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CONTRIBUTION OF THE JAINS TO INDIAN CULTURE With Special Reference to Non-violence

DR (MRS) PADMAJA PATIL

Jain community, the most ancient religious community of India, emphasized the doctrine of non-violence and the principle of peaceful co-existence which are of utmost importance in today's modern and fast scientifically advancing world. The great leaders of India, Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru had immensely realised the value of these principles. Gandhi used these principles for India's freedom struggle against British imperialism and Nehru strove throughout his life to drive home to the world the importance of these policies in establishing global peace and eschewing global wars.

Mahāvīra, the founder of Jainism, laid great stress on five vows : 1) *Ahiṃsā* (non-killing or non-violence), 2) *Satya* (truthful speech, 3) *Asteya* (non-stealing), 4) *Brahmacarya* (celibacy), and 5) *Aprigraha* (non-possessiveness). These aim at increasing self-discipline, will-power and inner strength so essential in modern world for solving day-to-day problems.

Jainism observes *Ahiṃsā* in every thought and action, for personal and social interest. Jain thinkers have linked ethics with metaphysical ideas and ideals.¹ Jainism preaches universal love, aiming at good of every being in this world. Jainism lays stress on selflessness, charity, compassion, forgiveness etc. to elevate the soul which contribute to the happiness of others in society. Principles of Jainism help in attaining purity in thought, speech and action. A jewel of an advice put forth by Jain philosophers for practicing by human beings was the insistence upon Right Knowledge, Right Belief, and Right Conduct, which assume especial importance in the today's world replete with all sorts of problems—individual, social and national. The principle of *Brahmacarya* means nothing but sexual *Ahiṃsā*.²

1. K.T. Tukol, *Compendium of Jainism*. Karnatak University, Dharrwad, 1980, p.1.
2. C.R. Jain, *Fundamentals of Jainism* (a revised edition of 'Practical Path'), Prabhat Press, Meerut, U.P. (Hindi) 1916. In the foreword by Dr. A.N. Upadhye.

Jainism regards God as completely unconcerned with the creation of universe or happenings in the universe. The man alone, his soul alone, is responsible for all the good and bad in his life, society and the world.

According to Jain Śāstras, Ahimsā is a positive quality based on universal kinship of all living beings. The principle of Ahimsā includes the human beings as well as sub-human creation including the plant life. Jainism has taken the wiser course of coping with dynamic roots of the symptoms with life deep in the emotional life of the individual. Jainism aims at the accomplishment of the blissful state of the self which leads to the well-being of the entire humanity.

Manyness of Truth or Reality (*Anekāntavāda*) is another³ feature of Jain philosophy which defines reality as a permanence in the midst of change, identity in the midst of diversity and unity in the midst of multiplicity.⁴ So, this is called 'Intellectual Ahimsā'.

The concept of 'Ahimsā' advocated by Jainism can be related to the solution of two problems, nature of food, war and peace. The food we eat has much effect on our body and temperament. 'Ahimsā' indirectly hints on eating vegetarian food which is safer and still adequately nutritious.⁵

Mahatma Gandhi, a politico-religious personality in India's freedom struggle (1920-1947), was deeply influenced by Jainism and developed the principle of non-violence to solve the problems of humanity. The 'Satyāgraha' over the Transvaral Asiatic Registration Bill of 1907 was the epic triumph of non-violence. Gandhi combined practicability and religion for India's freedom struggle. Fasting as a means to self-restraint and self-purification adopted by Gandhiji, appreciation of the beauty and rationality and certain restrictions on diet from areligious stand-point,⁶ are predominantly Jain methods. Similarly, Gandhiji adopted for his national freedom struggle, the practice of moving on foot from place to place, originally followed by Jain monks preaching religion. The concept of fasting was used by

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3. P.L. Bhargave, *The Jain Concept of Ahimsa*, an article published by R.C. Dwivedi, 'Contribution of Jainism to Indian Culture', published by Motilal Banarasidas, 1975, p. 121.
 4. Radhakrishnan. *History of Philosophy, Eastern and Western*. London. Vol. I, pp. 140-41.
 5. Tukul, *op.cit.*, p. 328.
 6. Pyarelal. *Mahatma Gandhi, Early Phase*, Vol. I, Ahmedabad, 1965, pp. 171, 252-53.

Gandhiji to the nation's need as a penance and to impress upon the guilty party to realise their guilt. Gandhi borrowed more comprehensive and humanistic concept of non-violence from Mahāvira. Gandhi stressed Ahimsā on the religious side, 'Anekāntavāda' on the philosophical side and the institution of vows on the ethical side.⁷ Gandhiji equipped his armoury with all the essential weapons of non-violent actions such as, Civil Disobedience, constructive programmes comprising mass non-cooperation movement and fasts,⁸ to achieve the goal of Independence.

Nehru, a dauntless worker for world-peace, was a rare blend of India's radiant spirit and scientific approach to the problem of mankind. His basic ideas were those of Mahatma Gandhi's – mutual-trust and non-violence. Nehru sought to build a nation not only in terms of political institutions but also in terms of mental emancipation and economic and social progress with the sole conception of Gandhiji. Jawaharlal Nehru proved non-violence effective in his policy of non-alignment for keeping apart the rival power blocks. The preamble of the Agreement, Sino-India Agreement on Trade and Intercourse between India and Tibet and the principle of peaceful co-existence mentioned in it clearly show politico-religious attitude of Nehru.

In today's world, full of historic and man-made tensions, it is necessary to stick to the principle of peaceful co-existence and friendly co-operation. And only such a way of life can do this. Ahimsā, Anekāntavāda and institution of vows, the principles advocated by Jainism and properly understood and used by the great leaders like Gandhi and Nehru, would lead us to a peaceful life, full of love and compassion. The religious principles would alone give a spiritual base to man which will transform a man into super-human being and provide the concept of 'live and let live'.

7. *Ibid. loc.cit.*

8. M.K. Gandhi, *Autobiography or the Story of My Experiments with Truth*. Ahmedabad, 1947, p. 549.

ON JAINA POLITY AND SOMADEVA'S NĪTIVĀKYĀMṚTAM

SUSHIL JAIN

This paper is about a certain tenth-century Sanskrit text (written by a Jaina author) which is neither on Jaina ethics (lay or ascetic) nor on philosophy, but rather on an unusual subject on which there are few full-length discourses by Jaina authors.

This work by Somadevasūri, *Nītivākyāmṛtam*, is on *nīti* or polity (as its title would indicate). Of course, the subject of polity or statecraft has been well-treated by ancient Indian writers; the most famous of them being Kauṭilya (aka Cāṇakya or Viṣṇugupta), the able minister of Chandragupta Maurya.

Kauṭilya, however, is not the only author on Indian polity; he is just the most famous, most well-known, and most studied and oftquoted Indian writer on state policy. Kauṭilya names, at least, eighteen sources, individual authors, or schools of thought on *nīti* that he is, at least, familiar with, and he duly notes his debt to some of them.¹

A most ancient source of Indian polity, statecraft, or *rājadharmā*, is perhaps the section called '*Śāntiparva*', the twelfth book of the great Indian epic, the *Mahābhārata*, commonly known as 'the book of peace', it has a lot to say on the subject of *nīti* (i.e., worldly wisdom) and *rājadharmā* (i.e., duties of the king).

In addition, discussion of *nīti*, *rājadharmā*, etc. can also be found in the Vedic texts, the *dharmasūtras* and *dharmasāstras*, *purāṇas*, ancient literary works and folk literature.

Even with all this wealth of material some writers have dismissed the contribution of Indian writers to polity as of little value or consequence. For example, Max Müller says, "India has no place in the political theory of the world".² And in his foreword to Beni Prasad's book,³ Professor Arthur Berridale Keith remarked about "the unwise

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1. cf. Law, *Aspects of Ancient Indian Polity*, Bombay, [1921], repr. 1960, p. viii.
 2. Cited in Pande, *Jain Political Thought*, Jaipur, 1984, p. 4.
 3. *Theory of Government in Ancient India*, [1926], repr. 1974.

enthusiasm of some writers who have attempted to prove that India made notable contributions to the theory of politics".⁴

It is doubtful if similar views (as cited above) are still prevalent amongst the students and scholars of polity, considering the fact that so much has been researched and written on the subject⁵ since the discovery and publication of Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* in the early years of the present century, in 1904 by Professor Shamasastri.⁶

Jaina contributions to the art and science of polity (*artha/nīti*) have attracted little attention in recent literature or conferences on Jaina themes. For example, when a conference was held on 'Contributions of Jainism to Indian Culture' at the University of Udaipur in 1973, no paper was presented on Jaina-nīti.⁷

Even some Indian writers, when discussing aspects of Indian polity, have failed to acknowledge any Jaina aspect in ancient Indian polity. For example, Professor Law does not mention Jaina polity in his text,⁸ nor is there any entry under Jains, Jainism, or Ajivakas in the index, though *Kāmandaka* is referred to on p.33, and Somadeva is mentioned on page 1, note 1.

This "[n]eglect of the political potential of Jainism is curious...", says Stein. "In contrast to its generally acknowledged cultural significance, the political significance of Jainism has been little recognized by scholars".⁹ The only full-length book on the subject is that of Pande¹⁰ which while being very sympathetic to the Jaina political theory and Jaina concept of polity must be read with caution.

Still, if the status of Indian political theory from the Vedic and

4. *ibid.*, p. viii.

5. see, for example, L. Sternbach's *Bibliography of Dharma and Artha in Ancient and Medieval India*; and *Bibliography of Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*, 1973.

6. see Ramaswamy, p. 3 some discussion on this discovery.

7. see D.R. Chandra (ed), *Contributions of Jainism to Indian Culture*, Motilal, 1975.

8. N.N. Law, in his *Aspects of Ancient Indian Polity*, Bombay: Orient Longmans, [1921], repr. 1960.

9. Burton Stein, "All the Kings' Mana: Perspectives on kingship in medieval south India", in J.F. Richards (ed), *Kingship and Authority in South Asia*. University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1978; repr. in author's *All the Kings' Mana: Papers on Medieval South Indian History*, New Era Publications, Madras, 1984, pp. 1-67 p. 12.

10. G.C. Pande, *Jaina Political Thought*. Prakrit Bharati Sansthan, Jaipur, 1984.

Brahmanical sources is now somewhat acknowledged, such is not the case with the Buddhist, and certainly not the Jaina contributions to the subject of polity.¹¹ "To the student of government theory", says Beni Prasad, "the (Jaina) Sūtras as a whole are rather disappointing". But, to our pleasant surprise, he adds, "There is, however, one Jaina work in Sūtra form which deserves detailed notice".¹² It is this work, *Nītivākyāmr̥tam* or nectar of Political Sayings, which is subject of our paper and presentation today.

