

# **SRAMAṆA TRADITION**

**ITS HISTORY AND CONTRIBUTION TO  
INDIAN CULTURE**

**L. D. SERIES 66**

**GENERAL EDITORS**

**DALSUKH MALVANIA**

**NAGIN J. SHAH**

**BY**

**G. C. PANDE**

**EX-VICE-CHANCELLOR**

**UNIVERSITY OF RAJASTHAN**

**JAIPUR**



**L. D. INSTITUTE OF INDOLOGY AHMEDABAD 9**

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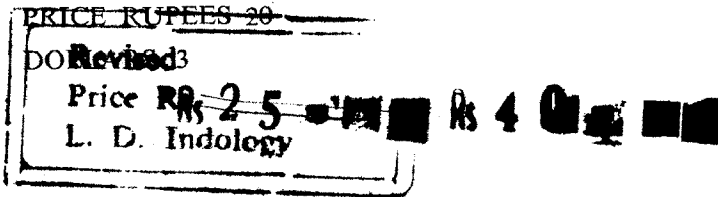
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## PREEACE

The L. D. Institute of Indology has great pleasure in publishing the three lectures on 'Śramaṇa Tradition – its history and contribution to Indian Culture', delivered by Professor Dr. G. C. Pande, Vice-Chancellor, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, in the L. D. Lecture Series in February, 1977.

The first lecture deals with the Śramaṇic outlook on life and its impact on Vedic thought as developed in the Upaniṣads. The second lecture brings out clearly the salient features of moral and social outlook of Śramaṇism. The learned Doctor maintains that the Dharma which Aśoka sought to preach in his edicts represents the quintessence of the Śramaṇic ethos for lay life. He concludes the lecture by declaring that Śramaṇism constitutes a system of universal, rational and ethical religion which is wholly non-sectarian, as applicable and relevant today as it was 2500 years ago. The third lecture is devoted to the Śramaṇic critique of Brāhmaṇism. The author acquaints us with the rational Śramaṇic criticism of casteism, validity of the Vedas and idea of God. His concluding words are memorable. He says: Śramaṇic atheism is not a variety of irreligion. It faces the evil and suffering of life squarely and attributes it to human failings rather than to the mysterious design of an unknown being. It stresses the inexorableness of the moral law. No prayers and worship are of any avail against the force of karman. It emphasises self-reliance in the quest of salvation. Man needs to improve himself by a patient training of the will and the purification of feelings. Such purification leads to an inward illumination of which the power is innate in the soul or mind. This is quite different from the Vedic view where illumination comes from outside, either from an eternally revealed word or from the grace of God.

His introduction to the three lectures is thought-provoking and illuminating. Therein he clearly brings out the distinction between culture and civilization, and shows how they are inextricably intertwined in the historical process. Again, he successfully attempts to demonstrate the origin, development and dialectical interweaving of two attitudes of Pravṛtti and Nivṛtti in Indian Culture.

The treatment has throughout been dispassionate, critical and arresting. His acquaintance with the subject is deep and extensive. He has strictly followed the maxim *nā'mūlam likhyate kiñcin nā'napekṣitam ucyate*. The style is lively. All this has made the present work a brilliant treatise on the subject.

We are grateful to Dr. G. C. Pande for these three lectures which he prepared at our instance. I have no doubt that the students teachers and others interested in the subject will find this book interesting and instructive.

L. D. Institute of Indology,  
Ahmedabad-380 009.  
1st February, 1978

**Nagin J. Shah**  
Director

## INTRODUCTION

The nature and origins of Indian culture have been the subject of much controversy. The controversy arises as much from uncertainties of a conceptual and methodological kind as from factual uncertainties. The great Orientalists of the nineteenth century looked upon Indian culture essentially from an anthropological point of view. Max Muller, for example, felt that the chief use of Vedic study lay in discerning through it the earliest phase of the development of the human mind. Historical and cultural studies in nineteenth century Europe were dominated by the idea that all past culture had been aspiring to achieve what only the modern West has actually succeeded in accomplishing. This assumption has dominated Western thought since the 18th century. It tends to confuse culture with civilization and forgets the inner life of the spiritual individual in its concentration on Society, Science and Technology.<sup>2</sup> It confuses the search for happiness with the perpetually restless craving for pleasures<sup>3</sup> and it confounds the quest for knowledge with the quest for power over sense objects. Such knowledge is a species of action or behaviour confined to the natural sphere. “*Jñānamasti samastasya jantorviṣayagocare*”.<sup>4</sup> Such knowledge cannot free man from the vicissitudes of life or the shadow of its transitoriness. Nor can it satisfy men’s inevitable search for the Beyond. That is why man has through the ages sought not merely power at the social level but also Immortality, Infinity, Transcendence.<sup>5</sup> This quest most clearly manifest in religion has also been manifested in greater or lesser measure in Art and idealistic philosophy. Every human being by his nature shares in this quest, though as in our times, he may be blinded by the

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1. *What can India Teach Us*, p. 85.

2. Cf. Pande, G. C.: *Meaning and Process of Culture*.

3. Cf. Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Everyman’s Lib. Ed.), p. 49.

4. *Durgāsaptasatī*.

5. Cf. Nārada’s dialogue with Sanat Kumāra in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*.

prejudices of his age and may fail to realise the true nature of his own quest and suffer like the tormented musk deer seeking outside what lies within.

While culture as the spiritual search for values must be distinguished from the search for social security and power, it cannot be denied that the two are inextricably intertwined in the historical process. Spiritual symbolism and emphasis tend to vary according to the mood of the age and civilisation. While the long history of Indian culture and civilisation stretching back to proto-historic times shows a remarkable continuity, it is nevertheless true that it has passed through many phases and cycles, interacting with civilisational vicissitudes and responding to new influences and challenges presented from outside or arising dialectically from within. In particular one can discern in the course of Indian history a dialectical interweaving of two types of spiritual attitudes which are apparently contradictory. In later times these were called *Pravṛtti-dharma* and *Nivṛtti-dharma*. Classical Brahmanical tradition as well as the common run of modern historians tend to attribute both the spiritual outlooks to the Vedic tradition. Classical tradition attributes the *Pravṛtti-dharma* to the ritualistic side of Vedic religion and the *Nivṛtti-dharma* to the gnostic side of the same tradition, to *Jñāna-kāṇḍa* as opposed to *Karma-Kāṇḍa*.<sup>6</sup> Modern scholars like Jacobi and Oldenberg basically accept this thesis and attribute the gnostic and ascetic traditions of Indian spirituality to a reformist school within the Vedic tradition evidenced by the Upaniṣadic literature as also by the *dharmasūtras*.<sup>7</sup> Buddhist and Jaina ascetics are then believed to continue this reformist and anti-ritualistic trend. Against this there has been a hypothesis which attributes these two streams to other sources. Some scholars had attributed them to different ethnic traditions, Aryan and non-Aryan, the ascetic tradition being attributed

6. Cf. Śaṅkara in his introduction to the Commentary on the *Gītā*.

7. Oldenberg, *Die Lehre der Upanishaden und die Anfänge des Buddhismus*; Jacobi, *S. B. E.*, Vol. s. 22 and 45.

to the latter.<sup>8</sup> Some other scholars attribute the rise of the ascetic movements to the social changes implicit in the break up of tribal society, rise of classes and castes and the various changes ushered in by the Second Urban Revolution. There is still another view which attributes the great ascetic movements to an ancient tradition independent of the Vedic Aryan tradition.

Whatever may be the origin of the distinction between *Pravṛtti* and *Nivṛtti*, there can hardly be any doubt that this distinction itself is of vital importance in the understanding of Indian culture. If Indian civilisation is 'composite' in the sense that many ethnic and cultural communities have contributed to its development, Indian culture continues as an original tradition developing by its own inner dialectic. While no culture can afford to be composite or synthetic without being spurious, no civilisation can grow without constantly absorbing the results of scientific, technological and economic developments occurring anywhere else. Civilisation is essentially a matter of means and exchanges between societies at that level are common and natural. That is why like race no civilisation is or can afford to be pure or unalloyed except at the pain of being stagnant. The very first civilisation which arose in India is already the product of far-flung exchanges. There is hardly any doubt that earlier Near Eastern civilisations played a part in its growth, and yet the characteristic Indianness of the civilisation is equally indubitable. "It has a particular character which differentiates it from other civilisations of the ancient world, and in this particularity one can trace the roots of some of later Indian civilisation. The Harappan civilisation is a unified civilisation made cohesive by a common theme, an ethos universally understood."<sup>9</sup> This inner ethos which gives unity, vitality and character to the

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8. R. P. Chanda, *Indo-Aryan Races*; S. K. Chatterji in *Vedic Age*; G. C. Pande, *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism*.

9. Fairservis, *The Roots of Ancient India*.



civilisation, may be described as its cultural or spiritual core.<sup>10</sup> Civilisation is the repertoire of means whereby a society adjusts itself to its external environment in the search of security and higher material standards. The structure of means, however, as an operative and controlling fact of social life is not wholly value-neutral and is in this sense not wholly separable from the cultural ethos or style of the civilisation. The interplay of continuing inner spirituality with a ready responsiveness in civilisational contacts has given to Indian history a distinctive pattern: "the diffusion and acceptance of new ideas and techniques from outside but with an apparent slowness of pace and an integration which changes their style so that we can recognize them as fully subcontinental whatever their origin".<sup>11</sup>

The Harappan civilisation already gives evidence of both the moments of Indian culture. In the worship of the Great Mother one can discern the worship of the creative principle, of Mother Earth, of Nature in its fertility. All over the ancient Near East as well as in the later Tantric tradition the worship of the Mother belonged to the religion of *Pravṛtti*. At the same time the worship of Paśupati seated in the midst of wild and tame beasts clearly reminds one of the Yogic tradition of *Nivṛtti*. Other evidence of Yoga may also be discerned from the Harappan civilisation.<sup>12</sup> It would not thus be correct to think of *Pravṛtti* and *Nivṛtti* as belonging to different ethnic and historic strata. Mountain caves and forest hermitages have been as much part of the Indian cultural scene as hamlets, villages and towns. Nevertheless it cannot be gainsaid that early Vedic literature is clearly marked by the belief that divinity is, above all, creativity. Nature is indwelt

10. Cf. "Paradoxically, it would appear that the Indus Civilisation transmitted to its successors a metaphysics that endured, whilst it failed utterly to transmit the physical civilisation which is its present monument". (Wheeler, *The Indus Civilisation*, p. 95).

11. Fairservis, *op. cit.*

12. Pande, G. C.: *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism*.

by divine power and man is surrounded by it in diverse forms.<sup>13</sup> Man must act and live rightly in accordance with *Ṛta* and hope to win the grace of gods.<sup>14</sup> While life after death is shadowy,<sup>15</sup> life is a blessing when the gods are favourable.<sup>16</sup> The Vedic seers felt the aspects of Nature to be sweet and described the world to be the best of all possible worlds. “*Madhu vātā ṛtāyate madhu kṣaranti sindhavaḥ*”<sup>17</sup> “*Viśvamidaṃ variṣṭhaṃ*”<sup>18</sup> Man owes sacrificial worship to them. The creator instituted the sacrifice at the same time as he created beings. The sacrifice was to be the means of obtaining all good. The sacrifice was to be the perpetual link between men and gods, men fulfilling their obligations and gods responding graciously. “*Sahaya jñāḥ prajāḥ sṛṣṭvā purovāca prajāpatih anena prasaviṣyadhvam eṣa vōstvistakāmadhuk. ...Devānbhāvayātānena to devā bhāvayantu vaḥ*”.<sup>19</sup>

When the *Upaniṣads* progressed from the idea of many gods to the idea of *Brahman*,<sup>20</sup> they did not abandon the idea of the reality or worth of creation.<sup>21</sup> *Brahma* was, in fact, defined as the creator – “*Yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante*”.<sup>22</sup> “*Sa aikṣata bahu syām prajāyeya*”.<sup>23</sup> The *Brahmasūtras* in systematizing the Upanisadic ideas, thus, define *Brahman* as “*janmādyasya yataḥ*”.<sup>24</sup> Although the later Advaitic tradition interprets this as the *taṭastha-lakṣaṇa* of *Brahman*, there can be no doubt that the obvious meaning represents the original tradition. Since the universe is the genuine manifestation of the highest spiritual reality, *Ānanda* or bliss is the deepest feature of experience – *kohyevānyat kaḥ prāṇyāt yadeṣa ākāśa ānando na syāt*.<sup>25</sup> *Ānandādध्येवा क्खल्विमāni bhūtāni jāyante*.<sup>26</sup> It is true that the perpetual vision of truth is covered by a

13. e. g.; *Rg.* 1.1.54, 2.12; 4.50; etc. *adlib.*

14. e. g. *Rg.*, 4.23; 2.33. 15. Cf. *Rg.*, 10.14–16.

16. Cf. *Rg.*, 10.7; 2.28. 17. *Rg.* 1.90.6.

18. *Muṇḍaka*. 2.2.11. 19. *Bhagavadgītā*.

20. Cf. Śākalya’s dialogue with Yājñavalkya in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*.

21. This is clear in the famous dialogue of Uddālaka with Śvetaketu in the *Chāndogya*. 22. *Taittirīya*. 23. *Chāndogya*. 6.3.

24. *Brahmasūtra*. 1.1.2. 25. *Taittirīya*. 2.7. 26. *Ibid.*, 3.6.

veil of untruth and men are harassed by false desires.<sup>27</sup> What they need is the knowledge of what they really are. The knowledge of Truth will make men the heir of eternal bliss. Life and nature are not basically evil or painful. They are the expression of the inherent bliss of spiritual reality. Early Vedic *Devavāda* as well as the later Vedic *Brahmavāda*, both have a distinctly positive attitude towards life, activist and optimistic.

As against this positive outlook of the Vedic tradition, one notices the powerful current of *Nivṛtti* which was popularised by Buddhism and Jainism and which was in course of time accepted by the Brahmanical tradition.<sup>28</sup> The *Dharma-sūtras* and the *Smṛtis* included the renunciation of life within the Vedic scheme of life as the Fourth *Āsrama*. The second *Āsrama* continued to be held the most important since on it depended the performance of Vedic religious duties as also the continuance of the social tradition. The challenge of the *Nivṛtti dharma* led to a transformation of the Vedic tradition through a new synthesis. The ubiquity of suffering was recognised and it was traced to the desire for transitory things arising from the ignorance of spiritual reality.<sup>29</sup> Reality is eternal and blissful while the hallmark of Ignorance is suffering. Positive and negative attitudes in spirituality are thus combined by the distinction of reality from appearance. We must shun the illusions of egoistic life to appreciate the bliss of spiritual life. Meanwhile, so long illusions persist we must not neglect the duties of social and religious life. The *Gītā*, indeed, held that duties must not be abandoned at all. With this synthesis Manu could say that “*Vaidike karma-yoge tu sarvāṅy etāny aśeṣataḥ antarbhavanti kramaśaḥ tasmin tasmin kriyāvidhau*”.<sup>30</sup>

27. Īsa, ‘*Hiraṇmayena pātreṇa satyasyāpihitam mukham*’. Cf. *Brhadāranyaka*. 1.2.1.: “In the beginning all was covered by Hunger that is Death”.

28. Cf. Sri Aurobindo, *Life Divine*, Vol. I, Chap. II-III - The Two Negations.

29. The Sāṅkhya-yoga as well as the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika accept the universality of *Duḥkha*.  
30. *Manu*. 12.83-87.

This interactive synthesis was, however, not confined simply to the Vedic tradition; it affected the Buddhist, Jaina and other traditions of ascetic and other worldly spirituality. They developed elaborate forms of monastic life where educational, literary and artistic activities found ample scope. Not merely this, these ascetic sects had to create adequate attraction for the laity. They had to develop large systems of plastic and ritual symbols. Images, temples and monasteries, Purāṇic myths and legends, devotional cults with holy names and mystic charms became the common repertoire of all the sects, orthodox and heterodox.

Thus the development of Indian spirituality seems to have passed through three stages – a Vedic phase which emphasised active life in the world, an early post-Vedic phase when powerful ascetic movements can be seen, emerging and spreading all over the country and beyond it, and finally, a phase of synthesis which rolled on till it created an almost uniform religion of asceticism and devotionism in the medieval period. Unfortunately this medieval synthesis played down the role of action and it was left to the great reformers and savants of the nineteenth century to re-emphasise the activism of the *Gītā* and the *Vedas*. These basic spiritual movements may be said to constitute the inner history of Indian culture.

It will be obvious that a leading key to the understanding of Indian cultural history lies in the negative challenge posed by the ascetic Śramaṇism in its several varieties and the interaction of the Vedic tradition with it. This constitutes the theme of the present lectures which seek to highlight some aspects of the Śramaṇic challenge and the consequent interaction.

I am greatly beholden to the L. D. Institute and its present and former Directors, Professor Dalsukhbhai Malvania and Dr. Nagin J. Shah, who were kind enough to give me the opportunity to deliver these lectures and took such good care of me during the occasion.

