

JAINA MYSTICISM

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In the cultural history of mankind, there have been persons who regard spiritual quest as constituing the essential meaning of life. Inspite of the marked environmental differences, their investigations have exhibited remarkable similarity of experience and expression. Such persons are styled mystics and the phenomenon is known as mysticism. Like the mystics of Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam etc., Jaina mystics have made abundant contribution to the mystical literature as such. They have dealt with mysticism quite systematically and in great detail.

The equivalent expressions in Jainism for the word 'mysticism' are: suddhopayoga, Arhat and Siddha state, Panditāpanditamarana, Paramātman-hood, Svasamaya, Parādrsti, Ahimsā, Samatva, etc. All these expressions convey identical meaning of realising the transcendental self. The traditional definition of Jaina mysticism may be stated thus: 'Mysticism consists in the attainment of Arhat-hood or Siddha-hood through the medium of Samyagdarśana (right attitude or faith), Samyagjñāna (right knowledge) and Samykcāritra (right conduct) after dispelling Mithyādarśana (wrong attitude), Mithyājñāna (wrong knowledge) and Mithyācāritra (wrong conduct)¹.' Kundakunda (1st cent. A. D.) records departure from this terminology when he says: 'Mysticism consists in realising the Paramātman (transcendental self) through the Antarātman (internal self) after renouncing the Bahirātman (external self)2. Haribhadra (7th cent. A. D.) also employs a different terminology when he announces: 'Mysticism consists in arriving at the state of Vrttisamkşaya (cessation of mental states) through the stages of Samyagdrsti and Cāritrī after abandoning the stage of Apunarbandhaka (Mithyādrsti in transition)³. At another place he says: Mysticism consists in attaining to Parādrsti (transcendental insight) through Sthirā (Steady spiritual insight), Kāntā and Prabhā Drstis (elementary and deep meditational insights) after passing through Mitrā, Tārā, Balā, and Dīprā *Dṛṣṭis.4

All these definitions of mysticism are fundamentally the same. Paramātman refers to Arhat-hood and Siddha-hood, Parādṛṣṭi and the state of Vṛṭṭisamkṣya; Antarātman points to Samyagdarśana, Sthirādṛṣṭi and Samyagdṛṣṭi; and consequently to Samyagjñāna, Samyakcāritra, the state of Cāritrī and the Kāntā and Prabhā Dṛṣṭis. Bahirātman refers to Mithyādarśana the state of Apunarbandhaka along with Mitrā, Tārā, Balā and Dīprā Dṛṣṭis and consequently to Mithyājñāna, and Mithyācāritra.

Thus we may say that the Paramatman is the true goal of the mystic quest. The journey

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^{*} The type of enlightenment accruing from eight Dṛṣṭis may respectively be compared to the type of light give out by the sparks of straw-fire, cowdung-fire, wood-fire, the light of a lamp, the lustre of a gem, the light of the star, the light of the sun, and the light of the moon. Thus it varies from the indistinct enlightenment to the most distinct one. The first four Dṛṣṭis (Mitrā, Tārā, Balā, Dīprā) occur in the stage of apunarbandhaka (Mithyādṛṣṭi in transition) hence they are unsteady; while the last four, in the stage of Samyagdṛṣṭi and Cāritrī, hence they are steady.

from the Antarātman to the Paramātman is traversed through the medium of moral and intellectual preparations, which purge everything obstructing the emergence of potential divinity. Before this final accomplishment, a stage of vision and fall may intervene. Thus the whole mystic way be put as follows: (1) Awakening of the transcendental self, (2) Purgation, (3) Illumination, (4) Darknight of the soul and (5) Transcendental life. According to Underhill, "Taken all together they constitute the phases in a single process of growth, involving the movement of consciousness from lower to higher levels of reality, the steady remaking of character in accordance with the 'Independent spiritual world's." But the Jaina tradition deals with the mystic way under the fourteen stages of spiritual evolution, technically known as Gunasthānas. However, these stages may be sub-summed under the above heads in the following way:

- 1. Dark period of the self prior to its awakening.

