.¹

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1. Mankhali Gośālaka died 16 years before Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* (see, *Bhagvatī Sūtra*, *Śataka* 15). In the chronology adopted by Dr. Jacobi, Dr. K. P. Jayaswal, Muni Kalyana Vijayji, Dr. A. L. Basham, Gośālaka's death occurs before the *Nirvāṇa* of Buddha as well as that of Mahāvīra. Puraṇa Kassapa had also died during the life-time of Buddha; see, *Dhammapada Aṭṭha Kathā*, 4-2. (Also, *Buddhacaryā*, by Pt. Rahul Sankrityayana, p. 86.)

CHAPTER VI

HISTORIANS' VIEW

Much has been written on the present issue by the Western as well as the Eastern historians. A detailed discussion of all the different views would be too lengthy a task to be discussed in the present treatise. We quote, here a view, which can be regarded as a theme of the present-day historians' approach. In *An Advanced History of India*, written by the top-most historians of India, Dr. R. C. Majumdar, Dr. H. C. Raychawdhri, and Dr. K. K. Datta, the subject has been elucidated to a great extent. It is to be noted that this work consisting of more than 1100 pages, has been prescribed as a text-book of history for the post graduate studies in almost all the Universities of India. In the first part *Ancient India* of the above treatise, in the context of *Nirvāṇa* the authors observe¹ : The event is said to have happened 215 years before the Mauryas, and 470 years before Vikrama. This is usually taken to refer to 528 B.C. But 468 B.C. is preferred by some modern scholars, who rely on a tradition recorded by the Jain monk Hemacandra that the interval between Mahāvīra's death and the accession of Candragupta Maurya was 155, and not 215 years. The latter date does not accord with the explicit statement found in some of the earlier Buddhist texts that Mahāvīra predeceased Buddha. The earlier date is also beset with difficulties. In the first place it is at variance with the testimony of Hemacandra, who places Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* only 155 years before Candragupta Maurya. Again some Jain texts place the *Nirvāṇa* 470 years before the birth of Vikrama and

not his accession and as this event, according to the Jains, does not coincide with the foundation of era of 58 B.C. attributed to Vikrama the date 528 B.C. for Mahāvīra's death can hardly be accepted as representing unanimous tradition. Certain Jain writers assume an interval of 18 years between the birth of Vikrama and the foundation of the era attributed to him and thereby seek to reconcile the Jain tradition about the date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* ($58 + 18 + 470 = 546$ B.C.) with the Ceylonese date of the great decease of Buddha (544 B.C.). But the suggestion can hardly be said to rest on any reliable tradition. Merutuṅga places the death of the last *Jina* or *Tīrthaṅkara* 470 years before the end of Śāka rule and the victory, and not the birth of the traditional Vikrama. The date 528 B.C. for the *Nirvāṇa* of the *Jñātrika* teacher can to a certain extent be reconciled with the Cantonese date of the death of Buddha 486 B.C. But then we shall have to assume that Mahāvīra died shortly after Buddha's enlightenment, forty-five years¹ before the *Parinivvāṇa*, when the latter could hardly have become a renowned religious teacher of long standing as the Buddhist (canonical) texts would lead us to belief. Certain Jaina *Sūtras* seem to suggest that Mahāvīra died about sixteen years after the accession of Ajātaśatru and the commencement of this war with his hostile neighbours. This would place the *Nirvāṇa* of the Jain teacher eight years after Buddha's death, as according to the Ceylonese chronicles, Buddha died 8 years after the enthronement of Ajātaśatru. The *Nirvāṇa* of the *Tīrthaṅkara* would, according to this view, fall in 478 B.C., if we accept the Cantonese reckoning (486 B.C.)

1. Here, instead of 'forty-five years' it should be 'forty-two years'. It seems that it is printed through a mistake (for $528 - 486 = 42$; by taking 45, Buddha could not achieve enlightenment at that time.

as our basis, and in 538 B.C., if we prefer the Ceylonese epoch. The date 478 B. C. would almost coincide with that to which the testimony of Hemacandra leads us and place the accession of Candragupta Maurya in 323 B.C. which cannot be far from truth. But the result in respect of Mahāvīra himself is at variance with the clear evidence of the Buddhist canonical texts, which make the Buddha survive his *Jñātrika* rival. The Jain statement that their *Tīrthaṅkara* dies some sixteen years after the accession of Koṇika (Ajātaśatru) can be reconciled with the Buddhist tradition about the death of the same teacher before the eighth year of Ajātaśatru, if we assume that the Jain, who refer to Koṇika as the ruler of Campā, begun their reckoning from the accession of the prince to the Viceregal throne of Campa while the Buddhist make the accession of Ajātaśatru to the royal throne of Rājagṛha the basis of their calculation.”

Express their views on the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*; the learned historians observe.¹ “The date of his great decease (*Parinivvāṇa*) is a subject of keen controversy.” If, the Ceylonese tradition, that 218 years intervened between the *Parinivvāṇa* and the consecration of Priyadarśana (Aśoka) has any value, the day cannot be far removed from 486 B.C., the starting point of the famous ‘dotted record’ at Canton”.

A Critique

The most remarkable thing in the above view of the renowned historians is that they have given no place to the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* proposed by Dr. Jacobi, and Dr. Charpentier. As pointed out before, the main reason behind this is that during the long period that has passed

1. *Ibid*, p. 84.

since the publication of the view of Dr. Jacobi and Dr. Charpentier, new conceptions have entered the field of history, concerning the pre-Christian period. With regard to the date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*, these historians have given importance to two fundamental facts and have insisted on their complete inviolation, while unravelling the present problem. The first is that out of the three dates, which are in vogue, 528 B.C. is the most veracious one. The second fact concerns the allusion of the Buddhist *Pitakas* regarding the death of Mahāvīra. Dr. R.C. Majumdar and his colleagues have definitely accepted the veracity of the *Pitakas'* statement that Mahāvīra predeceased Buddha. They have also expressed a need of such a chronology that can be reconciled with the above facts.

The only limitation of the above view of the famous historians is that though they have tried to make the life-events of Mahāvīra and Buddha consistent with each other, they have failed to present a completely consistent chronology. For, they have adopted 528 B.C. as the date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* and the Cantonese reckoning 486 B. C. as the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* thus creating an interval of 42 years between the *Nirvāṇas* of the two teachers. With such a long interval in between the deaths of Mahāvīra and Buddha, we cannot reconcile their life-events with each other. Thus we have to discover such a chronology which is compatible with the true life-events of Mahāvīra and Buddha.

CHAPTER VII

RESEARCH AND CONCLUSION

Need of an Exhaustive Research

An unprejudiced survey of the efforts made up to now by the various scholars shows that the problem of contemporaneity of Mahāvīra and Buddha, was, first of all, tried to be unravelled on the basis of general historical facts, then available. At a later stage, some scholars carried research into it in the light of the Buddhist scriptures, while others reached for its solution with the help of the Jain scriptures. The result was that on the one hand, the research based on general historical facts was in itself incomplete without bearing the imprint of the scriptural evidences, while on the other hand, the one-sided approach solely based on either the Jain scriptures or the Buddhist scriptures coloured the whole issue with sectarian tint. Some scholars regarded each and every word of the Jain scripture as a principle evidence and attached little significance to the Buddhist scriptures, whereas other did the *vice versa*. This cannot be the method of historical research. To arrive at the perfect solution, we have to think over the issue giving proportionate value to the general historical facts, the evidences of the Buddhist *Tripitakas* as well as the testimonies of the Jain *Āgamas*. We shall also have to pay heed to the fact that the *Āgamas* and the *Tripitakas* are taken to be the original and genuine evidences of the Jain and the Buddhist traditions respectively, while the evidences of the other traditional works are valid only so far as they conform to the original canons.

The Evidences of the Buddhist Tripiṭakas

The testimonies of the Buddhist *Tripiṭakas* are the most evident, obvious and direct ones out of the various evidences, which come across while considering the contemporaneity of Mahāvīra and Buddha. Hence, it necessitates a thorough and systematic analysis of these evidences of the Buddhist *Tripiṭakas*. We consider them here one by one.

The Event of Mahāvīra's Nirvāṇa in Tripiṭakas

The allusions of the *Tripiṭakas* in which the event of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* is discussed, are as follows :

1. "The Exalted One (*i.e.* Buddha) was once dwelling among the Sakkas, at Sāmagāma. Now at that time, Nigantha Nātaputta (*i.e.*, Mahāvīra) had just departed from life in Pāvā. After his death the Niganthas (*i.e.* the Jains) were divided into two groups. They making quarrels, making strife, falling into disputes were wounding each other with the weapons of the tongue, and were saying to each other..... 'You do not know this law of discipline': I know this law of discipline'; 'You cannot know this law of discipline you are having false beliefs, I am having true beliefs'; 'My statement is meaningful, your's is not'; You uttered the matter to be spoken first; last'; 'Your doctrine is lacking thoughtfulness, and hence, it is wrong'; 'You started the quarrel; you are unfit to be argued with'; 'Off with you! Stray you to be free from quarrel'; 'If you can, end it'. Thus the Niganthas of the Nātaputta were as if warring with each other.

"The disciples of the Niganthas who were wearing white robes and were householders were as much dis-

1. *Majjhima Nikāya, Sāmagāma Sutta, 3/1/4.*

interested in, disgusted with and indifferent to those Niganthas (monks) of the Nātaputta (Mahāvīra) as they were with respect to the religion of Nātaputta, which is not well-meaning, not well-founded, unable to carry one to the *Nirvāṇa*, unable to bring peace of mind, not expounded by an enlightened. One baseless, (supported on) broken pillars, and unfit to be stayed in.

“At that time, Cunda Samanuddesa, after having passed his rainy-season at Pāvā, went to Sāmagāma and approached the venerable Ānanda. Having approached, having greeted the venerable Ānanda he sat down on one side. So seated, he said to the venerable Ānanda. ‘Reverend Sir, Nigantha Nātaputta has just departed from life in Pāvā. After his death, the Niganthas were divided into two groups. They are making quarrels.....which is unfit to be stayed in. Thereupon, the venerable Ānanda said to Cunda Samanuddesa: ‘Reverend Cunda, this news is worthy to be presented to the blessed one. Come reverend Cunda, let us go to the Lord. Having gone there, let us, tell this matter to the Lord.’

“Yes, reverend Sir!”

“Then, the venerable Ānanda and Cunda Samanuddesa approached the Exalted One, saluted and sat down at one side. So seated, the venerable Ānanda said to the Exalted One: ‘Lord! This Cunda Samanuddesa says so, ‘Nagantha Nātaputta has just departed.....unfit to be stayed in. Now, Lord! it seems to me that after (the Nirvāṇa of) the Blessed One, such a dispute may not occur in the order. If it occurs, it will be for the disadvantage of the many, for the unhappiness of the many, for the unwellfare of the many, for the disadvantage and unhappiness of gods and men.’

“Do you, then believe, Ānanda, that even two monks have different opinions regarding the truths, such as....., preached by me, after having directly experienced them.

“Lord! I do not see difference of opinions of even two monks regarding the truth, such as..... preached by the Lord. After having directly experienced them. But, Lord! when the body, which is sustained by the Lord, will exist after the Lord's *Nirvāṇa*, there may occur a dispute in the Order, regarding the livelihood and the rules of discipline. That dispute will be for the disadvantage..... of gods and men’ ”.

2. “Thus have I heard :—

“The Exalted One was once staying among the Sakkas, in the palace of the Sakkas in the Mango Grove called Vedhañña.

“At that time, Nigantha Nātaputta had just departed from life in Pāvā. After his death, the Niganthas (*i.e.* the Jains) were divided into two groups. They making quarrels, making strifes, were wounding each other with the weapons of the tongue and were saying to each other : ‘You do not know this law.....unfit to be stayed in.’

“At that time Cunda Samanuddesa, after having passed.....unfit to be stayed in.’

“Thereupon the venerable Ānanda.....to the Lord!

“Yes, reverend, sir!”

“Then, the venerable Ānanda..... unfit to be stayed in.”

“Then the Lord said to Cunda: ‘Cunda, the religion (*i.e.* doctrines) of the order in which the master is not perfectly enlightened one is not well-meaning.....

1. *Dīgha Nikāya, Pāsādika Sutta* 3/6.

“Therefore, Cunda, the religion which has been preached by me after having attained the enlightenment, should be understood well by all of you unitedly and undisputedly.”

3. “¹Thus have I heard:—

“The Exalted One while making a tour among the Mallas together with the large order of monks, numbering five hundred, arrived at Pāvā, a town of Mallas. He was staying there at Pāvā in Mango Grove of Cunda, the son of the silversmith.

“At that time, the new and lofty assembly-house (*Sarīsthāgāra*) of the Mallas the natives of Pāvā, was just built and no recluse (*Śramaṇa*) or Brāhmaṇa or man had so far lived in it. The Mallas, the natives of Pāvā, heard— ‘The Lord has arrived at Pāvā, while making tour among the Mallas, and the Lord is now staying in the Mango Grove of Cunda, the son of the silversmith. Then the Mallas, the natives of Pāvā, approached the Lord. They having approached and having greeted the Lord, sat down at one side. So seated, they said to the Lord— ‘Lord ! A new and lofty assembly house.....so far lived in it, Lord ! the Lord is requested to use it as a dwelling place for the first time. The Mallas, the natives of Pāvā will use it as a dwelling place after the Lord has used it as a dwelling place. This will be for the advantage and happiness of the Mallas, the natives of Pāvā, for a long time.’

“The Lord accepted the invitation by keeping silence.

“Then, the Lord, having dressed of taking his bowl and robe, together with the Order of monks, went to the assembly-house. Having gone.....sat down.

1. *Dīgha Nikāya, Saṅgīti Paryāya Sutta* 3/10.

“Then the Lord, having addressed the Māllas, the natives of Pāvā, by a talk on *dhamma*..... said. ‘Vāśiṣṭās! The night of yours is over. Now do what seems good to you.’

“‘Well, Lord!’.....the Mallas after standing up from their seats and greeting, went away.

“Then, in a little while after Mallas had gone away, the Lord, having seen the Order of monks completely soundless, addressed Sāriputta.....’ Sāriputta, the Order of monks is completely soundless. Sāriputta, address the monks with a talk on *dhamma* ; my back aches and I will stretch it.’

“The venerable Sāriputta addressing the monks..... said: ‘Nigantha Nātaputta, your reverences, has just departed from life in Pāvā. After his death the Niganthas (i.e. the Jains) were divided in two groups. They making quarrels.....to be stayed in. But your reverences the *dhamma* (Doctrines) of our Lord is well-meaning, well-founded, able to carry to the *Nirvāṇa* (final emancipation)’” able to bring peace of mind, and expounded by the Enlightened One. Here, all should stay without controversy and dispute, so that this Order may endure for a long time, and this will be for the advantage and happiness of many.....’.

“.....Then, the Lord, having awoke, addressed SāriputtaExcellent Sāriputta ! Excellent Sāriputta ! Sāriputta, you have given a good talk to the monks on the way of unity.’

“The venerable Sāriputta said this ; the master (Buddha) agreed with him (on this point). The monks also, having satisfied with the speech of Sāriputta, greeted it.”

A critical Examination

The three allusions quoted above, though they differ slightly in their outer forms, contain essentially the same idea. In the first allusion, Buddha, after having received the news of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* preaches Ānanda ; and in the second one, he preaches Cunda. In both the allusions, the exhortations are worded differently, yet, they have the same intention. In the first and the second allusions, Buddha receives the report from Cunda in Sāmagāma (a village among the Śākayas) and also admonishes Ānanda and Cunda in Sāmagāma. In the third allusion, Sāriputta preaches the monks the way of unity in Pāvā by referring to Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* and the quarrels in his order after that event.

Now, some scholars have not accepted the validity of these allusions, because in their view they contradict one another. But the reality is as follows : History may not accept each and every word of any scriptural evidence as true. If the fundamental point of any such allusion is unequivocal, history adopts it as a valid proof. As far as the above allusions are concerned, the actuality is that their essences are not at all contradictory. If in the first allusion, Ānanda is admonished by Buddha and in the second one Cunda is given injunction, many an intelligible reason are possible for it. It is plausible that both of them might have heard the sermons simultaneously, but later on, the compilers of the first allusion by their own discernment, have deemed one of them more significant than the other and those of the second one by their own discernment might have deemed the *vice versa*. Another plausibility is that Buddha might have preached Ānanda and Cunda one by one intermittently. The third allusion is already independent in itself and also confirms the first two allusions. For,

the whole incident of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* referred to above had happened in Pāvā, and hence, it is quite natural that on arriving at Pāvā, Sāriputta must have referred to it.