Jaipur, 24-12-'77

Govinda Chandra Pande

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## LECTURE ONE

### ŚRAMANISM AS A WELTANSCHAUUNG AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE VEDIC TRADITION

*Śramaṇa* sects did not believe in the authority of the *Vedas*, nor did they believe in the existence of God in the sense of a personal creator or determiner of destiny. For this reason *Śramaṇa* philosophies were described in later times as *Nāstika* or Nihilist. Originally, however, *Nāstika* could properly apply only to the materialists. In a well-known *sūtra* Pāṇini says ‘*Astināstidiṣṭam matih*’ (4.4.60). As Patañjali explains, the words *Āstika*, *Nāstika* and *Daiṣṭika* should be understood to mean ‘one who believes that it exists’, ‘one who believes that it does not exist’, and ‘one who believes that it is fated’ respectively.<sup>1</sup> *Pradīpa* and *Kāśikā*<sup>2</sup> both explain that the subject of existence here is the other world or life after death. “*Paralokostiti matir yasya sa āstikah tadviparīto nāstikah*”. Although the *Mahābhāṣya* and the *Kāśikā* analyze the words *Āstika* etc., differently, the net result is the same. The *Padamañjarī* identifies *Nāstika* with *Laukāyatika*. *Diṣṭa* has been explained as *daiva* or fate and *Daiṣṭika* thus becomes a fatalist such as the founder of the *Ājivikas*, Maskarī Gosāla was. Pāṇini has the *sūtra* “*Maskara-maskarīṇau veṇuparivrājakayoḥ*” (6.1.154). The *Kāśikā* following the *Mahābhāṣya*, explains “*Mākaranaśīlo maskarī, karmāpavādīvāt parivrājaka ucyate | sa tv evam āha mā kuruta karmāṇi śāntir vaḥ śreyasī ti*”. *Maskarī* denotes a wandering ascetic who denies the freedom of action or will and declares that one should not engage in actions since quiescence constitutes the greater good. The denial of free will or action did not, however, mean the denial of the power of *Karman* as the determinant of destiny. Since the belief in the other world also rested on belief in *Karman*, it follows that the real issue on which the *Āstikas*, *Nāstikas* and *Daiṣṭikas* were divided was the

1. *Mbh.* Vol. IV, p. 749.

2. *Kāśikā*, Vol. III, p. 765.

issue of *Karman*. The doctrine of *Karman* constituted the essential doctrine of the *Śramaṇas* and its impact created an unprecedented ferment in the thought-world of the sixth century B. C. in India.

This phenomenal thought-ferment has been noted by many scholars but its genesis and significance have been explained in many different ways.<sup>3</sup> The commonest assumption has been that this thought-ferment was a reaction to the ritualism of Vedic religion. Professor R. G. Bhandarkar pointed out that while in the north-east of India this thought-ferment was anti-Vedic, in the north-west it sought to reconcile the newer tendencies with orthodoxy.<sup>4</sup> Buddhist and Jaina literatures represent the former while the *Gītā* represents the latter tendency. It has also been noted by Professors Ranade and Belvalkar that this thought-ferment is clearly traceable in Upaniṣadic literature and that the *Upaniṣads* give evidence of heterodox thinkers who did not accept the Vedic tradition. I had myself argued that this heterodoxy can, in fact, be discovered even in an earlier epoch since there are references to *Munis* and *Yatis* in Vedic literature. I had also argued that the essence of this heterodoxy consisted in the doctrine of *Karman* and rebirth as also in the practice of asceticism and *Yoga*. In this sense this heterodox stream could perhaps be traced back to the Indus civilization. While this is undoubtedly speculative it does remain a possibility which could only be confirmed if and when the Indus script could be deciphered. While Hrozny and S. R. Rao have sought to read an Aryan language in the Indus seals, Parpola brothers have sought to decipher them on the hypothesis of a Proto-Dravidic and claim to discover an ancient astral religion in the Indus civilization.<sup>5</sup> All such attempts, however, remain speculative.

It is interesting to note that Dr. H. L. Jain has sought to argue for the historicity of Rṣabhadeva by trying to correlate the description found in the *Bhāgavata* with some references in the *R̥gvedasam-*

3. Belvalkar & Ranade, *Creative Period of Indian Philosophy*; Otto Schrader, *Über den Stand der indischen Philosophie zur Zeit Mahaviras und Buddhas* (1902); B. M. Barua, *History of Pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy*; G. C. Pande, *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism*.

4. R. G. Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and other Minor Religious Systems*.

5. S. R. Rao, *Lothal and the Indus Civilization* (1973), pp. 127 ff.

*hitā*.<sup>6</sup> The *Bhāgavata* speaks of the royal sage R̥ṣabha who became an *avadhūta* and in this context mentions the *Vātaraśana śramaṇas* and uses the epithet 'Keśa-bhūri-bhāraḥ' for R̥ṣabha. Now the *R̥gvedasamhitā* has a *Keśi-sūkta* which mentions 'munayo vātaraśanāḥ'. Dr. Jain thus supposes that the Vedic reference is to R̥ṣabha who was the first of the *Tirthaṅkaras*. While the references to *Munis* and *Yatis* in Vedic literature had been pointed out by me much earlier and the *Keśi-sūkta* had been interpreted in this context, the correlation of the evidence from the *Bhāgavata* by Dr. Jain is of some interest. However, we cannot overlook the possibility of the *Bhāgavata* actually having the *Keśi-sūkta* in mind. In any case, it is clearly arguable that the Śramaṇa tradition already existed in the Vedic period as an independent though little known tradition.

What was the shape of Śramaṇism in that archaic period can only be a matter of some speculation. The *Śramaṇas* or *Munis* were apparently homeless wandering ascetics who did not follow the ritualistic religion of the Vedic tradition. Vedic religion emphasized social and ritual obligations, emphasized happiness in this world as in the other and hoped to gain it from the gods. The idea of a beginningless cycle of lives, governed by an overarching law of *Karman* from which freedom could come only by the total renunciation of all the claims and impulses of instinctive life, this is an idea which falls outside the purview of early Vedic thought. In the middle Vedic period we do find references to the idea of *Punarmṛtyu* or repeated death, but that is in another world and does not clearly imply a rebirth here.<sup>7</sup> To take the idea of *Punarmṛtyu* as a foreshadowing of the idea of *Punarjanma* does not appear to be sufficiently warranted. Actually, the idea of *Punarmṛtyu* occurs within a context where the efficacy of ritual is unfettered by any law of *Karman*. In the *Upaniṣads* a great change of ideas occurred and traditionally it has been assumed that the aim of the *Upaniṣadic* quest is to gain emancipation from the cycle of existence. Although there is no doubt that the *Upaniṣads* are not unacquainted with the ideas of *Karman* and Rebirth, it is equally clear that they do not wholly break away from the positive and life-affirming

6. H. L. Jain, *Bhāratīya Saṅskṛti men Jaina Dharma Kā Yogadāna*.

7. Cf. G. C. Pande, *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism*, p. 282.



ethos of the earlier Vedic tradition and although they transmute the idea of the gods they do not adopt an atheistic point of view. With respect to ritualism, again, the *Upaniṣads* sometimes esoterically reinterpret them, occasionally reject them and more often ignore them in favour of a moral, contemplative and gnostic life. The *Upaniṣadic* point of view is thus a development of Vedicism and a half-turn towards Śramaṇism, or rather, a position where further interaction between Brāhmanism and Śramaṇism could take place, an interaction which did take place in the subsequent age and had the profoundest effects on the origin and development of Buddhism, *Sāṅkhya* and *Vedānta*.

Let us consider the Upaniṣadic evidence to discover the earliest definite traces and echoes of the Śramaṇic *Gedankenkreis*. The *Chāndogya* and the *Bṛhadāranyaka* are among the most ancient *Upaniṣads*. The *Chāndogya* begins with a discussion of the mystery of the *Udgītha* which is identified with *Prāṇa*, *Āditya* and *Ākāśa*. This realization of the *Udgītha* leads to freedom from sin (*pāpman*), fulfilment of desires and the attainment of spacious and exalted worlds. The second *Adhyāya* goes on to elaborate the esoteric meditations of *Sāman* but mentions that there are three sections of *Dharma*, sacrifice, sacred study and liberality, and identifies sacrifice with *Tapas*, *Adhyayana* with *Brahmacarya* and liberality with a total gifting to the Preceptor. These virtues lead to immortality (*amṛtatva*). While *Tapas*, *Brahmacarya* and *Amṛtatva* are reminiscent of Śramaṇism, it seems that these words here have a different meaning. *Tapas* stands for creative energizing rather than austerities while *Brahmacarya* stands for Vedic study with a preceptor. What the precise meaning of immortality would be, is not clear. The whole context repeatedly shows awareness of death and sin but seeks to avoid them with the help of ritualistic knowledge which simultaneously assures worldly fulfilment also. ‘*Devatānāṃ salokatāṃ sārṣṭitāṃ sāyujyaṃ gacchati sarvamāyureti jyogjīvati mahān prajayā paśubhirbhavati mahān kīrtyā.*’ The great Ācārya Śāṅkara, however, interprets this passage in a very different manner. He construes ‘*Prathamah*’ to refer to the enumeration ending with ‘*iti*’, ‘*dvitīyah*’ to refer to *tapah* and *trītyah* to refer to ‘*brahmacāri* etc.’ The passage would then read thus : ‘*trayo dharmaskandhāḥ | yajño’dh-*

*yayanam dānam iti prathamah | tapa eva dvitīyah | brahmacaryācāryaku-  
lavāsas trīyo'tyantam ātmānam ācāryakule'vasādayan | sarva ete puṇya-  
lokā bhavanti | brahmasamsthom'ṛtatvam eti |*<sup>8</sup> On this construction Śāṅkara holds that here we have an enumeration of the threefold *Āsrama dharmas* followed by a reference to the *Parivrājaka* with wisdom who attains to emancipation from *Samsāra* in contrast to the other three who attain to 'meritorious worlds' (*Puṇya-lokas*). Sacrifice, study and liberality are thus referred to the house-holder, *tapas* as austerities to the *Vānaprastha*, and life-long study, dwelling with the preceptor, to the *Brahmacārin*. On Śāṅkara's interpretation we have here a reference to all the three *āśramas* as well as to the fourth state beyond them. The distinction between the attainment of heaven through action and of emancipation through knowledge and renunciation is thus held to be implied in this passage.

If this interpretation is correct we must believe that the impact and absorption of Śramaṇism was already complete in the later Vedic age. However, since the nomenclature of the *āśramas* and the position of the fourth *āśrama* was not settled even in the early *Dharmasūtras*, such an assumption appears doubtful. It is true that the first three *āśramas* must have, in fact, evolved by the later Vedic age. The first two *āśramas* are implied in the whole of Vedic religion while the third *āśrama* was obviously a resultant of the practice of pondering and meditating over the significance and symbolism of sacrificial ritual. The acceptance of a fourth state, however, was a revolution which changed the significance of the other three also. As far as one can see, the context being examined refers only to *Upāsana* and its results. Śāṅkara himself in his brief preamble to the *Chāndogya* distinguishes *Upāsana* from *Jñāna*. While both are mental states (*manovṛttimātram*), *Upāsana* means concentration of the mind over some object as distinct

8. This is how Hume translates the passage: "There are three branches of duty. Sacrifice, study of the Vedas, alms-giving – that is the first. Austerity, indeed, is the second. A student of sacred knowledge (*brahmacārin*) dwelling in the house of a teacher, setting himself permanently in the house of a teacher, is the third.

All these become possessors of meritorious worlds. He who stands firm in *Brahma* attains immortality". (*The Thirteen Principal Upaniṣads*, pp. 200–201).

from *Jñāna* which eradicates the false sense of dualities. As Vidyāraṇya has pithily stated, “*Vastutantram bhaved jñānam karṭṛtantram upāsanam.*”<sup>9</sup> The mental state which is *Upāsanā* is directed by the will as an interior action and is quite different from *Jñāna* which is of the nature of discovery or revelation entirely independent of the agent. *Upāsanā* rests on imagination and will while *Jñāna* arises from the subsidence of imagination and will. Within the Brāhmaṇical tradition the external *Karmakāṇḍa* developed into the internal *Upāsanākāṇḍa* but before this could develop into *Jñānakāṇḍa* proper, the realization of the basic limitations of worldly life was necessary and this was the point where Brāhmaṇism and Śramaṇism came together.

The Brāhmaṇic tradition generally reached this revaluation of instinctive life or *Pravṛtti*, not through a meditation over the sufferings of life and the fact of death, but through an extension of the concept of sacrificial worship. The *Puruṣa-ya jñā-vidyā* of Mahidāsa Āitareya and Ghora Āṅgīrasa in the third *adhyāya* of the *Chāndogya* furnish an example of the notion of regarding life itself as one continued worship, which implies making an offering of it to the gods, an attitude which certainly effects a profound change in the character of instinctive and egoistic life. It was this line of development which was taken up in the *Bhagavadgītā* and propounded as an alternative to the Śramaṇic ideology of the total renunciation of life.

The fourth *adhyāya* of the *Chāndogya* contains a clearer recognition of Śramaṇic ideas and values. The legend of Jānaśruti and Raikva clearly indicates that the knowledge of *Brahman* is far superior to wealth and liberality and that the man who knows does not really care for worldly things. And yet we notice that Raikva ultimately accepts the gifts of the king including his daughter as wife. Again, we find Upakosala Kāmalāyana lamenting that human life is full of desires, transgressions and diseases so that death is no worse (‘*bahava ime’s-min puruṣe kāmā nānātyayā vyādhibhiḥ pratīpūrṇo’smi naśiṣyāmūti*’). His teacher Satyakāma states that one who knows is never tainted by sin like a lotus leaf in water (‘*yathā puṣkarapalāśa āpo na śliṣyanta evam evamvidi pāpaṃ karma na śliṣyata iti*’). Here by implication sinful

9. *Pañcadasi*, 9-74.

action is imaged as sticking to the sinner on account of his ignorance, an imagery reminiscent of later times. Further, a *Devapatha* or *Brahmapatha* is mentioned as leading to *Brahman*. Those who follow it are said not to return to the human whirlpool. (‘*imaṃ mānavam āvartam nāvartante nāvartante*’) The ‘human whirlpool’ to which one may return can only refer to the doctrine of Rebirth which is here connected with sin and ignorance. Most of the elements of Śramaṇism can be seen here except that the conception of after-life and saving knowledge continue to be in line with the older Vedic tradition.

This very theme of afterlife and return (*Punarāvartana*) is taken up in the so-called ‘royal wisdom’ (*Kṣatriya vidyā*) which Pravāhaṇa Jaivali, the ruler of Pañcāla (or rather, the chief of the Pañcāla *samiti*), claims to expound to Uddālaka and Śvetaketu. After death one may follow one of the two paths, *Devayāna* or *Pitryāna*, the former leading to *Brahmaloka*, and the latter to *Pitṛloka*. According to Śāṅkara the former destiny does not mean emancipation. After the sojourn in the other world one returns to this world and is reborn, high or low, according to the qualities of one’s deeds. If one has wisdom or lives in the forests practising austerities with faith one goes by the *Devayāna*, if one practises sacrifices and liberality living in the world one follows the *Pitryāna*. With good deeds (*raṃanīyācaraṇāḥ*) one gets a birth in one of the three upper *Varnas*. Bad deeds (*kapūyācaraṇāḥ*) lead one to an animal birth or birth in a *cāṇḍāla* family. Apart from these two modes of after-life and rebirth for good men, there is a third mode of being born and dying without any moral quality, which is illustrated by the existence of insects and such lowly beings.

The idea of the cycle of existence and its relation to the moral quality of conduct is clearly expounded here. The interpretation of the idea, however, is in terms of sacrifice. Human birth and death are parts of a cosmic sacrifice. After-life may mean the companionship of the gods or the *Pitrs*. While *śraddhā* and *tapas*, *iṣṭa* and *āpūrta* are significant, the knowledge of this sacrificial symbolism is of the highest importance. It seems that here we have the instance of the idea of rebirth taken from a non-Brāhmaṇic or *Kṣatriya* tradition adapted to

and dressed up in a typical Brāhmanic ideology and symbolism. It is possible that the *Kṣatriyas* themselves sought to effect this synthesis between Śramaṇic and Brāhmanic ideas. It may be recalled that the *Gītā*, spoken by a *Kṣatriya*, similarly refers to a *Rājarsi-paramparā* and represents a synthetic point of view.<sup>10</sup> It is also possible that while the *Kṣatriyas* of the north-east were nearer the original Śramaṇic legacy, the rulers of the north-west or west like Pravāhana Jaivali or Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa, being nearer the home of Vedic orthodoxy, sought to reconcile the doctrines of *Samsāra* with the world of ritualism.

In contrast to this *Kaṣṭriya* wisdom relating to the birth, death and rebirth of man, the essence of the Brāhmanic doctrine of cosmic unity and its spiritual nature is to be found in the famous 6th chapter of the *Chāndogya*. Vedic speculation had begun with the search for an ultimate cosmological principle, which came to be called 'Brahman' and was successively identified with such material principles such as *anna*, *vāyu*, or *ākāśa*. Ultimately this led the Upaniṣadic seers beyond a merely natural philosophy. They discovered gradually that the spirit in-dwelling man is nothing but the revelation of the ultimate cosmological principle. The Upaniṣadic philosophy thus culminated in spiritual monism which made the ultimate reality at once spiritual and divine and divinity at once personal and impersonal. Thus far it is a straight development from early Vedic philosophy. The occurrence of the word *jīva* in the present text is, however, noticeable since it is this word which became the common word for the soul in the subsequent period. What is more, we also find here a clear contrast between the undying soul and the perishable body. The non-spiritual world of names and forms is also found to be devalued as of an ephemeral nature.

Although the 7th chapter of the *Chāndogya* develops the characteristic Upaniṣadic view about ultimate bliss being available only in infinity (*yo vai bhūmā tat sukhaṃ nālpe sukham asti*), nevertheless, this section for the first time connects *brahma jijñāsā* with the realisation of the sorrowfulness of life. Nārada declares that he is suffering misery from which he seeks deliverance through self-knowledge. "Such

a one am I, Sir, knowing the sacred sayings but not knowing the soul. It has been heard by me from those who are like you, Sir, that he who knows the soul crosses over sorrow. Such a sorrowing one am I, Sir. Do you, Sir, cause me, who am such a one, to cross over to the other side of sorrow.” Mrs. Rhys Davids had distinguished the search for More from the search for a mere deliverance from evil<sup>11</sup> While this is a correct formulation for the *Upaniṣads* as a whole and for Vedic thought in general, we do find at places in the *Upaniṣads* a sense of *Weltschmerz* reminiscent of the Śramaṇic outlook. In fact the section goes on to assert that what is mortal (*martya*), is limited and that unlike common opinion, cattle and wealth, wife and slaves, fields and houses, are all merely limited things and they are contrasted with the infinity and self-sufficiency of the spirit. Here again an old verse is quoted where there is a unique occurrence of the word *duḥkhata* (*na paśyo mṛtyuṃ paśyati| na rogaṃ nota duḥkhatām|*). It mentions *granthis* and *kaṣāya*. Both these words are of crucial occurrence in early Buddhist and Jain literature. It is clear from this that while the basic doctrine of *Ātmādvaita* has a different metaphysical and psychological attitude than that of Śramaṇism, nevertheless at this stage we have a clear contact between the two. Of course, one can argue for independent parallelism or even anticipation. Nevertheless, the total context does not appear to support such a hypothesis. The development of *Ātmādvaita* can be traced from the earlier Vedic polytheism through the gradual unification of the gods and their identification with the inner reality in man. Śramaṇism in any case, remained pluralistic and generally accepted the reality of a non-spiritual principle also in opposition to the spiritual principle. This dualism of the spiritual and the non-spiritual is fundamental to Śramaṇism and in a sense excludes the doctrine of creation which traces the origin of Nature from the Spirit.