In his "Introduction"¹³ to Sudhir Kumar Gupta's translation of Somadeva's *Nītivākyāmr̥tam*,¹⁴ Dr. V. R. Mehta, Director of Prakrit Bharati Academy, Jaipur, provides a good deal of information about the work but relatively little about the author, except that he (Somadeva) is also the author of a major literary work called *Yāśastilaka*.

However, from other sources¹⁵ we can discern that Somadeva was not only the writer of *Nītivākyāmr̥tam*¹⁶ and *Yāśastilaka*¹⁷ but also of such other works as (some extant and others lost or still buried in some bhandhars) : *Sannavati Prakarana*, *Yukticitāmaṇisūtra*,¹⁸ *Trivarga-mahendra-matalisankalpa*,¹⁹ *Sindura-prakarah*,²⁰ *Adhyatam Tirangini*²¹ and *Siddhiprada*.²²

11. cf. G.P. Singh, *Early Indian Historical Tradition*, New Delhi, 1984, p.22.

12. Beni Prasad, *op.cit.*, p. 229.

13. Somadeva Sūri's *Nītivākyāmr̥tam* (10th century Sanskrit Treatise on Statecraft). Original Text with Hindi and English translation. Translated by Sudhir Kumar Gupta. Prakrit Bharati Academy, Jaipur, 1987, pp. 9-24.

14. It is the most recent translation of this tenth century Sanskrit text, and all quotations cited in this paper come from this edition unless otherwise noted.

15. R.N. Saletore, *Encyclopaedia of Indian Culture (=ETC)*. New Delhi, 1985, Vol. 4, pp. 1368-70.

16. *Nītivākyāmr̥tam* was first published in the Bombay Granthamālā Series (1887); and then by Pandit Pannalal Soni, but edited by Nathuram Premi, Bombay, 1923 (cf. Saletore, *Ancient Indian Political Theory*, London, 1963, p. 634, n. 167).

17. *Yāśastilaka* was published in the Bombay Kāvya-mālā, No. 70, 1901. It contains the commentary of Śrutasaṅgāra (*ibid.*).

18. It is recorded as *Yukticitāmaṇistava* (cf. *Descriptive catalogue of Mss in the Jain Bhandara at Pattan*, I, p. 31, vide Saletore, EIC, 1985, p. 1368).

19. cf. *Jain Sahitya ka Brhad Itihas*, 1969, pp. 239-40: This work, "being a dialogue between Indra and his charioteer Matali on *dharma*, *artha*, and *kama*, refers to politics" (Saletore, *Ancient Indian Political Thought and Institutions (=AIPTI)*, London, 1963, p. 337).

20. 1975, vide World Catalogue, online search, June 1994.

21. Sadhavi Sanghamitra, *Jainadharma ke Prabhavak Acharya*, Jain Vishva Bharati Prakashan, 1976, pp. 281-284p @ p. 281.

22. *Acharya Somadeva krta Rasendrachudamaniḥ: 'Siddhiprada'*. Hindi vyaka sahitya. 1 samskarana. Varansi: Chowkhamba Oriyantaliya, 1984 (LOCI, online search).

However some of these works have not been firmly established as those of Somadevasūri. It is also important to distinguish him from other Somadevas, e.g., Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, writer of the famous *Kathāsaritsāgara*, who lived in the 11th century.

In the discussion following, therefore, we rely mainly on his two well-known and published works, viz. *Yaśastilaka* and *Nitivākyaṃṛtam* as our sources for basic information about the author.

Our author (Somadeva) himself has provided bits of information, here and there, in his works, and in the colophons²³ from which we are able to piece together a bit of author's life, lineage, teacher(s), benefactors, patrons etc. But as V. Raghavan points out :

One cannot always place full reliance on the significance of the mention or otherwise of an author's other works in a colophon or a praśasti in one of his works; that is, it is not necessary to assume that because the praśasti in the *Nitivākyaṃṛta* mentions the *Yaśastilaka*, the former was written after the latter. Such would really be the fact only if scribes had not revised colophons and Praśastis to the annoyance of scholars wanting to trace the chronology of an author's works.²⁴

Whatever may be the drawbacks of relying on information recorded in old manuscripts by contemporary and later scribes of the medieval period we have little choice but to construct the author's life and times from the only available sources.

Somadeva Sūri is not an entirely unknown figure in the history of Jaina literature, though his fame is "in a large measure due to modern research",²⁵ especially since Handiqui²⁶ published his researches on the importance of *Yaśastilaka* in Indian culture, in the late 1940s. A section of *Yaśastilaka* (chapters 6-8, known as '*Upāsakādhyayana*')²⁷ is an important piece of Digambara Jain Śrābhakācāra.²⁸

23. "Which throw considerable light on his personal life and achievements". Saletore, EIC, *op.cit.* vol. 4, p. 1368.

24. "Somadevasūri, author of *Nitivākyaṃṛta*, *Yaśastilakacampū*, etc.", *New India Antiquary*, June 1943, p. 67.

25. Saletore, EIC, *op.cit.*, p. 1369.

26. *Yaśastilaka and India Culture; or, Somadeva's Yaśastilaka and aspects of Jainism and Indian thought and culture in the tenth century*. Sholapur: Jain Sanskrit Samrakshaka Sangha, 1949.

27. Williams, *Jaina Yoga*, Delhi, MLBD, 1963, p. 21.

28. For a recent appreciation of Somadeva's *Upasakadhyayana*, see, Lath, Mukund. 'Somadeva Suri and the question of Jain identity', in Carrithers and Humphrey (eds), *The Assembly of Listeners : Jains in Society*. Cambridge University Press, 1991. pp. 19-30.

Somadeva has also received some attention from contemporary writers on Jainism, especially when there is a discussion of Jaina kings or Jaina concept of kingship. Prof. Jaini, for example, mentions Somadeva at several places in his book though most of the references are in the footnotes.

R.B.P. Singh notes that Somadeva was among “some of the prominent Jaina teachers who exerted profound influence upon the kings and princes of Mysore in their own times”²⁹ and, according to Mehta, Somadeva “was an important political thinker at the beginning of the middle ages in India”,³⁰ but “his very existence was practically ignored by non-Jaina literary luminaries of his day”.³¹

A certain of the life, times and works of Somadeva can be found in Sādhvī (Nun) Sanghamitra's book³² and in the *Encyclopaedia of Indian Culture*³³ which have provided much of the information that follows here.

Though very little is known about Somadeva's family life and childhood (which is not all that uncommon about Indian personalities of the medieval times), we do know that he was the younger brother of Mahendradeva³⁴ and that he belonged to a Jain order of Digambara monks, Devasangha,³⁵ in his later life.

Somadeva was a disciple of Ācārya Yaśodeva³² who in turn was a disciple of Nemideva.³⁶

We do not know for sure when Somadeva was born or died but there is little doubt that he flourished in the late tenth century A.D. Somadeva was a contemporary of Puṣpadanta (the author of the Mahāpurāṇa composed in A.D. 959) “and the statesman-scholar Vadidgāṅgala Bhaṭṭa who was also a noted grammarian”.³⁷ Amongst Somadeva's disciples were Vādirāja and Vādibhaṣiṃha.³⁸

29. *The Jaina Path of Purification*, see, pp. 87, 153n, 154n, 171n, 190n, 194n, 313n.

30. *Jainism in Early Medieval Karnataka*, Motilal, 1975, p. 135.

31. V.R. Mehta, *supra* note 1, p. 9.

32. Saletore, EIC, p. 1369.

33. *Supra* note 9.

34. R.N. Saletore, pp. 1368-70.

35. *ibid.*

36. Devasangha was “one of the four orders of the Digambar sect of the Jains.... From Jaina literature it appears that the Devasangha was confined to the south. Somadeva was probably a southerner. His Yaśastilaka Campū too bears traces of southern influence” (Beni Prasad, *Theory of Government in Ancient India* (=TGIA), Allahabad, 2nd ed., 1974, p. 230n)

37. Beni Prasad says otherwise; he reverses the order of discipleship when he notes, “His (i.e., Somadeva's) teacher was Namideva who had been a disciple of Yaśodeva” (TGAI, p. 230).

38. Sadhavi Sanghamitra, *op.cit.*, p. 281..

That Somadeva “was a great dialectician, a poet of considerable merit, and a master of Jaina theory and tradition” has been noted by several authors.³⁹

It is difficult to determine if Somadeva had any real or single patron or benefactor since *Nitivākyaṃṛtam* is not dedicated to any ruler or patron.⁴⁰ “His minute description of court-life depicted in the *Yaśastilaka* is certainly not that of a petty chief like Vagarāja but of a powerful monarch like Kṛṣṇa III”.⁴¹

Yaśastilaka is a campū mahā-kāvya in eight parts (a mention has already been made to the latter parts of the books, viz. chapters 6-8, which are also referred to as *Upāsakādhyayana*⁴²). The earlier sections of the book deal with the life, times and adventures of a prince named Yaśodhara; hence this portion of the text is also known as “*Yaśodharamahārājacaritra*”.

We learn from the book “that it was composed when Kṛṣṇadeva (Kṛṣṇa III the Rastrakuta monarch) was ruling after having vanquished the Pandya, Cola and Ceram (Cera) kings (E.I., IV, pts VI-VII, p. 281). This is corroborated by that ruler’s own inscriptions, issued on the 9th March, 959, from his Melapati camp, a few weeks prior to the composition of the *Yaśastilaka*, which was composed at Gangādhara, the metropolis of a chieftain Vagarāja, the eldest son of a Calukyan feudatory, Arikeśarin, of Kṛṣṇa III”.⁴³

Most scholars agree that the now “famous book on political science”. *Nitivākyaṃṛtam*, was completed around A.D. 959-966, several years before *Yaśastilaka*, which is dated about 992 A.D.

Whether “the book was written to advise princes, specially

39. Saleore, *op.cit.*, p. 1369.

40. *ibid.*

41. Saleore, AIPTI, p. 337. While making a selection from Jaina literature, in his section on ‘Jain Philosophy and Political Thought’, Professor Basham has included extracts from Somadeva’s *Nitivākyaṃṛtam* (SIT, 1958, pp. 88-90).