All the three allusions bear the description of the ideological split among the disciples of Mahāvīra after his *Nirvāṇa*. Though the Jain tradition itself does not give any direct clue to such an event, the possibility of some mutual discussion over the issue of Mahāvīra's successorship, cannot be ruled out. For, Indrabhūti (Gautama Svāmi) was the first *Gaṇadhara* i.e. chief disciple in the charge of the sub-order (Gaṇa) and hence, in normal state of affairs, he should have been ordained as Mahāvīra's successor, but, as the traditional history informs us, Sudharmā Svāmi, the fifth *Gaṇadhara* was ordained as the successor of Mahāvīra and that too, under the rule that *Kevalin* (i.e. omniscient) can not succeed to the Tīrthaṅkara and Gautama Svāmi was a *Kevalin* while, Sudharmā Svāmi was not *Kevalin*. Now it is plausible that this rule might have come into existence as a result of the above discussion. The possibility of a sort of dispute between the monks who were the disciples of Gautama Svāmi and the monks who were the disciples of Sudharmā Svāmi, can also not be wholly ruled out. The fact that the Śvetāmbara tradition of the Jains regards Sudharmā Svāmi as the first successor of Mahāvīra, while, the Digambara tradition of the Jains regards Gautama Svāmi as the first successor, also affords a slight hint towards the above possibility. Moreover the wordings.....'The disciples of the Niganthas who were wearing white robes' used in the Buddhist allusions quoted above, also points out to the dispute between 'the white clothed' (i.e. Śvetāmbaras) and 'the unclothed (i.e. Digam-

baras) *Nirgranthas*.¹ It is also probable that the Buddhists might have presented it in an exaggerated form in the above three allusions. It generally happens that the persons belonging to one sect often express even a trifling event of the rival sect in an exaggerated form. Dharmānnda Kauśāmbī, the renowned Buddhist scholar has, accordingly, regarded the undermining delineation of Gośālaka in the Jain *Āgamas* as an exaggeration.²

One of the arguments given by Dr. Jacobi against the authenticity of the above allusions is that the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sutta*, which affords us the account of the events of Buddha's last days, says nothing about this event. But this argument of Dr. Jacobi does not prove at all that the aforesaid allusions are inconsistent. At the most it only proves that the event described in the above allusions had not happened in the last days of Buddha's life.

Muni Kalyana Vijayaji has regarded the whole event alluded in the Buddhist *Piṭakas* to be a mere consequence of a misunderstanding of the Buddhist compilers. Muni Kalyana Vijayaji, in his interpretation of the above allusions of the Buddhist *Tripiṭakas*, has observed³ that the event of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*, which is described in the Buddhist canons, is merely the result of the rumour prevalent at the time of Mahāvīra's serious illness due to the injury caused by the *Tejoleśyā* of Gośālaka. He has also traced the origin of the post-*Nirvāṇa* dispute among the *Nirgranthas* (Jain

1. The plausibility suggested is only conjectural. Yet it is possible on the basis of the hints given in the above allusions that the origin of the schism of the Jain order into Śvetāmbara and Digambara Sects, may lie somewhere here. The researchers should pay attention to this.

2. See, *Parśvanātha kā Cāturyāma Dharma*.

3. *Op. cit.* p. 11.

monks), referred to in the Buddhist allusions, to the schism in the Jain order caused by Jamālī during the life time of Mahāvīra. He writes¹ : “The Buddhist delineation of the dispute and quarrel among the Niganthas after the *Nirvāṇa* of Mahāvīra, is, in fact, the grotesque form of the dispute between Jamālī and Indrabhūṭī narrated in the Jain canon *Bhagvatī Sūtra*.”

As already pointed out, such efforts of ‘reconciliations’ can, in no way, be regarded as historical. It is in fact, a misuse of the word ‘reconciliation’. For, the whole event of Gośālaka’s dispute with Mahāvīra had happened at ‘Śrāvastī’,² whereas the disputation between Jamālī and Indrabhūṭī had taken place at Campā.³ Both the events have no concurrence of the place and time, nor, the subject of these events are related to each other. Hence, the argument of Muni Kalyana Vijayaji is not at all competent to prove the aforesaid three allusions as fallacious.

Again, it should be noted that all the three allusions explicitly mention Pāvā to be the place of the event of the *Nirvāṇa*, and the event of post-*Nirvāṇa* dispute. How is it reasonable to relate with them the events having taken place at ‘Śrāvastī’ and Campā? Moreover, how can it be plausible that a rumour about the death of a distinguished man of the age like Mahāvīra, might be connected and might continue to have its sway over the people for so long a time? In addition to this, the whole event was narrated again by Sāriputta during his speech, and that too in Pāvā itself. If Mahāvīra had not really died by that time, Sāri-

1. *Ibid.* pp. 12-13.

2. *Bhagvatī Sūtra Śataka XV.*

3. *Ibid.* Śataka IX, *uddeśaka VI, sūtra 386-87.*

putta must have been informed of the reality by the people of Pāvā.

If there had been even a single reference in the Jain *Āgamas* contradicting the fact stated in the above three allusions viz. Mahāvīra predeceased Buddha, it could have created a doubt over the credibility of these allusions. But, because we do not get any such contradictory description in the Jain *Āgamas*, we should not doubt the veracity of these allusions. Secondly, had there been a fourth allusion in the Buddhist *Tripitakas*, stating something about Buddha's predeceasing Mahāvīra, it would have been necessary for us to ponder over the above three allusions seriously. But in absence of any such contradictions, it would not in the least be inequitable to accept these allusions, which are unequivocal in themselves, as the valid testimonies for the discovery of truth.

The Events of Mahāvīra's Seniority in Buddhist Tripitakas

Besides the above quoted three allusions, the Buddhist canons are replete with numerous allusions which show that Mahāvīra was older than Buddha. Most of the scholars, so far, have mainly discussed the aforesaid three allusions only. Only God knows why they have lost sight of other relevant allusions wherein it is explicitly stated and even Buddha himself accepts that he is the youngest of all the religious leaders of his time. We quote here three such allusions¹ : "Thus have I heard :—

The Exalted one was once staying near Sāvattthi, at the Jeta Grove, in Anāthapindika's Park. Now the king, Kosalan Pasenadi, came into the presence of the Exalted

1. *Samyutta Nikāya, Dahara Sutta* 3/1/10 (Cf. *The Book of the Kindred Sayings*, Tr. by Mrs. Rhys Davids, vol. 1, pp. 93-96.)

One, and after exchanging greetings with him and compliments of friendship and courtesy, sat down at one side. So seated he said to the Exalted One :—

“Does master Gotama also make no claim to be perfectly and supremely enlightened ?”

“If there be anyone, sire, to whom such enlightenment might rightly be attributed, it is I. I verily, sire, am perfectly and supremely enlightened.”

“But, master Gotama, there are recluses and brahmins who also (like yourself) have each their order of disciples, their attendant followers, who are teachers of disciples, well-known and reputed theorizers, highly esteemed by the people—I mean Purāṇa-Kassapa, Makkhali Gośāla of the Cowstall, the Nigantha Nātaputta Nata’s son *i.e.* Mahāvīra Sañjaya Belatthi’s son, Kaccāyana of the Pakudhas, Ajita Keśa Kamblī of the Hairblanket. Now they, when I have asked this same question of them, have not laid claim to perfect and supreme enlightenment. How can this be ? For (as compared with them) master Gotama is young in years, and is a novice in the life of religion.”

“There are four young creatures, sire, who are not to be disregarded or despised, because they are youthful. What are the four ? A noble prince, a snake, a fire, an almsman (*Bhikkhu*). Yes, sire, these four young creatures are not to be disregarded or despised because they are youthful.”

“Thus spake the Exalted One. And the Blessed One so saying the Master spake again on this wise :—

“A princely youth, by birth with fortune blest,
Off spring of well-born families, let none
Disdain for being youthful nor despise.

The time may come when he, as lord of men,
Comes to his heritage, and in his wrath
May with a despot's weapons seek revenge
With heavy hand. Hence from such attitude
Let everyone who guards his life refrain.

“Or if a man do walk within the woods
And see a snake glide by, let him not say
Disdainful : ‘Tis a young one,’ and despise.
In divers shapes and with an ardent force
Fareth the snake. Should he attacking strike,
He bites the heedless, be it man or maid,
No matter when. Hence from such attitude
Let everyone who guards his life refrain.

“A fire ablaze with appetite immense
And swarthy trail let none despise as young
Since it was lit, nor hold of no account.
If it but win to fuel, growing great,
It may attack the heedless, man or maid,
And burn no matter when. From this therefore
Let everyone who guards his life refrain.

“The forest burnt by fire, the swarthy trailed,
After the lapse of many nights and days,
In shoots and seedlings springs once more to life.
But he whom almsman, strong in righteousness,
Burneth with ardent flame, may look in vain
For child, or offspring ‘among his stock. No wealth
His heire may find ; childless and without heirs,
Like to a palm-tree stump such men become.

Hence with these four—the serpent and the fire,
The prince of high estate, the saintly friar—
Let the wise man, his own goodwill in sight,
Conduct himself as seemly is and right.

“When these things had been said, King Pasenadī, the Kosalan, spoke thus to the Exalted One :

“Most excellent, Lord, most excellent ! Just as if a man were to set up that which has been thrown down, or were to reveal that which is hidden away, or were to point out the right road to him who has gone astray, or were to bring a lamp into the darkness so that those who have eyes could see external forms—just even so, Lord, has the truth been made known to me, in many a figure by the Exalted One. I, even I, Lord, betake myself to the Exalted One as my refuge, to the Norm and to the Order. May the Exalted One accept me as a follower, as one who from this day forth as long as life endures has taken his refuge therein.”

At one time *Bhagavān* i.e. Buddha was dwelling at Rājagṛha in Venuvana, in Kalandakanivapa. At and that time some questions were recited to Sabhiya, the *Paribbājaka* (a wandering mender mendicant), by an old benevolent deity (who had in a former birth been a relation of his) : ‘He who, O Sabhiya, be it a *Śramaṇa* or a *Brāhmaṇa*, explains these questions to thee when asked, near him you should live a religious life.’

“Then Sabhiya the *Paribbājaka* having learnt the questions from the deity, went to whatever *Śramaṇas* and *Bhrāmaṇas* there were, who had an assembly (of Bhikhus), and a crowd (of followers), and were well-known teachers famous leaders and were considered excellent by the multitude, such as (1) Pūraṇa, Kassapa (2) Makkhalī Gośāla, (3) Ajita Keśakambalī, (4) Pakuddha Kaccayana, (5) Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta, and (6) Nigantha Nātaputta, (i.e. Mahāvīra). Those he want to and after going to them, asked these questions. They, being asked the questions by Sabhiya, the *Paribbājaka*, did not succeed (in answering

them), and not succeeding they showed wrath and hatred and discontent, and they also in return put questions to Sabhiya the *Paribbājaka*.

“Then this came to the mind of Sabhiya, the *Paribbājaka* : ‘Whatever *Śramaṇas* and *Brāhmaṇas* there are, that have an assembly (of Bhikkhus) and a crowd of followers), and are well-known teachers, famous leaders, considered excellent by the multitude, as Puraṇa Kassapa, Makkhalī Gośāla, Ajita-Keśa Kambalī, Pakuddha Kaccāyana, Sañjaya-Ballatthiputta, and Nigantha—, Nātaputta they being asked questions by me, did not succeed in answering them, and not succeeding they showed wrath and hatred and discontent, and they also in return put questions to me in this matter, surely I think I shall go back to what I have left, and enjoy sensual pleasures.’

“Then this came to the mind of Sabhiya, the *Paribbājaka* : ‘This *Śramaṇa* Gautama, *i.e.* *Buddha*, too has an assembly (of Bhikkhus) and a crowd (of followers), and is a well-known teacher, a famous leader, and is considered excellent by the multitude ; surely I think I shall go to him and ask him these questions’. Then this came to the mind of Sabhiya, the *paribbājaka*. Whatever *Śramaṇas* and *Brāhmaṇas* there are, *decayed, old aged, advanced in years havings reached old age, experinced elders, long ordained* having assemblies (of Bhikkhus) crowds (of followers), being teachers well-known, famous leaders, considered excellent by the multitude, such as (1) Puraṇa Kassapa, (2) Makkhalī Gośāla, (3) Ajita Keśa-kambalī, (4) Pakuddha Kaccāyana, (5) Sañjaya Belatthiputta : and (6) Nigantha Nātaputta, (*i.e.* Mahāvīra) and they, being asked questions by me, did not succeed (in answering them) and not succeeding they showed wrath and hatred and discontent and they also in return put questions to me in this matter. (I should like to know) whether

Śramaṇa Gautama (i.e. Buddha), will be able to explain them to me, for *Śramaṇa* Gautama is both young by birth and new in ascetic life.' Then this came to the mind of Sabhiya the *Paribbājaka* : 'Śramaṇa Gautama is not to be slighted because he is young ; even if the *Śramaṇa* Gautama is young, yet is mighty and powerful : surely I think I shall go to *Śramaṇa* Gautama and ask these questions.'"

3. "Thus have I heard :—

"Once the Exalted One was staying at Rājagṛha in the Mango Grove of Jivaka Komārbhacca, together with the large order of monks, numbering one thousand two hundred and fifty.

Now at that time, when it was the night of the full-moon day of the observance-day, the full-moon day being the *Kaumudī* of rainy-season (i.e. the full-moon day in the month of *Āśvina* or *Kārtika*², Ajātaśatru, the king of Magadha, the son of Vaidehī, surrounded by the ministers of the kingdom, was sitting on the terrace of the best palace. Then king Ajātaśatru expressing praise of the observance day (i.e. the full-moon day), said 'Ah' !

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1. *Sutta Nipāta Sabhiya Sutta*, III—6 (Cf. Tr. by V. Fausboll *S.B.E.*, vol. X, part II, pp. 85-86). It may be remarked here that in the canonical literature of the Buddhist, the *Mahāva* of the *Sutta Nipāta* is considered to be very old. V. Fausboll has observed : "The collection on discourses of (*Sutta Nipāta*) which I have here translated is very remarkable, as there can be no doubt that it contains some remains of primitive Buddhism, consider the greater part of *Mahāvagga Sutta Nipāta*) and nearly the whole of, *Aṭṭhaka vagga* as very old, (Cf. *op. cit.* Introduction p. I).
 2. *Dīgha Nikāya, Sāmnayaphala Sutta*, 1/2. (Cf. *Dialogues of the Buddha*, Tr. by T.W. Rhys Davids, vol. I p. 51).
 3. *Kaumudī* is full-moon day in *Āśvina* or *Kārtika* Cf. Sanskrit—English Dictionary of Prin Vaman Shivaram Apte Ed. by P.K. Gode and C.G. Karve part I, p. 611.

How charming is the night illuminated by the light of
the full-moon !

How beautiful is the night illuminated by the light of
the full moon !!

How handsome is the night illuminated by the light of
the full-moon !!!

How pleasant is the night illuminated by the light of
the full-moon !!!

How exquisite is the night illuminated by the light of
the full-moon !!!

(At such a pleasant time) to which Śramaṇa (recluse) or Brāhmin should we go to pass our time in the company of the good (man), so that his company may please our minds ?

“On his saying so one of the ministers of his kingdom said to Ajātasatru, the king of Magadha the son of Vaidehi : ‘Sire ! there is one Pūraṇa Kassapa, who has his order of disciples and his crowd of followers who is the teacher of disciples, well-known and reputed founder of a school of doctrine, esteemed as good man by the multitude, experienced, long-ordained, advanced in years and having reached old age. The king, sire, should have a religious discussion with Pūraṇa Kassapa. The religious discussion with Pūraṇa Kassapa even for a little time will delight your heart’. On his saying so, Ajātasatru, the king of Magadha the son of Vaidehi, kept silence.

“Another minister said this to Ajātasatru the...Vaidehi : ‘Sire, there is one Makkhalī Gośāla (*i.e.* of the cattle pen) who has his order of disciples,.....reached old age. The king, sire, should have religious discussion with this Makkhalī Gośāla. The religious discussion with Makkhalī Gośāla even for.....kept silence.

“Another minister said this.....there is one Ajita Keśa Kambalī who has.....old age. The king with this Ajita Keśakambalī.... The religious discussion with Ajita Keśakambalī even for..... kept silence.

“Another minister said this.....there is one Pakuddha Kaccāyana who has.....old age. The king.....with this Pakuddha Kaccāyana. The religious discussion with Pakuddha Kaccāyana even for.....kept silence.

“Another minister said this.....there is one Saññajaya Belatthiputta who has.....old age. The king.....with this Saññajaya Belatthiputta. The religious discussion with Saññajaya Belatthiputta even for.....kept silence.

“Another minister said this.....there is one Nigantha Nātaputta (*i.e.* Mahāvīra) who has.....old age. The kingwith this Nigantha Nātaputta. The religious discussion with Nigantha Nātaputta even for.....kept silence.

“At that time Jīvaka Komārabhacca was sitting silently near Ajātaśatru, the king of Magadha, the son of Vaidehi. Then Ajātaśatru, the king.....Vaidehi, said to Jīvaka Komārabhacca. ‘Why, good Jīvaka you are keeping complete silence ?

“Sire, this Lord the Perfected One and the wholly Awakened. One (*i.e.* Buddha is staying in my Mango Grove together with a large order of monks numbering one thousand two hundred and fifty.

The auspicious fame of such Lord Gautama has spread thus—he is the Lord the Perfected One, the wholly Awakened One, having knowledge and conduct, having reached the best life (*Sugata*), knower of the world, an unparalleled whip for restraining people (*i.e.* for bringing people on the virtuous path) the instructor (*i.e.* preacher) of the Gods and men, and the Enlightened One Sire ; Your Majesty should go

to him and have religious discussion with him. By having a religious discussion with him, perhaps Your Majesty's heart will be delighted."