In the 8th chapter of the *Chāndogya* distinction is made between true and false desires and it is asserted that the knowledge of the self leads to complete fulfilment where it is implied that false desires are to be shed and only the true desires are to be fulfilled. The doctrine

11. Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Buddhism* (HUL). The Upaniṣadic passage cited above is in Hume’s translation.

of *karma* and rebirth is fully accepted here. It is stated that just as the world won by *karma* is impermanent here, so is the other world acquired by merit—*tad yathā karmajito lokah kṣīyata evamevāmutra puṇya jito lokah kṣīyate*. However, it is to be noticed here that the final end here is not conceived in terms of desirelessness. On the contrary, it is declared that whatever end is desired by the man who knows, that very end is realised for him by mere willing. It is a stage not of being *niṣkāma*, but of being *satyakāma* or *satyasaṅkalpa*. So here also we see the difference as well as a contact between the Vedic and Śramaṇic points of view.

The best proof of the contact between the two streams and also of their independence may be seen in the sections relating to Yājñavalkya in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*. Yājñavalkya is said to be about to leave home life (*udyāsyān*). Whether he wished to repair to the forest as an anchorite or ascetic or to become a wandering mendicant, is not clear. However, in contrast to the earlier values he roundly declares that the quest for immortality is quite different from the quest for wealth (*amṛtatvasya tu nāsā'sti vittena*). This is a new contrast between spiritual and secular life. Spiritual life leads to an end where all dualistic consciousness is lost. The psyche dies with the body; only the 'great being' (*mahadbhūtam*) remains. "Sa yathā saindhavakhilya udake prāsta udakam evānuviliyeta na hāsyodgrahaṇāyaiva syād yato yatas tvādadīta lavaṇam evaivaṃ ara idaṃ mahadbhūtam anantam apāram vijñānaghana evaitebhyo bhūtebhyaḥ samutthāya tānyevānuvinaśyati na pretya sañjñā'stityare bravimīti hovāca Yājñavalkyaḥ."—"This is as a piece of salt, thrown into water, dissolves in it and cannot be taken out separately. Wherever one tries, one picks up salt. Similar is the 'great being, infinite and shoreless. The lump of consciousness arises from these material elements and perishes after them. There is no consciousness after death. This is what I say; thus said Yājñavalkya.' Apparently, here the destruction of *Vijñānaghana* and of *sañjñā* is contrasted with the eternity of the 'great being'. 'Śaṅkara, however, construes *Vijñānaghana* to be in apposition to *Mahadbhūtam*'. Hume follows him and translates the passage thus: "It is as a lump of salt cast in water would dissolve right into the water, there would not be in any one of it to seize forth, as it were, but wherever one may take,

it is salty indeed – so, lo, verily this great being (*bhūta*) infinite, limitless, is just a mass of knowledge. Arising out of these elements (*bhūta*) into them also one vanishes away. After death there is no consciousness”. Consciousness or *sañjñā* is interpreted by Śaṅkara as *viśeṣa sañjñā* – the consciousness that ‘I am such and such’ – ‘*ahamasāvamuṣya putro mamedam kṣetram dhanam sukhī duḥkṛtyevam ādi lakṣaṇā.*’ It may be recalled here that the Buddhists used both terms – *viññāna* and *sañjñā* but with a distinction. *Sañjñā* is used for conceptual consciousness where objects are named, as for example ‘blue’ or ‘yellow’.<sup>12</sup> *Viññāna* is used for perception but also for consciousness in general. It is *Viññāna* that transmigrates<sup>13</sup> and that becomes infinite and radiant (*anantaṃ sabbatopabhaṃ*) after purification.<sup>14</sup>

The most obvious interpretation of this is that it is similar to the Aristotelian doctrine of the mortality of the psyche and the immortality of Active Reason except that here it is not the death of Every man that is in question but the death of one who has known. Here we find the first expression of the utterly transcendent character of emancipation. The stream of psychic life and dualistic consciousness gets destroyed while in the eternity of the Supreme Being there is no distinction between the subject and the object with the result that one can hardly speak of knowledge or consciousness in the usual sense. This description remarkably anticipates the Buddhist description of *Nirvāṇa* especially as understood by the *Viññānavādins*. The Upaniṣadic passage runs thus – ‘*yatra hi dvaitam iva bhavati tad itara itaram jighrati...paśyati...abhivadati...manute...vi jānāti...yatra vā asya sarvamātmavabhūt... kena kaṃ jighreta...kena kaṃ vijāntyāt | yenedam sarvam vijānāti tam kena vijāntyād vijñātāramare kena vijāntyāditi*’ | ‘Where there is duality there one can perceive or know another; who will perceive or cognize whom where everything has become the self? That by which he knows all this, by what will he know it. By what will he know the knower?’ In a later section Yājñavalkya makes it

12. Cf. *Suttanipāta*, Paramatthaka sutta. v. 7. Where *saññā* is described as *pakkappitā*, Cf. Stcherbatsky, *Central Conception of Buddhism*, p. 18.

13. For Sāti’s heresy, *Majjhima* (Roman ed.), I, pp. 256ff.

14. *Majjhima*, I, pp. 329 – *viññāṇamanidassanumanantam sabbato pabhaṃ*



clearer by saying ‘*yaddhaitan na vijānāti vijānan vai tan na vijānāti na hi vijñātur vijñāter viparilopo vidyate*’*vināśitvān na tu tad dvitīyam asti tato’nyad vibhaktam yad vijānyāt*. ‘In not knowing, it is knowingly that he does not know since the knowledge of the knower does not disappear being imperishable. There is no second to him so that he could know something different.’ It is the consciousness of duality that is lost, not all consciousness, because consciousness is eternal. For the Vijñānavadins also when the *grāhya-grāhaka-bhāva* is transcended, the stream of *Vijñāna* yields place to *Vijñaptimatratā*.<sup>15</sup> While the early Buddhists had emphasized the variable and particular of *Vijñāna*, the Upaniṣadic tendency to absolutize it continued within Buddhism and ultimately made a powerful impact on the Vijñānavāda school.

In the description of the symposium at the court of Janaka, Jāratkāraṇa Ārtabhāga asks Yājñavalkya – What happens to man after death? “*Kvāyam tada puruṣo bhavāṭīti.*” To answer this Yājñavalkya took his interlocutor aside and the two are said to have discussed *Karman*. “*Karma haiva tadūcaturatha yat praśaśamsatuḥ puṇyo ha vai puṇyena karmanā bhavati pāpaḥ pāpena.*” ‘They spoke of *Karman* : What they praised was *Karman*. One becomes meritorious by meritorious *Karman* and sinful by sinful *Karman*.’ As has been pointed out, this description suggests that although the doctrine of *Karman* was not wholly unknown to some Brahmanical thinkers, still it was not generally known to the Brahmanas from Kuru-Pancala who had gathered at the Court of Janaka. This is confirmed by the fact that at the end of the debate Yājñavalkya asks the gathering to tell him the root from which man is born again after death. *Yadvṛkṣo vṛkṣo rohati mūlān navatarah punaḥ | martyaḥ svin mṛtyunā vṛkṣaḥ kasmān mūlāt*

15. On *Vijñāna*, see my *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism*, pp. 494–95, fn. 244. Cf. Sthiramati – ‘*tatra grāhakacittābhāvād grāhyārthānupalambhāc ca acitto’-nupalambho’sau dhruvo nityatvād akṣayyatayā sukho nityatvād eva*’

(On *Trimśikā*, vv. 29–30 :

*acitto’nupalambho’sau jñānam lokottarañca tat |  
āśrayasya parāvṛttir dvedhā dauṣṭhulyahānitaḥ ||  
sa evānāsravo dhātur acintyaḥ kuśalo dhruvaḥ |  
sukho vimuktikāyo’asu dharmakāyo’yaṃ mahāmuneḥ ||*

*prarohati*|| ‘ A tree cut down grows a new from the root. From which root does man grow when cut down by death.’ This also implies that the doctrine of *Karman* was not generally known, for otherwise this would be a ridiculously easy question to answer.

In the subsequent dialogue of Yājñavalkya with Janaka, the king asks the former to expound what may lead to *Vimokṣa* – *so’ham bhagavate sahasraṃ dadāmyata ūrdhvaṃ vimokṣāyaiva brūhīti* | Yājñavalkya speaks of the state of deep sleep beyond waking and dreaming – *evamevāyaṃ puruṣa etasmā antāya dhāvati yatra supto na kañcana kāmam kāmayate na kañcana svapnam paśyati* | ‘ Just so this person hastens to that state where, asleep, he desires nothing and sees no dreams. In deep sleep a man is freed from sin and fear and enjoys a wholly innate bliss not dependent on anything external – *apahatapāpmā’-bhayaṃ rūpaṃ tadyathā priyayā striyā sampariṣvaktō na bāhyaṃ kiñcana veda nāntaram* — *taddhā asyaitadāptakāmamatmakamamakāmam rūpaṃ śokāntaram* | ‘ As a man when in the embrace of a beloved wife, knows nothing within or without, so this person — that is his (true) form in which his desires are satisfied, where he only desires himself, where no desires are left and where there is no sorrow ? ’ It is a state where a man transcends all social and moral descriptions and all misery.’ ‘ *atra pitā’pitā bhavati mātā’mātā lokā’lokā devā’devā vedā’avedā atra steno’steno bhavati bhrūṇahā’bhrūṇahā cāṇḍālo’cāṇḍālah paulkaso’paulkasaḥ śramaṇo’śramaṇaḥ tāpaso’tāpaso’nanvāgatam puṇyena ananvāgatam pāpena tīrṇo hi tadā sarvān śokān hr̥dayasya bhavati* | “ There a father becomes not a father; a mother, not a mother; the worlds, not the worlds; the gods, not the gods; the Vedas, not the Vedas; a thief, not a thief. There the destroyer of an embryo becomes not the destroyer of an embryo. ( It may be recalled that this charge of being a *bhrūṇahā* was once labelled against the Buddha.) A *Cāṇḍāla* is not a *Cāṇḍāla*; a *Paulkasa* is not a *Paulkasa*; a mendicant is not a mendicant; an ascetic is not an ascetic. He is not followed by good, he is not followed by evil, for then he has passed beyond all sorrows of the heart.” The reference to *Śramaṇa* along with *Cāṇḍāla*, *Paulkasa* and *Tāpasa* is highly interesting. This condition is explained as one of non-dual consciousness, as one of imperishable self-knowledge. It is, therefore, described as the state of the highest bliss. ‘ *eṣo’sya parama ānanda*

*etasyaivānandasya anyāni bhūtāni mātrāmupajīvanti.* It may be emphasized, that this is a bliss higher than any other and that attaining to it the Śramaṇa and the Tāpasa transcend themselves.

Describing death, Yājñavalkya says that the actions, character and deeds of a person accompany him at the moment of departure. ‘*Tam vidyākarmaṇi samanvārabhete pūrva prajñā ca* |’ Just as a caterpillar creeps from one blade of grass to another, so the soul transmigrates from one body to another. ‘*tadyathā tṛṇajalāyukā tṛṇasyāntaṃ gatvā’nyam ākramam ākramyātmānam upasaṃharaty evam- evāyam ātmedaṃ śarīraṃ nihatya avidyāṃ gamayitvā ’nyam ākramam ākramyātmānam upasaṃharati* |’ Just as a goldsmith may make a new ornament from the gold taken from an old one, so the soul makes for itself a new body the quality of which depends on the moral quality of his deeds. ‘*Yathākārī yathacārī tathā bhavati sādhu-kārī sādhu bhavati pāpakārī pāpo bhavati puṇyaḥ puṇyena karmaṇā bhavati pāpaḥ pāpena* |’ “According as one acts, according as one conducts himself, so does he become, the doer of good becomes good. The doer of evil becomes evil. One becomes virtuous by virtuous action, bad by bad action.” Not only are the facts of transmigration and the doctrine of *Karman* described here but the psycho-ethical principles underlying the law of *Karman* are also clearly stated. From desire proceeds will and from will action which in turn produces consequences for the soul. ‘*athā khalvāhuḥ kāmamaya evāyaṃ puruṣa iti sa yathākāmo bhavati tatkratur bhavati yatkratur bhavati tatkarma kurute yatkarma kurute tadabhisampadyate* |’ Hume translates “But people say ‘A person is made (not of acts, but) of desires only. (In reply to this I say): As is his desire, such is his resolve; as is his resolve, such the action he performs; what action he performs, that he procures for himself.’ Here the first sentence is made out as a kind of *pūrvapakṣa* to be rebutted by what follows. This does not appear to be correct. As Śankara has pointed out the opening words — *kāmamaya evāyaṃ puruṣaḥ* — go to the root of the matter. Desire is the source of Samsāra. In its absence even *Karman* does not bind. ‘*Kāmaprahāṇe tu karma vidyamānamapi puṇyāpuṇyopacayakaram na bhavati* |’ This is a typically Buddhist doctrine. This is almost a simple description of *Pratītyasamutpāda* such as is found in some of the earlier texts like

the *Suttanipāta*. It is curious that Yājñavalkya appears to quote here the opinion of some group of thinkers. This is strengthened by the express verse quotation which follows. ‘*Tad eṣa śloko bhavati || tad eva saktah saha karmanāiti liṅgam mano yatra niṣaktam asya | prāpyāntam karmanas tasya yatkiñceha karotyayam | tasmālokāt punar etyāsmāi lokāya karmaṇa iti ||*’ Hume translates “Where one’s mind is attached the inner self goes thereto with action, being attached to it alone. Obtaining the end of his action, whatever he does in the world he comes again from that world, to this world of action.” The reference to the *liṅga* or subtle body is highly interesting. Do we have an opinion drawn from the Sāṅkhya tradition? Yājñavalkya describes the emancipation of the soul from this round of birth and death through non-desiring (*atha akāmayamānaḥ*) which comes from its realization of its own highest nature as *Brahman*. The true nature of the self transcends the realm of *Karman* ‘*na sādhunā karmanā bhūyān no evāsādhunā kanyān*’ ‘He neither waxes through right action, nor wanes through wrong action.’ This has an almost antinomian ring and reminds one of Purana Kassapa. Yājñavalkya goes on to say that the *Brahmanas*, the *Munis* and the *Parivrājakas*, all seek this very end. The *Brahmanas* seek it through reciting the Vedas, through sacrifice and liberality; one becomes a *Muni* knowing it through austerities and fasting. ‘*Tam etaṃ vedānuvacanena brāhmaṇā vividiṣanti ya jñena dānena tapasā’ anaśakenaitam eva viditvā munir bhavati |* It may be noted that Śāṅkara ends the sentence after *anaśakena* and thus reserves knowledge alone for the *Muni*. The *Parivrājakas* leave home for its sake. The ‘ancient seers’ (*pūrve Vidvaṃsah*) renounced the desire for children, wealth and fame for its sake and took to mendicancy (*bhikṣacaryam*) ‘*etām eva pravrajino lokam icchantāḥ pravrajanti etaddha sma vai tatpūrve vidvaṃsāḥ prajāna kamayante kiṃ prajāyā kariṣyāmo yeṣāṃ no’yam ātmā’yam loka iti te hasma putraiṣaṇāyās ca vittaiṣaṇāyās ca lokaiṣaṇāyās ca vyutthāyātha bhikṣacaryam caranti yāhy eva putraiṣaṇā sa vittaiṣaṇā yā vittaiṣaṇā sa lokaiṣaṇā ubhe hy ete eṣaṇe eva bhavataḥ |* ‘Wanting this very realm, the mendicants abandon their homes. The ancients knowing this did not desire children.’ ‘What shall we do with children, we whose world is this soul,’ thinking thus they renounced the seeking for children, wealth and recognition and took to mendicancy. The seekings for children, wealth and the world are all the same.’

It is obvious that Yājñavalkya is fully aware of the Śramaṇas and Śramaṇism. He draws a clear distinction between the Vedic way of the Brāhmaṇas, which accepts social and ritual obligations, and the way of the *Muni-Parivrājakas* which disregards such obligations in view of the liability to repeated death through the force of *Karman*. Nevertheless, Yājñavalkya fully affirms a doctrine of the emancipation which lays stress on the knowledge of the divine self, the one creator and ruler of the world, ever beyond sin and virtue which belong to the realm of duality. The theistic affiliation of Yājñavalkya clearly distinguishes his philosophy from that of Śramaṇism even though the sage takes note of it.