42. The first sūtra has been variously transcribed as : *atha dharmārtha phalaya rājyah namaḥ* (now, to the State, the source of *dharmā* and *artha*, Salutation!) (cited by Saleore, 1963, p. 337). Gupta (1987), however, transcribes it as follows : *dharmārtha-kāma-mokṣa-svarūp-sarva-puruṣārtha-phalamind-rājayam* (This righteous policy brings forth the fruits of all efforts of human existence—fulfilment of worldly needs and desires and attainment to salvation)

43. Saleore, *op.cit.*

Arikeṣari, on how best to govern their kingdoms” is no certainty, but this book has certainly found a place in the Indian *nīti* literature,⁴⁴ and Somadeva “has earned his place in the history of Indian political thought by adhering to the principles of Kauṭilya, and in the history of international political thought by deifying the state.”⁴⁵

It is perhaps this philosophy and attitude towards the State which sets Somadeva apart from other Jaina thinkers and writers on polity, e.g., Jinasena⁴⁶ and his disciple Guṇabhadra who completed his master's *Ādipurāṇa*,⁴⁷ and Hemacandra, the author of *Laghvarhan-nīti*.⁴⁸

Though the *Ādipurāṇa* has recently received some attention at the hands of scholars,⁴⁹ particularly the legend of Ṛṣabha, Bharata and Bāhubali, it remains relatively unexplored for its political philosophy even though it offers “a far richer source for the understanding of the Jain perception of kingship”.⁵⁰

The importance of *Ādipurāṇa* emanates from the ‘fact’, as related by Jinasena, that “it is the first and only *purāṇa*, to be distinguished from the false Hindu texts which teach violence”.⁵¹ Jinasena claims

44. Edited with a Hindi translation by Kailash Chandra Shastri, Bharatiya Jñanapitha, Varanasi, 1964; it is also included in the *Śrāvakācāra Sangraha*, tr. by Hiralal Siddhāntālaṅkāra, Sholapur, 1976.

45. Saletore, p. 1369.

46. Cf., for example, Beni Prasad's statement: “To the student of government theory, the (Jaina) Sūtras as a whole are rather disappointing” (p. 229), “few of them make any fresh contribution to political thought” (p. 328). “There is, however, one Jaina work in Sūtra form which deserves detailed notice. In the tenth century, Somadeva Sūri summed up the current political wisdom in a remarkable book called the ‘Nectar of Political Sayings’. In spite of the Sūtra form the very acme of concision, Somadeva has managed to combine extreme brevity with considerable perspicacity of expression” (TGAI, p. 229).

47. Saletore, AIPT, pp. 340-1.

48. “Jinasena lived from about 758 A.D. to about 848 A.D. Both he and Guṇabhadra spent most of their time in Maharastra and Karnataka” (Beni Prasad, p. 221).

49. *Ācārya Jinasenakṛta Ādipurāṇa*, text with Hindi commentary by Pandit Pannalal Jain. 2 vols. Delhi: Bharatiya Jnanapitha, 1963. A previous translation was made available by Lala Ram Jaina in Syādvāda Granthamālā Series, No. 4.

50. Ahmedabad, 1906. Also known as ‘Abridgement of the science of Polity of the Blessed One’ (Ghoshal, 1959, p. 456).

51. See, for example, George Ralph Strohl's doctoral dissertation, ‘The Image of the hero in Jainism: Ṛṣabha, Bharata and Bāhubali in the *Ādipurāṇa* of Jinasena’, University of Chicago, 1984.

that what he is relating here is what Rṣabha, the first Tīrthaṅkara, told his son, Bharata, the first Cakravartin. This message which was heard by Rṣabha's chief disciple has been passed down from disciple to disciple until the times of Mahāvīra when it was recited by the chief disciple of that last Tīrthaṅkara to Śreṇika, the king of Magadha, who after listening to it gave up all thoughts of participating in violence of any kind.

The point is implicit : as Gautama instructs Śreṇika in the behaviour of a Jain king, so does Jinasena instructs Amoghavarṣa⁵² and it is in chapter 42 of the *Ādipurāṇa* we find " a model of normative Jain kingship" which is that the true king "is the one, who, like Bāhubali, abstains from violence and, instead, conquers the spiritual enemies".⁵³

Still it does not mean that the temporal king, who is a Kṣatriya personified, can ignore his *dharma*, which is to protect his community, doctrine, self, subjects and equality. He must continue to strive for his and his subject's prosperity without violating his *dharma* which is to be obtained by following the path of right knowledge, right faith and right conduct. However, to seek liberation he must abandon his kingship and renounce all worldly attachments sooner or later as did Rṣabha and Bāhubali, and scores lives finished their worldly existence by the vow of *sallekhana* (fast unto death); the most celebrated case being that of Chandragupta Maurya.⁵⁴

A reference may be made here to a Jaina canonical work, *Uttarādhyayana Sūtra*,⁵⁵ which amplifies the position taken by Jinasena as far as the uselessness of temporal kingship is concerned, and that the only way to achieve liberation is by detaching oneself from worldly attachments, including power, prestige and position of kingship. In *Uttarādhyayana* (ninth lecture) is recorded a dialogue between the king of gods, Indra (disguised as a Brahman), and Nami

52. Its particular relevance can be seen more specifically in that Jinasena, the author, was probably addressing it to his patron, the powerful monarch, Amoghavarṣa I Rastrakuta, and also because it was, according to legend, the inspiration for that most conspicuous exemplification of the Jain warrior, the statue of Bāhubali at Śravaṇa Belgola, the focal point of South Indian Jainism" (Dundas, "The Digambara Jain warrior", in Carrithers and Humphrey (eds), *The Assembly of Listeners*, 1991, p. 176).

53. *ibid.*, p. 177.

54. *ibid. loc.cit.*

55. *ibid.*, p. 182.

who has just taken the life of mendicacy after abdicating his kingship of Mithila. The conversation goes as follows :

With the fair ladies of his harem King Nami enjoyed pleasure like those of heaven.

And then he saw the light and gave up pleasure...

In Mithila, when the royal sage Nami left the world

And took to the life of a monk, there was a great uproar.

To the royal sage came the god Indra, disguised as a brahman,

And spoke these words :

....

Indra said :

"Build a wall, with gates and turrets,

And a moat and siege-engines: then you will be a true warrior."

Nami replied :

"With faith as his city, hardship and self-control the bolt of the gate,

Patience its strong wall, impregnable in three ways

[i.e., by means of the three 'defenses'--self-control in thought, word, and deed]

With effort as his bow, circumspection in walking its string,

And endurance as its tip, with truth he should bend his bow,

And pierce with the arrow of penance the mail of his enemy, *karma*.

Thus the sage will conquer in battle, and be free [from *samsāra*]!"

Indra said :

"By punishing thieves and burglars, pickpockets and robbers,

Keep the city in safety; then you will be a true warrior."

Nami replied :

"Often men punish unjustly,

And the guiltless are put in prison, the guilty set free."

Indra said :

"Bring under our yoke, o lord of men, those kings

who do not bow before you; then you will be a true warrior."

Nami replied :

"Though a man conquer a thousand brave foes in battle,

If he conquers only himself, this is his greatest conquest.

Battle with yourself! of what use is fighting others?

He who conquers himself by himself will win happiness.'...

Throwing off his disguise, and taking his real shape, Indra bowed before him and praised him with sweet words :

Well done ! you have conquered anger !
 Well done ! you have vanquished pride !
 Well done ! You have banished delusion !
 Well done ! You have put down craving !

Hurrah for your firmness !
 Hurrah for your gentleness !
 Hurrah for your perfect forbearance !
 Hurrah for your perfect freedom ! ...

Thus act the enlightened, the learned, the discerning.
 They turn their backs on pleasure, like Nami the royal sage.⁵⁶

Whereas the above may be the ideal view of Jaina kingship, Jains in society, and Jaina kings have not followed this path literally, that is, not until they have fulfilled their worldly duties of protecting their kingdoms, their subjects and their faith. "Other Jaina writers (such as Somadeva) set somewhat less puritanical ideals before their kings"⁵⁷ since

Religious principles unrelated to political power leave impermanent effects on society. Dogmas of moral existence, if they should have spiritual values, must be interpreted in terms of action. The Jaina sages throughout the period under review (i.e., the period of Vijayanagara Empire) recognized this, and produced not merely devout *Bhavyas* who could perform the orthodox duties and gain for themselves salvation by the rite of *sallekhana*, but mighty leaders of armies as well who, while being sincere Jainas themselves, liberated their country from its enemies. The greatest claim of Jainism at the hands of posterity is that it gave to Indian men who turned it into a philosophy of action, and clearly showed the importance of the fact that *ahimsā*, which was the keynote of their great faith, instead of being an obstacle in the path of their country's liberation, was really an adjunct without which no freedom could be effected either in the field of religion or in that of politics.⁵⁸

56. Though there is much disagreement between scholars if it were the Mauryan emperor Chandragupta who accompanied Bhadrabāhu to Śravaṇa Belgola, where both undertook severe austerities and ended their lives by fasting unto death, Jaina tradition is very clear about Chandragupta Maurya becoming a disciple of Bhadrabāhu and accompanying him to his southward journey.

57. The *Uttarādhyayana* was first made available to the Western audiences by Jarl Carpentier who edited it for the Archives d'Etudes Orientales. It was later translated into English by Hermann Jacobi in Vol. XLV of the Sacred Books of the East. A new English translation has recently been issued by the London Institute of Jainology.

58. From *Uttarādhyayana Sūtra*, 9; cited in SĪT, pp. 67-68.

This is perhaps no better exemplified than in the case of “Kumārapāla, who is said to have enforced vegetarianism throughout his realm, is nowhere said to have given up warfare”.⁵⁹ In fact, “No Jain monarch had the enlightened sentiments of Ashoka in this respect, and nowhere in the whole body of Jain literature is a plea for peace between states to be found such as that in the Buddhist *Excellent Golden Light Sūtra*”. Moreover, “despite its (emphasis on) nonviolence, Jainism never strongly opposed militarism; several great Jain kings were conquerors”.⁶⁰

Thus it is no surprise that Somadeva, a practical man as he appears to be in his *Nītivākyāmr̥tam*, he strongly rejected the earlier Jaina tradition of abandonment in favour of world-affirming philosophy in the pan-Indian tradition of Kauṭilya for which he has been unduly criticised as not expounding the Jaina polity and concept of kingship.⁶¹ No doubt, there is much similarity between Somadeva’s *Nītivākyāmr̥tam* and Kauṭilya’s *Arthasāstra*, but Somadeva’s ideas are in harmony with the pan-Indian tradition of political thinking, going back to Kauṭilya (and perhaps even earlier).

However, if it is argued that Somadeva relies heavily on Kauṭilya, whom he mentions at several places, and even quotes (without due credit according to contemporary standards), or paraphrases the earlier authority at some places, as has been shown by Jolly, so can be argued that Kauṭilya also relies on previous authorities whose works are no longer available. And if they were available today, and a close comparison were made possible we may arrive at the same conclusion re. *Arthasāstra*.⁶² the identity of whose author, whether it be Kauṭilya, Chanakya or Vishnugupta is still in doubt. In fact, it is quite possible that *Arthasāstra* was written by a Jaina monk, as has been recently argued by Goyal.⁶³

Thus we may conclude that

[i]n spite of Somadeva’s indebtedness to previous writers on political philosophy, he cannot be declared to have made no contribution to

59. *ibid.*, p. 88.