A Critical Examination

These three allusions are so explicit in themselves to prove the seniority of Mahāvīra to Buddha that it would be entirely needless to reconcile or explain them.

In this way the three allusions (quoted before) prove that Mahāvīra predeceased Buddha and the other three allusions (quoted now) prove that Mahāvīra was senior to Buddha, and that too not only from the point of view of age but also from the point of view of knowledge, influence and period of Monkhood.

These allusions themselves speak eloquently that when Buddha had just started his preaching work, Mahāvīra, by that time, had already done a good deal in that direction.

The veracity of the above allusions is also proved by the fact that the Buddhist *Tripitakas* themselves accept the juniority of Buddha. If Buddha had been regarded senior from the point of view of age, period of Monkhood and influence by Buddhist *Tripitakas*, we would have questioned their credibility. On the ground that the compilers of the Buddhist scriptures might have done so in order to enhance the glory and fame of their religious preceptor, but acknowledging the juniority of one's religious preceptor cannot be regarded as a means of fostering the sentiment of sectarian egoism.

The already stated fact. viz. Mahāvīra was a senior, contemporary of Buddha, is also substantiated by the fact that the Jain canons are as reticent about Buddha as the

Buddhist canons are eloquent about Mahāvīra. The possible reasons thereof are as follows.

A budding religious leader generally speaks much about his senior rivals. He has psychologically a feeling of equating himself with his senior rivals, and, hence, he endeavours to show himself superior and his rivals inferior. Consequently, he refers every now and then to the weak points of his rivals. This very process is reflected in the Buddhist canons which are replete with the allusions about Nigantha Nātaputta (and also other five religious teachers) and the doctrines of the Niganthas (*i.e.* the Jains)¹. On the contrary the Jain canons do not mention even the name of Buddha as the sponsor of Buddhism. This also signifies the same fact that those who have already earned the name and fame and become dignifying and dominating figures, shrink from giving an importance to the rival budding power all of a sudden.

Another possible reason is that the teachings of Mahāvīra had already been compiled in the form of 12 *Āṅgas*, comprising the most original portion of the Jain canonical literature, by the eleven *Gaṇadharas* soon after Mahāvīra's attainment of omniscience. Now because Buddha's advent was not even 'in the air' at that time, how could we expect to find allusions in those canons about the life of Buddha? Also, on the other hand, if Buddha were really a senior contemporary of Mahāvīra, how the Jain canons could

1. See, for the detailed discussion of these allusions the author's article titled '*Pāli Vāṇmaya Meṃ Ehagavāna Mahāvīra in Bhikṣu-Smṛti Grantha*, part II, pp. 6—10.

have refrained from referring to the events of Buddha's life.¹

Again because Buddha was a junior contemporary of Mahāvīra and the Buddhist canons were compiled after the *Nirvāṇa* of Buddha by his perfected disciples, it is quite natural that the *Tripitakas* afford us with a lot of allusions about Mahāvīra's life.

Contemporaneity and Chronology

On the basis of the facts discussed in the preceding sections, we indubitably reach the conclusion that Mahāvīra predeceased Buddha and that Mahāvīra was a senior contemporary of Buddha. Now it remains to decide the period of their contemporaneity *i.e.* how long they lived in the presence of each other. But we can know this completely only after chronologizing the chief events of their life. Though the *Āgamas* and the *Tripitakas* afford us the account of the days and the months of their birth and death, they do not mention the years of these events in terms of any prevalent era. This might have happened on account of the fact that no such systematized era, was in vogue at that time. Thus the only means at our hand to determine their correct dates is the use of other chronicles after having attested their veracity on the touchstone of history.

First we shall consider the chronology of Mahāvīra, for it is rather more unequivocal and less controversial than that of Buddha.

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1. Though in the Jain canons such as the *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* Sūtra, etc., we find a mention of some beliefs of the Buddhists, it is quite negligible. Also, because the later patriarchs of Jainism possessing the knowledge of the *Pūrvas* (the most important portion of the Jain canons, but not available now) had made additions and alterations in the original *Āngas*, the above stated fact is not violated.

Chronology of Mahāvīra

In the foregoing chapter it has already been elucidated that the most unequivocal date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* is 527 B.C.¹ This date is substantiated by an extraordinary evidence: History accepts 322 B.C. as the date of the accession of Candragupta Maurya to the sovereignty of Magadha.² The historians call this date a 'light house' in that dark period of Indian history.³ They decide the chronology of hundred of years, posterior and prior to this period, on the basis of this unanimously accepted and definitely verified date. According to the chronology adopted by some ancient Jain traditional works, such as *Titthogālī Pannaya*, *Titthodhara Prakraṇa*, Merutuṅga's *Vicāra-śreṇī*, etc., the event of Mahāvīra's death had taken place 215 years before Candragupta's accession. It should also be remarked here that the above works speak of Candra-

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1. Many an authoritative historians and scholars have approved this date; see for example,
 - (a) Mahāmahopādhyāya Rāya Bahādura Gouri Śaṅkara Oyra, *Jain-Satya Parakāśa* Vol. II, Nos. IV-V, pp. 217-81.
 - (b) Dr. Baladeva Upādhyāya, *Dharma Aura Darśana*, p. 89.
 - (c) Dr. Vasudeva Sharan Agraval, *Tīrthaṅkara Mahāvīra*. Vol. II, preface, p. XIX.
 - (d) Dr. Hira Lal Jain, *Tattva Samuccaya*, p. 6.
 - (e) Mahāmahopādhyāya Pt. Vishveshar Nath Rey, *Bhārata ke Prācīna Rājavanśa*, Part II, p. 436.
 2. *Candragupta Maurya and His Times*, by Dr. Radha Kumud Mukherjee, pp. 44-46; *Bhārata kā Bṛhata Itihāsa part I*, (*Prācīna Bhārata*), by Shrinetra Pandeya, 4th Edition, p. 242.
 3. To these sources, Indian history is also indebted for what has been called 'the Sheet-anchor' of its chronology, for the starting-point of Indian chronology is the date of Candragupta's accession to sovereignty.
 — *Candragupta Maurya and His Times*, by Dr. Radha Kumud Mukherjee, p. 3. Also, see, *Ancient India*, by Rapson, pp. 20-21.

gupta's accession to the throne of Avanti, and not that of Magadha. It is also a historical fact that in 312 B.C. (*i.e.* 10 years after Candragupta's accession to the throne of Magadha) Candragupta acquired the kingdom of Avanti.¹ Thus, the Jain chronology and the historical chronology endorse each other and the date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* is confirmed in $312+215=527$ B.C.

The Vikrama Era

The above date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* is also supported by the historical dates of Vikrama, Śaka and Gupta eras. The ancient chronicles and works of Jain tradition state that Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* took place 470 years before the

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1. The date 313 B.C. for Candragupta's accession, if it is based on correct tradition, may refer to his acquisition of Avanti in Malva, as the chronological datum found in a verse, where the Maurya king finds mention in the list of successors of Pālaka, the king of Avanti.

—*Political History of Ancient India*, by Dr. H.C. Raychaudhuri
The Jain date 313 B.C., if based on correct tradition, may refer to his acquisition of Avanti (Malva).

—*An Advanced History of India*, by Dr. R.C. Majumdar, Dr. H.C. Raychaudhuri, K.K. Datta, p. 99.

Although the date 313 B.C. for Candragupta's accession is based on correct tradition it refers to his victory over Malva or Avanti, because the verse, in which this chronology is adopted, mentions Candragupta in the list of the successors of king Pālaka of Avanti.

—Shrinetra Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 245-246.

commencement of the Vikrama era.¹ According to the unanimous opinion of historians, the Vikrama era started

1. (a) Jaṁ rayanim Kālagao, arihā titthaṁkaro mahāvīro.

Taṁ rayanim aṇaṇivā, ahistto pālao rāyā !! 1 !!

Saṭṭhi Pālayaraṇṇo (60), Paṇavannasayam tu hoi nandāṇam

(155) !

Aṭṭhasayam muriyāṇam (108), tīsa cciya pūsamittassa

(30) !! 2 !!

Balamitta-bhānumitta saṭṭhi (60), vari-sāṇi catta (4) nahavāṇe!

Taha gaddabhilla-rajjam terasa (13), varisa sagassa cau

(varisa) (4) !! 3 !!

Śrī Vikramādityaśca pratibodhitastadrājyam tu śrī

vīrasaptati catuṣṭaye (470) saṁjātam !"

—Tappāgaccha Paṭṭāvalī by Dharmasāgara Upādhyāya (Ed. and Tr. by Panyas Kalyan Vijayji), pp. 50-52.

- (b) Vikramarajjārambhā parao siri vīra nivvui bhaniyā !

Sunna muniveya jutto vikkama kālau jina-kālo !!

Vikramakālājjinasya vīrasya kālo jina-kālaḥ śunyaḥ (0), muni (7), veda (4) yuktaḥ ! Catvāriṁśatāni saptatvadhikavarśāṇi śrīmahāvīravikramādityayorantaramityarthaḥ ! Navayam kālaḥ vīravikramayoḥ katham gaṇyate, ityāha vikramarājyārambhāt parataḥ paścāt śrīvīranirvṛttitratra bhaṇitā ! Ko bhāvaḥ śrīvīranirvāṇadinādanu, 470 varṣe vikramādityasya rajyārambhadinamiti !

—Vicāra-śreṇi by Merutuṅga pp. 3-4.

- (c) Punarmanirvānāt saptyadhikacchatu śatavarṣe (470) Ujjayinyām śrīvikramādityo rājā bhaviṣyati.....svanāmnā ca samvatsarapravṛtim kariṣyati !

—Śrī Saubhāgyapañcamyādīparvakathāsaṁgraha, Dipamālīkā Vyākhyāna, pp. 56-57.

- (d) Mahāmukkha gamanāo pālaya-nanda-candaguttāirāisu bolīnesu causaya satterahiṁ vikkamāicco rāyā hohi ! Tattha saṭṭhi varisānam pālagassa rajjam, paṇapaṇṇam nandāṇam, aṭṭhottara sayam moriyaṁ vaṁsāṇam, tīsam pūsamittassa, saṭṭhi, balamitta-bhānumittānam, cālisaṁ naravāhaṇasya, terasa geddabhillassa, cattāri sagassa ! Tao vikkamāi cco !

—Vividha tīrthakalap (Apāpābhāt-kalpa), pp. 38-39.

in 57 B.C.¹ This clearly implies that Mahāvīra died in 57+470=527 B.C.

The Śaka era

According to both the traditions of Jains—Śvetāmbara and Digambara, the Śaka era commenced 605 years and 5 months after Mahāvīra's Nirvāṇa.² According to history,

1. *An Advanced History of India*, p. 118, *Gupta Samrājya kā Itihāsa*, Vol. I, by Dr. Vasudeva Upadhyaya, pp. 182-183.
2. (a) Jam rayañiṃ siddhigao, arahā titthaṃkaro Mahāvīro !
 Tam rayañimavantīe, abhisitto pālo rāyā !! 620 !!
 Palaya raṇṇo saṭṭhi, puṇa paṇṇasayaṃ viyāṇi ṇadāṇam !
 Muriyāṇam saṭṭhisayam, paṇatisā pūsamittāṇam (ttassa) !! 621 !!
 Balamitta-bhāṇumittā, saṭṭhā cattāya honti nahaseṇe !
 Gaddābhasayanegam puṇa, paḍivanno to sagorāyā. !! 622 !!
 Paṇca ya māsā paṇca ya, vāsā chachceva honti vāsasayā !
 Parinivvassarihato, toappan (Paḍivanno) sago rāyā !! 623 !!
 —*Titthogāli Painnaya*, Vss. 620-623.
- (b) Shri vīranirvṛtervarṣaḥ ṣaḍbhiḥ pancottaraiḥ sataiḥ !
 Śāka saṃvatsarasayaśā pravṛttirbharate(a)bhavat !!
 —Merutuṇaga's *Vicāra-Śreṇī* (Jain Sāhitya-Saṃsodhana, Vol. II, Nos. III-IV, p. 4).
- (c) Chṭṭhaṃ vāsāṇa saehiṃ pañcāhiṃ vāsehiṃ pañcamāsehiṃ !
 Mama nivvāṇa gayassa u upājissai sago rāyā !!
 —Nemi Candra's *Mahāvīra Cariyam*, leaf, 94-1. Vs. 2169,
- (d) Paṇachassayavassam paṇamāsajudam gamiya vīra-ñivvuido !
 sagarājo to kakkī Caduṇavatiya-mahiya sagamāsam !! 850 !!
 —Nemicandra Siddhānta-cakravartī's *Trilokasāra* Vs. 65.
- (e) Varṣāṇāṃ ṣaṭṣatīm tyaktvā pañcāgrām māsapañcakam !
 Muktim gate Mahāvīre sakarājastato(a)bhavat !!
 —Jinasenācārya's *Harivaṃśa Purāṇa*, *Adhyāya* IX Vs. 549.
- (f) “Nivvāṇe vīraṇi chavvāsa sadesu pancvarisesu !
 Paṇamāsesu gadesu saṃjādo saganio ahavā !!
 —*Tiloyapaṇṇatti*, part I; 341.
- (g) “Paṇca ya māsā paṇca ya vāsā chachceva honti vāsasasayā !
 Sayakāleṇa ya sahiya thaveyavvo tado rāsi !!
 —*Dhavalā*, (Jain Siddhānta Bhavana, Ārā), leaf 537.

the Śaka era started in 78 A.D.¹ Hence, the date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* comes out to be, 605 – 78 = 527 B.C.

The Gupta Era

Dr. Vasudeva Upadhyaya, M.A., Ph. D. discussing about the Gupta era, writes in his famous historical work on Gupta period,² “On the basis of the account given by some Jain writers of centuries prior to Alberuni, it is found that there is an interval of 241 years between the Śaka and Gupta eras. One of these writers, Jinasena, who flourished in the 8th century A.D., states³ that 605 years and 5 months after Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*, the Śaka king flourished and 231 years after the Śaka, Gupta's reign began, during which was born the Kalakirājā. Another Jain author Guṇabhadra writes in his work *Uttara purāṇa*⁴ (889 A.D.), that 1000 years after Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*, the Kalakirāja was born. The statements of Jinasena and Guṇabhadra are seconded by a third writer, Nemicaandra.

“Nemicaandra writes in his work *Trilokasāra*⁵. ‘Śakarājā was born 605 years and five months after Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*

1. *An Advanced History of India*, p. 120; *Gupta Sāmrajya kā Itihāsa*, Part I, pp. 182-183.

2. *Ibid*, part I. p. 382.

3. *Guptānām ca satadvayam..... !*

Ektrimsacca varśāṇi kālaviddbhīrudāhṛtam..... !!

Dvicitvārimsadevātaḥ Kalkirājasya rājatā..... !

Tato (a) jitaṁjayo rājā syadindrapura-saṁsthitah..... !!

Varśāṇi ṣaṭṣatīṭi tyaktvā pañcāgram māsapañcakam..... !

Muktim gate Mahāvīre śakarājā tato(a)bhavan..... !!

— Jināsena *Harivaṁśa Purāṇa*, *Adhyāya LX*, VSS. 547-49.

4. *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XV, 143.

5. Paṇa chasayih assam paṇamāsa judam gamiya vīraṇi vuido Sagarājā to Kalkicadukakatiya mahiya Sasamāsa. *Trilokasāra*, p. 32.

and Kalakirājā was born, 394 years 7 months, after the Śaka era'. Thus, 605 years 5 months+394 years 7 months, =1000 years. In this way on the basis of these three Jain writers, the time of Śakarājā as well as that of Kalakirājā are ascertained. "In this way, after ascertaining the times of Śaka and Kalaki on the basis of some Jain works, Dr. Vasudeva Upadhyaya has proceeded further to find out the interval between the Śaka era, and the Gupta era on the basis of Khoja inscription of king Hastina. In conclusion of the whole discussion, he writes¹ : "On the basis of the above discussion, it can be said that adding the number 241 to a date in Śaka era, we get the corresponding date in Gupta era. Also, the statement of Alberuni is substantiated by this extensive discussion. It can be definitely concluded that the Gupta era began 241 years after Śaka era (i.e. in 319 A.D.)."

The above quotation shows how the date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* has become the base of the chronology upto the beginning of Gupta era. Dr. Upadhyaya, as shown above, has reached at the date of the Gupta era by starting from the date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*. Now, if we employ just the reverse process we reach back to the date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* as 527 B.C. For,

The beginning of Gupta era—319 A.D.

Interval between Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* and the beginning of era—846 years. ∴ Date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*—527 B.C.

Astrological Calculations

The learned Ācāryas of Terapantha have also accepted 527 B.C. as the date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*. They have supported their belief by the astrological calculations.

1. Op. cit. 181.

According to the Jain scriptures, at the time of Mahāvīra's death, an asterism of ashes (*Bhasma-graha*) entered into the sign of Zodiac under which Mahāvīra was born (the birth-*rāśi*) and it continued to stay for 2000 years.¹ According to the fourth Ācārya of Terapantha, Śrīmad Jayācārya, that asterism left the sign of Zodiac of Mahāvīra's birth in the year 1531 of Vikrama era². Again, the scriptures have predicted that a comet (*Dhūmaketu*) of duration of 333 years, will set in, 1990 years after Mahāvīra's death³. According to Śrīmad Jayācārya⁴, the comet left the sign of Zodiac of Mahāvīra's birth in the year 1853 of Vikrama era. On the basis of the above to astrological evidences, we reach 527 B.C. as the date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* as follows:

Total duration of asterism of ash——2000 years.