 Mithvātva Gunasthāna (first)
- 2. Awakening of the self—Aviratasamyagdrsti Gunasthāna (fourth) Fall from awakening:
 - (a) Sāsādana Guņasthāna (second)
 - (b) Misra Gunasthāna (third)
- 3. Purgation:
 - (a) Viratāvirata Guņāsthāna (fifth)
 - (b) Pramattavirata Guņasthāna (sixth)
- 4. Illumination:
 - (a) Apramattavirata Gunasthāna (seventh)
 - (b) Apūrvakaraņa Guņasthāna (eighth)
 - (c) Anivṛttikaraṇa Guṇasthāna (ninth)
 - (d) Sūksmasāmparāya Guņasthāna (tenth)
 - (e) Upaśantakasāya Guņasthāna (eleventh)
 - (f) Kṣīṇakāṣāya Guṇasthāna (twelfth)
- 5. Dark period post illumination—fall to the first or the fourth Guṇasthāna.
- 6. Transcendental life:
 - (a) Sayogakevalī Guņāsthāna (thirteenth)
 - (b) Ayogakevalī Guņasthāna (Fourteenth)

1. Dark period of the self prior to its awakening or Mithyātva Guņasthāna:

In this Gunasthana the empirical souls remain in a perpetual state of spiritual ignorance owing to the beginningless functions of Mohaniya (deluding) Karma. This Karma on the psychical side engenders a complex state of 'Moha' having perverted belief (Mithyādarśana) and perverted conduct (Mithyācāritra) as its ingredients. Here the effect of Mithyādarśana is so dominant that the self does not evince its inclination to the spiritual path. Just as the man invaded by bile-infected fever does not have liking for sweet juice6. This Mithyādarśana vitiates knowledge and conduct alike. In its presence, both knowledge and conduct, however extensive and suffused with morality they may be, are impotent to disintegrate the hostile elements of the soul and to lead us to those superb heights which are called mystical. Consequently, the darkest period in the history of the self is the one when the self is overwhelmed by Mityhādarśana. It obstructs all our mystical endeavours. Thus the plight of the self in Mithyātva Gunasthāna resembles that of a totally eclipsed moon or a completely clouded sky. It is a state of spiritual slumber with the peculiarity that the self itself is not cognisant of its drowsy state. Led astray by the perverted attitude, the soul staying in this Gunasthāna identifies itself with bodily colour, physical frame, sex, caste, creed, family, friends and wealth? The consequence is that it is constantly obsessed with the fear of selfannihilation on the annihilation of the body and the like8 and is tormented even by the thought of death9. Besides, it is the victim of the seven kinds of fear10 and the eight kinds of pride11. Again under the influence of Mithyādarśana one accepts the Adharma (wrong religion) as the





Dharma right religion, the Amarga (wrong path) as the Marga (right path), the Ajīva (non-soul) as the Jīva (soul), the Asādhu (non-saint) as the sādhu (saint), the Amukta (unemancipated) as the Mukta (emancipated) and vice versa¹². Kundakunda¹³ and following him Yogindu, Pūjyapāda, Subhacandra, Kārttikeya etc., recognise this Mithyātva Guņasthāna as the state of Bahirātman. In this Guṇasthāna there are such souls as will never triumph over this darkest period and hence will never win salvation. They are technically called Abhavyas14. Haribhadra aptly calls them Bhavābhinandis (welcomers of transmigratory existence)¹⁵. In contrast to these souls, there are, according to Haribhadra, Apunarbandhakas who are also occupying this Guṇasthāna16. The difference is that the latter are moving in the direction of becoming Samyagdrstis and consequently do not commit sinful acts with much strong inclination, do not attach undue value to the worldly life and maintain properties in whatever they do¹⁷, whereas the former are Mithyādṛṣṭis proper, and consequently they are mistaken as to the nature of things, evince no disgust for worldly existence and are like the man to whom unworthy acts appear worthy of performance18. The Apunarbandhakas may be further said to have developed first four Yogadrstis, namely, Mitrā, Tārā, Balā and Dīprā. It may be noted here that the spiritual darkness of the Apunarbandhakas is not so intense as that of the Bhavābhinandis.

2. Awakening of the self or Aviratasamyagdṛśṭi Guṇasthāna:

Spiritual awakening or conversion is the result of Granthibheda (cutting the knot of ignorance)19. By virtue of cutting the knot, the Bhinnagranthi sees supreme verity and acquires unswerving conviction in the true self. 20 This occurance of Samyagdarśana (Spiritual conversion) is consequent upon the instruction of those who have realised the divine within themselves or are on the path of divine realisation.21 Yogindu points out that insight is attained by the Atman. when at an opportune time, delusion is destroyed.²² It may be noted here that when there is Ardhapudgalaparāvartana kāla for the deliverence of the self, it prepares itself for three types of Karanas (Bhāvas) namely, Adhaḥpravṛttakaraṇa, Apūrvakaraṇa, and Anivṛttikaraṇa, which guarantees for its spiritual conversion. Each of these Karanas last for an Antarmuhūrta (less than forty-eight minutes).24 Just after the process of Anivṛttikaraṇa the soul experiences the first dawn of enlightenment of spiritual conversion. It is by these Karanas that Granthibheda is effected. "Even as a person born blind can see the world as it is on the sudden acquisition of eyesight, so can a soul having experienced the vision, sees the truth as it is. Even as a person suffering from long-drawn disease experience extreme delight on the sudden disappearance of the disease, so does a soul eternally bound to the wheel of worldly existence feels spiritual joy and bliss on the sudden dawn of enlightenment."25