60. B.A. Saletore, *Medieval Jainism, with special reference to the Vijayanagara Empire*, Bombay: Karnatak Publishing House, [1938], pp. [101]-102.

61. Basham in SIT, p. 89.

62. *ibid. loc.cit.*

63. For example, Dundas argues, Somadeva’s *Nītivākyāmr̥ta* “barely shows any Jain traits at all”; “all the textual material is, in any event, highly idealised” (Dundas, DJW, p. 177); cf. also Saryu Doshi (ed), *Homage to Shṛavana Belgola*, Bombay, 1981, p. 47).

Indian political thought. He laid down certain principles. Like Kauṭilya, he maintained that knowledge was essential for an intelligible study of the State, that prosperity was the end of a State, the King was the State. Somadeva in his [i.e., his] work has [i.e., has] reinforced the principles enunciated first by Kauṭilya and later followed by Kāmandaka. He adhered to the realistic approach of Kauṭilya. He emphasized the equality of all before the law and he actually deified the State to which he offers his salutation at the commencement of his work.⁶⁴

And it is also worth pointing out that

Jain thought has often been (wrongfully) accused of preaching an attitude of life negation. It is argued that the mystic tradition emphasizes the essential unreality of this world which, according to Jainism, is a prison house from which we must escape in order to be free. But it should be clear that like his mentor Kauṭilya, Somadeva too has an attitude of 'life affirmation'; an attitude in which no activity or attitude is preached to the exclusion of any other. If anything, the emphasis is on the continuity of the life process in this world itself, and we are consequently enjoined not to neglect our obligation.⁶⁵

But the most unusual thing about the Jaina kings is that some of them willingly renounced their kingdoms⁶⁶ in their later lives, and took up the life of a wandering mendicant as did the Tīrthaṅkaras, beginning with the first, Lord Ṛṣabha.

64. This argument may not be construed as shedding doubts on the importance and originality of *Arthaśāstra* (It is an important and original piece of pan-Indian penmanship). In fact Kauṭilya was in a way a point of departure from the earlier tradition of the *Dharmaśāstra* where politics was discussed as a part of the ethics of life, but Kauṭilya made it an autonomous discipline, though still paying a lip service to ethical principles (cf. Mehta, *op.cit.*)

65. S.R. Goyal, *Kautilya and Megasthenes*, Kusumanjali Prakashan, Meerut, 1985, pp. 24-28.

66. Saletore, EIC, 1985, vol. 4, p. 1370.

67. Mehta, *op.cit.* p. 14-15.

68. I have not seen the book, but, I believe, this issue is dealt with in Lawrence Babb's forthcoming book, *Renouncer Kings: Ascetic & Worldly Values in a Jain Ritual Culture*, Univ. of California Press, (due for publication in August 1996).

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MAHENDRAVARMAN AND JAINISM-A REAPPRAISAL

Dr A. EKAMBARANATHAN

Tondaimandalam, roughly corresponding to the northern parts of modern Tamil Nadu and the southern parts of Andhra, witnessed the rule of the pallavas from about the 6th century A.D. down to the end of the 9th century A.D. Kanchipuram, the temple city of the south, served as their seat of power. The rulers of the pallava dynasty were mainly followers of brahmanical religion and at the same time, were liberal towards the other creeds. Mahendravarman I was one among them who took up the reigns of the Government in c. 600 A.D. and continued to rule till 630 A.D.¹ He is said to be a Jaina in the early part of his career and later converted into a Saivite.

Though opinions are divergent among scholars on this issue, most of them accept that Mahendra was originally a Saivite, then became an adherent of the Jaina faith and got reconverted to Saivism by Tirunavukkarasar at a later stage.² This conclusion is arrived at mainly based on the life sketches of saint Tirunavukkarasar *alias* Appar picturised in the hagiological work, *Periyapurāṇam* of the 12th century A.D.

Tirunavukkarasar, according to the *Periyapurāṇam*, was a contemporary of the Pallava king Mahendravarman. Though born in an orthodox Saiva family, he was attracted towards Jainism in his early life. He, after mastering the *Jainasāstras*, became a reputed monk under the name Dharmasena and he headed the monastery at Tirupatiripuliyur near Cuddalore. His sister, Tilagavati, being an ardent devotee of Śiva, implored god's help, where upon Śiva caused him to be a victim of an incurable abdominal disorder. When all the efforts of the Jaina monks failed to save him, Śiva is said to have miraculously cured him of his disease, therefore, he embraced Saivism. The news of his defection upset the Jaina recluses who framed many a false charge against him to poison the mind of the Pallava King.

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1. R. Gopalan, *Pallavas of Kanchi*, p. 88. T.V. Mahalingam assigns 610 A.D. to Mahendra. see, *Kanchipuram in Early South Indian History*, p.64
 2. C. Minakshi, *Administration and Social life under the Pallavas*, p. 255 K.A. Nilakanthasatri, *A History of South India* pp. 423-424, R. Gopalan, *Op.cit.*, p.90.

Consequently, Appar was subjected to many tortures which, however, by the grace of lord Siva, he could overcome easily. Finally, the king was himself convinced of the greatness of Saivism and became a devotee of Śiva. As a sequel, the king is said to have destroyed the Jaina monastery at Tiruppatirippuliyur and out of its ruins built a Siva temple, *Gunadhara-īśvaram*, naming it after him.³

The hymns of Tirunavukkarasar in the *Tevaram* collections contain references to his activities in the Jaina monastery at Tiruppatirippuliyur, his ailment due to acute abdominal pain and its alleviation by the grace of god Śiva.⁴ It was under the influence of the same saint, Mahendra got reconverted to Saivism. With his reconversion, Jainism suffered a setback and lacked royal support. Appar's activities were now directed against the adherents of Jainism who are denounced in his hymns of *Tevaram*. Their reconversion coincided with the *bhakti* movement leading to Hindu revival in the Tamil country and ultimately resulted in a temporary decline of Jainism in the Southern part of the peninsula.⁵

A peep into the archaeological sources and an analysis of the Sanskrit farce, *Mattavilāsaprahasana*, would throw welcome light on Mahendra's association with Jainism and his conversion to Saivism, probably at the close of his reign. The *Mattavilāsa* is a satirical play composed by king Mahendra himself. It humourously ridicules the decadent nature of the Kapilika and Paśupata sects of Śaivism and even Buddhism. But the king had not condemned the votaries of the Jaina fold in the play. In a passage of the same work, the Jaina way of attaining salvation (by following the principle of *Ahimsā*, abstaining from eating of meat, drinking of liquor etc., as against that of the Kapalikas) is alluded to,⁶ thus indirectly revealing the king's lenience towards Jainism.

Mahendra is said to be the pioneer in introducing rock-cut architecture in Tamil Nadu. He excavated a number of rock-cut temples in places like Mandagapattu, Mahendravadi, Mamandur, Mahabalipuram, Pallavaram, Kuranganilmuttam, Talavanur, Siyamangalam, Vilappakkam, Aragandanallur and Trichi. The earliest among them at Mandagapattu was caused to be made for the Hindu trinity, Brahma, Viṣṇu and Isvara.⁷ The cave temples at Mahendravadi, Pallavaram,

3. *Tirunavukkarasar Puranam*, verses. 38-146

4. *Tirunavukkarasar Tevaram*, Tiruvatigai Patigam

5. C. Minakshi, *Op.cit.*, p. 255

6. *Mattavilāsaprahasana*, 1.37

7. *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. XII, No. 12

Mahabalipuram and Kuranganilmuttam were also dedicated to the gods of the Hindu pantheon. The remaining examples found at Mamandur, Dalavanur, Siyamangalam, Vilappakkam and Trichy are also of Hindu personation, but have Jaina association. These were excavated in the later part of Mahendra's reign. The architectural fineness and the sculptural refinement achieved in the images of these temples (except Mamandur and Vilappakkam) would bear testimony to the late phase of Mahendran style of art. The choice of the location of these temples deserve special mention as they are found in close proximity to Jaina caverns once inhabited by monks of the same order.

Mamandur is a hamlet in North Arcot district, lying at a distance of about 20 kms from Kanchipuram. The local hill contains a cave shelter which was made suitable for the occupation of Jaina monks at the instance of a chieftain Kaniman in the 3rd-4th centuries A.D.⁸ The adjoining hillock was selected by king Mahendra for cutting temples dedicated to the Hindu faith.⁹

Siyamangalam in the same district was also an early important centre of Jainism with natural caverns inhabited by monks. It continued to be a flourishing centre of pilgrimage even in the 9th-10th centuries A.D., and recluses of the Nandisangha had their abode here.¹⁰ A little away from these caves is another hillock, part of which was modelled into a beautiful temple of Śiva by Mahendravarman.¹¹

Vilappakkam also known as Panchapandavamalai in the Walajapet taluk has a chain of hillocks, the western end of which contains a natural cavern with figures of a yakṣī and a saint. Though these images were carved in 781 A.D.,¹² the cavern seems to be a Jaina resort long before. A little away from the cave is an unfinished rock-cut temple of Mahendra style which was abandoned owing to the failure of the pillars, making further work unsafe.¹³ Subsequently, it came in possession of the Jains who at that time carved a bas relief of a Tirthaṅkara in a shallow niche on the projecting ledge of the rock-cut temple. Thus, the place has a Jaina cavern and a rock-cut edifice of the Mahendra style.

8. I. Mahadevan, *Corpus of Tamil Brahmi Inscriptions*, Mamandur-1

9. K.R. Srinivasan, *Cave Temples of the Pallavas*, pp. 54-55

10. *Journal of the Epigraphical Society of India*, Vol II, pp. 21-23 ARE, 227-A&1901.

11. *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol.VII, No. 441

12. *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, pp136-137

13. K.R. Srinivasan, *Op.cit.*, pp.9697

Dalavanur in Gingee taluk of South arcot district has a Saiva rock-cut temple, *Śatrumalleśvarālaya*, on the southern scrap of the huge rock running east to west. Above this temple of Mahandra, at a height of about 80' from the ground level, is a natural cave with two stone beds meant for the Jaina monks, formed by an overhanging rock.¹⁴

There are two fine rock-cut temples, one near the base and the other higher up on the hill, in the town Trichirappalli. The upper one known as *Lalitaṅkurapallaveśvaragrham* was excavated by king Mahendravarman. In close proximity to this is a natural cavern which once served as a Jaina resort. The cavern is formed by an over hanging boulder on the top of the hill and contains stone beds with brahmi records assignable to 3rd-4th centuries A.D.¹⁵ Besides, a fragmentary inscription mentions the name "*Chira*", denoting that the name of the place was Chirappalli, the suffix emphasising its Jaina association.¹⁶ It continued to be a centre of Jainism in the 7th century A.D. as is attested to by several label inscriptions.¹⁷

The above mentioned places bear evidence of Jainism as well as Saivism. The Jaina resorts in all these places, except at Villappakkam, are certainly earlier than the Saiva rock-cut temples of Mahendravarman. This would go to prove that the king deliberately selected such Jaina hill resorts to create rock-cut edifices of the Saiva order and make them centres of Hindu Worship. Obviously, such a change could have taken place after Mahendra's reconversion to Saivism. K.R. Srinivasan has rightly pointed out that "the choice of the location of the rock-cut temples by Mahendra was apparently more prompted by intent and less by chance", but he does not agree that it was due to the conversion of Mahendra's religion from Jainism to Saivism.¹⁸

The famous Trichi rock-cut temple inscription of the same king also bears undisputable evidence of his change in religious faith. A portion of the lithic record reads as follows :

*"Guṇabhara namani rajany anena lingene lingini jnanam prathan
ciraya loke vipaksha vritteḥ paravrittam".*¹⁹

14. *Ibid.*, p. 71.