Date of its leaving the birth-*rāśi*——1473 A.D.

Date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*——527 B.C.

Similarly, 1990+333 years after Mahāvīra's death, the comet left the birth-*rāśi*, so that——

Total duration of comet——2323 years.

Date of its leaving the birth-*rāśi*——1796 A.D.

Date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*——527 B.C.

Traditional Era of Vīra Nirvāṇa.

The era of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*, which is in vogue at present in the Jain traditions, is also based on the date 527 B.C. It is remarkable that this era is unanimously and uncontrovertibly accepted by all the sects of Jains. At

1. Kalpa Sūtra, vs. 129 (S.B.E. Vol. XXII).

2. Bhrama Vidhavaṃsanam, Preface.

3. Baṅkaculia.

4. Op. cit.

present, in the year 1963 A.D., the era of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* is 2490, which is 527 years ahead of Christian era, as it should be.

Chronology of Mahāvīra's Life.

After having decided the date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*, now we can easily chronologize the important events of Mahāvīra's life as follows :

B.C.	Event
599	Birth
569	Initiation into ascetic life.
557	Attainment of omniscience.
527	Final emancipation.

Traditional dates of Nirvāṇa

It is not so easy to discover a unique date for Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* as in the case of Mahāvīra. More than a millenium ago, there existed ambiguity about it and even today it persists to a great extent. Famous Chinese traveller Fa-Hien, who visited India in 400 A.D., remarks¹. "Up to now, 1497 years have passed since the *Nirvāṇa* of the Blessed One (Buddha)." Another well-known Chinese traveller Hiuen-Tsang who toured in India in 630 A.D., wrote². "Lord Buddha lived for 80 years. There is a great controversy over the date of his *Nirvāṇa*. Some believe that Buddha attained the *Nirvāṇa* on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, while the *Śarvāstivādins* take the full-moon day of the month Kārtika as the day of *Nirvāṇa*. Some people say that 1200 years have passed since the *Nirvāṇa*, while others contend that 1500 years have passed, and some other believe that 900

1. Bhāratīya Prācīna Lipimātā, by Rayabahādura Mahāmahopadhyāya Gourishankar Hirāchand Ojha.

2. Ibid.

and a few more years have passed since the *Nirvāṇa*.” On the basis of these beliefs, the dates of Buddha’s *Nirvāṇa* come out to be 570 B.C., 870 B.C. and a few years earlier than 270 B.C. respectively. But all these dates have no more value than the legends.

At present, there are several dates prevalent on the basis of different Buddhist traditions. One of these is based on the Ceylonese chronicle, *Mahāvamsa*¹. According to this, the *Nirvāṇa* of Buddha took place in 544 B.C. (This is popularly known as ‘Ceylonese date’). Another date is based on the “dotted record of canton.”² Saṅghabhadra brought this news to China. The people of Canton established a “Dotted record”, the starting dot of which synchronised with the year of Buddha’s *Nirvāṇa*. Then, every year a dot was added to it. This tradition continued up to 489 A.D. When all the dots were counted, they were found to be 975, on this basis, the date of Buddha’s *Nirvāṇa* was calculated to be 486 B.C.

There is a third date, prevailing in Chinese Turkestan. This is also known as ‘Khotan tradition.’³ “It place, Dharma-Aśoka 250 years after the *Nirvāṇa* of Buddha, and makes him contemporary with Chinese emperor Shih Huang-Ti (Chin), the builder of the great wall, who came to throne in 246 B.C., became universal emperor in 221 B.C. and reigned up to 210 B.C.” On the basis of this tradition, some scholars affirm that Buddha died in $246 + 250 = 496$ B.C.⁴

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1. Early History of India, by Vincent A. Smith, p. 49
 2. Journal of Royal Asiatic Society, Great Britain, 1905, 51.
 3. Sarat Chandra Das, Journal of Asiatic Society, Bengal, part, I, 1886, pp. 193-203, Tchang, Synchronismes Chinois ; Early History of India by V.A. Smith, pp.49-50.
 4. Buddhakāltina Bhārata, by Janārdana Bhatt, p. 371.

Historian's Date of Buddha's Nirvāṇa

It is really suprising that in spite of the extensive re-search work, that has been carried into the problem of Buddha's date, the historians failed to reach an unanimous decision regarding it. Most of the scholars have put forth a new opinion, and thus, they have elongated the list of these dates. The dates, suggested by the prominent scholars are enlisted here:

Name of the scholars	(Date of Buddh's Nirvāṇa in B.C.)
E. J. Thomas and a Japanese Scholar ¹	386
Rhys Davids ²	412
Max Müller ³ and Jarl Charpentier ⁴	477
Gen...Cunnigham ⁵ and Diwan Bahadur Swami Kanna Pilley ⁶	478 480
Oldenberg ⁷	481
Ferguson ⁸	
Dr. Buhler ⁹	In between 483 & 471
Dr. Wheeler, Geiger ¹⁰ , Dr. Fleet ¹¹ ,	483

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1. B.C. La Commemoration Volume, II, pp. 18-22.
 2. Buddhism, pp. 212-13.
 3. Introduction to Dhammapadda, S.B.E.. Vol. p. X, XII.
 4. Indian Antiquary, Vol. XLIII, 1914, pp. 126-133.
 5. Corpus Inscriptionum. Indicarum, Vol. I, Introduction, p. II.
 6. An Indian Ephamenish, part I, 1922, pp. 471 ff.
 7. Introduction to Vinaya Piṭaka, S.B.E., Vol. XIII p. 22 and The Religions of India by E.W. Hopkins, p.310.
 8. Journal of Royal Asiatic Society. IV, p.81.
 9. Indian Antiquary, VI, p. 149, ff. (Also, see, Buddhism in Translation, p. 2).
 10. Mahavamsā, Geigar's Translation, XXVIII and Journal of Royal Asiatic Society, 1909, pp. 1-134.
 11. Journal of Royal Asiatic Society, 1908, pp. 471 ff.

Tukaram Kriṣṇa laddu ¹ , Pt. Rhaul	
Sankrityayana ² , Dr. Jacobi ³	
Dr. H.C. Ray Chandhri ⁴ , Dr. Smith's later view ⁵ .	487
Prof. Kern ⁶	488
Dr. Smith's Earlier View ⁷ , Dharmānanda	
Kauśāmbi ⁸	543
Pt. Bhagawan Lal Inderji ⁹	638

It can easily be inferred, from the above list that out of the twenty two opinions quoted, nineteen hold that Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* took place later than 527 B.C. If 527 B.C. is accepted to be the correct date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* Buddha can be considered as a Junior contemporary of Mahāvīra in opinion of the above 19 scholars.

Though in course of time, new changes have entered in the opinion regarding the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*, not a single view has been propounded so as to reconcile the events of Buddha's life connected with Mahāvīra, Gośālaka, Bimbisāra (Śreṇika). Ajātaśatru (Koṇika), etc. This suggests that there has remained some fundamental mistake in our way of approach to the problem. It is nothing but the adoption of the chronology of Ceylonese chronicles as the basis.

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1. Quoted from Vira Nirvāṇa Samvat Aura Jaina Kālagāṇanā, p. 155.
 2. Buddhacaryā, preface, p.I.
 3. Op. cit, p. 11.
 4. Political History of Ancient India, p. 227.
 5. Early History of India p.46.
 6. *Der Buddhismus*, Jar—Telling, II, p. 63.
 7. *Early History of India*, 1924, pp-49-50.
 8. *Bhagvāna Buddha*, p. 89.
 9. *Indian Antiquary*, XIII, 1884, pp-411ff.

Problem of Chronology

There are mainly three sources, which throw light on the ancient chronology of India :

1. *Purāṇic*,
2. Jain,
3. Buddhist

The first of these, viz. the *Purāṇic* chronology is based on the *Purāṇa* such as *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, *Matasya Purāṇa*, *Vāyu Purāṇa*, *Bhāgvat-Purāṇa*, etc. The second one i.e. the Jain chronology is found in the ancient works of Jain tradition such as, *Titthogalī Painnaya*, Merutuṅga's *Vicāra Śreṇī*, etc. The Buddhist chronology is based on the Ceylonese chronicles *Dīpavaṃśa* and *Mahāvāṃśa*.

The first of the above sources is the earliest of all. The *Purāṇas* cited above according to the historians, were compiled in the fourth century B.C.¹

Titthogalī Painnaya, the work of the Jain tradition describing the chronology of ancient India, is believed to be composed in the 3rd or the 4th century A.D.²

1. The *Purāṇa* certainly existed in any form in the fourth century B.C., for we find in Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra*, a reference to the *Purāṇa*.—Janārdana Bhatt, *Bhāudha Kālīna Bhārata*, p. 3.

In the opinion of scholars, the administrative system, described in Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* is, in reality, an elaborated discussion of Candragupta Maurya's administration. So, the date of *Arthaśāstra* is, in no case, later than 3rd century B.C. Hence, it can be said that the *Purāṇas* were composed much earlier than the 3rd century B.C.

Shri Baladeva Upadhyaya, *Ārya Saṃskṛti Ke Mūlādhāra*, p. 164.

2. Muni Kalyan Vijayaji, *op. cit*—, p. 30n.

The Ceylonese chronicles, date back, according to the scholars¹ to the 4th or 5th century of our era.

The *Purāṇic* and the Jain chronologies are wholly Indian, and endorse each other². It is worth noting that the authority of the *Purāṇic* chronology has been accepted by the historians.³ The Buddhist chronology is non-Indian, in as much as the Ceylonese chronicles were composed in Ceylon. Dr. Rhys Davids writes :⁴ “In the fourth century of our era, some one collected such of these Pāli verses, as referred to the history of Ceylon, piecing them together by other verses to make a consecutive. He called his poem, thus constructed, the *Dīpavaṃśa*, the *Island Chronicle*...”

“As generation afterwards Mahānāma wrote his great work, the *Mahāvamśa*. He was no historian, and has, besides the material used by his two predecessors, only popular legends to work on.” This quotation of the renowned scholar clearly indicates of the unauthenticity of the Ceylonese chronicles. The greatest weakness of the Ceylonese chrono-

1. Dr. Vincent A. Smith, *Early History of India*, p. 11.

2. Muni Kalyan Vijayaji has discussed this point at length in his *Vīra Nīrvāṇa Samvat Aura Jaina Kālagāṇanā*, pp. 15-29.

3. Modern European writers have inclined to disparage unduly the authority of the *Purāṇic* lists, but closer study finds in them, much genuine and valuable historical tradition.

Dr. V. A. Smith, *op. cit.*—, p. 12.

The modern scholars have now accepted the view that the *Purāṇas* give authentic account of ancient chronology. The facts described in them have been corporated by the edicts, the coins and the reminiscences of the foreign travellers. The learned historians, therefore, state that these materials should be regarded as genuine and acceptable.

Shri Baladeva Upadhyaya, *op. cit.*—, p. 167.

4. *Buddhist India*, pp. 277-78.

logy is that it shows a great discrepancy with the *Purāṇic* and the Jain chronologies.¹

Reconstruction of chronology

We have already reached a definite conclusion about the following dates :

Birth of Mahāvīra	599 B.C.
Accession of Ajātaśatru	544 B.C.
Death of Gośālaka	543 B.C.
<i>Nirvāṇa of Mahāvīra</i>	527 B.C.
Accession of Candragupta (at Magadha)	322 B.C.
Accession of Candragupta (at Avanti)	313 B.C.

Now, we should try to reconstruct the whole chronology from the king Śīsunāga, the founder of the Śrī Śuṅga dynasty to the end of Nandas rule.² As we have seen, the Jain sources assign 60 years to the rule of Pālaka dynasty and 155 years to that of Nanda dynasty over the kingdom of Avanti, after the death of Mahāvīra in 527 B.C. Thus in Avanti, the Pālaka dynasty rule from 527 B.C. to 467 B.C., and the Nanda dynasty ruled from 467 B.C. to 312 B.C.

Now regarding the chronology of Magadha, we find that after the *Nirvāṇa* of Mahāvīra, the Śīsunāga dynasty

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1. It is to be noted that the Buddhist tradition runs counter to the Brahmanical and Jain traditions.

Canaragupta Maurya and His Time by Dr. Radha Kumud Mukherjee, p. 20.

2. Muni Kalyan Vijayaji (op. cit. pp. 25-29) and Dr. Tribhuvandas Laherchand Shah (Prācīna Bhārata Varṣa) have on the basis of a comparative study of the Jain, *Purāṇic* and Buddhist traditions, computed the regnal period of the kings of Śīsunāga and Nanda dynasties. We refer our readers to these sources for the detailed discussion of the topic.

continued to rule for 54 or 53 years,¹ after which the Nanda's rule began in Magadh.

In terms of chronology, rule of the Śiśunāga-dynasty ended and that of Nanda-dynasty began in Magadha in 474-3 B.C.² Again, according to the *Purānas*, the ten kings of Śiśunāga-dynasty reigned Magadha for 333years³.

1. According to Dr. T.L. Shah (*op. cit.*), after the death of Mahāvira, Ajātaśatru reigned for 30 years, Udāyi for 16 years and Aniruddha-Muṇḍa for 8 years, thus, assigning Mahāvira's death in 527 B.C., the rule of Śiśunāga dynasty at Mahāvira's death in 473 B.C.

According to Muni Kalyan Vijayaji (*op. cit.* p. 28), Ajātaśatru and Udāyi reigned for 37 and 33 years respectively. But Mahāvira's death took place 17 years after the accession of Ajātaśatru. Thus, 53 years after the death of Mahāvira, ended the rule of Śiśunāga dynasty, so that 474 B.C. is the starting point of Nanda's rule at Magadha.

2. Nanda's rule at Magadha started in 474-3 B. C. and at Avanti, it started in 467 B. C. It is a wellknown historical fact that at that time, there was a keen struggle between the kingdoms of Magadha and Avanti. It is quite probable that 6 or 7 years after having established his reign at Magadha, the first Nanda king would have conquered the kingdom of Avanti. It is unanimously accepted by the historians that the Nandas had established '*Ek rat*' i.e. One umbrella kingdom in India (See, *Political History of Ancient India* by Dr. H.C. Raychaudhuri, p. 234, *Age of Nandas* and *Mauryas* by Nilkantha Shastri, pp. 11—20).
3. According to T.L. Shah (*op. cit.*) 'Śiśunāga was the founder of the Śiśunāga dynasty (cf. *Vāyu Purāṇa*, ad II c, vs 314). After the death of Aśvasena, the king of Kāśī and the father of 23rd *Tīrthāṅkara* of Jain Lord Pārśvanāthā, Śiśunāga established his kingdom in Kāśī. Then Śiśunāga himself went to Magadha and enthroned his son Kākavarṇa in Kāśī' (cf. *Matsya Purāṇa*, ad CCLXXI, V-5). 'Śiśunāga was followed by Kākavarṇa Kṣem-Vardhana and Kṣemajita. The fifth king of the Śiśunāga dynasty was Prasenjita (The name of Prasenjita is omitted in the *Purāṇas*,

(Contd. on next page)

Hence, the beginning of Śiśunāga dynasty¹ dates back to 807 B.C.

Thus, the rule of the ten kings of Śiśunāga-dynasty in Magadha lasted from 807 B.C. to 474 B.C. by accepting the regnal period given in the previous foot-note. the accession of Bimbisāra falls in 582 B.C.² As we have already seen

but according to the Jain tradition the famous king Bimbisāra was the son of Prasenjita. Also, the Buddhist work Divyāvadāna (p. 369) enlist Prasenjita in the successors of Śiśunāga and Kākavarṇa, cf. Raychaudhuri, op. cit., p. 222.) 'It was Prasenjita, who transferred his capital from Kuthalnagar to Girivrija, Prasenjita was succeeded by Bimbisāra, Ajtāśatru, Udāyi Anuruddha and Muṇḍa.' (The *Purāṇas* enumerate Nandivaradhana and Mahānanda as the successors of Udāyi, while the Buddhist chronology enlist Anuruddha—Muṇḍa. It will be shown below, Nandivaradhana and Mahānandi were Nanda kings, and not Śiśunāgas). 'The regnal period of each of these ten kings is as follows:

1. Śiśunāga	60 Years
2. Kākavarṇa	36 "
3. Kṣemvaradhana	50 "
4. Kṣemajita	36 "
5. Prasenjita	43 "
6. to 10. Bimbisāra to Muṇḍa	108 "

Though the *Purāṇas* ascribe slightly different regnal-periods to these kings, the above regnal-period assigned by T.L. Shah seems to be more correct.

1. It may be remarked here that though the *purāṇas* state that the 10 kings of the Śiśunāga-dynasty reigned for 362 years, the total of the regnal period assigned by them to these kings come out to be 333 years, (Cf. *vāyu purāṇa*, a ic, vss. 315-321, Prācīna by Mahamabopādyaaya Vishaveshar Nath Reu, Vol. II, p. 54).
2.