This is to be borne in mind that the spiritual conversion is to be sharply distinguished from the moral and the intellectual conversion. Even if the man in the first Gunasthāna gets endowed with the capacity of intellectual and moral achievements, it cannot be said to have dispelled the spiritual darkness. The characters portrayed by Jaina Acāryas of Dravya-lingī Muni and some of the Abhavyas who have attained to the fair height of intellectual knowledge and moral upliftment illustrate this sort of life without spiritual conversion. Thus the flower of mysticism does not blossom by the water of mere morality and intellectuality, but requires spiritual manure alongwith it.

It will not be idle to point out here that the soul in this Gunasthāna is called samyagdṛṣṭi, Antarātman²7, Bhinnagranthi²8 and the occupant of Sthirādṛṣṭi.²9 Being spiritually converted, the Samyagdṛṣṭi considers his own self as his genuine abode, regarding the outward physical dwelling places as artificial.³0 He renounces all identification with the animate and inanimate objects of the world and properly weighs them in the blance of his discriminative knowledge.³1 His is the only self that has acquired the right of Mokṣa.³2 Besides, he practises universal compassion (Anukampā),³3 does not hanker after worldly opulence and empyreal pleasures,³4 shows no feeling of disgust at the various bodily conditions caused by disease, hunger etc.,³5 and is free from all fears.³6 Again being overwhelmed by fear, inferiority and

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agreed for profit, he does not recognise $Hims\bar{a}$ as $Dharma.^{37}$ Apart from this, he has deep affection for spiritual matters and strengthens the conviction of those who are faltering in their loyalty to the path of righteousness³⁸ and disseminates spiritual religion through various means best suited to time and place.³⁹

Fall from awakening or [a] Sāsādana Guņasthāna and [b] Miśra Guņasthāna:

If the spiritual conversion is due to the total annihilation of Daršana Mohanīya (faithdeluding) Karma, the self has thrown over all the chances of its fall to the lower stages. 40 This is called Ksāyika Samyaktva.41 It is Sthirā irstī proper.42 But if the spiritual conversion is consequent upon the suppression of Darsana Mohaniya Karma, the self after one Antarmuhurta either falls to the lower stages or remains in the same stage with the emergence of certain defects ordinarily incognisable. This is known as Upasama Samyaktva. 48 Here four Anantānubandhi passions and the faith-deluding karma which is divided into three qualitatively different fragments of Mithyātva (impure), Samyaka-Prakrti (pure), and Samyaka-Mithyātva (semi pure) are suppressed. 44 When the impure piece comes up, the self again descends to the first Gunasthana where again darkness overwhelms45 him, if the semi-pure piece, the self falls to the third Guṇasthāna, namely, Miśra Gunasthāna wherein total scepticism as regards matters spiritual prevails.46 If there is the rise of the Anantānubandhī passion, the soul sinks to the second stage known as 'Sāsādana Guṇasthāna47, This is the intermediatory stage of the self which has fallen from the peak of the mountain of Samyagdarśa na, but has not arrived at the stage of the Mithyatva Gunasthana.48 In this stage the peculiar taste of the fall from Samyagdarśana like the peculiar taste of sweet food after its vomiting is experienced.49 Lastly, when the pure piece rises up, it continues to be in the fourth stage, but has lost the purity of Upasama Samyaktva. This is called Kṣāyopasamika Samyaktva. 50