In the metrical *Upaniṣads* which are relatively later, the acquaintance with the doctrine of *Samsāra* becomes clearer. The *Kaṭhopaniṣad* raises the all important question, what survives after death? This query about after-life (*samaparāya*) was traditionally answered in ritualistic terms. It is through the proper performance of sacrifices that a man may hope for a blessed afterlife which may be in the company of *Pitṛs* or of the gods. The *Kaṭha*, especially in its earlier portion constituted by the three *Vallis* of the first *Adhyāya* which ends with a *phalaśruti*, is not yet wholly free from this older notion. The performance of the *Nāciketāgni* is said to ensure everlasting felicity in heaven. The God of the yonderworld, Yama, even goes so far as to say that he has himself attained his immortal status through the impermanent means of ritual – *tato mayā naciketaś cito'gnir anityair dravyaiḥ prāptavān asmi nityam* | This assertion of finding the eternal through the perishable sounds so incongruous in the light of the Śramaṇic revolution. It may be recalled that since Yama is the ancient god who presided over the *Pitṛloka*, it is fitting indeed that he should be the one to clarify the question about survival after death. At the same time, the *Upaniṣad* draws a categorical distinction between the impermanent and degrading pleasures of the senses and the true good of man. This distinction between *Anitya* and *Nitya*, *Adhruva* and *Dhruva*, *Preyas* and *Śreyas*, *Bāla* and *Dhīra*, is a distinction which became of the greatest importance in Śramaṇic poetry later on. The contrast between the highest destiny and *samsāra* is clearly drawn and in fact *samsāra* is here mentioned as such for the first time. *Na sa*

*tatpadam āpnoti saṃsārañcādhigacchati* | ‘He does not obtain that state. He obtains *saṃsāra*.’ The hierarchy of being which is mentioned in this context – *indriyebhyaḥ parā hy arthā arthebhyas ca param manah*. The objects are beyond the senses, the mind beyond the objects etc.— has been connected by scholars with the *Sāṅkhya*. It may be remembered, however, that in the *Sāṅkhya*, the senses are beyond the gross objects. So in the *Gītā* we find *indriyāṇi parāṇy āhuḥ*. This, however, is generally based on the assumption that the *Sāṅkhya* has an Upaniṣadic origin, an assumption similar to the assumption that the later Śramaṇic sects owe their origin to the *Upaniṣads*. In fact, the heterodox nature of the *Sāṅkhya* is clearly recognized by the *Vedāntasūtras* in the well-known aphorism *īkṣaternāśabdaṃ*. ‘The *Pradhāna* or insentient nature cannot be the cause of the world because the cause is described in the scriptures as sentient’. Here the *Sāṅkhya Pradhāna* is described as ‘heterodox’ or *aśabdaṃ*. The Vedic view of the universe is *Puruṣavāda*, tracing the universe to a sentient, divine being (*Satkāraṇavāda*), while the *Sāṅkhya* is *Pradhānavāda*, a doctrine of material or natural transformations. The Vedic tradition emphasized a positive and optimistic view of the life *viśvam idam variṣṭham* (*Muṇḍaka*). ‘This is the best of all the worlds’, *kāmasyāptim jagataḥ pratiṣṭhām*, ‘The satisfaction of desires and recognition of the world,’ (*Kaṭha*), *ānandaṃ brahmaṇo vidvāna bibheti kutaścana*, ‘Knowing the bliss of *Brahman*, is not afraid of anything’. The *Sāṅkhya*, on the other hand, counted even the supreme happiness of contentment as part of *Duḥkha*<sup>1</sup> and set about to seek final and absolute liberation from *Duḥkha*. In view of these considerations it would be reasonable to suppose that the origins of *Sāṅkhya* are Śramaṇic rather than Brahmanic. The present context should then be interpreted not as an anticipation of *Sāṅkhya* but as an influence of *Sāṅkhya* ideas. This hypothesis would hold about the other places such as in the *Śvetāśvatara* where *Sāṅkhyan* echoes can be discovered. The *Śvetāśvatara* does not give atheistic, *Ur-Sāṅkhya* but a theistic adaptation of *Sāṅkhya* which is achieved by converting *Prakṛti* into a power controlled by the Lord. It should be noticed that both in the *Śvetāśvatara* and the *Kaṭha* the central Upaniṣadic doctrine

1. Jaigīṣavya quoted in *Vyāsa-bhāṣya*.

is that of one supreme spirit that controls the universe and is the goal of all aspirations. This doctrine is quite irreconcilable with the essential point of view of *Sāṅkhya*, which posits many individual spirits seeking disengagement from the bondage of an alien Nature.

The second *Adhyāya* of the *Kaṭha* mentions the *Muni* directly and goes on to clearly describe the processes of human bondage and liberation, *yonim anye prapadyante śarīratvāya dehinaḥ | sthānum anye-  
'nusaṁyanti yathākarma yathāśrutam ||* 'Some souls incarnate in a womb, others even reach the plant life according to their deeds and learning.' Immortality is gained when one perceives the inner self and is freed from all desires in the heart — "*tam ātmastham ye'nupaśyanti dhīrās teṣāṁ sukham śāśvataṁ netareṣāṁ*" 'Those wise persons who see him in the soul, they alone attain everlasting happiness, not others' '*teṣāṁ śāntiḥ śāśvatī netareṣāṁ*' — their is everlasting peace — '*yadā sarve pramucyante kāmā ye'sya hṛdi sthitāḥ | atha martyo'mṛto bhavaty atra brahma samaśnute ||*' 'When all the desires in his heart are removed, then the mortal becomes immortal and attains to Brahman here.' This even suggests the possibility of *jīvanmukti* or *Arhattva*. Again, corresponding to *kāma*, the word '*granthi*' also occurs here. There can be no doubt that the second half of the *Kaṭha* belongs to an age when Śramaṇism was known as a full-fledged doctrine and some of its basic principles were being adopted into the Brāhmanical tradition.

The high watermark of such adoption is reached in the *Muṇḍaka*, an *Upaniṣad* the very name of which suggests the Śramaṇas. The second section of the first *Muṇḍaka* begins by recapitulating the older ritualistic formulae for gaining the *Brahmaloka* — '*Eṣa vaḥ panthāḥ sukṛtasya loke*' — 'This is your path for the world of righteousness'. But it goes on to condemn the sacrifices as 'frail boats' (*plavā hy ete adṛḍhā yajñarūpāḥ*) and declares that those who, moved by desires (*rāgātenā-turāḥ*) follow the ritualistic path or engage in charitable works, keep on revolving in the cycle of existence. The heaven they might gain is but a temporary respite. Here we find for the first time a clear rejection of Vedic ritualism on account of the doctrine of *Samsāra* which holds the world of desires and actions to be coextensive with the world of transmigration. The relative lateness of this *Upaniṣad* clearly emerges from the fact that it adapts a passage from the *Chāndogya*

giving it a clearer interpretation — *tapah śraddheye hy upavasanty arāṇye śāntā vidvāṃso bhaikṣacaryām carantaḥ* | ‘‘Those who dwell with austerity and faith in the woods, the pacified, men of wisdom engaged in mendicancy.’’ While the *Chāndogya* seems to have referred only to the anchorites in the forests, here we have a unique Upaniṣadic reference to mendicancy — *bhaikṣacaryā* | This *Upaniṣad* again gives a clear picture of emancipation, its nature and process. Meditation is essential and it leads to the resolution of the knot of ignorance (*avidyāgranthi*), a phrase, of which this is a unique reference. The destruction of ignorance leads to the destruction of the doubts and of the accumulated force of Karma (*bhidyate hṛdayagranthiḥ chidyante sarvasaṃśayāḥ* | *kṣīyante cāsya karmāṇi tasmin drṣṭe parāvare* ||) ‘The knot of the heart is split, all doubts are destroyed and so are all his *Karmans* on seeing Him, the transcendent.’ *Hṛdayagranthi* is apparently parallel to *avidyāgranthi* and suggests that ignorance here is not intellectual but transcendental. We may recall that in the *Yogasūtras* it is stated that the subtle *kleśas* of which *Avidyā* is the first, can be removed only through the practice of meditation or *bhāvanā*. In the third *Muṇḍaka* we hear of the *Yatis* who abandon inner evils (*kṣīṇadoṣāḥ*) and practise truth, austerities (*tapas*), *brahmacarya* and right knowledge (*saṃyak jñāna*). It again mentions the *Yatis* who adopt the vow of renunciation and are thus purified (*saṃnyāsa-yogāt yatayaḥ śuddhasattvāḥ*). The *Yatis*, however, are said to be well-versed in the Vedantic science (*Vedānta-vijnānasuniṣcititārthāḥ*). The description of emancipation or *Vimukti* reminds one of a closely parallel verse in the Buddhist *Sutta Nipāta* (*yathā nadyaḥ syandamānāḥ samudre astaṃ gacchanti nāmarūpe vihāya* | *tathā vidvān nāmarūpād vimuktaḥ parāt param puruṣam upaiti divyaṃ* ||) ‘Just as the flowing rivers reach home in the sea by abandoning name and form, so does the man who knows, freed from name and form, attain to the divine person who is higher than the highest.’ This may be compared with the following verse from the *Upasīva-mānavapucchā* — ‘*accī yathā vātavegena khitto atthaṃ paleti na upeti saṃkhaṃ* | *evaṃ munī nāmakāyā vimutto atthaṃ paleti na upeti saṃkhaṃ* ||’ ‘Just as a flame struck by the breeze disappears and cannot be discovered, so the Muni, freed from name and body disappears and cannot be discovered.’ We must also advert here to two verses from the *Śāntiparvan*



which are highly illuminating — ‘*yathārṇavagatā nadyo vyaktīr jahati nāma ca | nadās ca tāni yacchanti tādrśaḥ sattvasamkṣayaḥ || evaṃ sati kutaḥ samjñā pretyabhāve punar bhavet | jīve ca pratisamyukte gr̥hyamāṇe ca sarvataḥ ||*’ These verses from the *Mbh* not only interpret the famous *Brahadāraṇyaka* passage quoted earlier but also state in philosophical language what is implied in the description of emancipation in the Upaniṣadic and Buddhist passages.

At the end, the *Muṇḍaka* states that this *Brahmavidyā* should be taught only to those who have systematically followed the ‘capital vow’ (*śirovratam vidhivad yastu cīrṇam*). Śaṅkara explains ‘*śirovratam*’ as ‘*śirasy agnidhāraṇam yathā ātharvaṇānām vedavratam prasidhham*.’ It is not clear what is meant by tending the fire on the head. Could it mean shaving the head and being a *muṇḍaka* ?

The *Īsopaniṣad* like the *Gītā* is seized of the contradiction between the traditional Vedic philosophy of action, ritual and moral, and the Śramaṇic doctrine of the renunciation of action. It asserts that if action is done from the spirit of dedication and a sense of the presence of God, action does not bind. Indeed action must not be abandoned. ‘*kurvann eveha karmāṇi, jījviṣec chatam samāḥ |*’ ‘One must seek to live for a hundred years, all the time engaged in work.’ In this way action does not stick to the soul — ‘*na karma lipyate nare |*’ Those who abandon action and even proceed to the extent of laying down their life must be guilty of suicide and are liable to be born in the sunless world of endless darkness. ‘*asuryā nāma te lokā andhena tamasāvṛtāḥ | tāṃs te pretyābhigacchanti ye ke cātmahano janāḥ ||*’ Śaṅkara interprets *ātmahano janāḥ* as *prākṛtā avidvāṃso janāḥ*. However, the earlier reference to the need of living for a hundred years suggests that *ātmahanaḥ* may be taken literally. In that case one may, following the late Pandit K. Chattopadhyāya, hazard the guess that the reference here may be to the Jaina practice of laying down one’s life voluntarily as an extreme form of *Tapas*.

If we keep in mind the fact that these Upaniṣadic references are only occasional islands in the general stream of Upaniṣadic thought, we would be able to assess their significance properly. It is true that some Upaniṣads like *Kaṭha* and *Muṇḍaka* are generally aware of the doctrines of transmigration, *Karman* and renunciation and they contain

the earliest version of the later Vedāntism which combines *Brahmātma-vāda* with *Samsāravāda* and *Sannyāsa*. This is the doctrine of *Jñāna* as leading to *Nivṛtti* in opposition of *Karma* as tied with *Pravṛtti* and transmigration. However, from this we cannot assume that the *Upaniṣads* as a whole are familiar with the doctrine of *Samsāra* and advocate a *Nivṛtti-lakṣana-dharma* as Śaṅkarācārya describes it while opening his commentary on the *Bhagavadgītā* “*divividho hi vedokto dharmah pravṛttilakṣaṇo nivṛttilakṣaṇaś ca* |” The prevailing doctrine in the *Upaniṣads* is that the universe is a manifestation of divine being and energy. The many gods of the earlier period were undoubtedly merged into one Great Being identified with the Self but the result was a spiritual view of the universe where everything falls into place as part of a great harmony if only one realizes that every finite object is nothing but a limited expression of *Brahman*. Creation and manifestation are here held to be real, not illusory. It is true that occasional utterances denying duality or asserting the unreality of Name and Form can be quoted on the other side. But as the *Vedāntasūtras* expound the *Upaniṣadic* passages, the realistic interpretation appears to be the correct one. The very definition of *Brahman* as *janmādyasya yataḥ* sets the pace and to explain this as an *aupādhika lakṣana* appears to be a *tour de force*. Duality and finitude are due to a real but limited manifestation of the infinite and one reality. They are not a beginningless illusion due to Nescience. Such a view tends to consecrate worldly life, properly lived, as a stepping stone to the ultimate destiny of man. Action as ritual is not sufficient for man but is not an inherent evil. Moral action is indeed more important than merely intellectual knowledge — “*nāvirato duṣcaritānnāśānto nāsamāhitaḥ | nāśāntamānaso vāpi prajñānenainam āpnuyāt ||*” “No one can attain to the spirit by intellect, if he has not desisted from evil action.” The knowledge of the self leads to happiness all round. The quest of the self, indeed, arises not from the realization of the truth of ubiquitous sorrow but from the search for truth in a mind which seeks to understand things in their ultimate nature. In modern times Tagore and Aurobindo have read the principal doctrine of the *Upaniṣads* in this way and even the interpretation of Rāmānuja has been acknowledged by Thibaut as more appropriate to the *Brahmasūtras* than that of Śaṅkara.

It would be seen thus that the main stream of Vedic thought as developed in the *Upaniṣads* is still one of a positive, active and robust outlook on life which does not deny life as unreal or reject it as evil but rather seeks to affirm that there is a higher reality behind what we see and which gives ultimate value to human life and quest. In this context it is undeniable that the *Upaniṣads* give evidence of an occasional but increasing impact of Śramaṇic ideology especially in the *Kaṭha* and the *Muṇḍaka*. The later Śāṅkarite development of Vedānta became possible only through a full synthesis of Śramaṇic negativism with the Vedic positivism. Śāṅkara was indeed led in this direction by the inexorable logic which the Buddhists had discerned in the very nature of change. If change is real, eternity is impossible. If *Brahman* produces the world really, He must be changeable and perishable. The only logical alternative then is to deny the reality of creation. As soon as that is done life becomes devalued and stark pessimism stares one in the face. This is the starting point of Śramaṇic philosophy – the misery of human life subject to the bondage of passions and actions, birth and death. It seeks not an upgrading of life to the level of the divine, not its perfection, but its transcendence, the return of the soul to its own realm “far from the sphere of our sorrow”.

## APPENDIX

[ A ]

### The interpretation of *Keśi-sūkta* ( Rg. 10.136 )

The seers of the different *ṛks* of the hymn are mentioned as Jūti, Vātajūti, Viprajūti, Vṛṣāṇaka, Karikrata, Etaśa and Ṛṣyaśṛṅga who are described as the sons of Vātaraśana.

*keśyagnim keśi viṣam keśi bibharti rodasī |  
keśi viśvam swardrśe keśidam jyotir ucyate ||* (1)

The verse apparently identifies Keśī with the sun. As Sāyaṇa says “*ittham mahānubhāvah keśi ko nāmety ata āha | idam dṛśyamānam maṇḍalastham ya j jyotir idam eva keśity ucyate ||*” While this interpretation is the obvious one, the meaning of *viṣam* does not fit in with it. Sāyaṇa says of Viṣam ‘*udakanāmaitat*’. If, on the other hand, ‘Keśī’ is supposed to refer to a poison-eating, wonder-working, long-haired ascetic, then this verse would have to be regarded as an attempt to exalt the ascetic by identifying him with the sun.

*munayo vātaraśanāḥ piśaṅgā vasate malā |  
vātasyānudhrājim yanti yaddevāso avikṣata ||* (2)

Sāyaṇa interprets *vātaraśanāḥ* as *vātaraśanasya putrāḥ* and *piśaṅgā malā* as “*piśaṅgāni kapilavarṇāni malā malināni valkalarūpāni vāsāmsi*”. Thus Sāyaṇa interprets the whole verse as ‘The seers of supersensuous vision (*atindriyārthadarśinah*) are clad in tawney-coloured and dirty rags. When the gods, shining by their greatness enter their divine nature, these seers through the worship of breath attain to the form of air (“*prāṇopāsanayā prāṇarūpiṇo vāyubhāvam prapannā ityarthah*”). Dr. H. L. Jain interprets it to mean that the sages enter the divine state by stopping the breath (op. cit., p. 13). While the second line remains obscure, what is the meaning of *Vātaraśanāḥ*? For a patronymic, it is strange indeed. I would still think, as I had suggested earlier, that *vātaraśanāḥ*’ refers to the ‘flying’ of the Munis which would make it possible for them to follow the sweep of the wind as

stated in the second line. It does not appear correct to see a reference in *vātaraśanāḥ* to nudity, since there is a clear reference to being clad in ochre coloured dirty clothes.

*unmaditā mauneyena vātāṃ ā tasthimā vayam |*  
*śariredasmākam yūyam martāso abhi paśyatha ||* (3)

According to Sāyaṇa the Munis claim here to have reached inner identity with the wind and that is why having abandoned all worldly ways, they appear to the people to be mad since the common people can only see the external body. *Munibhāvena laukikasarvavyavahāra- visarjanena...unmattavad ācarantah...nīrūpeṇa vāyunā sāyujyam prāptāḥ |* Dr. Jain interprets *vāyubhāva* to mean 'asariri dhyānavṛtti'. In any case, the *mauneya* definitely shows that the 'state of being a Muni' was a recognized and distinctive state and was seen as a state of ecstasy or frenzy.

*antarikṣeṇa patati viśvā rūpāvacākaśat |*  
*munirdevasya devasya saukṛtyāya sakhā hitah ||* (4)

According to Sāyaṇa here we have a reference to the sun or the wind flying through space and showing all things for the proper performance of the sacrifice. It seems to us that '*antarikṣeṇa patati*' seems to recapture and expand the sense of '*vātaraśanāḥ*'.