Śiśunāga	807 B.C.	747 B.C.
Kākavarṇa	747 B.C.	711 B.C.
Kṣemavardhana	711 B.C.	661 B.C.
Kṣemajita	661 B.C.	625 B.C.
Prasenjita	625 B.C.	582 B.C.

Ajātaśatru's reign began 17 years before the death of Mahāvīra (527B. C.) and ended 30 years after it. Thus, Ajātaśatru reigned from 544 B.C. to 497 B.C. Then, Udāyi¹ reigned for 16 years i.e. from 497 B.C. to 481 B.C. The Śiśunāga dynasty ended with the 8 years rule of Ajātaśatru and Muṇḍa in 473 B.C. As stated before the Śiśunāga dynasty was succeeded by the Nanda dynasty. The first Nanda, probably called as Nandivardhana,² acceded to the throne of Magadha in 473 B.C.

1. The *Purāṇas* insert Darśaka in between Ajātaśatru and Udāyi. Also the famous Sanskrit play *Svapnavāsavadattā* speaks of Darśaka as the King of Rājagṛha. But it seems that Darśaka was really a king of viceregal throne at Rājagṛha and not that of the regal throne of Magadha at Campā or Pātaliputra. (cf. Muni Kalyan Vijayaji) (op. cit. pp. 22-23) some scholars have considered it probable that Darśaka might be one of the many sons or grand sons of the King Bimbisāra (cf. Dr. Sita Nath Pradhan, *Chronology of Ancient India*, p. 217. "The order of succession in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, which inserts Darśaka between Ajātaśatru and Udayaśva must be rejected. Also cf. *ibid*, p. 212- Darśaka may be one of Bimbisāra's many sons who managed the state affairs during the life time of his father, Also, cf Raychaudhuri, op cit. p. 130; Geiger, *Mahāvamśa*, parichhedo IV, VV 1—2). Hence, in the chronological list of the main Śiśunāga-dynasty, we need not count Darśaka.
2. According to the Buddhist chronology Aniruddha-Muṇḍa were succeeded by Magadasaka (*Mahāvamśa parichhedo* IV, vs. 4) and Śiśunāga (*ibid*, *parichhedo* IV, vs). Nāgaśaka and Śiśunāga are ascribed 24 and 18 years respectively as their regnal periods. (*ibid*. 1.c. cit). On the other hand, the *Purāṇas* assign Darśaka and Nandivardhana a period of 24 and 42 or 40 years respectively. *Vāyu Purāṇa*, II c. vs. 320 *Matsya Purāṇa*, ad. CCLXXI, vs-10). Now, it seems that Darśaka of the *Purāṇa* and Nāgaśaka of the Ceylonese chronicles are one and the same person. (cf. E. J. Rapson, *Cambridge History of India*, p. 279; Dr. Radha Kumud Mukherjee, *Hindu Sabhyatā*, p. 265). This Darśaka or Nāgaśaka,

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This Nandivardhana conquered the kingdom of Avanti and established the Nanda's rule there in 467 B.C., thus ending the rule of the Palak dynasty or "Pradyotas."¹

after having ruled for 24 years at Rājagṛha (Viceregal throne), acceded to the regal throne of Magadha at Pāṭaliputra. Because he belonged to the Śiśunāga dynasty, he can be called as "Śiśunāga". He it seems then assigned a new name "Nandi Vardhana" and found as a new dynasty—the Nanda-dynasty after his new name. He must have reigned for 16 or 18 years, for the Buddhist-chronology assign this period to Śiśunāga. Also, the *Purāṇas* have ascribed 40 or 42 years out of which 24 were spent at Rājagṛha as "Darśaka" and the remaining 16 or 18 years must have spent as "Nandivardhana". It should also be remarked here, that Udāyi and Aniruddha Muṇḍa reigned for 24 years at regal-throne of Magadha and at the same time, Darśaka reigned at Rājagṛha for the same period. Thus the *Purāṇas* count 24 years of Darśaka twice which is an error, while the Buddhist-chronology counts it only once which is correct.

1. According to the *Purāṇas* (Vāyu Purāṇa, a Ic, vs. 309-314, Matsya Purāṇa, ad CCLXXI, vvs, 1-4), Pulaka (or Śunaka) killed his master Ripunjaga, the last king of the Bṛhadratha-dynasty, and enthroned his son Pradyota. Thus, when the rule of *Vitihotras* and *Bṛhadrathas* ended in Avanti, the rule of the kings called *Pradyotas* commenced. The following five kings are called *pradyotas* :

1. Pravdyota (Mahāsena or Candpradyota)
2. Pālaka (Son of Pradyota)
3. Viśākhyupa
4. Ajaka or Gopālaka
5. Avantivardhana (Or Vartivardhana).

As we have already seen, according to the Jain tradition, Palaka acceded to the throne of Avanti on the very day on which Mahāvīra died, and his dynasty reigned for 60 years. Now, the *Purāṇas* assign 20 years to Pālaka's reign (cf. Pargiter, *Dynasties of the Kali age*, p. 19, note 26. In some *Purāṇas*, 24 years are assigned; but the scholars have relied on the above version. cf. Dr. Shanti Lal Shah, *Chronological Problems*, p. 26). The third Pradya
(Contd. on next page)

After conquering Avanti, it seems that Nandivardhan attacked Kaliṅga and brought a Jain-statue to Magadha. On the basis of the Hathigumphā inscription of Khāravela, this event should have been taken place in 466 B.C.¹ Thus,

king Viśākupa is assigned a period of 53 (or 85) years. But the scholars, on the basis of other literary works like *Mṛcchakaṭika*, have proved that Ajaka or Gopālaka succeeded Pālaka and therefore Viśākpyupa should be omitted from the Pālaka dynasty, (Cf. Dr. Shanti Lal Shah *Chronological Problems*, p. 27, "What about Yisākhyupa who occurs in the *Purāṇas* in between Pālaka and Aryaka? According to the family-history of Pradyota which we have seen just now, there is no place for Viśākhyupa in between Pālaka and Ajaka as reported; "also cf. Majumda Shastri *Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society*; vol VII., p. 116. "Viśākhayupa has been introduced between Pālaka and Ajaka, but as that name does not occur in all Mss, we ought to take no notice of him.", also, cf. Dr. Ramashanker Tripathi, *Prācīn Bhārata kā Itihāsa*, p. 72. "The *Purāṇas* insert a third name—Viśākhayupa in between Pālaka and Ajaka, which is probably a mistake." Ajaka is assigned a regnal period of 21 years, after which his son Avantivardhana or Vartivardhana reigned for 20 years. Thus the three kings Pālaka, Ajaka and Avantivardhana ruled for 61 years. Then, the rule of Pradyotas ended. Thus both the Jain and *Purāṇic* chronology agree that the Pālaka-dynasty reigned for 60 or 61 years. (cf. Dr. Shanti Lal Shah, *chronological problems*, pp. 25-27).

1. A Nanda king is twice mentioned in the Hāthigumphā inscription of king Khāravela of Kaliṅga (orissa) (cf E. J.) Rapson, *Cambridge History of India*, Vol I, p. 280). The sixth line of the inscription is : "*Pañcame cedāni vasa nandarāja-ti-vasa-sata ogāhitam tamsuliya-vātābandi (m) nagaram pavesayati*).....", (which means, "And now in the fifth year (of his reign), he (Khāravela) brings in to capital Tosala or Tamsuliya (or entered a particular town through or executed some public work associated with) the canal excavated by the king Nanda 300 years before". Though the word "tīvasa—sata" has been translated as "in 103rd years (of Nanda king) by some scholars, the conscientious scholars like Dr. K. P. Jayaswal, Dr. R. D. Banerjee, etc. have (Contd. on next page)

after having established the rule of the Nanda—dynasty

translated it as “300 years” (cf. *Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, Dec. 1917, pp. 425 ff) Dr. Shanti Lal Shah has made the following remark : “*That ti-vasa-sata* means” 300 years and not 103, is certain. See Dr. Banerjee’s article in *J. B. O. R. S.* Vol. III, p. 496 ff. 9 May add here that because the years are expressed in compound the word ‘Sata’ is used in the singular instead of the plural.” (Op cit. p. 41 n.)

Thus, the above Nanda king flourished 300 years before the fifth year of Khāravēla’s reign Dr. Jayaswal has also shown that this Nanda king was no other than Nandivardhana cf. *op. cit.* Vol. XIII op. 240).

Again, the sixteenth line of the inscription shows that the thirteenth year of Khāravēla’s reign synchronized with 165th year of Maurya Era. The inscription reads : “*Panamtariya saṭṭi-vasa-sata Rājā Muriyakāla, vacāinām ca coyatiaga śataka* turiyaṃ Upadayati”, which means, “He (Khāravēla) caused to be made (the things described in the foregoing lines) in the 165th year of the Rājā Muriya Era (of which) 164th year has just terminated *Voc-inām*”. Here, also, though some scholars translate the above line in a different way and deny the existence of any date in the above inscription, others have critically refuted their view (cf. Dr. Shanti Lal Shah, *op. cit.*, pp. 47, 48). The famous historian E. J. Rapson has made the following remark : “Even the fundamental question whether the inscription is dated or not is still in dispute. Some scholars contend that a passage in the sixteenth line can only be interpreted to mean that the inscription was engraved in the 165th year of the Maurya kings, or of the Maurya king), while others deny the existence of any such date. The discussion of problems of this kind does not fall within the scope of the present work ; but it may be pointed out here that the acceptance of the supposed date would seem to involve no chronological impossibilities, and that, in any case, the inscription probably belongs to about the middle of the second century B. C. We know from analogous instances that the origin of imperial eras is usually to be traced to the regnal years of the founder of the empire. A Maurya era, therefore, would naturally date from the accession of

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Candragupta C. 321 B. C. ; and, if such an era is actually used in the present instance, the inscription must be dated c. 156 B. C. and the beginning of Khāravēla's reign c. 169 B. C. With this hypothetical chronology other indications of date seem to agree.

Epigraphical consideration shows that the Hāthigumphā inscription of Khāravēla and the Nānāghāta inscription of Nāganikā, the queen of Śātakarṇī, belong to the same period as the Nāsika inscription of Kṛṣṇa. (Buhler, *Archaeological Survey of Western India*, V, p. 71 ; Indische Palaeographie, p. 39). Even, therefore, if it must be admitted that the Hāthigumphā inscription is undated, there is still reason to believe that Khāravēla may have been contemporary with Śātakarṇī in the first half of the second century B. C. Moreover, a Śātakarṇī is actually mentioned in the Hāthigumphā inscription is Khāravēla's rival ; and it appears most probable that he is to be identified with the Śātakarṇī of the Nānāghāta inscription. (*Op. cit.* pp. 481, 482)

Thus, by taking 322 B.C., the date of Candragupta's accession, as the year of beginning of Maurya Era, Khāravēla's accession should fall in 170 B.C., and the fifth year of his reign in 166 B. C. Consequently, Nanda-rājā's (i. e. Nandivardhana's) attack on Kalinga must have taken place in 466 B.C. This Nanda-king is again mentioned in the 12th line of the inscription, which means, "In the twelfth year of his reign, Khāravēla produced consternation among the king of Uttarāpatha, created fear in the people of Magadha, made his elephants to enter into 'Sugānageya,' humbled Brihaspatimitra, the king of Magadha and brought back to Kalinga the Jain statue which had been carried away by the Nanda-king, and also gained some Jewels from Aṅga and Magadha as an evidence of victory" (*Cf. Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, Vol. IV, p. 401, Vol. XIII, p. 732). This line also confirms the date of Khāravēla, decided above. For, 'Brihaspatimitra' mentioned in the inscription is identified with Puṣyamitra, the Śunāga—king, who flourished in 185-150 B.C. according to the *Purāṇic* chronology, and the 12th year of Khāravēla's reign falls in 159 B. C. which synchronises with the reign of Puṣyamitra. (*Cf. Chiman Lal Jee Chand Shah, M. A. Jainism in North India*, (Gujarati Translation), pp. 159-162 ; Dr. V. A. Smith,

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within 16 or 18 years, Nandivardhana, the first Nanda king died in 456 B.C.¹.

It may be remarked here that this date (474-456 B. C.) of Nandivardhana, the first Nanda king, is also corroborated by the date of famous grammarian Pāṇini, who is proved to be his contemporary and to have lived in 480-410 B. C.².

Journal of Royal Asiatic Society, 1918, p. 554 ; Dr. K. P. Jayaswal, *op. cit.* Vol. III, p. 447, Dr. Shanti Lal Shah, *op. cit.*, pp. 53-55).

Our view that this Nanda—rājā was no other than Nandivardhana, is supported by some famous historians. Dr. V. A. Smith observes, "The Nanda-Rājā referred to appears to be Nandivardhana, the ninth Śiśunāga king of the *Purāṇas*. It seems to be necessary to treat him and his successor Mahānandin, No. 10 as Nandas distinct from the nine Nandas who come between No. 10 and Candragupta. In the third edition of *Early History of India* (1914) I placed the accession of Nandivardhana about 418 B. C. He must now go back to c. 470 B. C. or possibly to an earlier date." (—*Journal of Royal Asiatic Society*, 1918, p. 547). E. J. Rapson, the editor of *Cambridge History of India* (Vol. 1.), concludes : "If *tivasa—sata* in line 6 of the inscription can mean 'three centuries before (the fifth year of Khāravela's reign), we must suppose that in the middle of the fifth century B. C., Kalinga was under the rule of a Nanda king, and it is natural to associate him with the wellknown predecessors of the Mauryas." (—*op. cit.* p. 484).

1. This date is also approved by the fact that according to Alberuni, the Nanda era commenced 400 years before the Vikrama—era (56 B. C.) (Cf. Dr. K. P. Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, vol. XIII, p. 240, also, cf. Ganga Prasād Maheta. *Prācīna Bhārata*, p. 103). It is quite probable that to mark the death of the founder of Nanda-dynasty, the Nanda-era was started in 456 B. C.
2. The ancient Brahmanical as well as Buddhist traditions show Pāṇini to be contemporary with a Nanda king. It is mentioned by Tarānāth, the famous Tibetan writer, that Pāṇini was a friend of the Nanda-king, Mahānandin, the father of Mahāpadma Nanda.

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Nandivardhana was succeeded by his son Mahānandina, whose regnal period according to the *Purāṇas* is 83 years¹.

Thus, in 413 B.C., Mahāpadma Nanda acceded to the throne of Magadha. He is said to have established “*Ek rat*” Kingdom in India². He is assigned a regnal period of 88 years by the *Purāṇas*,³ and hence, his rule must have

(*History of Buddhism*, p. 1608). The Buddhist work *Mañjuśrī—Mūlakaṇṭha* records.

Tasyāpantro rājā Nandanāmā bhaviṣyati !

Puṣpākhye nogre Śrīman mahāsainyo mahābalaka.

Bhaviṣyati tadā kāle brāhmaṇāstārkikā bhuvi !!

Tebhi parivārīto rājā vai !

asyapyanatamah sakhyah Pāṇinirnāma manavah !!

Paṭal III, pp. 611-12 ; *Studies on Mañjuśrī*—Mulakal by Jayaswal p. 14.

This means—“There will be a Nanda-rājā in Puṣpapura (Pāṭli Putra) and a Brāhmaṇ called Pāṇini will be his intimate friend. In the court of the king, there will be many Brāhmaṇas who will be logicians and the king will honour them by gifts.”

Besides these evidences, Somadeva's *Kathāsaritsāgara* and Kṣemendra's *Bṛhatkathāmañjirī* bear testimony to the contemporaneity of Pāṇini with the Nanda—rājā the records of the Chinese traveller Hieun—Tsang also support this view. (Cf. Dr. Vasudeva Saran Aggrawal, *Pāṇinikālina Bhāratavarṣa*, pp. 467-480). Dr. Vasudeva Saran Aggrawal has shown on the basis of literary, historical and traditional evidences that the correct date of Pāṇini is about 480-410 B.C. Dr. Aggrawal has also endorsed the view of Jain chronology that the Nanda-dynasty ruled in 473-323 B. C. (*op. cit.*, p. 473). Dr. Aggrawal has also accepted that in 465 B.C. Nandivardhana, the first Nanda king was reigning at Pāṭaliputra. (*op. cit.* p. 474). Dr. Aggrawal has also cited an allusion from the grammar of Pāṇini, which records that Nandivardhana was the first Nanda king and that Mahānandin his son was the second Nanda-king. (*Loc. cit.*)

1. *Vāyu Purāṇa*, adh, ICV 320 ; *Matsya Purāṇa* adh CCLXXI, vs. II.
2. *Vāyu Purāṇa*, adh. Ic, V, 327
3. *Ibid*, loc. cit.

ended in 325 B.C.¹ The remaining Nandas are assigned totally 12 years as their regnal period, and hence, the Nanda dynasty should have ended in 313 B.C.²

Thus, we have reconstructed a complete chronology of the kings from the foundation of Śiśunāga-dynasty to that of Maurya-dynasty. We give it here in a tabular form :

Event	Date (B.C.)
Foundation of Śiśunāga-dynasty.	807
Accession of Śiśunāga	
" " Kākavarāṇa	747
" " Kṣemavardhana	711
" " Kṣemajita	661
" " Prasenjita	625
" " Bimbisāra	582
" " Ajātaśatru	544
" " Udāyi (in Pāṭliputra)	497
" " Darśaka or Nāgadasaka in	
Rājagṛha	497
" " Aniruddha-Muṇḍa	481

1. It is remarkable that Dr. Smith, who has established his chronology on different basis, has also ascribed the period of 88 years from 413 B.C. to 325 B.C. to Mahāpadma Nanda.
2. Candragupta Maurya acceded to the throne of Magadha in 322 B.C., but the Nandas continued to reign at Avanti, upto 313 B.C. As already discussed before, Candragupta Maurya acquired the kingdom of Avanti in 313 B.C., and this ended the rule of the Nanda-dynasty.