15. I. Mahadevan, *Op.cit.*, Trichirappalli. No. 1.

16. *Annual Report on Epigraphy*, 1937-38, pt. II, p. 78.

17. *Ibid.*, 132-140/1937-38.

18. K.R. Srinivasan, *Op.cit.*, p.31.

19. SII, Vol.I, Nos.33.

This passage has been translated by the editor, E. Hultsch, in the following manner. "While the king called Guṇabhara is a worshiper of the linga, let the knowledge which has turned back from hostile conduct be spared for a long time in the world by this liṅga".²⁰

It is evident from this inscription that Guṇabhara (Mahendra) was sometime a follower of "hostile conduct" (here it implies Jainism) and later became a worshipper of liṅga, i.e., a Saivite. Thus, the present epigraph substantiates the *Periya-purāṇam* account regarding the king's conversion from Jainism to Saivism.

Scholars like K.A. Nilakantha Sastri, C. Minakshi and others agree in common about the change of Mahendra's religion. But they do not accept the story regarding the persecution of Appar by Mahendravarman.²¹ K.R. Srinivasan, on the other hand, opposes them saying that the assumption of the story of Mahendra's conversion from Jainism to Saivism is made in the light of much later tradition as found in *Periyapurāṇam* and the uncertain identification of Guṇadhara of that tradition with Guṇabhara Mahendra.²² Had he been a convert from hostile conduct (Jainism), he would not have dedicated his early excavations to Trimurti as at Mandagapattu or subsequently to Viṣṇu he did at Mahendrabadi. It would be apt to assume that he was a tolerant follower of brahmanical religion and under the influence of *bhakti* movement spear-headed by the Saiva Nayanmars, he became an ardent devotee of Śiva in the later part of his life when his cave temples were dedicated to Śiva in preference to other deities.²³

To sum up, the *Periyapurāṇam* version of Mahendra's religious conversion finds archaeological corroboration. The king had intentionally chosen to excavate Saiva cave temples in places like Mandur, Dalavanur, Siyamangalam and Trichi which were already throbbing with Jaina activities. This could have been done by him after embracing Śaivism. His Trichi lithic record does bear unmistakable evidence for his conversion from Jainism to Śaivism. His title Guṇabhara occurring in *Periyapurāṇam* is only a variant of Guṇabhara found in his scriptal vestige. However, his policy of Jaina persecution mentioned in *Periyapurāṇam*, cannot be substantiated by other evidence at the present state of our knowledge.

20. *Ibid*, Vol. I, p. 29.

21. C. Minakshi, *Op.cit.*, P. 206,

22. K.R. Srinivasan, *Op.cit.*, p. 89.

23. *Ibid.*, p.31.

THE WESTERN ORDER OF JAINISM

NATHUBHAI SHAH OF LONDON

Background

The fourfold order of the Sangha is the main cause of the continuity of Jainism. Lay people respect monks and nuns, and learn their faith from them. The close contact between ascetics and lay people has kept Jainism a living religion. The monks and nuns have taken five major vows and embody the teachings of Mahāvīra as an ideal for the Jain community. Their vow of *ahiṃsā* does not allow them to travel abroad. Moreover there are obstacles to observing the major vows in countries outside India.

There are now over 100,000 Jains living outside India. There are also many non-Jains who are attracted to the teachings of Jainism. The needs of the Jain community dispersed throughout the world, and of prospective converts, are not being fulfilled, because there are no monks and nuns outside India. If Jainism is to survive outside its land of origin, some sort of four-fold order is necessary. Clearly, there is no obstacle to the creation of the lay bodies of such a four-fold order in any part of the world. However, the creation of ascetic orders outside India would necessitate a reappraisal of traditional practices. Ascetics in India represent an ideal. If ascetics were to function outside India they would be obliged by circumstances to observe rules which took account of local conditions. Apart from (for example) using vehicles, taking showers, using toilets, most of the ascetics' rules familiar in the Indian context could be observed elsewhere.

The question of the possibility of creating ascetic orders outside India is raised by the circumstances in which Jains find themselves in other countries. But this is not the only need. There is, at present, no single body which speaks for the Jain minorities in various countries. Other comparable minority groups, such as Jews and Buddhists, have developed representative bodies to make their needs and views known to the rest of the societies among whom they live. Whether the need for contact is with government or statutory institutions, academic or educational bodies, or social and religious groups, there is no unified Jain voice.

Proposals for Action

In order to meet the perceived needs of the Jain community, there are a number of questions to be considered.

1. What would be the rules of an ascetic order outside India?
2. What role would ascetics be expected to fulfill in the Community?
3. In whom would authority in community be vested?
4. How would the material needs of ascetic orders be met by the community?
5. What other forms of leadership could complement the ascetic orders?
6. What representative bodies could be created to speak for the community?
7. How could custom and ritual be adapted to circumstances of life outside India?

A series of discussions with the Jain community organisations, conferences and deliberations are required before such initiatives could be acted upon. The blessings from the *ācāryas* of all sects in India and their guidance should be sought and obtained wherever possible. (However, Jain communities outside India must ultimately be prepared to accept the possibility of autonomy).

If properly thought out and developed, the Western Order of Jainism may attract many non-Indian people to Jainism. For them, and for future generations of children born to Jains whose ancestors came from India, a different form of community may develop. These issues, and the tremendous possibilities presented by the fact of Jain migration from their land of origin, represent a substantial challenge for us to meet. The experience of other migrant and minority populations shows us that there is only one choice which is not open to us : to do nothing. If we do not act together the long-term future of our community will be threatened. Jain values and Jain teachings can only be preserved and transmitted to future generations if we act to ensure that this happens.

The Experience of Other Communities

(a) Christianity

In the West, the majority communities are largely Christians of one sort or another. Most of these groups have a long history of organisation based upon hierarchy. The most common of their religious professionals are the priests (Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican or

Episcopalian etc.) or the minister (most Protestant churches). Only a few of the denominations do not have some form of active, trained, usually full-time, professionals. Most of these 'clergy' are well-educated by secular standards. Many are university graduates and have then added to this education by some years of training in a religious college of some kind. Higher up in the ranks of the churches the leadership is often very highly qualified.

The duties of the clergy vary to some degree depending on the type of church. However, as a generalisation, their duties involve some form of leadership in religious worship, teaching and education in their communities, representing their churches to the outside world and pastoral work caring for their members. In England, with the sole exception of the Church of England (which has a historical connection to the state), the churches are self supporting. All the funds for the training and subsequent salaries of clergy are ultimately provided by church members. This is the main pattern in the USA too. Some European countries have different means of directing money to religious bodies.

In view of the long historical tradition of European and American societies as overwhelmingly Christian societies, there is no need for them to adopt strategies to preserve this background culture. It is largely taken for granted and the majority of the populations of Europe and the U.S.A. continue to identify themselves as Christian, even if only vaguely. For the purposes of this discussion paper, it is therefore more practical to look at the example and experience of Europe's and America's longest established non-Christian minority, the Jews.

(b) Judaism

The religious leadership of Jewish communities has changed over long periods of history. For all practical purposes there are no longer Jewish priests (their functions in the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem disappeared nearly two thousand years ago). Leadership is now vested in Rabbis. The modern Rabbi is an employee of Jewish communities which are usually organised as synagogues. A Rabbi (men and women are accepted as Rabbis today) will normally have a minimum education to university graduate level or above and in addition spend another five or more years training in a Jewish college of some description. Only in the most conservative (often called 'ultra-orthodox') communities will secular education be replaced by an exclusively Jewish education.

In the West, the Jews are the wealthiest religious and ethnic

minority group. They differ from the wider societies in two important respects. Their involvement in the professions and in business and commerce is proportionally higher than average. Jewish educational achievement, for men and women, especially participation in higher education is much higher than the average for the rest of the population.

In countries such as the UK, the Jews have developed strong representative bodies to protect the communities' interests, to make Jewish views known to others and to facilitate co-operation with other religious and minority communities. The longest established and best known such Jewish organisation is the Board of Deputies of British Jews.

Jewish communities finance themselves by, in the case of synagogues, levying membership fees and by fund-raising events and donations. In the U.K. surveys show that Jews give more money per capita in charitable donations than any other sizeable minority group. They are very efficient at using donated money, e.g. they take full advantage of deeds of covenants and other tax-efficient means of giving. Jewish organisations are very professional in seeking grants from local and central government bodies and other charitable sources of funding. Many Jewish organisations use specialist fund raising personnel.

There are two major areas of Jewish communal endeavour as a focus for charitable and philanthropic activity. One is the provision of community social services, e.g. residential homes for the Jewish elderly. The Jewish example is held up as a model for other communities. The second area is Jewish education. Ever since the earliest days of Jewish settlement in the U.K. there have been Jewish schools. Today the trend towards provision of Jewish primary and secondary education is increasing across all parts of the Jewish community. The need for education to maintain the future viability of the Jewish community is not questioned by most Jews. In addition to full-time Jewish schools, there is a dense network of part-time educational and cultural activities: Jewish religious classes for children and adults, Jewish youth clubs and residential holiday camps.

Culturally, Jews come from a wide range of backgrounds. In the West they generally adopted Western cultural modes. An example of this is in the synagogue. Where music is used, either chorally or instrumentally, it is recognisably 'westernised'. With regard to questions of gender equality, the westernisation of the Jewish community has proceeded very far. There are now few areas of community life from which women are any longer excluded. The remaining exclusions are

found among the diminishing orthodox minorities. In the (world-wide) majority non-orthodox communities there are even women Rabbis. The home and family based nature of much of Jewish life, e.g. sabbath and festival observances, is an important aspect of Jewish community life not often seen by non-Jews and its importance is therefore often underestimated. In terms of day to day religious behaviour, e.g. in synagogue worship, Jews have modernised their worship as the Christian Churches did in the past few centuries. The effect of these changes has been to make conduct in churches and synagogues more orderly, with greater decorum and with greater participation of worshippers in a more organised type of service.