*vātasyāśvo vāyoh sakhātho deveṣito munih |*  
*ubhau samudrā vā kṣeti yaśca pūrva utāparaḥ ||* (5)

The divinely inspired Muni is the friend of the wind, the horse of breath and dwells or rules over the eastern and the western oceans. Sāyaṇa interprets *Aśva* as "*aśvo vyāptah | yadvā | vāyor aśitā bhoktā | vāyur eva tasyāhārah ity arthah |*" Perhaps the idea of trembling in ecstasy suggested the connection with the wind.

*apsarasām gandharvāṇām mṛgāṇām caraṇe caran |*  
*keśi ketasya vidvān sakhā svādurmadintamah ||* (6)

Here *Kesi* may be seen to alternate with *Muni*. He walks in the track of the water-nymphs and their companions as well of the wild animals. He knows the signs and is a friend enjoying or helping enjoyment and being ecstatic.

*vāyurasmā upāmanthatpinaṣṭi smā kunannamā /  
keśi viśasya pātreṇa yadrudreṇāpibatsaha || (7)*

This is very obscure. Keśi drinks poison along with Rudra and the wind stirs it up for him while *Kunannamā* grinds it for him. Sāyaṇa explains *Kunannamā* as “*kutsitamapi bhṛṣaṃ namayitri vāk*” and connect the whole with the sun drawing up water, the wind gathering clouds and the lightening stirring them up.

What is clear in the whole hymn is the identity of Keśi and Muni, his use of ochre robes and his distinctive condition of ecstasy. The hymn uses the image of Keśi-Muni for the sun who is similarly ochre-robed and wondrous. The rays of the morning sun are his matted hair and the sun flies with the wind as the Muni claims.

[ B ]

### The Chronological position of the Upaniṣads

It has been argued in the lecture that the *Upaniṣads* show in some parts an influence of Śramaṇic ideology. This assumes that the chronological position of atleast some of the *Upaniṣads* is not too far removed from the time of Buddha and Mahāvīra. At least such a proximity would tend to support the assumption of contact and influence between the Upaniṣadic and Śramaṇic traditions.

The *Praśnopaniṣad* mentions the following sages by name — Sukeśas Bhāradvāja, Śaibya Satyakāma, Sauryaṇi Gārgya, Kauśalya Āśvalāyana, Bhārgava Vaidarbhi, and Kabandha Kātyāyana. Of these it has been suggested that Kabandhī Kātyāyana should be identified with Kakuda or Pakudha Kaccāyana who was a contemporary of Buddha.<sup>1</sup> Similarly it has been suggested that Āśvalāyana of Kosala should be indentified with Assālayana of Sāvatti mentioned in *Majjhima* (II.147 ff) as well as Āśvalāyana, the author of the *Gr̥hyasūtras*.<sup>2</sup> Again, Śvetaketu whose name occurs in the *Chāndogya*,

1. Barua, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 281–82; Ray Chowdhuri, PHAI, p. 34.

2. Raychaudhuri, *l. c.* This has been strongly contested by Dr. Pathak, *History of Kosala*, p. 204.

has been described by Āpastamba in his *Dharmasūtras* (1.2.5, 4-6) as an *avara* or modern authority. By implication Uddālaka Āruṇi the famous father of Śvetaketu could not be much older. Yājñavalkya, again, appears as a junior contemporary of Uddālaka from the lists of teachers in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*.<sup>3</sup> Pāṇini appears not have recognized Yājñavalkya among the older sages.<sup>4</sup> *Kāśikā* quotes, ‘*Yājñavalkyā-dayaḥ acirakālā ity ākhyāneṣu vārtā*’. Of the two rulers, Ajātaśatru of Kāśi and Janaka of Videha, who were contemporaries, while identification is not possible, it may clearly be said that they represent a set up earlier than that contemporary with Buddha when Kāśi was under Kosala and the Vajji Gaṇa ruled Videha. However, it may be plausibly suggested that the great Janaka should have belonged to the dynasty which ended with Karāla Janaka and led to republican government.<sup>5</sup> Ajātaśatru could have belonged to the famous Brahmadaṭṭa dynasty.

It seems thus that some of the famous sages of the Upaniṣads were not far removed from the Sūtrakāras like Pāṇini, Āpastamba and Āśvalāyana, and some of the famous kings like Janaka and Ajātaśatru were nearer the age of Bimbisāra than of Parīkṣit.

3. Cf. Barua, *Op. Cit.*, p. 125.

4. Pāṇini, IV 3.105 and *Mahābhāṣya* on it. ‘*purāṇaprokteṣu brāhmaṇakalpeṣv ity atra yājñavalkyādibhyaḥ pratiṣedho vaktavyaḥ*’ (Vol. III, p. 719).

5. Cf. Yogendra Miśra, *History of Vaisali*, pp. 97-98.

## LECTURE TWO

### MORAL AND SOCIAL OUTLOOK OF ŚRAMANISM

It is a common enough notion now-a-days that social life is built round economic and political structures and that the moral attitudes of a society are somehow derivative from such realities. On the other hand, it is perhaps truer to say that man is essentially a moral being and that his moral consciousness, however inarticulate, is the matrix out of which his social attitudes evolve. In the western tradition man has been defined as a rational or social animal; in the Indian tradition, man is distinguished from the animal as a 'moral being'. As a famous verse runs "food, sleep, fear and sex are common to men and animals: *Dharma* is what distinguishes them. If men are without *Dharma*, they are like animals".

*Dharma* or morality has two aspects, an objective context of norms or prescriptions (*vidhi*) and a subjective sense of value (*artha*) to be realized through volitional efforts (*Pravṛtti-ṣaya, kṛtisādhyā*). It includes socially recognized rules of behaviour and an inner sense of desirability or rational seeking. In the Vedic tradition the source of moral norms is ultimately the Vedic-revelation. Subject to the ultimate authority of the *Vedas*, the *Smṛtis*, the example of the good and the subject's own conscience act as further sources of *dharma*. In the Śramaṇic tradition the emphasis is on the example and precept of the founding teachers as illustrating the spiritual ideal as available to anyone in his own heart. Universally available principles inscribed in the luminous book of the heart thus become the source of guidance in moral life —

“*cārittaṃ khalu dhammo jo so samo tti ṇiddiṭṭho |  
mohakkhohavihṇo pariṇāmo appaṇo hi samo ||*

(Pravacanasāra,)

Morality lies in conduct, in equanimity, in the equanimous, luminous and untroubled modification of the soul. As a form of self-consciousness morality synthesizes subjectivity and objectivity, inner attitude and



outward behaviour, thus seeking to realize the ideal and idealize the real. At the social level this becomes a dialectical process between the moral ideas perceived and expressed by great minds and the concrete norms of institutional life. The development of the concept of *Dharma* shows a simultaneous development of both these aspects. On the one hand, the definition of ideal personality in terms of virtues becomes clearer and, on the other, the institutional regulation of behaviour is increasingly systematized and codified.

Early Vedic literature contains the first expression of Indian moral consciousness. Here we find much emphasis placed on will, choice and action and the necessity of directing them in accordance with the Cosmic Law or *Ṛta*. *Ṛta* is uncreated and eternal, the ground of all order in the created world. Gods themselves exercise their will in accordance with *Ṛta*, which is natural and spontaneous for them. The gods are the protectors of *Ṛta* in the created world. The human will must seek to follow this ultimate law which is discoverable through reason (*dhi*) since *Ṛta* or order is inseparable from *Satya* or Truth.<sup>1</sup> Gods are wise and good and inspire the truth-seeking mind in accordance with *Ṛta*. Untruth (*anṛta*), insincerity and treachery (*droha*), disorder (*Niṛtti*), these constitute the prime evil.

*Ṛta* is, to use mediaeval European terminology, not only the 'eternal law', it is also the principle of social ethics and the law of religious observances and ritual. Just as man owes a debt to the gods, has an obligation to serve them through religious rites and observances, similarly he has an obligation to serve his ancestors and the sages. Gods regulate life and nature and give inspiration and guidance. The sages intuit and reveal the truth and the Law and thus educate mankind. Man, thus, has a duty to acquire learning and maintain the educational tradition. Similarly the family tradition must be maintained so that the lineage of the ancestors continues. As a young *Brahmacārin* one must study the scriptures. As a mature householder one must bring up one's family, fulfil obligations to men and gods, indeed, to all creation. Here economic activity, social activity and religious activity, are all fused into one moral activity. As an old man one must

1. *Rg.* 10.85.1 — *Satyenottabhitā bhūmiḥ sūryeṇottabhitā dyauh |*

retire from the social activities of 'production and reproduction' and engage in the performance of ritual, austerities and the contemplation of mysteries.

This view of moral life is an integral and activistic view. There is no trace of otherworldliness or pessimism here, nor of any sense of 'original sin' or inherent evil in natural life. It accepts human life as good, and the social, religious and educational tradition as the progressive fulfilment of man's moral consciousness. The Vedic notion of order – *Rta* or *Dharma* was crystallized in three concrete socio-ethical orders – the order of *Varṇas*, the order of *Āsramas* and the order of ritual observances both *gṛhya* and *śrauta*. By the later Vedic age the concept of the *cāturvarṇya* was well established. The *Varṇa* order gave social leadership to the priests and the rulers and gradually lowered the relative position of the Vaiśyas and especially the Śūdras. Although a certain rivalry could be noticed between the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas in the later Vedic age even in the sphere of philosophical learning, the prevailing theory was that cooperation and mutual respect between these classes was to their mutual advantage. The *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*<sup>2</sup> declared that the priest is the other half of the Kṣatriya (*ardhātmo ha vā eṣa kṣatriyasya yat purohiṭaḥ*). The Vaiśyas in this age stood for the producing classes generally, looking after agriculture, cattle-rearing, trade and crafts. The upper or ruling classes depended on them and hoped that they would willingly follow the rulers. The Vaiśyas are thus called 'āḍya's, literally, 'fit to be eaten', exploitable, usable. The *Śatapatha* explains that giving a share to Maruts after Indra ensures an obedient populace — '*tat-kṣatrāyaivetaḍ viśaṃ kṛtānukarāmanuvartamānaṃ karoti*<sup>3</sup> | Although the Śūdras were regarded as an integral part of the social order, their position was distinctly inferior and even humiliating. Śabara quotes a *śruti* to the effect that the Śūdra should not hear the *Vedas* ('*tasmācchūdrasamīpe nādhyeyam*'). In one of the *Brāhmaṇas* the Śūdra is considered unfit for sacrifice (*ayajñīyaḥ*), even if he be rich (*bahupaśuḥ*).<sup>4</sup> In another he is said to be unceremoniously at the

2. *Ait. Br.*, 34.8.

3. *Śat. Br.*, IV.3.3.10.

4. *Tāṇḍya Br.*, VI.1.11.

beck and call of others (*anyasya preṣyaḥ*).<sup>5</sup> In the *Chāndogya*,<sup>6</sup> when Raikva turns away Jānaśruti Pautrāyaṇa as a Śūdra, while it may be debated whether the epithet is meant literally or merely as an invective, there can be no doubt that the appellation Śūdra was intended to convey a sense of incongruity between being a Śūdra and seeking *Brahmavidyā*.

As has already been stated, at least three *āśramas* can be clearly distinguished in Vedic literature – *Brahmacarya*, *Gārhasṭhya* and *Vānaprastha*. The *Vānaprastha* was connected with the *Vaikhānasa śāstra* – (*Vānaprastho Vaikhānasa-śāstra samudācārah*).<sup>7</sup> Now the *Vaikhānasa śāstra* is connected by Haradatta with *Srāvaṇakāgni*<sup>8</sup> for which *Vasiṣṭha*<sup>9</sup> has *Śrāmaṇakāgni*. It is thus not impossible that there was a Śramaṇic connection even in the development of the third *Āśrama*. As for the fourth *Āśrama*, I have argued elsewhere in detail that its regular adoption within the Brāhmaṇical scheme of things could not have been earlier than the formulation of the order of *Cāturāśramya* as such and that formulation was done in the age of the *Dharma-sūtras*,<sup>10</sup> though reference to *Bhaiṣyacyā* or *Pravrajyā* does occur in the *Upaniṣads*.

It is unnecessary to dwell here on the order of ritual observances. The *gṛhya* ceremonies were relatively simpler and widely popular. The *śrauta* ritual, on the other hand, became ever more complicated owing to its elaboration by the priestcraft. Originally the sacrifice was a simple offering of food and drink to the gods as part of their worship and since the Vedic Aryans were meat-eaters this offering could include meat also. The growth of the Brāhmaṇas as a numerous and influential guild of priests led to the elaboration of the sacrifices through the operation of magical superstition and esoteric symbolism. Wealthy and powerful kings became the patrons of this sacri-

5. *Ait. Br.*, 35.3.

6. *Chāndogya, Up.*, 4.2.3.

7. *Baudhāyana.*, 2.6.16.

8. *Gautama*, 1.3.26.

9. *Vasiṣṭha*, 9.10.

10. See my *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism* (Allahabad, 1957), pp. 324–26.

ficial religion and found in it a medium for the expression of power and pomp.

It is only in this background that we can understand by contrast the moral and social outlook of the Śramaṇas. The notion of obligation, of giving in response to what one has received from society and the gods, constituted the key-stone in the arch of Vedic social ethics. This view linked man to nature and to the divine powers manifested in it. It also stressed man's social dependence and linked the generations together in the common effort of maintaining and developing a tradition. The *Bhagavadgītā* beautifully summarizes this Vedic view in the third chapter concluding :

*evam pravartitam cakram nānuvartayatiha yah |*  
*aghāyurindriyārāmo mogham pārtha sa jivati ||* (3.16)

The sacrifice is the basic principle of creation, representing a mutual bond between gods and men. It stands for a cycle of ritual giving and receiving. In contrast to this, Śramaṇism cut man lose from the sense of dependence on the gods and also sundered the bond of moral obligation tying the individual to his community. It replaced the gods by the force of *Karman*. What man receives he does not owe to the favour or frowns of any god but to his own past actions and efforts. This also affects the relationship of the individual to society. The individual becomes morally free. Social claims become conventional and cease to be final. The individual is himself responsible for his actions and cannot avoid their moral consequences. Man's character and history decide his destiny. His response to the environment should be the stoic one of *apathia*. He must seek to transcend his natural and social personality, not to fulfil it through the cultivation of its faculties and the satisfaction of its instincts and desires. Natural instincts and passions must be restrained and finally given up so that, the egoistic personality is dissolved by losing its habitual supports. Śramaṇic morality is an ascetic morality of wantlessness which identifies the past life with withdrawal from society. If niggardliness and sterility are held to be the main evil in the Vedic tradition, pleasure-seeking, egoism and violence are the main evils on the Śramaṇic view.

Vedic ethics is based on theistic belief. It is the gods who uphold the moral order and punish its transgression and they have the authority to remit or waive punishment in their graciousness in response to human prayer and worship. It is through their inspiration and guidance, directly or through revelation, that man is enabled to perceive and practise the good. In contrast, man is wholly dependent on himself in Śramaṇism : ‘ *tumaṃ yeva tumaṃ mittā kiṃ bahiyā mittam-icchasi*’, ‘ *attā attano nātho kōhi nātho paro siyā*’, ‘ *attadīpā viharatha attasaraṇā anaññāsaraṇā*’, ‘ *kammassakā sattā kammadāyādā*’ |<sup>11</sup> The force of *Karman* is inexorable and impersonal. The law of moral retribution is eternal and works by itself without requiring any support from the gods who are themselves subject to it.

Although the doctrine of *Karman* should logically mean self-reliance and strenuous activity i. e., the principle of *Kriyāvāda*, it is a curious fact that some of the Śramaṇa sects which we encounter in the 6th century B. C. had turned fatalistic or otherwise rejected the possibility of real action. They thus exemplified what is called *Akriyāvāda*. One variety of it was illustrated most prominently by the Ājīvikas, another by the ‘Sāṅkhyan’ Pūraṇa Kassapa and Pakudha Kaccāyana. For the Ājīvikas, there is a mysterious force which gradually unwinds itself during the course of numberless lives and man obtains release from *Samsāra* only when this force is exhausted through the experiencing of pleasure and pain caused by it. The measure of predestined pleasure and pain is fixed and predestined (*doṇamite sukhadukkhe*). Their occurrence depends on *Niyati*, *Sanṅati* and *Bhāva*, and emancipation from them is obtained through the process of transmigration itself (*samsarivā dukkhassantaṃ karissanti*). As the *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* puts it, “Pleasure and misery, final beatitude and temporal (pleasure and pain) are not caused by (the souls) themselves, nor by others, but the individual souls experience them; it is the lot assigned them by destiny”.<sup>12</sup> It is a denial of free will, of *puruṣakāra*, *vīrya*, *utthāna* or *kriyā*. To accept a fixed course of transmigration without accepting *Kriyā* is to accept

11. *Dhammapada* ‘attavagga’ (Nal. ed.) p. 32;

*Digha* (Nal. ed.), II, p. 89;

*Aṅguttara* (Nal. ed.), IV, pp. 339–40.