Some historians have called the first two Nanda-Nandivardhana and Mahānandī as old Nandas and Mahāpadama Nanda and his dynasty as Neo-Nanda (Nanira-Nanda) or new Nandas. (Cf. Dr. Shanti Lal Shah, *Chronological Problems*, pp. 34—37; also Cf. E. J. Rapson *Cambridge History of India*, pp. 279-280; Dr. K. P. Jayaswal, *Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, Sept, 1915, p. 21).

Foundation of Nanda-dynasty	474
Accession of Nandivardhana (in Pāṭliputra)	
„ „ „ (in Avanti)	467
„ „ Mahānandi	456
„ „ Mahāpadama Nanda	413
„ „ eight sons of Mahāpadma	325
Foundation of Maurya-dynasty (in Magadha)	322
Accession of Candragupta Maurya (in Magadha)	
„ „ Candragupta, Maurya (In Avanti)	313 ¹

1. Cf. the following chronologies supplied by the *Mahavāmśa*, Dr. Smith and Dr. Shanti Lal Shah respectively :

(i) *Mahāvamśa, Pariccheda IV, V.*

(Taking Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* in 544 B.C., the eighth year of Ajātaśatru's reign; the dates refer to the accession of the kings mentioned)

	Regnal Period	B.C.
Ajātaśatru	32	551
Udāyibhadda	16	519
Aniruddha-Muṇḍa	8	503
Nāgadasaka	24	495
Siśunāga	18	471
Kālāśoka	28	453
Kālāśoka's sons	22	425
Nava Nandas	22	403
Candragupta	24	381
<i>Dr. Smith : (Early History of India)</i>		
Bimbīśāra	31	582
Ajātśatru	24	551
Darśaka	24	527
Udāyi	23	503
Nandivardhana	24	480
Madānandin	43	456
Mahāpadma Nanda	88	413
Sons of Mahāpadma Nanda	12	325
Candragupta	—	313

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Inconsistencies in Ceylonese Chronology

Some inconsistencies in the chronology described by the Ceylonese chronicles are so obvious that it surprises us how they were accepted as the authoritative sources by the historians. For instance, the *Purāṇic* and the Jain chronologies assign 100 and 150 years respectively to the Nanda dynasty, whereas the *Mahāvamśa* ascribes only 22 years to the whole dynasty, and more surprisingly, we find that no place is given to this important dynasty of India in the chronological list supplied by the *Dīpavamśa*.¹ Another inconsistency of the Ceylonese chronology is that whereas in the *Purāṇas* the king Śīśunāga Kākavarṇa, etc. are enumerated as the predecessors of Ajātaśatru, the Ceylonese

Dr. Shanti Lal Shah (*Chronological Problems*)

Ajātaśatru	32	551
Darśaka	18	519
Udayina	33	501
<i>The Old Nandas</i>		
Nandivardhana	20	467
Kākavarṇa add Mahānandina	43	447
<i>The New Nandas</i>		
Nanda (Barber)	22	404
Nanda II (Mahāpadma)	66	382
Candragupta	24	316

1. Refer to Muni Kalyan Vijayji, *op. cit.* p. 24, for a detailed discussion of the topic Prof. Lassen had observed long ago. "In den Berichten die Nandas herrschten den Singhalesischen Schriften offenbareine Verwirrung." (*Indian Antiquary*, Vol. II, p. 64) "The account about the Nandas recorded by the Singhalese chronicles reveal a confusion". Dr. Smith (*op. cit.*) and Dr. Radha Kumud Mukherjee (*Hindu Sabhyatā*, p. 267) have explicitly refuted this belief of Ceylonese chronicles.

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Bṛhadratheṣvatiteṣu vīṭihotreṣavantiṣu !

Pulakas svāmināṃ hatvā svaputrmabhiṣekṣyati !!

(*Vāyu Purāṇa*, adh. Ic, VV. 309-310 ; *Matsya Purāṇa* adh. CCLXX V. 30 ; ad. CCLXXI, V. 1)

These verses explicitly indicate that when the rule of the kings *Vīṭihotrās* and *Bṛhadrathās* was over in Avanti, Ripuñjaya the last king was killed by his minister Pulaka (or Puṇika or Śunaka) and his son Pradyota was enthroned. (We have already discussed Prādyota's rule in Avanti.) Thus, though the rule of the *Bārhadrathās* was established in Magadha in the time of Somādhi, later on it must have been transferred to Avanti.

(iv) The kings of Prādyota dynasty from Pradyota to Avanti-
vardhana. This dynasty reigned in Avanti.

(v) The king of Śiśunāga—dynasty from Śiśunāga to Mahānandi.
This dynasty reigned in Magadha.

These dynastielists clearly show that the dynasties mentioned are not in succeeding order but are more or less contemporary. Udayan of the first dynasty, Presenjita of the second dynasty, Pradyota of the fourth dynasty and Ajātaśatru (and Bimbisāra) of the fifth dynasty are undoubted by contemporary kings of Vatsa, Kośala, Avanti and Magadha respectively. (cf. Rapson, *C.H.I.* p. 277) Thus, it would be a mistake if we take the fifth as the successor of the fourth dynasty, although the fourth dynasty is explicitly mentioned to have succeeded the third dynasty. Also, because the *Bārhadrathās* transferred their seat from Magadha to Avanti, the *Śiśunāgas* are justified as the rulers of Magadha and the contemporaries of the later *Bārhadrathās* of Avanti. The only question which remains still to be answered is that during whose reign the *Bārhadrathās* changed their seat from Magadha to Avanti. It is possible that when *Śiśunāga* became powerful in northern India and when he established his kingdom in Magadha (in c. 807 B.C.) the *Bārhadrathās* king ruling at that time in Magadha would have escaped to Avanti and established his kingdom there. Then onwards, the *Śiśunāgas* ruled in

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Magadha and the Bārhadrathās in Avantī contemporarily. The Bārhadrathās were succeeded by the Pradyotās, who, as already shown, were succeeded by Śaiśunāga Nandivardhana, the first Nanda king.

The above interpretation of the *Purāṇic* verses is also compatible with the chronology described therein. According to the *Purāṇas*, the twenty two kings of the Eārhadratha-dynasty ruled for 1000 years as follows.

<i>Name of the King</i>	<i>Regnal period</i>
(1) Somādhi	58 Years
(2) Śrutaśrvā	60 „
(3) Ayutāyusa	36 „
(4) Niramitra	40 „
(5) Sukṣketra	56 „
(6) Bṛhatkarma	23 „
(7) Senajita	50 „
(8) Śrutañjaya	40 „
(9) Mahābahu	28 „
(10) Śuci	64 „
(11) Kṣema	28 „
(12) Bhūvrata	64 „
(13) Dharmanetra	35 „
(14) Vivṛti	58 „
(15) Suvrata	38 „
(16) Dṛdhasena	48 „
(17) Mahīnetra	33 „
(18) Suśala	32 „
(19) Sunetra	40 „
(20) Satyajita	83 „
(21) Viśvajit	35 „
(22) Ripuñjaya	50 „
Total	999 years

Thus 1000 years for 22 kings are exactly computed. Also by taking airthmetical average of these regnal periods, we find that each king is allotted 45.45 years. This means “that the last six kings ruled for

(Contd. on next page)

year of Ajātsatru's reign¹, "Aśoka's coronation (anointment)

$45 \times 6 = 273$ years, which is also the exact total of the last six rulers. Now, we know from other sources that Pradyota acceded to the throne of Avanti (by ending the rule of Ripuñjaya) in 549 B.C. (see '*Tibetan Tradition*' in chapter VIII of this book). This means that Ripuñjaya's rule ended in 549 B.C. By calculating the dates of the last six kings and by comparing them with those of the first six kings of the Śiśunāga dynasty, we find that their contemporaneity is surprisingly proved :

<i>Bārhadatha king</i>	<i>Date (B.C.)</i>	<i>Śiśunāga king</i>	<i>Date (B.C.)</i>
(1) Ripuñjaya	599—549	Bimbisāra	582—544
(2) Viśvajita	634—599	Prasenjita	625—582
(3) Satyajita	717—634	Kṣemajita	661—625
(4) Sunetra	757—717	Kṣemavardhana	711—661
(5) Sucala	789—757	Kākavarṇa	747—711
(6) Mahānetra	823—789	Śiśunāga	807—747

Ajātsatru the 7th king of the Śiśunāga dynasty and Pradyota, the 7th king in the line of Avanti-rulers also become contemporary as follows :

Ajātsatru : 544-497 ; Pradyota 549-527.

Thus, the whole chronology becomes complete.

It may be indicated here, that the date of Mahābhārata is also fixed to a great certainty in c. 1559 B.C. This is also confirmed by another chronological fact of the *Purāṇas* and the Mahābhārata that the Nanda's rule commenced 1050 years after the Mahābhārata war, which is thus, dated in $474 + 1050 = 1524$ B.C. (Cf. *Vāyu Purāṇa* adh. To v.v. 217-329 ; *Matsya Purāṇa*, adh. CCLXX v.v. 30 adh. CCLXXI, v.v. 1-20 adh. CCLXXII. v. 35 Mahābhārata XIV=66—70, also cf. *Buddha Parva kā Bhāratiya Itihāsa*, by Missra & Missra, pp. 30-171 Pargiter, *The Dynasties of Kali age*, pp. 20 ff. 65 ff. ; Dr. Sita Nath Pradhāna, *chronology of ancient India* pp. 100-230.

1. Cf. Editor's Note, p.—XII.

218 years after Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*" contradict not only *Tripaṭakas* and more genuine literary works, but also run counter to the fundamental historical facts.

Dr. Vinsent Smith had long ago warned the historians against the over-estimation of the value of the Ceylonese

(4) Cf. T.W. Rhy Davids, Introduction to the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sutta S.B.E.* vol. XI, p. XLV : "According to the *Rāja-paramparā* or line of kings, in the Ceylon chronicles, the date of great decease would be 543 B.C., which is arrived at by adding to the date 161 B.C. (from which the reliable portion of the history begins), two periods of 146 and 236 years. The first purports to give the time which elapsed between 161 B.C. and the great Buddhist church council held under Aśoka, and in the eighteenth year of his reign at Patna ; and the second to give the interval between that council and the Buddha's death.

"It would result from the first calculation that the date of Aśoka's coronation would be 325 B.C. (146+161+18). But we know that this must contain a blunder or blunders, as the date of Aśoka's coronation can be fixed, as above stated with absolute certainty within a year or two either way of 267 B.C.

Would it then be sound criticism to accept the other, earlier period of 236 years found in those chronicles a period which we cannot test by Greek chronology—and, by simply adding the Ceylon calculation of 236 years to the European date for the 18th years of Aśoka (*i.e.* circa 249 B.C.) to conclude that the Buddha died in or about 485 B.C. ?

"I cannot think so. The further we go back, the greater does the probability of error become, not less. The most superficial examination of this earlier period shows that they are unreliable and what reliance would it be wise to place upon the total, apart from the details, when we find it mentioned for the first time in a work *Dīpavaṃśa*, written eight centuries after the date it proposed to fix ?

If further proof were needed, we have it in the fact that the *Dīpavaṃśa* actually contains the details of another calculation—based on the lists of kings (*Rājaparamparā*), but on a list of *Theras* (*Thera-paramparā*) stretching back from Aśoka's time to the time of great Teacher—which contradicts this calculation of 236 years".

chronicles.¹ Dr. H.C. Raychaudhuri has also maintained that these Ceylonese legends cannot be made basis of the historical conceptions.² Dr. Shanti Lal Shah has already found out the reason of the discrepancy which is found in the Ceylonese chronicles, and which he terms as a deliberated perversion.³ He writes :⁴ “The peculiarity of the Buddhist tradition (The Ceylonese tradition) is that it confines itself firstly to the history of the Hīnayāna Buddhism and secondly to the history of its development in Ceylon, since Buddhism although originating in India, had found its development in Ceylon. Because of this territorial limitation, which has been a great factor for the preservation of the history of Ceylon, the account of this tradition about Ceylon is much more perfect than that about India. One who is acquainted with the scheme and content of the *Dīpavaṃśa* and *Mahāvaṃśa* will hardly fail to notice that the account of the North Indian kings in these two books is only occasional and of minor importance. This conclusion is absolutely borne out by the typical construction of the *Dīpavaṃśa* and *Mahāvaṃśa*.⁵”

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1. *Early History of India*, p. 11
 2. *Political History of Ancient India*, p. 6.
 3. *Chronological Problems*, p. 41.
 4. *Op. cit.*, p. 19.
 5. The content of *Mahāvaṃśa* are as follows :
 1. The visit of the Tathāgata.
 2. The race of Mahāsammata.
 3. The first council.
 4. The second council.
 5. The third council.
 6. The coming of Vijaya.
 7. The consecration of Vijaya.
 8. The consecration of Paṇḍu Vasudeva.
 9. The consecration of Abhaya.

See Giger Tr. of Dr. *Mahāvaṃśasa*, p. VIII.

In spite of all these inconsistencies, in the most of the approaches made up to now to fix the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*, the Ceylonese chronology has been accepted as the main basis. This seems to be the main reason responsible for the discrepancy created between the chronology of Buddha and the genuine life-events of Buddha.

The Chronology of Buddha

In such a condition, when the chronology of Buddha itself is dubious and uncertain, in order to compute the period of contemporaneity of Mahāvīra and Buddha, their life-events depicted in the *Āgamas* and the *Tripitakas*, serve as the most authentic means. Out of the six contemporary rivals of Buddha, Mahāvīra was the most prominent one. The *Tripitakas* bear testimony to their intimate relations, either bad or good. Hence, a complete consistency in their life-events will reveal their period of contemporaneity, and consequently, the chronology of Buddha.

According to the Jain canon *Bhagvatī Sūtra*, Makkhali Gośālaka, the leader of the Ājīvakas, died 16 years before the *Nirvāṇa* of Mahāvīra. Also, as we have already proved¹, Bimbisāra's (Śreṇika's) death and Ajātsatru's accession took place 17 years before the *Nirvāṇa* of Mahāvīra. On the basis of the foregoing discussion, it has also become clear that Ajātsatru fought the *Mahā-Śilākantaka* war and the *Rathamūsala* war with the Vajjis of Vaiśālī, in the first year of his reign.

The following four facts are quite obvious in the light of the foregoing discussion of the life-events of Mahāvīra and Buddha, as depicted in *Āgamas* and the *Tripitakas*.

1. See, 'Inconsistencies' in Chapter III of this book.

1. Mahāvīra was elder than Buddha, the former having lived for 72 years, while the latter for 80.

2. Mahāvīra's omniscience is antecedent to Buddha's enlightenment, Mahāvīra attained omniscience at the age of 42, while Buddha attained enlightenment at the age of 35.

3. When Gośālaka died, Mahāvīra was 56 years old.

4. Buddha's enlightenment had taken place before the death of Gośālaka¹, i.e. Mahāvīra. Buddha as well as Gośālaka were alive at the time of *Mahā-Śīlā-Kaṇṭaka* war.

On the basis of the above facts, the following conclusion can easily be deduced—When Mahāvīra was 56 years old, Buddha must be at least 35. So the maximum possible seniority of Mahāvīra could be 21 years, and because Mahāvīra died at 72 and Buddha at 80, the maximum possible interval between *their Nirvāṇas* could be 29 years.

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1. The *Tripitakas* tell us that the six religious teachers—Pūraṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Gośālaka, Niganth Nātaputta, Ajita Keśakambalī, Sañjya Vellathiputta and Pakuddha Kāccāyana had already announced themselves as '*Tīrthaṅkaras*' and had started preaching their religions before the enlightenment of Buddha. Also, when Buddha attained the enlightenment, all of them were alive. Makkhali Gośālaka was the founder of the Ājīvaka sect. When, just after having attained the enlightenment, Buddha was travelling from Gayā to Sāranātha in the way he met an Ājīvaka monk called Upaka. Buddha said to him, "I have attained enlightenment." But Upaka, being not convinced of this, paid no heed to him. Having said, "May be, perhaps, Upaka went away by another road. *Vinaya Piṭaka*, *Māhāvagga*, 1, also see *Buddhacaryā* by Rahul Sankrityayana, p. 21 and *Bhagvāna Buddha* by Dharmananda Kauśāmbī, p. 137. This incident makes it clear that at the time of Buddha's enlightenment, Makkhali Gośālaka had already become an eminent religious leader.

Again, as stated above, Mahāvīra attained omniscience 14 years before Gośālaka's death. Consequently, on the basis of fact No. 2, Buddha could not have attained the enlightenment prior to this. At the most, he could have attained it in the same year. If we suppose so, Buddha would be 35 and Mahāvīra 42 at that time. Therefore, the minimum possible seniority of Mahāvīra could be 7 years and the minimum possible interval between their *Nirvāṇa* could be 15 years.