The U.K. Jewish community is relatively traditional and conservative. It is the only major Jewish community where orthodox institutions are in a majority, even though the Jewish members of these institutions are not orthodox either in belief or practice! This conservatism has to some degree maintained the separate identity of U.K. Jews and preserved their distinctive traditions. In the U.S.A., by contrast, the pervasiveness of the American idea of an open, mixed and eclectic culture has produced very unusual results. It is not by accident that American society both produces large numbers of 'new' religious cults and, at the same time blurs, the distinctiveness of cultures. This latter effect has been termed 'the MacDonaldisation of society, meaning the spread of a very uniform culture to all groups in society. Any group wishing to preserve a distinct cultural or religious tradition must therefore work very hard to maintain their difference in the face of the relentless homogenisation common in American society.

Buddhists

The religious group which is perhaps closest to the Jains in the West are the Buddhists. A distinct strategy has been adopted to create a Western Buddhist community. There has not been an attempt simply to transplant Buddhism to the West without taking account of Western society and culture. On the contrary, there has been a planned adaptation of Buddhism to Western modes. This has proved to be highly successful. Buddhism has even succeeded in influencing Western religious attitudes and practices and has established itself as a respected and valued part of Western religious life. The main thrust of the Western Buddhist Order, as it calls itself, has been the promotion of (a) certain religious practices, (b) changes in lifestyle and conduct and © religious and spiritual learning.

(a) Western Buddhism promotes the practice of meditation as a

regular ritual, often supported by longer periods of 'retreat'. This is the most prominent aspect of spiritual development and it has both attracted Westerners to become Buddhists and has been adopted by many Christians and Jews, even if they have not become Buddhists. Retreats for Buddhist in the West last from a few days to a few months or longer and are often organised on a singlesex basis. This experience often has a profound effect upon those who take part in it.

- (b) Many Westerners have made radical changes in their lives through the influence of Buddhism. These include changes in dietary habits, e.g. the adoption of vegetarian or vegan diets, and changes in profession involving the adoption of means of earning a living while avoiding harm to others.
- (c) The religious and spiritual traditions of Buddhism are very different from those of the West. The Western Buddhist Order has enabled the Buddhist tradition to be kept alive and meaningful for Westerners while adapting it culturally, e.g. in art forms or in music, to Western modes.

The Western Buddhist Order has developed a network of local and larger regional or national groups. There is an extensive range of WBO publications. Members support the WBO through a proper structure of membership fees and, of course, voluntary donations. Educational activities, such as lectures, are self-financing through the payment of fees. The WBO, which was founded in 1967, is essentially an organisation for lay people. It is supported by Buddhist monks and nuns.

Many of these are either from Eastern countries or are Westerners who have received their training in the East. Westerners usually join the WBO through personal contacts with members. Those who eventually aspire to proceed beyond lay membership may devote themselves full-time to preparation for acceptance as monks or nuns. It is possible today to become a monk or nun in the West. Such has been the impact of the founders and leaders of the WBO that they have attracted widespread admiration and respect from Buddhist and non-Buddhists alike.

Hindu groups:

(a) Brahma kumaris

The Brahma Kumaris were founded in India shortly before the outbreak of the second world War and spread abroad from the 1960s

onwards. This spiritual movement promotes the enhancement of life through the overcoming of tensions and conflicts through meditation, vegetarianism and peaceful activities. They have attracted many Eastern as well as Western followers. Their organisation has branches in sixty-two countries. In the U.K. alone, there are more than 250 branches, a magnificent head quarter in North London and a palatial Retreat Centre in Oxford. The attraction of the B.K.s lies in their emphasis on meditation on the soul. They also engage in wide ranging social activity and mutual support. Members live both in the wider community and in communes, giving extensive financial support to the B.K.s. The degree of support and commitment by members is equal to the highest levels found in other religious groups. Part of their success can be attributed to their efficient organisational infrastructure.

(b) *Swāminārāyan*

The success of the Swāminārāyan movement lies in the tightly integrated society which it has created among its members. The monks are the social as well as religious leaders of the movement and have attracted highly educated people to the ranks of the movement. Swāminārāyan has motivated many young people to become members and to engage in religious and communal service to the community. Prompted by an ideal of self-help, even well-paid professionals have given up large amounts of time to serve the movement. Swāminārāyan is a strictly hierarchical organisation, headed by a single figure : at present, Pramukh Swāmi.

(c) *Other faiths*

The Muslims, the Sikhs and the Bahais have infrastructure in tune with the Western world. They use modern methods to propagate the values of their faiths. The discipline and brotherhood of Muslims, the community dinner (*Langar*) of Sikhs and the weekly meeting at different houses (*the fire side meetings*) and the Houses of worship of Bahais are worth taking notice..

What can Jains learn from the experience of others?

Many of the features of the religious groups described above, their social values, religious practices, etc., are equally present in Jainism. These include concern for avoiding harm to other living beings, vegetarianism, proper conduct and ethics, philanthropy, animal welfare and environmental concern. Now that there are substantial numbers of Jains living in the West, attention must be given first to the preservation of that community through the next generations and second to the expansion of the Jain community.

The unique fourfold order of the Sangha is not found in other religions. It has been the strength of Jainism in India. There is no reason to suppose that it could not form the basis for a Jain community outside India. In order to create the conditions necessary for the development of the Western Jain community (perhaps to be called the Western order of Jainism) we must address the questions posed earlier in this paper.

Let us begin by recognising an important point. Whatever is created outside India, no matter how pressing the need or how lofty the motives, it is the situation in India which presents us with our ideal. As a matter of principle, there should be as few digressions as possible from the prevalent practice in India. Any adaptation of practice in the West should take place only with the support and blessing of the Sangha, and in particular the *ācāryas*, in India. Given these principles, we can turn to consideration of practical issues :

(a) *General*

Infrastructure of Western Order,
 Management structure,
 The leadership
 International head quarter and regional offices
 Resources and staffing
 Promotion of Jainism

(b) *Ascetics*

Travel and movement
 Accommodation, Residence, Food and Gochari
 Activities (e.g. teaching, spiritual practices, appropriate leadership)
 Contacts with householders and relation with lay leadership
 Possessions, clothing, medical care
 Observing expected Western conventions (e.g. toilets, showers, electricity)
 Contacts with members of opposite sex
 Renunciation and initiation of ascetics
 Status of ascetics sent from India by *ācāryas* and Sangha
 Status of ascetics who travel to West on their own initiative
 Ascetics and social functions of the community

(c) *Other Issues*

Jain 'priests' (non-celibate scholars/leaders)
 Functions and duties of lay people and the promotion of Jain values
 Spiritual development

Ethics and conduct

Religious education, children and adults

Training teachers and priests and Academic activity about Jainism

Publications

Publicity, Public relation and Interfaith relations

Representation to local and central governments

Management of places of worship and other community centres

Sources of funding, individual and other

Social rituals (marriages, cremations etc.)

Social relations regarding Western traditions

Mechanisms of mutual support among the Jains

Where to Begin?

How, when and where to start? What impact will this order have on our established traditions and norms? How does this vision fit to preserve our heritage and culture in our future generations? How will the Jain community be involved? How will the organisation be set up? How will it be funded? Why pay attention and commit to make this vision success? It is natural to have these and many other questions. The following paragraphs, disussion, deliberations, discovery and one's personal experience and thoughts may help to get the answers. To establish the initiative of *The Western Order of Jainism* we will have to embark on a journey designed by SIGMA (Social Innovations in Global Management, Weatherhead School of Management, Ohio, USA) which can be summarised in four words : Discovery, Dream, Design, and Destiny. The activities offered in these four D's will provide the framework for this initiative and will bulid bridges for co-operative action for a successful outcome.

Discovery

Activity 1 : Discovering wealth of experience, ideas, needs, resources, passion and the energy within the community

Activity 2 : Discovery of the relevant historical aspects and creation of timelines.

Activity 3 : Discovery of significant political, community and spiritual trends that may have significant impact on this effort. The blessings from the *ācāryas* and the deliberations with the Jain leaders in India may be helpful in this discovery.

Dream

Activity 4 : Imagining a future the Western Order of Jainism can provide to the Jains, Non-Jains and for the promotion of Jainism.

Design

Activity 5 : Materialising the vision with declarations of purpose, setting the organisation and the personal practices.

Activity 6 : Commitments, actions and taking steps for the activities, consistent with the Jain values.

Destiny

Activity 7 : Co-operative action, building alliances and friendship, planning for the needs of the community including the needs for young generation and the future generations. Build a foundation and the working organisation with the Headquarters and the Regions.

The vision of the Western Order of Jainism may have to overcome barriers such as :

- Fear, ignorance, old habits, reluctance to change, relation to the *Sangha* in India.
- Many delicate questions on the rules for the ascetics and the lay members.
- Questions of membership, representation, decision making and the authority.
- Funding.
- Relations with the existing Jain Organisations.
- Head Quarters and the regions.

Prior to planning and designing the activities, the Jain community will have to have thorough discussions on the purpose of this order. It must be absolutely made clear that the four fold order established by Mahāvīra will remain as ideal and the vision of the Western order has come because of the pressing needs of the community outside India.

The involvement of the Community is very important for the success of this Initiative. Communications, proper infrastructure, motivation and gathering Resources should be done in the efficient manner. The purpose of this order, actions, functions and the areas of work should be clearly stated. Politeness, friendliness, listening to others and the sincerity of the purpose should be a norm in the discussions.

The action plan depends upon the deliberations and dissemination of this vision to the community members and the resources available, yet we are taking a liberty to suggest some time scale for guidance.

- 1997-98 CE Dissemination of the idea in UK, North America, East Africa, Belgium and other countries outside India. Deliberations with the Jain leaders in India and the guidance and blessings from *Ācāryas*. Regional Gatherings and the enrolment of the support.
- 1999 CE Conferences in UK, North America and other countries. Planning the charter for *The Western Order of Jainism* and future action plan.
- 2000 CE Preparations, Actions and Gathering the Resources. Establishment of Infrastructure.
- 2001 CE On the 2,600 Birth Anniversary of Mahāvira, the signing of the Charter Of the Western Order of Jainism. Launching the Order.

JAINS AND THEIR RELIGION IN AMERICA : A SOCIAL SURVEY

Dr BHUVANNEDRA KUMAR

Introduction

In the study of South Asian religions in North American Universities that has begun in recent years, Jainism, which has been professed by millions from very ancient times in India, finds only a casual referenc. However, Harvard University had its first Jain doctoral student, late professor Kendall W. Folkert. In 1975, Folkert was awarded doctoral degree for his thesis – “Two Jaina Approaches to Non-Jains : Patterns and Implications.” Since then, a few more American universities have produced doctoral thesis on different aspects of Jainism.