12. Jacobi, *Jaina Sutras*, Pt. II, pp. 239–40.

an impersonal but individual predestination. As the famous passage in the *Sāmaññaphala suttanta* says, ‘*natthi. .hetu nathi paccayo sattānaṃ saṃkilesāya, ahetu appaccayā sattā saṃkilissanti | natthi.....hetu visu-ddhiyā natthi attakāre natthi parakāre natthi purisakāre natthi balaṃ natthi viriyam natthi purisathāmo natthi purisaparakkamo, savve sattā savve pāṇā savve bhūtā savve jivā avasā abalā aviriyā niyati-saṅgati-bhāva-pariṇatā chasvevābhijātisu sukhadukkhaṃ paṭisaṃvedanti*’<sup>13</sup> “There is no reason, no cause for the suffering of beings. They suffer without reason and cause. There is no reason for purification, neither is the self a free agent, nor another. There is no freedom of the will, no force, no power, no human strength, no human effort. All beings, all organisms, all creatures and all souls are helpless, powerless, forceless, determined by destiny, conjuncture and situation, experiencing pleasure and pain in the six types of births”. This total denial of human freedom did not, however, mean a rejection of the concept of *Karman*. In fact, the very passage quoted just now goes on to mention that there are 500, 5, 3, 1 and half *karman*: What these numbered classes of *Karman* are we do not know. But apparently *Karman* is like a potential energy which exhausts itself by producing pleasure and pain, life and death. ‘*Seyyathāpi suttagule khitte nibbēhiyamānameva phaleti evameva bāle ca paṇḍite ca sandhāvitvā saṃsaritva dukkhassantaṃ karissanti*’<sup>14</sup> “Just as a ball of thread unwinds itself, so fool and wise alike come to the end of their suffering by repeated birth and death”. This force of *Karman* can neither be hastened nor abbreviated by human effort. ‘*Tattha natthi im ināhaṃ sīlena vā tapena vā brahmacariyeṇa vā aparipakkaṃ vā kammaṃ paripācessāmi paripakkaṃ vā kammaṃ phussa phussa vyanti karissāmīti hevaṃ natthi*’<sup>15</sup> “It is not true that we can mature immature *Karman* or end mature *Karman* deliberately by means of good conduct, vows, austerities or *Brahmacarya*”.

Apart from the Śākyaputriyas and the Nigganths the Ājivikas were the most important Śramaṇa sect in the sixth century B. C. and

13. *Dīgha Nikaya* (Nal. ed. Ed. Bhikkhu Jagdish Kashyap), Vol. I, p. 47.

14. *Dīgha* (Nal. ed.), I, p. 47.

15. *Ibid.*

it was a sect which continued to survive for centuries. There is also no doubt that this sect already existed as an old sect in the days of Buddha and Mahāvira. Apart from Makkhali Gosāla, we hear of two other Ājīvika teachers viz., Nanda Vaccha and Kisa Saṅkicca, from Buddhist sources. The names of Udāi Kundiyāyaṇa and the six other teachers whose bodies were successively reanimated are apparently the names of Makkhali Gosāla's predecessors,<sup>16</sup> who were all claimed by him to be a series of bodies animated by the same soul successively. The interpretation of this principle of *Pauttaparihāra* is somewhat uncertain<sup>17</sup> but it seems to be an alternative to the normal course of death and rebirth. It reminds one of the *Nirmāṇakāya* of the *Yogasūtras*, which could be used by the *Yogī* to work out his *Karman*, or better still of Śaṅkarācārya's *Para-kāya-praveśa*. It is also true that some founding prophets of religions have been regarded as having had a miraculous birth which serves to distinguish them from the common run of sinful mortals, The masters of the Ājīvika sect also appear to have claimed that they had a supernatural continuation without generation.

The doctrine of the Ājīvikas is not to be identified with fatalism as such but rather with a special variety of it which included many other little understood dogmas. For this reason Professor Basham's assumption that Pūraṇa Kassapa and Pakudha Kaccāyana played a not inconsiderable part in the development of early Ājīvikas appears unnecessary.<sup>18</sup> The references in *Mañimekalai* or the *Tarka-rahasya-dīpikā* of Guṇaratna are too late to have any independent value. In all probability they reflect the occasional confusion in the ascription of doctrines to particular *Parivrājakas*, which can be discerned in the early Buddhist and Jaina texts. With fatalism the Ājīvikas combined an extreme form of asceticism which included nudity, and austerities culminating in a voluntary suicide through 'not drinking'.<sup>19</sup> As already

16. Cf. A. L. Basham, *History and Doctrine of the Ājīvikas*, (London, 1951), p. 31.

17. B. M. Barua, calls it *Parināmaṇāda*, see his *Pre-Buddhist Indian Philosophy*, pp. 315-318.

18. Basham, *op. cit.*, pp. 23ff.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 127-129.

stated the Ājivika saints claimed miraculous powers and especially the power of 'reanimation'. The metaphysical basis of the Ājivika doctrine remains obscure. The word 'bhāva' in 'Niyati-saṅgati-bhāva-pariṇatā' could hardly mean 'svabhāva' since 'svabhāva-vāda' generally implied materialism.<sup>20</sup> Ājivikas make a contrast between the innate purity of the soul and the determined but temporally limited process of time. As in the later doctrine of *Malapāka* or of *Prārabdha Karman*, human emancipation must await the moment when *Karman* matures and ultimately ceases through fruition. The Ājivikas remain the most forceful exponents of the belief that 'nābhuktva kṣiyate karma kalpakotiśatairapi' / 'Unexperienced *Karman* is not exhausted even in tens of millions of cycles of existence'. In their contrast of the soul and *Karman*, and their extreme asceticism culminating in religious suicide, the Ājivikas were very near the Nigganṭhas with whom they were sometimes confused. The attribution of atomism to the Ājivikas is not supported by reliable early evidence and Prof. Basham's reliance on Tamilian sources is open to doubt.<sup>21</sup> The Ājivika doctrine of the six *Abhijātis* is another point of contact between them and the *Nigganṭhas* who hold a similar doctrine of the six *leśyās*.<sup>22</sup>

Pūraṇa Kassapa is said to have denied the reality of *Pāpa* and *Puṇya*. Neither does any sin or crime lead to *Pāpa*, nor any good action to *Puṇya*. '..... pāṇaṃ atimāpayato adinnaṃ ādiyato..... musā bhaṇato karoto na kariyati pāpaṃ.....dānena damena saṃyamena sacca-vajjena natthi pāpassa natthi puññassa āgamo' /<sup>23</sup> "Violence, stealing, do not produce any sin. Nor is any virtue produced by liberalities, control of the senses, self-restraint or truth". This is not a doctrine of fatalism and has nothing to do with the Ājivika position. This is an antinomianism from the point of view of the ultimate immutability of the soul. It reminds one of the *Gītā* that the soul neither kills nor is killed

20. Cf. Basham, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

21. Cf. Basham, *op. cit.*, pp. 263ff.

22. On *leśyās* see *Uttarādhyayana*, xxxiv : Jacobi, *Jaina Sūtras*, Pt. II, pp. 194-203; See also K. C. Lalwani (ed. & tr.), *Bhagavatī Sūtra*, Vol. I (Jain Bhawan, Calcutta), p. 235 for his note on *leśyā*.

23. *Dīgha Nikāya* (Nal. ed.), I, p. 46.



(*nāyaṃ hanti na hanyate*).<sup>24</sup> It is like the Sāṅkhyan position where the soul is never involved in real action. The Ājīvikas deny only the freedom, not the reality of action. In any case they do not deny the the moral status or consequences of action.

Pakudha Kaccāyana is said to have questioned the possibility of interaction between the seven ultimate and immutable elements. *Sattime... kāyā akatā... vañjha kūṭṭhā te na iñjanti na vipariṇamanti na aññamaññam vyābādheti... katames attapaṭhavi-kāyo, āpokāyo tejokāyo vāyokāyo sukhe dukkhe jīvasattame ...*<sup>25</sup> “There are these seven bodies, uncreated, sterile, unchangeable. They neither move nor undergo alteration nor do they interact. Which are the seven? Earth, water, fire, air, pleasure, pain and the soul”. This doctrine is somewhat peculiar because it separates experience from both matter as well as the soul. The one thing common to these three philosophers is ‘*Akriyāvāda*’ a denial of the spiritual efficacy of action.<sup>26</sup>

The Buddhists and the Jainas condemned *Akriyāvāda* as being morally subversive in its consequences. The *Āyāraṅga* defines the Niggantha as *Kiriyaṅvaṇi*. The *Sūyagadaṅga*, criticizing the rival doctrines of *Akriyāvāda*, *Vinayavāda* and *Ajñānavāda*, explains “misery is produced by one’s own works, not by those of somebody else, but right knowledge and conduct lead to liberation”.<sup>27</sup> Śīlāṅka explains that action becomes sufficient for liberation only when it is combined with knowledge. The wise man avoids injury to living beings and restrain their actions. Only he “who knows the influx of sin and its stoppage; who knows misery and its annihilation – he is entitled to expound the *Kriyāvāda*”.<sup>28</sup> This doctrine is criticized by the Buddhists who said – “*abhavvo diṭṭhisampanno puggalo sayamkatam sukhadukkham paccāgantum abhavvo diṭṭhisampanno puggalo paramkatam sukhadukkham paccāgantum*.”<sup>29</sup> Prof. Barua has shown on the basis of the *Devadatta*

24. *Gītā*, II, 19.

25. *Dīgha* (Nal. ed.), I, p. 49.

26. For a detailed discussion on *akriyāvāda* see my *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism*, pp. 341ff.

27. *Jaina Sūtras*, II, p. 317.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 319.

29. *Aṅguttara-Nikāya*, quoted in Barua, *op. cit.*, p. 386, fn. 1.

*suttanta* of the *Majjhima* that the Buddhist view differed from the Nigantha view in as much as the latter held that a man's experiences depend not only on his present actions but also on circumstances determined by fate on the basis of his past life. However, one must remember that there are Buddhist canonical texts which place other factors by the side of *Karman* and also that the role of past deeds is certainly acceptable to the Buddhists. The *Jātakas* popularly illustrate this. The real difference between the Jaina and Buddhist views of *Karman* must be formulated in terms of the character of the dialectic accepted by them rather than simply in terms of the fact that Mahāvīra accepted a *dialectical point* of view. The Buddhist dialectic is negative. *Karman* is neither one's own nor another's; there is, in fact, no identical agent. The Buddhist dialectic seeks a 'middle way' between *Asti* and *Nāsti* by rejecting the exclusive claims of each. The Jaina dialectic is positive and synthetic. It holds that *karman* may be looked upon from different points of view since the soul is identical as *dravya* but different as *pariyāya*. Hence *Karman* may be described as belonging to the agent as well as not belonging to it. The two alternatives are here sought to be combined into a more flexible point of view. The Jainas seek to reach the state of the purity of the soul, the Buddhists to renounce the very notion of the soul. But both believe in the efficacy of action and the reality of moral responsibility.

Whether metaphysical belief by itself is sufficient to determine the moral character of one's actions must remain questionable. We hear of a materialist Ajita-Kesakambali and of an Agnostic Saṅjaya Belaṅṅhaputta among the leaders of the *Parivrājakas*. They are like the others described as 'gaṇācariyo', 'titthakaro', 'sādhusammato' and 'cirappabajito'.<sup>30</sup> Whatever the shade of their metaphysical belief they all showed a common pessimism towards life. Life and its pleasures are ephemeral and death unavoidable. There is no assurance of success and in so far as man seeks to win happiness through the satisfaction of desires he is at the mercy of forces over which he has no control. What brought together the different heretical philosophers was their common endorsement of asceticism in practice.

30. *Dīgha* (Nal. ed.), I, pp. 41-52.

The rise of asceticism must be counted as a revolutionary and unique movement in the history of religion. While religion is as old as man, asceticism can be discerned for the first time only in Indian Śramaṇism. Its appearance within Orphicism and later among the Essenes and the Theraputae and still later among the Christians was in all probability not without a historical contact with India, especially as induced by the missionary activities of Aśoka and the Buddhist *Samgha*.<sup>31</sup> We have already argued that the origin of asceticism in India should not be traced to a reform which first began within the Brahmanical fold and led to the recognition of the fourth *Āśrama*. This view which was strongly argued by Jacobi rests on the similarities between the vows of the mendicants, Brahmanical as well as Śramaṇic, and the assumption that the fourth *Āśrama* must be older than the Śramaṇa sects.<sup>32</sup> This second assumption we have already disputed. The similarities between the vows of mendicants are of a general type relating to the very ideal of an ascetic. The 'five great vows' (*pañca-mahā-vratas*) as they are described, for example, in the *Yoga-sūtras* are *Ahimsā*, *Satya*, *Asteya*, *Brahmacarya* and *Aparigraha*. The *Cāturyāma saṁvara* of Pārśva included non-injury, truth, non-stealing and non-possession. It may be noted that the Buddhist account of the *Cāturyāma saṁvara* appears confused as it speaks of restraint in the use of cold water, evil, sin and ease on account of purification of sin.<sup>33</sup> Mahāvīra added celibacy as the fifth vow and thus the *Pañca-mahā-vratas* of the Jainas came to be identical with those mentioned by Patañjali. Thus the *Āyāramga*<sup>34</sup> describes the first *mahāvratā* as *Pāñāvāyāo veramaṇam* and details its five *bhāvanās* and goes on to mention the other *mahāvratas* implying avoidance of *musāvāya*, *adiṅṅādāṇa*, *mehuṇa* and *pariggaha* and similarly describes the five *bhāvanās* for each. Among the Buddhists the *Pañcasīlas* include desisting from destroying life, from stealing, from telling lies, from wrong sexual conduct and from drinking intoxicating liquors. These become the eight-fold *Sīla* if one adds to it not eating unseasonable

31. Cf. H. C. Raychaudhuri, *Political History of Ancient India*, (7th ed., Calcutta, 1972), pp. 294–295.

32. See *Jaina Sūtras*, Pt. I, pp. xxiii–xxxii.

33. Barua, *op cit.*, p. 378.

34. *Āyāramga*, 2.15.

food at nights, not wearing garlands or use of perfumes and sleeping on a mat spread on the ground. These, again, become the Ten *Sīlas* by adding abstention from dancing, music and stage, and abstention from the use of gold and silver.<sup>35</sup> The Brahmanical mendicant was similarly required to abstain from causing injury to living beings, lying, misappropriation, incontinence and niggardliness.<sup>36</sup>

It is hardly necessary to point out that there is a basic identity in the broad conception of ascetic life among the Buddhists, the Jains and the Brahmanical *Dharmasūtras*. This ideal consists in the training of the attitude of the ascetic and also involves a regulation of his relations with society. Vyāsa in his commentary on the *Yoga-sūtras* says that *Ahimsā* is the chief vow and quotes an ancient Sāṅkhya tradition to the effect that it is for the perfection of *Ahimsā* that the other vows are undertaken.<sup>37</sup> A similar view of the matter may be easily discerned in Buddhist and Jaina literature. For example, Āryadeva declares that the Buddhas describe *dharma* compendiously as *Ahimsā*.<sup>38</sup> Akalaṅka says '*ahimsāyāḥ pradhānatvādātau tadvacanam.*'<sup>39</sup> Respect for life and the total avoidance of violence is fundamental to ascetic life. Violence presupposes egoism, cupidity, intolerance, lack of self-restraint, ignorance of the nature of living beings and often fraud and treachery. On the other hand, the total avoidance of violence is not possible without self-control, giving up of egoistic claims and ambitions, recognition of the similarity of self and another and the cultivation of wantlessness. This emphasis on non-violence distinguishes the Śramaṇic from the old Vedic tradition where animal sacrifices and meat-eating were common. Similarly victory in war was one of those things which the Vedic Aryans frequently prayed for. Their gods although generally wise and beneficent, were not unoften gods of might and power. *Yajña-dharma* and *Kṣātra-dharma* both

35. The ten *Sīlas* as well as the *Sikkhāpadas* appear to have developed out of the five *Sīlas*. See *Pali Dictionary* (Pali Text Society).

36. P. V. Kane, *History of Dharmasāstra*, Vol. II, Pt. II (Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, 1941), pp. 930ff.

37. See my *Bauddha Dharma ke Vikāsa kā Itihāsa* (Lucknow, 1963), p. 123.

38. *Catuhśataka*.

39. *Tattvārthavārttika*.

legitimized violence and were part of the system of *Varṇāśramadharmā*. The emergence of emphasis on non-violence in Śramaṇism and its gradual adoption in Indian culture meant a profound revolution in Indian ethos by accenting the feminine virtues.

The doctrine of *Ahimsā* starts from a perception of the sameness of life, the equality of all souls. This was accepted in the Vedic tradition also but as part of the ultimate metaphysical realization which had its truth at a level other than that of common social life which rests on the cooperation of differences rather than on an abstract sameness. Thus it is that the inequalities of *Varṇāśrama Dharma* remain valid at the empirical level while the absolute and faultless sameness of Brahman ('*nirdoṣaṃ hi samaṃ brahma*') is a matter for inward realization. What made the doctrine of *Ahimsā* imperative for the Śramaṇas was the belief in the transmigration of the soul which linked the lowliest forms of life with the highest in one interacting chain of being. The Jainas, indeed, held that even the four material elements are inhabited by the souls which are thus ubiquitous and turn any careless action into a form of violence.<sup>40</sup> The Jaina view is in such marked contrast to the western view where even the animals were not held to have souls. Since pleasure and pain do not depend on reason, the lack of a rational faculty in the animals is not really a sufficient reason for regarding them as different from men in respect of being the objects of human actions. Indeed the modern realization of the need for avoiding cruelty to animals is a vindication of the principle of non-violence. It is welcome indeed that the new changes in our constitution give due importance to respect for life and compassion.

The emphasis on truth is, however, ancient and was one of the chief virtues in the Vedic tradition. The avoidance of falsehood implies not merely sincerity and mindfulness towards truth but also restraint in speech for much talk is difficult to reconcile with true speech. The avoidance of stealing apparently refers to the respect for other people's claims of property while *Aparigraha* renounces any such claims on behalf of the ascetic himself. While non-stealing is the avoidance of a crime, *aparigraha* or non-possession is distinctive of

40. See *Ācārāṅga Sūtra: Jaina Sūtras* (tr. Jacobi), Pt. I, pp. 31-34.

mendicancy and the outward expression of the ascetic's renunciation of worldly quests and relations. The sacrificial religion presupposes family life as well as property. The wife is a partner in such worship and one cannot make offerings of material goods to the gods without having material possessions oneself. This is clear in the philosophy of the school of *Mīmāṃsā*.<sup>41</sup> Even the *Bhāgavata* says “*dharmādākṣipyate hyarthaḥ*.” In this tradition religion and morality are essentially tied with the maintenance of social life. In contrast Śramaṇism despairs of happiness in the pursuit of instinctive life which underlies the patterns of social behaviour and institutions. In this sense Śramaṇism is an extreme form of spiritual individualism which has even been called soteriological egoism.