Thus Mahāvīra's seniority to Buddha lies between 21 and 7 years, and the interval between their *Nirvāṇas* lies between 29 and 15 years.

We get another way to reach a more definite period within the possible range stated above. The *Aṭṭhakathā of Aṅguttara Nikāya* supplies us a complete chronological list of the places where Buddha passed his rainy seasons after his enlightenment.¹ According to the above work, in Rājagṛha, Buddha spend his 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 17th and 20th rainy seasons after the enlightenment.² Now according to the *Sāmmñīyaphala Sutta of Dīgha Nikāya*, the event of Ajātaśatru's only call upon Buddha, during which the king Ajātaśatru asked Buddha a question about the fruitfulness of monkhood and repented for murdering his father, took place during

1. Aṅguttara Nikāya, Aṭṭhakathā, 2-4-5.

2. According to Rhys Davids, Buddha passed his 4th rainy-season in Mahāvana (Vaiśālī): (*Buddhism* by Rhys Davids quoted by M.N. Shastri in *Buddha: His Life, His Teaching, His Order* p. 120). But the *Aṭṭhakathā* states that the 5th rainy-season was spent at Vaiśālī in the same way *Aṭṭhakathā* states that Buddha passed his 6th rainy-season at Mankula Parvata." While Rhys Davids has stated that he passed the 5th rainy-season, at Mankula Pravata. It seems, that in the calculation of Rhys Davids, there is an error of 1 year.

one of the rainy seasons passed by Buddha at Rajāgrha.¹ Again, this event should have happened in the first year of Ajātaśatru's reign, in as much as soon after his accession, he had transferred his capital to Campā, on account of the great sorrow he felt over his father's death. Now, if we suppose that the above event recorded by the *Sāmmañña-phala Sutta* had taken place in the 17th or 20th rainy-season after Buddha's enlightenment, the fact No. 2 (stated above) is violated. For, as shown before,² Ajātaśatru's accession took place in the 13th year after Mahāvīra's attainment of omniscience. So the possibility of the above event taking place in 17th or 20th rainy-season is ruled out. Consequently the event should have taken place either in the 2nd or 3rd or the 4th rainy-season after Buddha's enlightenment.

Thus it was the 13th year after Mahāvīra's omniscience and the 2nd, the 3rd, or the 4th year after Buddha's enlightenment. This means that Mahāvīra was, at that time 55 years old, and Buddha either 36, 37 or 38. In other words Mahāvīra was 19, 18 or 17 years older than Buddha, and attained the *Nirvāṇa* 27, 26, or 25 years earlier than Buddha.

Further to reach at a definite conclusion out of these three alternatives, we fortunately get a small way out—If we suppose that the event of *Sāmmañña-phala Sutta*, had taken place in the 2nd or 3rd rainy season after Buddha's enlightenment, it would mean that Ajātaśatru's accession and Bimbisāra's death took place only one or two years after Buddha's enlightenment, that is to say, the contemporaneity of Bimbisāra with enlightened Buddha was of one or two years. But a closer study of the Buddhist *Tripiṭakas* reveal

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1. This *Sutta* has been quoted in *Seniority* of Mahāvīra, in this Chapter.
 2. See, 'Inconsistencies' in Chapter III of this book.

that it should be slightly wider than this. Therefore, it will be consistent to take the 4th rainy-season after enlightenment to be the year of Ajātaśatru's accession. This will allow a period of three years which is enough long, for the contemporaneity of Bimbisāra with enlightened Buddha. Thus by taking the last alternative, we reach the final conclusion that :—

1. Mahāvīra was 17 years older than Buddha.
2. Mahāvīra attained the *Nirvāṇa* 25 years earlier than Buddha.
3. The total contemporaneity of their life was 55 years, the contemporaneity of their life as religious leaders was 20 years.

It should be borne in mind that the above conclusion is based only upon the life-events of Mahāvīra and Buddha. Even if we suppose them to have lived in any period of history, this conclusion will hold good. In order to accomplish our discussion, it is essential to think over it from the chronological point of view.¹

It has already been made clear that the chronology of Buddha is in itself quite uncertain. Also, it has been shown that the chronology of Mahāvīra in itself is almost unanimous and certain. Hence, on the basis of the unequivocal date of Mahāvīra, the above conclusion can be put in chronological terms. The date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* is 527 B.C. Therefore, that of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* should be 502 B.C. Now as we have found out the date of *Nirvāṇa*, we can easily compute the dates of the important events of his life as follows :

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1. Dr. Radha Kumud Mukherjee has rightly remarked, "Chronology is essential to biography. An individual cannot rank as a historical person, unless his life and work are placed in time".
Candragupta Maurya and His Times, p. 2,

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event of Buddha's life</i>	
582 B.C.	Birth	
554 B.C.	Renunciation	
547 B.C.	Enlightenment	
502 B.C.	Nirvāṇa	

The comparative chronological table of the important events of their life is as follows :

	<i>Mahāvīra</i>	<i>Buddha</i>
Birth	599 B.C.	582 B.C.
Renunciation	569 B.C.	554 B.C.
Enlightenment (Omniscience)	557 B.C.	547 B.C.
Nirvāṇa	527 B.C.	502 B.C.

Thus Mahāvīra and Buddha lived contemporarily from 582 B.C. to 527 B.C. *i.e.* for 55 years. As religious leaders, their contemporaneity lasted from 547 B.C. to 527 B.C. for 20 years.

It should also be noted here that Buddha had attained *Nirvāṇa* in 42nd year of Ajātaśatru's reign; and that Candragupta Maurya and Aśoka acceded to the throne of Magadha 180 and 229 years after Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* respectively.

CHAPTER VIII

CORROBORATION OF THE CONCLUSION

We have reached the above conclusion regarding the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* solely on the basis of historical and mathematical methods. Hence it can be regarded as a 'self evident' fact. But, because it is being disclosed in the field of history for the first time, it will not be unnecessary to corroborate it by some other evidences. We get some historical and traditional evidences which directly corroborate the above conclusion. They are as follows :

1. *Tibetan Tradition* :

According to the Buddhist tradition of Tibet, the day on which Buddha was born, was also the birthday of the king Caṇḍa Pradyota (also known as Mahāsenā) of Avanti.¹ The same tradition also records that Buddha's enlightenment and Pradyota's accession took place on the same day.²

The king Pradyota is mentioned in all the three traditions—Buddhist, Jain and *Purāṇic*. According to the *Purāṇas*, such as *Vāyu Purāṇa*,³ *Matsya Purāṇa*,⁴ *Bhāgvat Purāṇa*,⁵ etc. and the famous literary works like *Kathāsaritsāgara*,⁶ *Svap-*

1. *Life of Buddha* by Rockhill, p. 17.

2. *Ibid.* p. 32.

3. *Vāyu Purāṇa*, *Adhyaya* IC V. 312.

4. *Matsya Purāṇa*, *Adhyaya* CCLXXI V. 3.

5. *Bhāgvat Purāṇa* Skandha, XII Adhyāya V. 3.

6. *Kathāsaritsāgara* 3/5/58.

anavāsavadattā,¹ *Mṛcchakaṭika*² etc. and the Jain works like *Āyaśyaka*—*Niryukti*—*Dīpikā*,³ Pradyota was succeeded by his son Pālaka. Now, as we have already seen the king Pālaka acceded to the throne of Avanti in the same night on which Mahāvīra passed away.⁴ Thus, it becomes clear that the king Pradyota was born on the day of Buddha's birth, he acceded to throne on the day of Buddha's enlightenment, and lastly, his reign ended on the day of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa*. The purāṇic chronology unequivocally ascribe 23 years to Pradyota's rule.

“*Trayaviṃśat samārājā bhavitā sa narottamah*”⁵ that is “He (Pradyota) ruled for 23 years.”

Thus, when Buddha attained the enlightenment at the age of 35, Pradyota became the king, and when Mahāvīra attained the *Nirvāṇa* at the age of 72, Pradyota's rule ended.⁶ Therefore, at the time of Pradyota's accession, Mahāvīra must be $72 - 23 = 49$ years old, and Buddha was 35 years old. Hence, we conclude that Mahāvīra was 14 years older than Buddha. This conclusion nearly endorses our conclusion that Mahāvīra was 17 years older than Buddha.

2. The Traditional Date of Chinese Turkestan

Our conclusion is also quite consistent with the tradi-

1. *Svapānavāsavadattā* of Bhāsa.

2. *Mṛcchakaṭika* of Śudraka.

3. *Āyaśyaka-Niryukti*—*Dīpikā* part II pp. 110—11, V. 1282.

4. *Tithogālīpaimya*—quoted in ‘The Date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* in Chapter VII of this book.

5. *Vāyu Purāṇa* Adhyāya IC V. 311.

6. Pradyota's reign ended in 527 B.C. Hence, his accession should have taken place in $527 + 23 = 550$ B.C. Cf. foot note.

tional date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*, prevalent in Chinese Turkestan,¹ and also known as "Khotan Tradition."

This tradition places the King Aśoka 250 years after the *Nirvāṇa* of Buddha by taking him as a contemporary of the Chinese emperor Shih-Huang-Ti. Some scholars, on the basis of the fact that Shih-Huang-Ti's accession took place in 246 B.C., have accepted $(246 + 250 =)$ 496 B.C. as the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*.² It may be noted that there is only a nominal difference of 6 years between this date and our conclusion. But, it seems that the interval of 250 years between Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* and Aśoka should, in reality, be the one between Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* and the famous third Buddhist council, that had taken place in the 18th year after Aśoka's consecration, and according to historians, in 252 B.C.³ Hence, the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*, on the basis of the above tradition should be $252 + 250 = 502$ B.C. which exactly coincides with our conclusion.

3. *Aśoka's Edicts*

The stone (rocks) and pillars inscribed by Aśoka the great Mauryan emperor, are, in fact the foundation-stones and foundation pillars of Indian history. Many a doubtful facts regarding history were made undoubtful on the basis of the above inscriptions. The present conclusion regarding the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* is too corroborated by these edicts. The edicts are mainly divided in the following types :

5 Minor Rock Edicts

14 Rock Edicts

4 Minor pillar Edicts

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1. See *Traditional Dates of Buddha's Nirvāṇa* in Chapter VII of this book.
 2. See, for example Janardan Bhatt, *Buddha Kālīna Bhārata*, p. 213.
 3. Dr. Ramashankar Tripathi, *Pracīna Bhārat kā Itihāsa*, p. 129.

7 Pillar Edicts

3 Cave Edicts

6 Miscellaneous Edicts.

The following is the text of the Minor Rock Edicts No. 1, which is found at Rupanātha, Sahasarāma and Vairāta ;¹

“Devānaṃ piye evaṃ āhā (—) Sātilekāni aḍhatiyāni vaya sumi pākā savake² no cu vaḍhi pakate; sātilake cu chavachare ya sumi hakaṃ saṃghe upete.

“Bāḍhi cu pakate yi ! imāya kālāya jambudipaṃsi amisā devā husu te dāni misā Katā ! Pakamayi hi esa phale ! Noca esā mahatataṃ pāpotave khudakena hi ka !

“Pi parūmaminena sakiye pipule pi svage ārodhave ! Etiya aṭhāya ca saṭo kaṭe Khudakā cha udhālā ca pakamuta ti ! atā pi ca jānaṃtu iyaṃ pakakha.

“Kiti (?) cirathati ke siyā Iya hi aṭhe vaḍhi vaḍhisiti vipula ca vaḍhisiti ! Apalaghiyenā diḍhiya vadhisata (1) iya ca aṭhe pavatisu lekhāpeta vālatahadha ca (1) athi.

“Silāṭhame silāṭhambhasi lākhāpata vayata Etinā ca vayanenā yāvataka tupaka ahāee savara vivasetavāyuti ! Vyūṭhenā sāvane kaṭe 256 Satavivāsāta !”

The following is the translation :

Thus saith His sarced Majesty : For more than two and a half years I was a lay disciple, without, however exerting myself strenuously. But it is more than a year since I joined the Order, and have exerted myself strenuously.

“During that time the Gods who were regarded as true all over India have been shown to be untrue.

1. *Asoka ke Dharma Lekha*, by Janardan Bhatt.

2. The edicts of Sahasarāma and Vairāta read “*Upāsake*”.

“For this is the fruit of exertion. Nor is this to be attained by a great man only, because even by the small man who chooses to exert himself immense heavenly bliss may be won.”

“For this purpose has the precept been composed : ‘Let small and great exert themselves.’”

“My neighbours too should learn this lesson: and may such exertion long endure.”

“And this purpose will grow, yea it will grow immensely at least one-and-a half-fold will it increase in growth.”

“And this purpose must be written on the rocks, both afar of and here; and wherever there is a stone—pillar, it must be written on stone-pillar.” And according to this text, so far as your jurisdiction extends, you must send it out everywhere.”

“By (me) was the precept composed, when 256 years had passed since the *Nirvāṇa* of Buddha.”

In the Minor rock Edict No. 2, which is found at Brahmagīri Sidhapur, and Jatinga-Rameshwar, we find the same thing repeated with a slight difference. Emperor Aśoka writes there :¹

“Suvaṃṇagīri te ayaputasa mahāmāyama ca vacanena isilasi Mahāmātā ārogiyam vataviyā hevaṃ ca vataviyā ! Devāṇaṃ piye āṇapayati !

“Adhikāni aḍhāti yāni vaya sumi.....diyaḍhiya vaḍhisiti ! iyam ca sāvaṇe sāvaṇate vyudhena 256.

The translation is by command of the Prince and high officials at Suvaṇṇagīri, the high official at Isilā are to be addressed with greetings, and further addressed as follows :

1. *Aśoka ke Dharmlekha*, by Janardan Bhatt.

His sacred majesty gives this instruction : ‘For more than two.....And the precept quoted above was preached by? (me) in 256th (years) after Buddha’s *Nirvāṇa*.’

There are mainly two things in the above edicts to be noted : The first is concerning Aśoka’s joining order, which is expressed by the words “*Samghe upete* ;” the second one—the date inscribed in the end of the edicts viz. 256 years after Buddha’s *Nirvāṇa*, expressed by the words “*Vyūṭhenā sāvane kaṭe 256 Satavivāsāta*.”

The words “*Samghe upete*” used in the above Edicts have become a matter of controversy amongst the scholars and different scholars have tried to interpret them in different ways. Dr. Radha Kumud Mukherjee, discussing about this controversy, writes :¹ “It is difficult to understand what Aśoka exactly intends by the expression on *Samghe upete*, which has been translated above to mean that he lived with, entered or visited the Saṃgha, and the opinion of the scholars is sharply divided on this point. Some scholars hold that Aśoka actually became a Buddhist monk (Bhikkhu). Others, however, take the expression simply to mean that Aśoka made a state-visit to the *saṃgha* and publicly proclaimed his faith as the Sinhalese chronicle informs us. The former view is, however, supported by the statement of I-tsing that he actually saw a statue of Aśoka dressed as a monk. A third possibility is that Aśoka lived with the *saṃgha* for more than a year, without taking orders.

“Among those who assume that Aśoka became a monk, there is again a difference of opinion. Some hold that

1. *The Age of Imperial Unity*, (The History and Culture of Indian People, Vol. II), pp. 75-76.

during the period Aśoka was a monk, he must have ceased to be a monarch, for monastic life is hardly compatible with royal duties. Others, however, point out actual examples of kings who were monks at the same time and find no reason for the assumption that Aśoka, even temporarily abdicated the throne.

“Whatever may be the right interpretation of this association with the *Samgha*, there is no doubt that since this event, Aśoka exerted himself with unflagging zeal for the propagation of Buddhism, or at least that part of it which he accepted as his Dharma. He not only set up a net-work of missions to preach the doctrine both in and outside India, but himself undertook tours for this purpose and took various other steps to the same end.”

Dr. Mukherjee has not emphasised a particular view regarding the interpretation of the expression, *Samghe upete*. Nevertheless, it is easily understood, even by glancing at the different interpretations, that the event of Aśoka's “*Samghe upete*” is related with his historical religious tour or pilgrimage, which is explicitly mentioned even in Aśoka's own edicts. In the *Rummindei Pillar Edict*, Aśoka writes :¹ “*Devān piyena piyadasin lājina visati vasābhisitena atana āgā ca mahīyite ! hiya budhe jāte sakya munīti silāvigaḍa bhīvā kālāpita silāthame ca usa papi te hiya bhagavaṃ jāte ti luminigāme uvalike kaṭe aṭhabhāgiye ca*”.

It means, “His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the King, when he had been consecrated twenty years, having come in person, did reverence; and because “Here Buddha was

1. *Aśoka ke Dharamā-lekha*, by Janradan Bhatt.

2. Aśoka, by Vincent A. Smith, p. 199.

born, the Śākya sage," a great (?) railing of stone was prepared and a stone pillar erected.

Because "Here the Venerable one was born" the village of Lumini was made free of religious cesses and declared entitled to the eighth share (of the produce claimed by the crown).