This paper as the title suggests deals with Jain religion and its followers in Canada and the United States, and the first half introduces Jain religion by examining its characteristics, its historical evolution and its religious structure as propounded and propagated by its twenty-four Jinas, from a period of long antiquity in the history of Indian subcontinent. The second half establishes Jain migrations from India at differnet periods : circa 300 B.C.E., medieval times and the last centuries of the present millennium. It establishes Jain population in America, placed at about one hundred thousand. Then, it examines Jaina sociological and moral modalities in America, underlined by important characteristic features of identity in contrast to other South Asian religious traditions. Thus, Jaina socio-anthropologic and an ethnographic profile of the “peaceful liberators” in America is presented.

Jainism, an ancient religion practised mostly in India by over just ten million people, is neither known, nor taught at American schools and universities, in the format that a world religion is introduced to pupils. Prof. Kay Koppedrayer of the University of Wilfred Laurier at Waterloo discusses this issue thoroughly and eloquently. She says that “with the exception of those Indian background or those who have taken a secondary school level world religion course, most university student I teach know nothing whatsoever of Jainism.”¹

1. *Jinamanjari*, Vol.9, April 1994.

Defining Jain and Jina

The term Jain is a derivative from the word Jina, whose etymological meaning is 'spiritual development, and preached his gospel about the path of deliverance. According to the ancient expression- *jayati iti Jinam*, Jina is "He with unflinching success has His conquest over passion." The Jina is also known by the term Tīrthaṅkara, in the sense that 'He built a ford across an ocean of sufferings.' Inscriptional record of the word Jina at least goes back to 1776 years, and is found at Vaddamanu Jain archaeological site in the Krishna river valley in South India. This inscribed potsherd from the site reads : *Jinana vihara pari bhoka sameta*.² Thus, the term Jain is applied to followers of the Jinas, and their religion, therefore, is known as Jainism.

It must be pointed that the use of the word Jina by the Vajrayāna subsect of the Mahāyāna Buddhism of Tibet, sometime beginning in the medieval period in circa 750, must not be confused with Jina of the Jainas. Buddhists use this word without any etymological explanation, and they use it to express their body of bliss, which is an aspect of the five divine wisdom in Buddhism.³

Antiquity and History of the Faith

The religion of the Jinas can be traced—before the advent of the Vedic Aryans—to the prehistoric period in India, which was then known as Jambudvīpa. The first of these Jinas was Ṛṣabha, whose bull insignia is found in the Indus Valley civilization, which is dated approximately from 3500 to 1500 B.C.E. In the Indus Valley cities of Harappa, Mohanjadaro and Lothal, the surviving seals and amulets indicate respect for animals and trees, veneration of women, possible ritual use of water, and a proto-meditative tradition. Recent study of these seals by American scholars Dr. Thomas McEvelley of Rice University at Houston Texas, and Dr. Robert DeCaroli of California University at Los Angeles, and Dr. Katherine Harper of Loyola Marymount University further add strength to the suggestion that there existed pre-Aryan Jain tradition in the Indus valley.

Dr Thomas McEvelley suggests that both the *mūlabhadraṣana* (a seated position flanked by upright serpents that identifies Pārśva tradition) and the *kāyotsarga* (an upright body posture with arms hanging somewhat stiffly and held away from the sides of the body)

2. *Jainism in America*, pp. 7-8, forth coming Dec. 1996.

3. *Ibid.*, p.8.

meditative positions have a strong connection between the roots of Jain tradition and the mysterious and elusive Indus valley culture.⁴

Dr Robert DeCaroli referring to many images like the tree, the meditator, the *swastikā*, the snake and the bull, connects them with later Jain tradition. However, he notes that their incorporation into the Hindu and Buddhist traditions make any exclusive claim for Jainism possible.⁵

Citing archaeological and textual evidence, Dr Katherine Harper observes that the early culture within India had espoused an egalitarian attitude toward women, and it was eroded by the advance of the Aryans, who established patriarchy as the norm. Noting the sole exception in the orders of the Jain nuns, Harper finds this egalitarian attitude toward Jain women linked with pre-Aryan cultural form.⁶

In the history of ecclesiastic Jainism, there are twenty-four Jinas, born during the pre-and-protolithic periods to historic times. The pre-historic Jinas were two : Ṛṣabha, whose archaeological remnants are found in the Indus Valley culture, and Ajita, whose remnants are not known. In the proto-historic period, there were eighteen Jinas, from Sambhava to Munisuvrata.⁷ In the period circa 3000 through 2000 B.C.E. Sambhava was followed by Abhinandana (4), Sumati (5), Padmaprabha (6), Supārśva (7), Candraprabha (8), Puṣpalanta (9), and Sītala (10). During whose time saw the coming of the Aryans and the rise of the Vedic Aryans. In the period circa 2000 through 1500 B.C.E. Śreyāṃśa (11), Vasuṣṭya (12), Vimāla (13), Arianta (14), Dharma (15), Śānti (16), Kuṇḍa (17), Ara (18), Mallinātha (19), Munisuvrata (20), were said to have appeared successively. Parasurama, a Hindu *avatār* was said to be a contemporary of Tīrthaṅkara, Ara. The growth of the Vedic culture was apparently evident at the time of Mallinātha; and in the time of Munisuvrata, it is said that Daśaratha and Rāma attempted reconciliation between the Śramanic and the Vedic systems, leading to a gradual Aryanization of the country and their Brahmanical expansion.

Modern scholar Dr T.G. Kalghatgi contends, based on the Hindu source material, that Nami (21), Ariṣṭanemi (22)-cousin of Krishna of the famous Gītā, were historic personages. Thus, the account brings out some specifics in reference to the period 1400 to 890 B.C.E.⁸ It

4. *Jinamanjari*, Vol. 13, April 1996.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Jainism in America*, p. 53.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 67

shows that somewhere in the period circa 1400 through 1200, Nami (21) was at Mithila in Videha country, and during his time, the composition of the R̥gveda was said to have taken place. Between the period 1200 to 900 B.C.E., Ariṣṭanemi was said to have lived along with Krishna, his first cousin. King Aśvasena, father of Pārśva (23), reigned Kasi in circa 900-897 B.C.E. The Upanisads were formed sometime in the eight century B.C.E. The historicity of Pārśva (23) and Mahāvīra (24) is well-known.

Followers of the Faith

Though its antiquity is deep, presently Jainism has a very small number of followers—just over ten million—almost all residing in India. But, the essence of the faith that was postulated by the Jinās, as many scholars have noted, has changed the religio-social and socio-psychical composition of India in terms of their peaceful coexistence, tolerance and multifaith living. Thus, the essence of Jainism may be measured by three of its principal doctrines : Non-violence, Karma and Anekānta, which were said to have been originated with the Jains. Therefore, Jains practice peace within and around all life-animate and inanimate—with possible physical and mental endurance; reincarnate life underlined by spiritual incline and decline depending on the karmic matter and flux one generates or degenerates, and they show tolerance by espousing that a 'Real' is expressed with due consideration to methods of standpoint and of dialectical predications qualified by the indeclinable *syat* (in view of) and *eva* (factored).⁹

The conduct of the faithful in the practice of the faith has been dealt extensively by Jina Mahāvīra, in the ancient text the *Uttarādhyayana-sūtra*. It speaks thus of the Jaina practice that-

There is no knowledge without Faith,
No Conduct is possible without knowledge.
Without conduct there's no liberation,
And without liberation, no deliverance.

The Faithful Outside India

In order to study Jains and their community in the present, a general understanding of the history of Jainism from Mahāvīra times is very essential. Records show that Mahāvīra had travelled extensively in India as far south to Krishna river valley, and had influenced with

9. *Canadian Studies in Jainism*, pp. 18-19, forthcoming Dec. 1996.

his religious gospel not only various kingdoms within India, but also the Persian king Karusa and prince Ardaka.

The great Indian famine in the North that occurred in the second half of the fourth B.C.E. lasting for twelve years led to the Jain exodus from Magadha under the leadership of Pontiff Bhadrabāhu-I, along with his royal disciple Mauryan emperor Candragupta. Then, Sthūlabhadra became the Pontiff of the church. History notes that Bhadrabāhu migrated to the modern place called Sravanabelagola in the South. Owing to the harsh conditions of the famine, Jain ascetic practices were lax in the North, and thus, cracks developed in the church, but with no major structural change. On the other hand, Jainism took a back seat in its development in the Mauryan kingdom when king Aśoka, the grandson of Candragupta, got converted to Buddhism after Kalinga war that was said to have taken place in 261 B.C.E.¹⁰ Thus, Jainism, losing its royal patronage during the time of Aśoka, had to wait to regain the Maurya support till the ascension of Samprati, the grandson of Aśoka, to the throne. Suhastin, the Pontiff of the Jain church, had redrawn Maurya king Samprati back to Jainism. Records show that Samprati had facilitated the spread of Jain gospel by making suitable arrangements for the Jain ascetics to travel to places in Saurashtra, Andhra, Damila, Coorg and Maharashtra. Following his religious deeds, Samprati himself had led a Jain congregation of 5000 monks in circa 270 B.C.E. from Ujjain to the Jain shrine Satrunjaya, in the company of his preceptor Suhastin.¹¹

Thereafter, the Jain ascetics in the South began to play a bigger role in the development of the church within their geographical domain. Bhadrabāhu-II, Kundakunda and Lohācārya – all belonging to the last years of B.C.E. to the last years of the first half of the Common Era – had fully established the Jain church in the South. This ascetic group began to exert a great influence among their pupils and votaries. Thus, the southern ascetics, under Arī adbali, convened the Great Council of Southern Monks in the year 66 C.E. at Mahima, which has been identified with modern village of Mahimnagar, in the Satara district of Maharashtra, situated on the banks of river Vena. That was the year when definite and historic point of great schism in Jain church took an embryonic form.¹² By the year 80-82 C.E., the church was officially split into Śvetāmbaras and Digambaras, not in any philosophic arguments and assumptions, but in the appearance of the monks,

10. *The Wonders that was India*, p.53.

11. *Jainism in America*, p. 81.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 82-83.

who became Śvetāmbaras with white attire and lax ascetic practices. The monks who continued maintaining unaltered ascetic practices and their nudity came to be known as Digambaras. In the last quarter of the Common Era, Śvetāmbaras were further split into Sthānakavāsīs, which either came to existence due to Muslim onslaught, or in opposition to the excessive ritualism deviated from scriptural pronouncements.

Thus, the social study of Jains must include both these sections, which very often accommodate and adjust to each other in time and space, especially in America, where they portray a common fellowship without preferring their apparent divisions in their practices. Therefore, the paper concerns itself with ethnographic and social aspects of Jains, often in reference to other South Asian religious groups and sometimes, Judo Christian faiths.