In the *Paṭisambhidāmagga Sīla* is defined as will, as mental disposition, as restraint, as non-transgression. ‘*Kiṃ sīlaṃ ti ? cetanā sīlaṃ, cetasikaṃ sīlaṃ, saṃvaro sīlaṃ, avītikkamo sīlaṃ ti*’<sup>42</sup> Buddha himself had defined *Karman* or moral action as volition and its disposition. As Nāgārjuna has quoted the Master, ‘*cetanā cetayitvā ca karmoktaṃ paramarṣinā*’<sup>43</sup> Now *Vrata* has a similar sense. It refers to a rule or conduct adopted by a deliberate act of the will. The mental dispositions which are an essential part of the moral consciousness include greedlessness (*anabhijjhā*), friendliness (*abyāpāda*) and an outlook based on proper knowledge (*sammā-diṭṭhi*). *Saṃvara* or restraint has been described as fivefold.<sup>44</sup> Of these the first is the adoption of the *Pātimokkha* rules. The second is restraint imposed on the senses, called the *Satisaṃvara*. *Ñāṇasaṃvara* arises from the right introspection into the occasions of experience. Forebearance is *Khantisāṃvara*. Disregarding desires and desire-prompted thoughts is *Viriyasaṃvara*.

The Buddhist theory of ethics rests on a psychological as well as an axiological theory. Buddhist psychology is analytical – *Vibhajya-*

41. *Mīmāṃsā* School explains sacrifice as ‘*dravya-tyāga*’, which presupposes ownership. See esp. the discussion of *Viśvajit* in *Mīmāṃsā Sūtras* 6.7.1 ff.

42. *Paṭisambhidāmagga*. 1. Buddhaghosa has also quoted this definition. See, *Viśuddhimārga* (tr. Bhikkhu Dharmarakshita : Varanasi, 1956), I, p. 8.

43. *Madhyamaka*, 17.2–3.

44. See *Viśuddhimārga*, I, p. 8.

*vāda*.<sup>45</sup> It explains mental phenomena by regarding them as composed of various combinations of 'atomic' factors and processes. Of these factors *cetanā* or will is one and it is influenced by right or wrong motives called *Kuśala* or *Akuśala hetus*. The wrong motives are desire, aversion and insensibility or ignorance (*moha*), the right motives are their opposites. This functioning of right and wrong motives itself depends on the previous habits as well as the state of spiritual enlightenment of the subject. Right action, thus, depends on the cultivation of a spiritually enlightened point of view on life, the assiduous cultivation of good habits and immediately, on acting under the impulse of higher emotions. The Buddhist theory of value considers inward peace of greater moment than sensuous enjoyments which being ephemeral quickly turn into their own opposites. Desire is a snare, which promises happiness but only brings unhappiness and bondage. Desire rests on the mistaken belief in the permanence of things and selves, a mistake under which men seek to recapture and ensure fleeting pleasures in the future. Imagination under this mistaken belief is the foremost instrument of human bondage. It is the wind which pushes the sails of desires. So the Buddha is said to have exclaimed: '*kāma jānāmi te mūlaṃ | samkalpāt kila jāyase ||*'<sup>46</sup> "Desire, I know your origin. You arise from imagination." The Buddhist morality, thus, is essentially a spiritual morality which seeks eternal peace and quiescence and countenances action only as occasions for the cultivation of purer feelings which would liberate man from his own egoism and extroversion.

The Jainas define *Vrata* as *Virati* or desisting from violence, falsehood, theft, sex and possession. '*Himsānṛtasteyābrahmaparigrahebhyo viratirvrataṃ*'<sup>47</sup> It is a rule deliberately adopted (*abhisandhikṛto niyamaḥ*). The adoption of such rules is distinct from *Sāmvara* but is a preparation for it. If the application of these rules is unlimited, they are called *mahāvratas*. Otherwise, they form the *Aṇuvratas*. Five *bhāvanās* have been prescribed for each of the five *Vratas* so that they

45. Cf. Mrs. Rhys Davids. *The Birth of Indian Psychology*.

46. Words attributed to the moment of enlightenment, *Samkalpa* here is not '*Mānasain Karman*' but 'clipping' together of experiences in imagination.

47. *Tattvārtha*, 7.1.

could be stabilized. For making the *Ahimsā-Vrata* firm one must exercise care in speech and thought, in walking and other movements, in accepting and placing things and in inspecting food and drink before taking them. For practising truth one must abandon anger, greed, fear and ridicule and at the same time avoid speaking contrarily. For practising the avoidance of theft, one should dwell in lonely or abandoned places, not obstruct others, take only pure alms and cease disputing proprietary rights with one's companions. For chastity one should abandon attending to tales of passion or to feminine beauty, nor should one recall previous love or partake of aphrodisiacs or tasty food nor should one decorate oneself. For non-possessiveness one should cultivate equanimity towards the pleasant and the unpleasant objects of the five senses.<sup>48</sup> Apart from these particular *bhāvanās*, one should meditate on the fact that violence etc., are in reality of the nature of suffering. Just as they cause suffering to oneself they cause suffering to another. It is worth noticing that this way of explaining why violence etc., are of the nature of suffering, is different from the Buddhist approach which insists on describing everything as suffering which undergoes change and is impermanent.<sup>49</sup>

It is well-known that for the Jainas souls are ubiquitous and hence all motion is liable to cause injury to living being. In fact it was even said jeeringly —

*jale jantuḥ sthale janturākāṣe jantureva ca |  
jantumālākule loke katham bhikṣurahimsakah ||*

'There are living beings in water and on land and in the sky. When the whole world is teeming with life, how will the mendicant be free from violence?' In answer to this it was stated that the very minute forms of life are not easily injured, while injury to the grosser forms of life can be avoided by deliberate care. It has also to be remembered that the Jainas distinguish *bhāvendriya* from *dravyendriya*. Moral life depends primarily on the condition of the *bhāvendriya* or the psychic sense. Its purification requires the eradication of the *Kaṣāyas* i.e., anger, pride, crookedness and stupidity. When the passions are eradicated,

48. See *Ācārāṅga Sūtra : Jaina Sūtras*, Pt. I, pp. 202-210.

49. See my *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism*, pp. 397ff.



the senses controlled and the accumulation of *Karman* reduced through the practice of austerities, then a man may be said to be set on the path of moral and spiritual progress. The basic similarity of the Jaina and Buddhist points of view on morality is obvious. Apart from the difference in the metaphysical basis, the difference between them is only one of exposition and detail. The most important difference between them lay in the attitude of moderation which the Buddha advocated, the famous *madhyamā pratipadā*, in contrast to the extremism which was advocated by the Jainas. The Buddha after the most severe penance realized its futility and felt that there was no reason to be afraid of the pure happiness which arises from meditation – ‘*kiṃ nu ahaṃ tassa sukhasa bhāyāmi yaṃ taṃ sukhaṃ aññatreva kāmehi aññatra akusalehi dhammehi*’<sup>50</sup> He then followed the path of *dhyāna* which he recalled from early childhood. Mahāvīra, on the other hand, succeeded in gaining omniscience from the practice of extreme austerities. Each of them taught in the light of his own experience and the modern student has no option but to attribute this difference to the difference of spiritual personalities.

It is the corpus of monastic rules which seeks to give a concrete form and shape to the ideal of asceticism. These rules which regulated the food, drink, clothes, dwelling, begging of alms and religious practice of the monks varied from sect to sect. The Ājīvaka monks, as already mentioned, adopted complete nudity and were called *acelakas*. They did not carry any begging bowl and ate directly from the hand and were for this reason called *hatthāpalekhanas*. They were permitted the use of cold water, unboiled seeds and specially prepared food. They practised extreme mortification and finally committed suicide through not drinking.<sup>51</sup> The Niganthas have been described as nude, or having few cloths or having one piece of cloth (*ekasāṭaka*). It is generally believed that Mahāvīra introduced the more rigorous rule of complete nudity which was not practised by all the Niganthas.<sup>52</sup> Removal of hair from the roots was one of the distinguishing fea-

50. *Majjhima*, I, p. 247 (Roman ed.)

51. On the Ājīvaka monastic organization and ascetic observances etc., see Basham, *op. cit.*, pp. 107ff.

52. Cf. S. B. Deo, *History of Jaina Monachism* (Poona, 1956), pp. 160-162.

tures of the Nigantha community. Whatever clothes were used were not allowed to be washed or dyed in any case.<sup>53</sup> Apart from the clothes or *Vattha*, the *Āyāraṅga* permits the Jaina monk the use of a bowl or *Pāya*, a blanket or *Kambala* and a cloth for dusting the feet, *Pāyapuñchana*. The blanket was permitted as a covering against cold or during sleep. The *Pāyapuñchana* or *rajoharaṇa* was a kind of broom with bristles. A piece of cloth for being tied over the mouth and nose was permitted just as the use of a stick was also permitted.<sup>54</sup> For use as a bed grass, stone or a wooden plank could be used. The monk could also borrow a bedding or matting from the householder but was expected to return it back – ‘*pāḍihāriyam piḍha-phalaga-sejjā-santhāragam*’.<sup>55</sup> On the subject of begging for alms numerous restrictions existed. Umbrellas and shoes were not allowed to the Jaina monks.

The position of the Buddhist monks was much more favourable.<sup>56</sup> In the beginning perhaps the monks were merely allowed the Four *Nisrayas*. The ‘four *Nisrayas*’ were (a) food obtained in the alms, (b) robes made out of rags, (c) dwelling under the tree and (d) cow’s urine as medicine. Gradually with each one of these were permitted extra acquisitions or *atirekalābhas*. The monk was allowed to have three pieces of clothes – *antarvāsaka*, *saṅghāṭi* and *uttarāsanga*, a girdle for the loins, an alms-bowl, a razor, a needle and a water-strainer. He could use a variety of materials for his clothes such as cotton or wool. Although the monks were not allowed to eat after midday they could accept invitation from householders. As medicine they could use butter, oil, honey or ghee. Several types of dwellings were also permitted to them.<sup>57</sup> In the beginning the ideal of the Buddhist monks was also eremitical but gradually with the growth of lay patronage an increasing coenobitism was the result. The practice of the rain retreat aided this process.<sup>58</sup>

53. *Ibid.*, p. 163.

54. *Ibid.*, pp. 164-167.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 167.

56. For the general life and monastic observances of the Buddhist Monks see G. S. P. Misra, *The Age of Vinaya*, (New Delhi, 1972), ch. IV.

57. *Cullavagga* (Nal. ed.), p. 239.

58. Cf. S. Dutt, *Early Buddhist Monachism* (Asia Publishing House, 1960), p. 90ff.

Thus both the Jainas and the Buddhists, thanks to lay patronage, came to live in monasteries where they formed a new society standing over against the mad rush of the world moved by desires and fears. These monasteries became in course of time noble monuments of art and architecture, places of pilgrimage and centres of education and learning. Beginning as the isolation of the monk from society, the movement ultimately placed him in the midst of a new society!

All the Śramaṇa sects were organized under a leader as a *gaṇa*. The leader – *gaṇi, satthā* – directed the followers in their conduct and instructed them in doctrine and also appointed his own successor. The Buddha made a great departure in this respect. He organized the *Saṅgha* as an impersonal, democratically organized body and instead of nominating a successor declared that the Dharma itself should govern the *Saṅgha*.<sup>59</sup> The entry to the *Saṅgha* was governed by *Pravrajyā* which made the novice a *Śrāmaṇera* till he received the *Upasampadā* or confirmation. The novice to be ordained was required to fulfil the conditions of eligibility such as being at least fifteen years old, having the permission of the parents and having the requisite articles like the alms bowl, the three robes etc. He was ordained by the *Trisarāṇa* formula and placed under an *Upādhyāya* or *Ācārya*. The relationship between the *Ācārya* and the *Antevāsika* or *Saddhavihārika* was patterned on that in the Brahmanical school and this state of pupilage or training itself was called *Brahmacarya*. The monks in each locality met periodically to recite the *Prātimokṣa* and confess any transgression of which they might be guilty. Such assemblies were called *Uposatha*, a custom widely prevalent among the Śramaṇa sects. The Rain-retreat or *Varṣāvāsa* was another common custom. Among the Buddhists the *Varṣāvāsa* ended with the ceremony of the distribution of robes or *Kaṭhina* and a general confessional called *Pravāraṇā*. In course of time the Buddhist monks were allowed the use of a variety of goods in the monasteries.<sup>60</sup> They were thus permitted robes (*pāvāra*), blankets (*Kambala*), bathing clothes (*udaka-sāṭikā*), towels and bags (*Parikkhā-*

59. Cf. *Mahāparinibbānasutta* : *Dīgha Nikāya* (Nal. ed.) II, p. 118 : *mayā dhammo ca vinayo ca desito paññatto, so vo mamaccayena satthā* |

60. G. S. P. Misra, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-127.

*racolaka*). They were permitted to accept not only invitation from the laity but also a wide variety of alms. They could use medicines also. Beginning with the meagre four *Nissayas*, Buddhist monasteries developed into elaborate set ups which had considerable property and several officials.

As for monastic architecture the Buddhist monks were ordinarily allowed to dwell in five types of dwellings – *Vihāra*, *Aḍḍhayaga*, *Pāsāda*, *Hammiya* and *Guhā*. As is well known, rock-cut *Vihāras* were used in later times by Buddhists as well as the Jainas and the Ājīvakas and they provided occasions for decorative sculpture and painting. The names of Ajantā and Nālandā are sufficient to bring to one's mind the amazing contribution of monasteries in the sphere of education, art and culture. The richness and glory of monastic life in classical times can be easily gleaned from the glowing accounts of Chinese travellers, especially I-tsing.<sup>61</sup>

Although Śramaṇism is essentially asceticism which developed into monasticism, it had to provide a lesser but necessary ideal to its lay followers. The Jainas logically distinguished the *Mahāvratas* from the *Aṇuvratas*. The householder is required to follow the same five ideals of non-violence, truth, non-stealing, chastity and non-possessiveness but within limitations necessary for leading the life of a householder. Thus chastity comes to mean for them fidelity in marriage and poverty means not avoiding wealth and property but cultivating detachment, contentment and liberality. What is more, the householder must avoid the use of foul means in the course of his professional and business life. Śramaṇism for the laity means an ideal of spiritually inclined ethical humanism. It does not condemn the pursuits of secular life but holds them to be subordinate to the cultivation of a moral and spiritual attitude which would combine simple living with high thinking and inward training of the will with purity of feeling.

In the *Uvāsagadasāo*, which may be taken as an example of the Jaina attitude towards laity, we are told that the merchant Upāsaka

61. Takakusu (tr.) I-tsing : *The Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malaya Archipelago* (Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1966), especially Ch. XXXIV.

Ānand of the city of Campā, not essaying to be a monk, accepts the five *Aṇuvratas* : ‘ *ahaṃ ṇaṃ devaṇuppiyānaṃ antie pañcāṇuvvaiyaṃ satta-sikkhāvaiyaṃ duvālasavihaṃ gihidhammaṃ paḍivajjissāmi* ’.<sup>62</sup> As a result he accepts restrictions on his conduct which would help in the direction of non-violence, truth, non-stealing, chastity and non-possession. With respect to the last two, marital faithfulness and a voluntarily accepted ceiling on different forms of property are resolved upon. Lord Mahāvīra specifies five transgressions of each of the *Aṇuvratas*, which need to be avoided. For example, with respect to *Prāṇātīpāta* one needs to avoid *bandha*, *vadha*, *chaviccheda*, *atibhāra* and *bhakta-pānavyavaccheda* | This excludes gross violence to men and animals done directly or through cruel treatment or indirectly by oppressing them. Falschood, again, must be avoided even in the form of rash speaking or speaking out secrets or giving wrong advice or preparing false documents. Similarly, stealing must be avoided in the shape of aggression as well as cheating such as through the use of false weights and measures or counterfeits. Marital faithfulness must be combined with a general restraint or moderation of sexual passions. A number of industrial business enterprizes are stated to be undesirable and fit to be avoided. Such are professions connected with the cutting of trees, extraction of tusks, manufacture of lac, sale of poisons, castration of animals, burning of forests, draining out of lakes etc. The extension of the concern for life and organic environment shown in such precepts is one of tremendous significance socially.

If we turn to a Buddhist text such as the *Sigalovādasutta* of the *Dīghanikāya*, which has been described as *Gihivinaya*, we find the duty of the householder summarized in terms of his social obligations, Sigāla, a householder's son was found by Buddha worshipping the different quarters of the earth and sky. Buddha substituted the performance of moral duties in place of such external ritual. I crave your indulgence to quote from Dr. Rhys David's translation of the *suttanta* —

“ Mother and father are the Eastern View,  
And teachers are the quarters of the South,  
And wife and children are the Western view,

62. *Suttāgame* (1953), p 1128.

And friends and kin the quarter to the North,  
 Servants and working folk the nadir are,  
 And overhead the Brahmin and the recluse  
 These quarters should be worshipped by the man  
 Who fitly ranks as houseman in his clan”.

Consideration and compassion for all life is here joined to the norms of social ethics and a sense of gentleness and humanity. The asceticism of the monk emphasizes the complete purification of the soul and its ultimate emancipation from all natural and social bondage so that it would enter the state of eternal peace. On the other hand, the outlook prescribed for the laity in Śramaṇism is that of ethical humanism and is not only an antechamber for progressing towards the more strenuous point of view of mendicancy but its valuable complement. The cultivation of purer feelings and right action necessarily precede the direct attempt to transcend the realm of actions and feelings altogether. The earlier phase of self-restraint, training and activity prepare the soul for detaching itself from its habitual extroversion, distraction and dullness and the cultivation of higher emotions suffuses it with an inward peace and happiness which makes rigorous contemplation as well as unflinching austerities possible. The lay follower gradually develops a new moral personality, self-controlled, gentle and humane. He thus develops an inward life and the seeking for spiritual peace and enlightenment gradually finds a suitable base in his personality so that he can in course of time take the ultimate plunge and renounce the world.