3. Purgation or [a] Viratāvirata Guņasthāna and [b] Pramattavirata Guņasthāna :

After dispelling the dense and intense darkness caused by the faith-deluding (Darsana Mohaniya) Karma, the passionate and ardent longing of the awakened self is to purge the conductdeluding (Cāritra Mohanīya) Karma which now stands between it and the transcencental self. Only those who are in possession of sturdy will are capable of doing so, says Amrtacandra.⁵¹ In the fifth Guṇasthāna, the aspirant who is a house-holder is incapable of making himself free from all Himsā root and branch. 52 In consequence, he adopts the five partial vows (Anuvratas) along with the seven Sīlavratas in order to sustain the central virtues of Ahimsā as far as possible.53 This state of the self's journey has been called Viratavirata or Desavirata Gunasthana, since here the aspirant avoids intentional $Hi\dot{m}s\bar{a}$ of two to five-sensed Jivas, but he has to commit the intentional Himsā of one-sensed Jīvas namely the vegetable-bodied, fire-bodied etc.54 Besides the Himsā which is committed in being engaged in a certain profession, in performing domestic activities, and in adopting defensive measures cannot be avoided by him 55 This shows that the householder's life is a mixture of virtue and vice,56 which obstruct the purgative way pursued by the mystic. Hence, the aspirant, being motivated by certain incentives to spiritual life (Anuprekṣā) gradually renounces the householder's type of living, becomes a saint in order to negate Hims \bar{a} to the last degree.⁵⁷ In consequence, the saint observes five Mahāvratas, five Samitis, three Guptis and practises internal and external austerities with special attention to meditation, devotion, and Svādhyāya. Besides, he gets food by begging, eats only a little, gets over sleep, endures troubles, practises universal friendship, adheres to spiritual upliftment, and turns away from acquisitions, associations and life injuring activities⁵³. Thus from the life of Muni, vice totally vanishes and there remains virtue which will also be transcended as soon as the flight into the realm of spirit is made. 59 Since in this stage there is complete self-restraint (Samyama), this stage is styled Pramattavirata Gunasthana i. e., here Pramada exists with self-restraint. Nevertheless this stage may be regarded as the terminus of purgative way. It may be noted here that the self in the fifth Gunasthāna and onwards is called Cāritrī62.

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4 Illumination or [a] Apramattavirata, [b] Apūrvakaraņa. [c] Anivṛttikaraṇa, [d] Sukṣma-Samp. araya, [e] Upaśanta Kaṣaya and [f] Kṣīṇakaṣaya Guṇasthānas:

These Gunasthanas from the seventh to the twelfth are the meditational stages or the stages of illumination and ecstasy. In other words, these are the stages of Kāntā and Prabhā Drstis⁶³. It is to be noted here that the self oscillates between the sixth and the seventh Gunasthanas thousands of times and when it attains steadiness, it strenuously prepares itself either for suppressing or for annihilating the conduct-deluding Karmas⁶⁴. This oscillation is the result of the struggle between Pramāda and Apramāda. By the time the aspirant reaches she seventh Gunasthāna, he has developed a power of spiritual attention, of self merging and of gazing into the ground of the soul. It is through the aid of deep meditation that the mystic now pursues the higher path. In consequence, he arrives at the eighth and the ninth stages known as the Apūrvakaraņa and the Anivettikarana Gunasthana, where exists the state of profound purity⁶⁵. In the tenth Gunasthana known as Suksma-Sāmparāya there is only subtle greed that can disturb the soul66. The soul suppresses even this subtle greed in the eleventh Gunasthana known as Upaśanta Kasaya and thus absolves itself from rise of all types of passions⁶⁷. If the self follows the process of annihilation instead of suppression it rises directly from the tenth to the twelfth Gunasthana known as Kşīnakasāva Gunasthāna.68 Here the conduct-deluding Karma is destroyed instead of being suppressed. Pūjyapāda rightly observes that meditation produces supreme ecstacy in a mystic who is firmly established in the self, such an ecstatic consciousness is potent enough to burn the Karmic fuel; and then the person remains unaffected by external troubles and never experiences discomposure69.

5. Darknight of the soul post-illumination:

Owing to the suppressed passions gaining strength, the illuminated consciousness of the eleventh Guṇasthāna falls to the lowest stage of Mithyātva or to the fourth stage of Aviratasam-yagdṛṣṭi Guṇasthāna. The consequence is that the ecstatic awareness of the transcendental self gets negated and an overwhelming sense of darkness envelops the mystic. It may be noted that not all mystics experience this dark night. Those of them who ascend the ladder of annihilation escape this tragic period, whereas those who ascend the ladder of suppression succumb to its dangers and pains. Mystics of the latter type no doubt will also reach the pinnacle of transcendental life, but only when they climb up the ladder of annihilation either in this life or in some other to come.

6. Transcendental life or [a] Sayogakevalī and Ayogakevalī Guņasthānas:

The slumbering and the unawakened soul after passing through the stages of spiritual conversion, moral and intellectual preparation, now arrives at the sublime destination by dint of ascending the rungs of meditational ladder. In the thirteenth stage the soul possesses dispassionate activities (Yoga) and omniscience (Kevalajñāna), hence it is known as Sayogakevalī Gūṇasthāna⁷⁰. It is a state of Jīvanmukta, a supermental state of existence and an example of divine life upon earth. The fourteenth stage is called Ayogakevalī Gūṇasthāna, as there the soul annuls all activities (Yogas), but preserves omniscience and other characteristics. In this stage the soul stays for the time required for pronouncing five syllables a, i, u, r, Ir⁷². After this, disembodied liberation (Videha Mukti) results. To be more clear, the self in the Sayogakevali and Ayogakevali Gūṇasthānas bears the title of 'Arhai' and after this, the title of 'Siddha'⁷³. This state of Siddha is beyond all Gūṇasthānas⁷⁴.