Ancient Jain Migration and Coming to America

The ancient canonical Jain text—the *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* makes reference of the Jain influence on the Persian king Karusha and the prince Ardaka of ancient Persia, in circa 558 B.C.E.i.e. over 2500 years ago. Then comes the Greek record, which shows that Alexander the Great had heard of the wise Śramaṇas, the naked Jain monks whom the Greeks referred as Sophists. According to it, Alexander, entering India in the Year 326 B.C.E. at Taxila, the present Islamabad in Pakistan, was said to have sent his men to bring the Sophists to him for a discussion. Further, it states that Alexander on his return to Greece was accompanied by one sophist called Kalanos.¹³

Commenting on the possible influence of Jainism, Western scholars—Dr Paul Marret of Britain and Dr Christopher Chapple of the United States—observe that Jainism had certain influence on early and medieval Christianity in its theological thought. In light of this, two Jaina metaphilosophical aspects apparently may be seen on the Bardaisan theology (154-223 C.E.), which was said to have come to prominence from the town of Edessene, a meeting-place of many cultures in the eastern part of Syriac country. One is, Jain concept 'of cosmos without being created' may be seen in the Bardaisan view of 'cosmology without creation.' Two is, Jain 'adherence to precepts to achieve a state of spiritual awakening' is apparently reflected in the Bardaisan point—'man's freedom fortify a higher state of being through adherence to precepts.' Similarly, the Cathar records show some Jain

13. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

influence on its metaphilosophy. Dr Paul Marret suggests thus that the roots of Catharism may be traced to the Balkans and to the travellers, and even perhaps to the Jain monks, who may have provided a link with some Jain beliefs from India to Europe.¹⁴ These views about Jain influence on the early and medieval Christianity find support from vestiges of Jain antiquities found outside India. Prof. Klaus Fischer reports two sites-one in Kabul in Afghanistan and the other in Eastern Turkestan, which has a painting of a Jain monk in the caves of the Turfan oasis. Archaeologist M.C. Joshi reports the discovery of the bronze Jain image datable to circa eleventh century found at Kemla in northeast Bulgaria.¹⁵ These are further supported by Dr Christopher Kay Chapple of Loyola Marymount University of Los Angeles who notes that those "traditions, from the Gnostics and Manichaeans to the Bogomils and the Cathars, bear similarities to Jainism, especially in their emphasis on the purgation of evil through asceticism and their practice of vegetarianism."¹⁶

The record of Jain migration is also found in the canonical work, the *Jñātādharma-kathāṅga* which describes Jains from ancient Campa in Magadha undertaking sea-voyages to Zanzibar in East Africa. It also refers to Culikas-the Sodigan people in the north of river Oxus in Turkestan and to the people of Camcuya, who have been identified with Cenchu of China.¹⁷ The medieval Jain record, the *Jagadu-carita* gives a description of Jagadu, a rich Jain merchant who had maintained trade post at Hormuz in carrying regular trade with Persia, and transported goods in his ships.¹⁸ In the recent past, record of Jain migration to east Africa and the Arabian gulf may be found beginning from 1500. Historic records of the Jain rulers from southwestern coastal region of India show that they not only established a sea-route, but also transhipped their commodities. These Jain officers and merchants thus made large gifts of precious stone Jain images to their temples back in their country, and these precious gifts now are vaulted at the Jain *matha* in Moddabidre, an important Jain town from historic times to the present, situated at about 30 miles the Arabian sea coast.¹⁹ In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Jain migration to east Africa is recorded with community settlements and temple. Oral history of Jains in America thus narrate the continuing migration of Jains in

14. *Ibid.*, p.90.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 91.

16. *Nonviolence to Animals, Earth and Self in South Asian Traditions*, p. 114.

17. *Jainism in America*, p.92.

18. *Trade and Travels in Western India*, p. 36.

19. *Jainism in America*, p. 93.

the last century of this millennium to Africa, Burma and to part of Pakistan before its statehood.²⁰

The first arrival of Jains in America is recorded in the visit of Virchand Gandhi in 1893 to attend the Parliament of World Religions in Chicago. During the time, one American family—the Howards of Inglewood—were said to have become Jains, following Virchand Gandhi. The next record of a Jain visit to America was by Barrister Champatrai Jain to address World Fellowship of Faiths held in Chicago on 30th of August 1933.²¹ Records in the mid to late sixties show that there were handful of proselytized Jains in Canada and America.²²

Jains in America

The Account leads to a small number of Jain immigration to America from early fifties to the large arrivals in the seventies and eighties, largely due to exodus from Africa. Thus, the Jain immigration to America can be divided into four phases, based on kind, period, political expulsion and home grown population.²³

First phase consisted of the coming of the professionals and the students, the immigration being directly from India. These men were mostly married before landing in America. So, they sent for their wives as soon as they had set up a home. The students sought immigration instead of going home, and these unmarried men devised a system of their own to get a wife. They arranged marriage in India, and sometimes they made two or three trips to India before they returned with their wives.

Second Phase consisted of family years of the first arrivers. This was the period of building a foundation in the new country. Between the spouses, the male assumed the role of a patriarch, with specific duties and responsibilities.

Third phase consisted of immigration due to political expulsion. They came as a family unit, often as a joint family. The period saw the numerical strength of the Jains grow, and thus, Jain communities came to existence in many regions.

Fourth phase consisted of the second generation Jains, where North American Jains have established their own independent families, and

20. *Ibid.*, pp. 95-96.

21. *Ibid.*, p.100.

22. *Idibd.*, p. 101.

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 102-103.

in many instances, children of the third phase formed a constituent of the majority born and raised second generation, whom I term a *Ameri-Jains*.

Ameri-Jain Population

Records of *Ameri-Jain* population cover Jain community publications in Canada and the United States; telephone directories, *North American Jain Directory* from Boston, Massachusetts, and mailing lists of *Jain Digest Quarterly* and *Jinamañjarī*. Based on figures from these sources, the *Ameri-Jain* population has been established at one hundred thousand. Of this, the Jain population of Canada is estimated at around ten thousand only.²⁴

Available records show that all Canadian provinces, except for Saskatchewan, Prince Edward Island, Yukon and Northwest Territories, have Jain residents, Ontario has the majority of Jains living followed by Quebec and British Columbia. In the United States, Jains live in all the states except for Maine, South Dakota and Wyoming. The majority of the Jains are concentrated in the states of California, Illinois, Michigan, Maryland, New Jersey, New York and Texas. In both the countries, Jains live in urban and industrial centres.

The Survey Questionnaire and Findings

A survey was conducted in both Canada and the United States to gather data on obtaining a general understanding of the Jain views on aspects of their practices and preferences. It reveals some of the following information gathered for the first time in North America.²⁵

- Jains fall mostly in the plus fifty age group immigrating in the sixties and seventies.
- Educational background has a large percentage of professionals such as, engineers, medical doctors, PhD etc.
- Most families consist of two children, and only a handful of joint families are noted.
- By nature, they are exogamous.
- They prefer to belong to religious organization over linguistic choice.
- a large majority believes that Jain culture is distinct within the Indian context.

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 113-120.

25. *Ibid.*,

- They like to support mainstream organizations like animal rights and vegetarianism movements.

On a broader issue of household, *Ameri-Jains* show that it must be operated on three principles- *samyaktva* (equanimity), *ahiṃsā* (nonviolence) and *anekānta* (perspectives from different angles), for they are structured to bring about a good working relation among the individual members. On the issue of cultural and linguistic pluralism, they emphasize homogeneity, conformity and assimilation within the larger milieu, but appear to insist on uniqueness of the self while stress the nature of interdependency, speaking metaphorically of water drop on the lotus leaf.

Characteristic Features of Jain Identity

The social and anthropological perspective of *Ameri-Jains* may be understood by examining its religio-social values and psycho-social attitudes. However, it is essential first to know what a Jain layperson is. Many western scholars like Dr K.R. Norman of Oxford University defines that 'one who is not an ascetic is a Jain person, whether or not that person has taken the vows of the votary.' According to late American scholar Kendall Folkert, the lay do not practice the ascetic model of holiness but rather participates by means of religious and social activities that are often have more visible features.²⁶

The study shows that *Ameri-Jain* characteristics form two strata: one is, the ecclesiastical custom which forms the code of lay practices, and two is, established moral values conforming sanctioned notion which underlie in the conscience of Jainistic life. The ecclesiastic stratum is found to consist five features, namely—daily prayer; daily essentials which are five in number; fasting; giving or donating and rite of passage. The conscience of Jainistic life stratum, unlike other world religions, takes into consideration that the living pattern must respect all life, the earth and the air, dictating conformity in living the moral goodness. This is featured by such characteristics like—approach to life and liberation; aspect of economic aggregate; feeding the poor and the hungry with strict vegetarian meal; campaign for vegetarianism from both doctrinal and health points; approach toward death (*sallekhana*), which the West currently debates rigorously.

These characteristics thus define features of Jain identity which may be studied under three broad classifications: One is, Jain conscious which the study focuses on features such as self-definition, idealism,

26. *Ibid.*, pp. 124-126, 132-138, 140-141.

orthopraxy and nomenclature. Two is, Jain outward expressions like family structure, attitude of adolescence, matter of marriage, *svādhyāya* which I term *communis colloquia*. Three is, Jain ethics, seen in their attitude towards animal rights and Jain dietary laws.

In the first category, self-definition and nomenclature are unique features of Jain identity within the South Asian religious groups in North America. In the second category, Jain matter of marriage is established as solemnizing the sacredness of unity of the two individuals as a foundation not only of the family but also of the society. *Svādhyāya* is very much an ancient system found among the Jains, unlike the Hindu or the Buddhist practices. The third category shows unique features of Jain identity in contrast to South Asian or even Juedo Christian values and practices.

Ninian Smart in his work, *The Religious Experiences of Mankind* has dealt with aspects of religious externals, and notes that experiential dimension forms one of the important constituents. Features of *Americ-Jain* identity from this perspective suggests that the community has altered or adapted textual Indian Jainism to American environment, and thus, has implanted or newly developed certain new features through practices in its experiential dimension. Such features on close examination show textual Indian Jainism being altered in America in many fronts, and prominent among them are found in ascetic and lay relation; temples and rituals, and festivals. Each of these outward features demonstrate that Jains and their faith do have distinctive indicators which are often completely different in identifying Jainism and its followers from other major South Asian religions and their groups.

Presentation of Jainism and its characteristic features of identity as outlined in the study basing both on theoretical exercise and practical considerations conclusively show that Jains and Jainism in North America undoubtedly possess all the characteristics of a structured world religion, in spite of a small number of followers. Its strong and independent roots that began from the time of unrecorded historic India have come to the present, preserving individuality and distinctiveness, in contrast to other religious groups from South Asia. However, would this small community sustain its new environment on the new landscape, and survive as it has done all these millenniums in India? My study indicates that this religion which finds peace within will possibly enter into a new phase, and will maintain its identity without losing its core essence and energy.

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