In addition to this, the way in which the famous Buddhist work *Asokāvadāna* describes the pilgrimage of Aśoka, suggests that the expression "*Samghe Upete*" is quite competent with the pilgrimage of Aśoka. '*The pilgrimage of Aśoka*' is described thus:¹

"The King said 'I desire to visit all the places where the venerable Buddha stayed, to do honour unto them, and to mark each with an enduring memorial for the instruction of the most remote posterity.' The Saint (Upagupta) approved of the project, and undertook to act as a guide. Escorted by a mighty army, the monarch visited the holy places in Order.

"The first place visited was the Lummini garden. Here Upagupta said: 'In this spot, great king, the Venerable one was born; and added: 'Here is the first monument consecrated in honour of the Buddha, the sight of whom is excellent. Here, the moment after his birth, the reculse took seven steps upon the ground.'

"The king bestowed a hundred thousand gold pieces on the people of the place, and built a *Stūpa*. He, then passed on to Kapilvastu.

"The royal pilgrim next visited the Bodhi-tree at Bodhi Gayā, and there also gave a largesse of hundred thousand

1. Translated from *Asokāvadāna* by Dr. Vincent A. Smith, in *Aśoka* (The Rulers of India), pp. 227-228.

gold-pieces, and built a Caitya. R̥sipatana (*Sāranātha*) near Benaras, where Gautama had turned 'the wheel of law' and Kuśinārā, where the teacher had passed away, were also visited with similar observances. At Sarāvasti the pilgrims did reverence to the Jetavana monastery, where Goutama had so long dwelt and taught, and to the *Stūpas* of his disciples, Sāriputra, Maudgalāyana, and Mahākāśyapa. But when the king visited the *Stūpa* of Vakkula, he gave only one copper coin, in as much as Vakkula had met with few obstacles in the path of holiness and had done little good to his fellow creatures. At the *Stūpa* of Ānanda the faithful attendant of Gautama, the royal gift amounted to six million gold pieces."

Many a scholars are of the view that Aśoka had also become a Buddhist monk in his life-time may it be only for a short time. It seems most probable that the above pilgrimage was undertaken by Aśoka in the form of a Buddhist monk. But it does not mean that he ceased to be the king at that time.

Thus the purport of the expression "*Samghe-Upete*" also becomes meaningful. Aśoka has stated in the above edicts that he became a lay-disciple $2\frac{1}{2}$ years before his stage of "Joining the Order" (*Samghe-Upete*). Now, if Aśoka "Joined the Order" 20 years after his consecration, as stated by him in the *Rummindei pillar Edict*, he must have become a lay disciple $17\frac{1}{2}$ years after his consecration. This is exactly the time of the 'Third Buddhist Council'¹. Though generally it is held that Aśoka became a follower of Buddhism 9 years after his consecration, it seems that he considered himself initiated into "formal *Upāsaka-dharama* (rules of the lay-disciple)" from the time of the Third Buddhist Council.

1. Cf. *Aśoka*, by V.A. Smith, p. 211.

Thus, we can say that Aśoka became a lay disciple 17½ years after his consecration ; he “joined the order” 20 years after his consecration; and he wrote the above inscriptions (*Minor Rock Edict* Nos. I & II), slightly more than 21 years after his consecration.

“The second thing, to be paid attention to, in the aforequoted edicts, is the last time of the inscription viz. “*Vyuṭhenā sāvane kaṭe 256 satavivāsāta.*” This line has also been interpreted differently by different scholars.

Etymologically, *vyuṭhenā* is the *Apabhraṃśa* of the Sanskrit word *vyuṣṭena* and *vivāsā* that of *vivāsāt*. *Vyuṣṭa* is formed by adding the termination *kta* to the root *vi+vas* (forming the part participle), and *Vivasa* is formed by adding the termination *ghan* to the root *vi+vas*. According to the distinguished scholars like Dr. Bühler, Dr. Fleet etc. *vyuṣṭena* means ‘one who has passed away’ i.e. Buddha, and *vivāsāt* means ‘the *Nirvāṇa* (of Buddha¹).’ Dr. Fleet also observes:² “It is quite probable that king Aśoka would have become a monk by abdicating the throne 255 years and 7 or 8 months after the *Nirvāṇa* of Buddha and since then he would have “joined the Order.” When 8 months and 16 days were thus completed, on the 256th night, Aśoka would have written these inscriptions (*Minor Rock Edict* Nos. I & II). But a question arises that why Aśoka specially mentioned 256th night in these inscriptions. The answer is 256th year from Buddha’s *Nirvāṇa* had just completed on the 256th day or night of Aśoka’s tour, and to mark the 256th

1. *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society*, 1904, pp. 1—26, Dr. Bühler, ‘Second notice, *Indian Antiquary*, 1893’.
2. *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society*, 1910, pp. 1301—8, 1911, pp. 1091—1112 (quoted from Janardan Bhatta, *Aśoka ke Dharma lekha*).

anniversary of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*, Aśoka wrote these inscriptions. Thus it is proved that the number 256 mentioned in these inscriptions is indicative of the fact that Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* took place 256 years before Aśoka."

The above view of Dr. Fleet and Dr. Bühler is based on a critical study of the inscriptions of Aśoka. But the modern historians, however, accept it only partly. According to them¹, it can only be said that the inscription was written on the 256th departure from staging-places or on the '256th day of the tour,' but to say that it was written to observe 256th anniversary of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*, does not seem to be correct.

The only reason behind this view of the modern historians seems to be that the period which is 256 years precedent to Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*, does not synchronize with the whole period of Aśoka (273-236 B.C.), on the basis of any prevalent date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*².

Hence, they say,³ "The number 256 in the earliest edict has no bearing upon chronology." But their argument is neither justifiable nor correct. Dr. Max Müller, the profound Oriental Scholar, has criticized this trend of the historians, and supported the view of Dr. Bühler. He writes,⁴ "I fully admit the difficulties in the phraseology of

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1. For the view of the modern history, see Vincent A. Smith, *Aśoka*, p. 150 ; Dr. F.W. Thomas, *Indian Antiquary*, 1908, pp. 19—23, Dr. H.C. Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 341 n ; Yadhunandana Kapur, *Aśoka*, p. 128, etc.
 2. None of the dates of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*, which are in vogue, falls between (236+256=) 492 B.C. and (273+256=) 529 B.C. cf. *Historians dates of Buddha's Nirvāṇa* in chapter VII of this book.
 3. Dr. F.W. Thomas, *Aśoka in Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I, p. 453.
 4. *Dhamapadda, Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. X, part I Introduction, p. XI I.

these inscriptions; but I ask, "Who could have written these inscriptions, if not Aśoka? and, how if written by Aśoka, can the date which they contain mean anything but 256 years after Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*? These points, however, have been argued in so masterly a manner by Dr. Bühler in his 'Second Notice' that I should be afraid of weakening his case by adding anything of my own, and must refer my readers to his 'Second Notice'.

Now, the remarkable and important thing regarding this matter is that the "number 256 years" of the above inscriptions becomes quite consistence, with the date 502 B.C., which we have proved in this book to be the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*. It has already been made clear that the above inscriptions were written by Aśoka a little more than a year since he "joined the Order", and he "joined the Order" 20 years after his consecration. Here, we reach a definite point regarding the chronology which is unanimous and certain. It is the date of Aśoka's consecration 269 B.C. Thus,

Aśoka's consecration	269 B.C.
Aśoka "joined the Order" in	248 B.C. ¹

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1. Dr. Radha Kumud Mukherjee has observed that since Aśoka's association with the order, he exerted himself with unflagging zeal for the propagation of Buddhism, and it was Aśoka's zeal for his new faith that led him to preach it in a foreign colony by sending up a net-work of missions. *The Age of Imperial Unity*, pp. 76; also, *Aśoka* by Radha Kumud Mukherjee, p. 257. Accordingly and also because the historians accept 246 B.C. as the date of introduction of Buddhism into Ceylon by Mahendra (the son of Aśoka) (cf. Dr. L.D. Barnatt, 'The Early History of Ceylon in Cambridge History of India, Vol. I, p. 547), 248 B.C. our date of Aśoka's "joining the Order" is proved to be correct.

The date of the minor Rock Edicts I & II 247 B.C.

Hence, by going 255 years back from

247 B.C. we, reach the date of Buddha's *Nirvāṇa*.

$247 + 255 = 502$ B.C.

4. *Burmese Tradition*

The most sound evidence among the traditional evidences is that of Burmese tradition. There prevails an era called "*Eetzana era*" in Burma.¹ *Eetzana* is the Burmese term for *Añjana*, who was the Śākya king of *Devāha* which is the Burmese for Devadāha Country and who was also the maternal grandfather of Buddha.² The chief events of Buddha's life have been chronicled in the *Eetzana era* and the *tithis*, (the lunar days), the week-days as well as the constellations with which the moon was in combination on these days, have also been recorded with reference to the different years of that era, which would seem to have been current at that ancient time.

(1) *Birth of Buddha*³ on Friday the full-moon day of the month *Katson* which is Burmese for the Indian lunar month *Vaiśākha*, combined with the constellation *Withaka*, which is Burmese for the 16th lunar mansion *Viśākha* in the 68th year of the *Eetzana era*.

(2) *Renunciation*⁴ (Departure from the household life and initiation into *asectic life*) ; On Monday the full-moon day in the month of July i.e. *Āṣāḍha* (the Indian lunar month), combined with the constellation *Oetharathana*,

1. *Life of Gautama* by Bigandet, Vol. II, p. 13.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

3. *Ibid.*, vol. II pp. 71—72.

4. *Ibid.*, vol. I, pp. 62-63 ; vol. II, p. 72.

which is Burmese for the 21st lunar mansion *Uttrāṣāḍha* in the 96th year of the *Eetzana* era.

(3) Enlightenment of Buddha.¹ On Wednesday the full-moon day of *Katson*=*Vaiśākha*, combined with the constellation *Withaka*=*Vaiśākha* in the 103rd year of the *Eetzana* era.

(4) *Parinirvāṇa* of Buddha² : On Tuesday the full-moon day of *Katson*=*Vaiśākha* combined with the constellation *Withaka*=*Vaiśākha*, in the 148th year of *Eetzana* era.

According to the Burmese tradition, the *Eetzana* era began on Sunday which was the 1st lunar day of the waxing moon of the month *Tagoo* i.e. Burmese for the Indian month *Caitra*.³

A research scholar Mr. M. Govind Pai has found out the corresponding English dates of the above Burmese⁴ dates. According to his conversions the chronology date is as follows :

1. Birth of Buddha 30th March, 581 B. C.
2. Renunciation of Buddha : 18th June, 553 B. C.
3. Enlightenment ,, ,, : 3rd April, 546 B. C.
4. *Parinirvāṇa* ,, ,, : 15th ,, 501 B. C.
5. Beginning of *Eetzana* era : 17th February 648 B. C.

Thus, it can be seen that the Burmese tradition is in perfect congruence with the chronological date of Buddha's life-events, which we have deduced in the last chapter.

1. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 97 ; Vol. II, pp. 72-73.

2. *Ibid.*, vol. II, pp. 69.

3. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 13.

4. *Prabuddha Karnataka, a Kannada Quarterly* published by the Mysore University, vol. XXVII (1945-46), No. 1, pp. 92-93 ; 'The date of the *Nirvāṇa* of Lord Mahāvīra in Sri Mahāvīra Commemoration Volume, vol. I, 1941-49, pp. 93-94.

It is really a surprising coincidence that the Burmese tradition and our approach arrive exactly at the same fact, for the author of this book was not at all aware of the Burmese tradition till he reached the conclusion.

The author came to know about the Burmese tradition only after the whole book had already been published in the form of articles in the journals like *Jaina Bhārati*,¹ *Anekānta*² etc.

Well, the four evidences cited above have corroborated our conclusion in the same way as the fourway farers from different directions would confirm the reality of the pole by arriving at the same polar point.

1. *Jaina Bhārati*, vol. XI, Nos. IV, VI to X.

2. *Anekānta* (Bi-monthly), April-June, 1963.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

*The Chronological list of Rainy-seasons passed by
Māhāvīra after his Attainment of Omniscience.¹*

<i>Number</i>	<i>Date (B.C.)</i>	<i>Place</i>
1	557	Rājagrha
2	556	Vaiśālī
3	555	Vāṇijyagrāma
4	554	Rājagrha
5	553	Vāṇijyagrāma
6	552	Rājagrha
7	551	Rājagrha
8	550	Vaiśālī
9	549	Vaiśālī
10	548	Rājagrha
11	547	Vāṇijyagrāma
12	546	Rājagrha
13	545	Rājagrha
14	544	Mithilā
15	543	Mithilā
16	542	Vāṇijyagrāma
17	541	Rājagrha
18	540	Vāṇijyagrāma
19	539	Vaiśālī
20	538	Vaiśālī
21	537	Rājagrha
22	536	Nālandā
23	535	Vaiśālī

1. The order of the rainy seasons is based on the research work of Śrī Vijayendrasuri, see *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 3-326.

24	534	Vaiśālī
25	533	Rājagṛha
26	532	Nālandā
27	531	Mithilā
28	530	Mithilā
29	529	Rājagṛha
30	528	Pāvā

APPENDIX II

*The Chronological list of Rainy-seasons passed by Buddha
after his Enlightenment.¹*

<i>Number</i>	<i>Date (B.C.)</i>	<i>Place</i>
1	547	Ṛṣipatana
2	546	Rājagṛha
3	545	Rājagṛha
4	544	Rājagṛha
5	543	Vaiśālī
6	542	Maṅkulaparbata
7	541	Tryastrimśa
8	540	Sumsummāragiri
9	539	Kauśāmbī
10	538	Pārileyaka
11	537	Nālā
12	536	Vairāñjā
13	535	Cāliyāparvata
14	534	Śrāvastī
15	533	Kapilvastu
16	532	Ālavi
17	531	Rājagṛha
18	530	Cāliyāparvata
19	529	Cāliyāparvata
20	528	Rājagṛha
21—45	527—503	Śrāvastī
46	502	Vaiśālī

1. The order of the rainy-seasons is based on *Aṅguttara Nikāya Aṭṭhakathā*, 2/3/5.

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Scholars' Views On The Present Work

It is well-known that there is plenty of disparate evidence and conflicting traditional information as well as a plethora of controversy amongst scholars about the dates of the Nirvāṇa of Buddha and Mahāvīra. Shri Nagarajji has surveyed, in this respect, all the accessible material and different traditions specifying duly the sources etc., and his conclusion that Mahāvīra attained Nirvāṇa in 527 B.C., and Buddha in 502 B.C. seems to be quite consistent in itself.

DR. A.N. UPADHYE, M.A., D.LITT.
Dean of the Faculty of Arts
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The work is full of deep scholarship, penetrating criticism and originality. It essays tackling problems which have not received due attention so far, and in my opinion, constitutes a most welcome contribution to the world of scholarship.

PROF. DR. G.C. PANDE, M.A., D.PHIL.
Head of the Deptt. of History and Indian Culture
University of Rajasthan

Muni Shri Nagrajji has made an extremely reflective study of the subject in this work. On the basis of his research-work, he has found out that—

- (1) Mahāvira was senior to Buddha ;
- (2) Mahāvira predeceased Buddha ;
- (3) Mahāvira had earned much fame and veneration on account of his religious leadership and erudition long before the enlightenment of Buddha.

The learned author has established that Buddha attained the *Nirvana* in 502 B.C., while Mahāvira in 527 B.C. It should be noted that due to the lack of purely Indian sources, it is very difficult to decide the exact date of Buddha's death. On the one hand, the Ceylonese Chronicle *Mahāvamsa* puts the event in 544 B.C., while on the other hand, by putting the event 218 years before the consecration of Asoka, 487 B.C. is also accepted as the date of Buddha's *Nirvāna*.

527 B. C. is generally accepted to be the date of Mahāvira's *Nirvāna*. Nevertheless, some scholars have put forward some arguments against this date. But all of them are adroitly refuted by the author.

The author has critically discussed the views of Indian as well as foreign scholars such as Dr. Jacobi, Dr. Charpentier, Dr. Jayaswal, Dr. Shanti Lal Shah, Pt. Sukh Lalji, Muni Kalyna Vijayaji, Shri Vijayendra Suti and several other prominent historians. Such a contemplative and unbiased discussion of the problem of the contemporaneity and chronology of Mahāvira and Buddha is not found anywhere else.

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I am very much impressed by the discussion of the subject which has been made so profoundly by Muni Shri Nagrajji in his work. In my view, its English translation is necessary, for it will provide the non-Hindi speaking people with the opportunity of knowing the controversy which is existing regarding this problem and also the correct solution thereof.

DR. B. CH. CHHABRA,
M.A., M.O.L., Ph.D. (England) F.A.S.I.
Jt. Director-General of Archaeology in India

Many a scholar of India as well as abroad have tackled the controversial problem of the contemporaneity and chronology of Mahavira and Buddha. Muni Shri Nagrajji has unbiasedly and critically examined all these views and also he has presented a new solution, which, in my view, is quite unimpeachable.

The historical evidences, supplied by the author from the two-and-a-half millenium old remnants of the dark age, are so solid that their validity would not be easily challenged by scholars in the future. Author's researchful efforts, talent governed by austerities, and constant hard work are clearly manifested in this valuable discovery. The effort to discover the missing links of the Jain History constitutes, in fact, *Sāadhanā*, a way of achieving the ultimate aim, for it requires the whole life—each and every moment of life. I consider it as good as the *Sāadhanā* of achieving the blissful state.

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