It may be noted here that the self in these two Guṇasthānas is called *Paramātman*,⁷⁵ the doer of *Vṛttisaṃkṣaya*, and the possessor of *Parādṛṣṭi*⁷⁶. This perfected mystic is established in truth in all directions⁷⁷. He experiences bliss, which is supersensuous, unique, infinite and interminable⁷⁸. Whatever issues from him is potent enough to abrogate the miseries of tormented humanity. His presence in supremely enlightening. He is the spiritual leader of society⁷⁹. Just as a mother educates her child for its benefit and a kind physician cures diseased orphans, so also the perfected mystic instructs humanity for its upliftment and dispenses spiritual pills to suffering humanity⁸⁰. He is always awake⁸¹. He has transcended the dualities of friends and foes, pleasure

and pain, praise and censure, life and death, sand and gold, attachment and aversion⁸². Since he is the embodiment of spiritual virtues, he leads a life of supermoralism but not of a-moralism⁸³. Thus we may conclude by saying that the cognitive, conative and affective tendencies of the perfected mystic reveal their original manifestation in supreme mystical experience, which is ineffable and transcends all the similes of the world⁸⁴.

Notes and References

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- 3 Yogabindu of Haribhadra, 31, 252, 366.
- 4 Yogadrstisamuccaya, 13, 19, 178
- 5 Mysticism by Underhill, p. 169
- 6 Gommaţsāra Jīvakānda of Nemicandra, 17
- 7 Paramātmaprakāśa, 80 to 83
- 8 Jňānārnava, 11, 18
- 9 Samādhiśataka of Pūjyapāda, 76
- 10 Mūlācāra of Vaţţakera, 53
- 11 Ratnakaranda Śrāvakācāra of Samantabhadra, 25
- 12 Sthānāngasūtra, x-1-734
- 13 Moksapāhuda 8
- 14 Samayasāra of Kundakunda, 273
- 15 Yogadrstisamuccaya, 75
- 16 Yogadrstisamuccaya, Introduction, pp. 5 to 11
- 17 Yogasataka of Haribhadra, 13
- 18 Yogadrstisamuccaya, 78, 79, 80
- 19 Yogabindu, 252
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- 21 Tattvārthasūtra, 1. 3
- 22 Paramātmaprakāśa, 1. 85
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- 25 Studies in Jaina Philosophy, p. 273
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- 27 Kārttikeyānuprekṣā, 197
- 28 Yogabindu, 266
- 29 Yogadrstisamuccaya, 155
- 30 Samādhiśataka of Pūjyapāda 73
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- 32 Yogabindu, 342
- 33 Rājavārttika of Aklanka, 1
- 34 Puruşārthasiddhyupāya of Amrtacandra, 24
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- 36 Samayasāra, 228
- 37 Kārttikeyānuprekṣā, 418
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- 40 Gommatsāra Jīvakānda, 647
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- 43 Bhāvanāviveka 93, 100

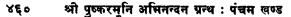














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- 45 Bhāvanāviveka, 98
- 46 Labdhisāra, 108
- 47 Labdhisāra, 107
- 48 Gommatsara Jīvakānda, 19
- 49 Gommatsāra Jīvakānda, 20
- 50 Darśana Aur Cintana, p. 276
- 51 Labdhisāra, 105
- 52 Purusārthasiddhyupāya, 37
- 53 Puruşārthasiddhyupāya, 75
- 54 Ratnakaranda Śrāvakācāra, 51; Puruşarthasiddhyupāya, 136
- 55 Gommațsāra Jīvakāņda, 30, 31
- 56 Jaina Darsana, p. 63
- 57 Ethical Doctrines in Jainism, p. 87
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- 59 Mulācāra 895, 896
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- 61 Gommatsara Jīvakāņda, 33
- 62 Yogabindu 352
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- 64 Labdhisāra commentary Candrika, 205, 217
- 65 Gommațsāra Jīvakāņda, 50, 57
- 66 Gommațsāra Jīvakāņda, 60
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- 72 Jñānārņava LX, 11, 59
- 73 Bbāvanāviveka, 234
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- 76 Yogadrstisamuccaya, 178, 179
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