Brāhmaṇical morality was bound up with religious and ritual observations and with the fulfilment of traditional social obligations. The soul was thus released from its debts especially to the gods and by being obedient to their will made itself eligible for happiness here and hereafter. If the soul acquires true knowledge of itself or God, it transcends the realm of good and evil and enters one of eternal felicity. In contrast the Śramaṇic tradition accepted the fulfilment of social obligations with a difference. It rejected much of the traditional ritual, emphasized inward morality and accepted social obligations, not as something absolute but as something which provided an occasion for

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the practice of certain voluntarily accepted moral vows. Here the justification of social duties is in terms of the purification of the individual's psyche, which is in contrast to the Vedic view where the obligations are absolute and arise from the individual's relationship to the gods and the social tradition. Similarly even the Upaniṣadic notion of salvation joins the soul to a higher or cosmic self; it does not isolate the soul but unites it to cosmic yet personal reality. In contrast, the Buddhist, the Jaina and the Sāṅkhya views of salvation, all tend to reject creation and seek to return the soul to its original isolation or simply to end the psychic process.

Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar had argued that the *Dhamma* which Aśoka sought to preach in his edicts may be traced back to Buddhism for the laity.<sup>63</sup> Even if this view is doubted there can still be no doubt that Aśoka's *Dhamma* represents the quintessence of Śramaṇism as applicable to the laity. Aśoka's *Dhamma* rejects animal sacrifices and possibly the privileges of the Brāhmaṇas stand rejected in his principle of *Vyavahāra-samatā* and *daṇḍa-samatā*. He defines the duty of man in terms of moral qualities and humane social relations. His distrust of ritualistic religion in general comes out most clearly in R. E. IX where he declares – "Every worldly rite is of a dubious nature. It may or may not accomplish its object. *Dhamma-maṅgala*, however, is not conditioned by time. Even though it does not achieve that object here, it begets endless merit in the next world". *Dhamma-maṅgala* itself is defined as "seemly behaviour towards the servants and menial classes, reverence towards perceptors, self control in regard to animals (and) liberality to Brāhmaṇas and Śramaṇas". Elsewhere reverence to parents and the aged is recommended (e. g. R. E. III). Among moral qualities, the *dhamma* stands for "freedom from depravity (*apāsinave*), much good (*bahukayāne*), mercy (*dayā*), liberality (*dāne*), truthfulness (*sace*), purity (*ṣocaye*)" (R. E. II). To these is added elsewhere moderation (*mādave*). The evil emotions to be avoided are 'violence, cruelty, anger, conceit and envy. (R. E. III). A whole edict (R. E. II) is devoted to the compassion for men and beasts by providing medical treatment for them. It is unnecessary to elaborate here on the contents of Aśoka's *dhamma* since it has been the subject of extensive

63. Bhandarkar, *Aśoka* (University of Calcutta, 1955), pp. 107-116.

writing. What is important here is to note that Aśoka's *dhamma* can be easily recognized as an almost classical formulation of the Śramaṇic ethos for lay life. Aśoka, in fact, goes beyond its description and lays bare its inmost essence. In R. E. VII he says that all sects desire "self-restraint (*samyama*) and purification of heart (*bhāvaśuddhi*)". "...even the lavish liberality and firm faith are quite worthless, if he has no self-restraint, purity of heart or knowledge of what is right". Here the roots of social ethics are traced to inner character which is implicitly defined in terms of the disposition of the will as influenced by feelings. Pure feelings or higher emotions such as compassion and liberality and the restraint of the senses are the essence of a moral character.

It is worth noticing that while compassion is typically Śramaṇic, liberality continues a typical Vedic virtue. Aśoka's *dhamma* is so broadly conceived that even with a Śramaṇic background and the rejection of animal sacrifice and ritualism, it could well be the meeting point of the pure ethical traditions of Śramaṇism and Brāhmaṇism.

It would in fact be noticed that in this form Śramaṇism cannot be distinguished from Brāhmaṇism except negatively since it avoids ritual sacrifices or reference to the worship of the gods or to the inequalities of the caste-system. In this form it constitutes a system of universal, rational and ethical religion which is wholly non-sectarian, as applicable and relevant today as it was 2500 years ago.



## LECTURE THREE

### ŚRAMANIC CRITIQUE OF BRĀHMANISM

In my first lecture I had tried to trace the impact of the Śramaṇic doctrine of *Karman* and Rebirth on Upaniṣadic thought and in my second lecture I had tried to indicate the range of Śramaṇic ascetic and monastic practices which influenced the growth of the fourth Āśrama in the Brāhmaṇical tradition. On these points although Śramaṇism was originally different from Brāhmaṇism, the latter gradually imbibed Śramaṇic ideas and came to approximate it so that in classical times the doctrines of *Samsāra*, *Karman*, asceticism and monasticism became the common repertoire of Śramaṇism as well as Brāhmaṇism. However, there were certain points of belief on which the Śramaṇa sects continued to be critical of Brāhmaṇism. The three most important of these points were the caste system, the authority of the Vedas and the belief in God. There is a well known verse of Dharmakīrti which may be recalled in this connection —

*Veda-prāmāṇyam kasyacitkarṭṛvādaḥ |  
snāne dharmecchā jātivādāvalepaḥ ||  
santāpārambhah pāpa-hānāya ceti |  
dhvastaprajñānāṃ pañca liṅgāni jāḍye ||*

‘There are five signs of the folly of those who have lost their intelligence – belief in the validity of the Vedas, belief in a creator, expecting ethical merit from ablutions, pride of caste, and engaging in violence to be rid of sin.’ From this one can easily surmise how rational, even modern, Dharmakīrti was. In fact, Buddha had himself said – “*parīkṣya madvaco grāhyam bhikṣavo na tu gauravāt*” – “Monks, you should accept my words only after examining them, not out of reverence.” Against the traditionism, even, dogmatism of the Vedic tradition, we can discover a spirit of protest and criticism in the Śramaṇa tradition.

The Buddhists as well the Jainas rejected the dogma of the superiority of the Brāhmaṇas, sought to elevate the relative position of the Kṣatriyas, gave due importance to the mercantile class as their patrons and threw open the monastic order to the persons of the lowest classes in contrast to the regulations of the Brāhmaṇical law givers. The Śvetāmbaras held the belief that the embryo of Mahāvira was transferred from the womb of the Brāhmaṇī Devānandā to that of the Kṣatriyaṇī Trisālā since it was alleged “That a Brāhmaṇa or another woman of low family was not worthy to give birth to a Tirthankara”. As the *Kalpasūtra* states, the king of the gods, on learning of the descent of Mahāvira into the womb of Devānandā, reflected, “It never happened, nor does it happen, nor will it happen, that Arhats, Cakravartin, Baladevas, or Vāsudevas, in the past, present or future should be born in low families, mean families, degraded families, poor families, indigent families, beggar’s families, or Brāhmaṇical families. For indeed Arhats, Cakravartins, Baladevas, and Vāsudevas, in the past, present and future, are born in high families, noble families, royal families, noblemen’s families, in families belonging to the race of Ikṣvākus, or of Hari, or in other such families of pure descent on both sides.”<sup>1</sup> By its side we may place the Buddhist tradition which makes Buddha a scion of the Śākyas who claimed descent from the Ikṣvākus. In the *Ambaṭṭhasutta* of the *Dīghanikāya* we are told that the Brāhmaṇa Ambaṭṭha who was a disciple of the Brāhmaṇa teacher Pokkharasati, went to the Buddha and accused the Śākyas of being rude to the Brāhmaṇas. The Buddha in answer praises the Śākyas and to humble the pride of Ambaṭṭha, describes the Kaṇhāyana gotta to which he belonged as having been founded by a slave of the king Ikṣvāku. He goes on to declare that the status of the Kṣatriya was higher than that of a Brāhmaṇa because while the Brāhmaṇas accept the offspring of an intermarriage between the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas, the latter do not. This is a somewhat strange statement which finds no parallel in Brāhmaṇical literature. Buddha then quotes a *gāthā* supposed to have been enunciated by the Brahmā Sanankumāra to the effect —

“*khattiyo seṭṭho jane tasmim ye gottapaṭisāriṇo |  
vijjācaranaṣampanno so seṭṭho deva mānuse ti ||*”

1. Jacobi, *Jaina Sūtra*, Vol. I, p. 225.

‘Among those who follow the lineage or *gotra*, the Kṣātriya has superiority. However, the person who has learning and character is superior to men as well gods.’ The Buddhist point of view expressed here departs from the orthodox Brāhmaṇical point of view in two respects. It places the Kṣātriyas above the Brāhmaṇas in social hierarchy and at the same time decries the caste hierarchy in favour of spiritual learning and achievement. It has been suggested by Prof. Rhys Davids that the caste system was not yet fully established. “The key-stone of the arch of the peculiarly Indian caste organisation – the absolute supremacy of the Brāhmaṇas – had not yet been put in position, had not, in fact, been yet made ready. *The caste-system, in any proper or exact use of the term, did not exist.*”<sup>1</sup> This conclusion, however, does not seem to be sufficiently warranted. The fact seems to be that the Buddhists represent the caste hierarchy in a manner different from the Brāhmaṇical texts and evaluate its idea and the hierarchy itself differently.

In the *Sonadaṇḍa sutta*, the Brāhmaṇa Sonadaṇḍa declares that there are five pre-requisites for being regarded as a Brāhmaṇa. These are – “In the first place, Sir, a Brāhmaṇa is well born on both sides (*ubhato sujāto hoti*) on the mother’s side and on the father’s side, of pure descent back through seven generations, with no slur put upon him, and no reproach in respect of birth (*avikkhitto anupakutto jātivādena*). Then, he is a repeater of (of the sacred words), knowing the mystic verses by heart (*ajjhāyako hoti mantadharo*), one who has mastered the three Vedas (*tinnaṃ vedānaṃ pāragu*) with the indices, the ritual, the phonology, and the exegesis and the legends as a fifth (*itihāsapamcamānaṃ*), learned in the phrases and in the grammar, versed in Lokāyata sophistry, and in the theory of the signs of a great man “(*lokāyata-mahāpurisalakkhaṇesu anavayo*).” Apart from being well born in a Brāhmaṇa family and possessing learning, a Brāhmaṇa requires in the third place that he be “handsome, pleasant to look upon, inspiring trust, gifted with great beauty of complexion, fair in colour, fine in presence, stately to behold.” In the fourth place the Brāhmaṇa has to be virtuous (*sīlavā hoti buddhisīlī būddhisīlena samanvāgato*) / Finally he has to be “learned and wise, the first,

1. *Dialogues of the Buddha*, Vol. I, p. 101.

or it may be second, among those who hold out the laddle. (*paṇḍito ca hoti medhāvī paṭhamo vā dutiyo vā sujāṃ paggaṇhantānaṃ*) / When Buddha presses the Brāhmaṇa to declare what is indispensable out of the five qualities – *Varṇa*, *Jāti*, *Mantra*, *Śīla* and *Pāṇḍitya* – the Brāhmaṇa agrees that the first three are not really necessary and that what really makes a person Brāhmaṇa is conduct and learning. In this praise of conduct and learning ritualistic conduct and Vedic learning are expressly excluded as becomes clear in the *Kūṭadaṇḍa* and *Tevijja suttas*.

The Buddhist argument against the Brāhmaṇical theory of caste finds expression at several places in canonical writings. In the *Assalāyana sutta*, the Brāhmaṇa Assalāyana says “Brāhmaṇa is the superior *Varṇa*, inferior are the other *Varṇas*.” The Buddha points out that Brāhmaṇas and Brāhmaṇis conceive and produce children in the same manner as all the others. In fact, the four *Varṇas* do not obtain in all the countries, e. g., in Yona and Kamboja there are only two classes – *Ārya* and *Dāsa*. Again, Brāhmaṇas, Kṣattriyas etc., are all of the same human species capable of interbreeding unlike different natural species. Moreover, the destiny of men depends on their moral attainment, not their caste. Any one, whatever his caste, is capable of moral and spiritual progress. Just as there is no difference between the fire lighted from one sort of wood by one caste and another sort of wood by another caste, but all fire is equally fire, bright and burning, similarly men have the same potentiality for moral and spiritual progress whatever the circumstances of their birth.

The *Vāsetṭha sutta* tells us of a debate between the Brāhmaṇas – Bhāradvāja and Vāsiṣṭha. The former held *jātivāda* believing that Brāhmaṇahood depends on birth. The latter contested this and propounded that Brāhmaṇahood depends on conduct or *Śīla*. They both go to Buddha and ask him, “*jātiyā brāhmaṇo hoti udāhu bhavati kammunā* /” Does one become a Brāhmaṇa by birth or by deeds? The Buddha begins by contrasting the differences between species and castes. The species differ in physical features but not so the human classes —

*yathā etāsu jātisu liṅgaṃ jātimayaṃ puthu /  
evaṃ natthi manussesu liṅgaṃ jātimayaṃ puthu ||*

Among men class distinction rests on their vocations. A man might become a cultivator, an artisan, a trader, a servant, a soldier, a priest or a ruler. None of these is really a Brāhmaṇa. A Brāhmaṇa is one who has high moral qualities and is detached and wise.

*na jaccā brāhmaṇo hoti na jaccā hoti abrāhmaṇo |  
kammunā brāhmaṇo hoti kammunā hoti abrāhmaṇo ||*

One does not become a Brāhmaṇa by birth, nor does one become a non-Brāhmaṇa by birth. It is by deeds that one becomes a Brāhmaṇa or ceases to be one. Again,

*tapena brahmacariyena samyamena damena ca |  
etena brāhmaṇo hoti etaṃ brāhmaṇamuttamaṃ ||*

It is through austerities, chastity, self-restraint and control of the senses, that one becomes a Brāhmaṇa. And such a Brāhmaṇa is the noblest. This remained the standard Buddhist theory of caste. It disputed the idea of Brāhmaṇa superiority based on birth and gave a spiritual meaning to Brāhmaṇahood. It threw open the monastic order to persons from the lowest castes. For example, the *Aggañña* and *Madhura sutta* expressly mention the Śūdras joining the order. In the post-canonical period this point of view persisted. The famous text *Vajrasūci* attributed to Aśvaghosa, thus, attacks caste in broadly the same way as the *Vāseṭṭha sutta*. *Vajrasūci* begins by asking the meaning of Brāhmaṇahood. “*Ko yaṃ brāhmaṇo nāma | kiṃ jīvaḥ kiṃ jātiḥ kiṃ sarīraṃ kiṃ jñānaṃ kimācāraḥ kiṃ karma kiṃ veda iti |*” The first alternative that the *jīva* may be Brāhmaṇa is rejected by establishing on scriptural authority that the soul transmigrates among gods, men and animals. The *Vajrasūci Upaniṣad* states the argument clearly. It is, in fact, a notable characteristic of this work (*Vajrasūci*) that it quotes from Brāhmaṇical writings throughout. It goes on to argue that *jāti* cannot be Brāhmaṇahood because the *Smṛtis* declare famous sages to have been born through miscegenation. For example, Vyāsa had a fisherwoman as his mother. Nor can it be argued that the caste of the mother is immaterial because in that case even the son of a slave-woman – *dāsiputra* – would be a Brāhmaṇa. Even if it were accepted that a person is a Brāhmaṇa if he is the son of a Brāhmaṇa, one cannot be sure of the purity of the paternal lineage. Again, the *Smṛtis*

speak of the loss of caste. For example, “*sadyaḥ patati māsenā lākṣayā lavaṇena ca | tryahācchūdraśca bhavati brāhmaṇaḥ kṣtravikrayi ||*” If a Brāhmaṇa can fall into śūdrahood, birth could not be the basis of Brāhmaṇahood. “*Kim khalu duṣṭo ’pyaśvaḥ sūkarō bhavet ? |*” Can a bad horse become a pig ?

Nor can the body be Brāhmaṇa. Otherwise burning the dead Brāhmaṇa would cause *brahma-hatyā* ! It may be recalled here that this particular alternative has been supported by Kumārila.

Nor, again, can knowledge cause Brāhmaṇahood, else all the learned śūdras would be Brāhmaṇas. The same argument excludes conduct because we find low caste people engaged in austerities and having good conduct. As for profession it is found in a mixed state among the different castes. Vedic study was practised even by the *rākṣasas*.

The true source of Brāhmaṇahood is the purity of the heart. “*Brāhmaṇatvaṃ na śāstreṇa na saṃskārairna jātibhiḥ | na kulena na vedena na karmanā bhavettataḥ || Kundendudhavalam hi brāhmaṇatvaṃ nām sarvapāpasyāpākaraṇamiti |*” ‘Brāhmaṇahood is not by scriptures, or sacraments or birth or family, Vedic learning or profession. Brāhmaṇahood is avoidance of sins and is pure like the Kunda flower and the moon.’ Moral and spiritual qualities make one Brāhmaṇa.

Aśvaghoṣa then goes on to argue that all men belong to the same race. There is only one *Varṇa* which gets functionally divided into four.

“*Kriyāviśeṣeṇa khalu caturvarṇa-vyavasthā kriyate |*”

Vaiśampāyana is quoted to say —

“*eka-varṇamidam pūrvam viśvamāsīd Yudhiṣṭhira | karmakriyā-viśeṣeṇa caturvarṇyam pratiṣṭhitam ||*”

One may recall here that Sīlānka in his commentary on the *Āyāra* says that there is only one human race where the rulers were called the Kṣayattriyas, the rest through suffering and lamenting were the Śūdras. Those who took to manufacture and trade when fire was discovered became Vaiśyas while the Brāhmaṇas arose from the Śrāvakas. (Comm. pp. 14–15.)

However, it must be added that despite the theoretical opposition to the theory of the *Cāturvarṇya*, the Buddhists could not in practice disregard caste altogether. For example, it is interesting to note that the famous Chinese pilgrim Yuan Chwang generally mentions the castes from which the famous monks of his time were derived. We have also to remember Udayana's remarks that there is no sect which disregards the Vedic *samskāras* in practice even though they might decry them as 'conventional' – *nāstyeva taddarśanaṃ yatra sāmṃvṛtameta-dityuktvāpi garbhādhānādyantyeṣṭiparyantāṃ vaidikīm kriyāṃ nānutiṣṭhati janah* | (*Āmatattvaviveka*). 'There is no school where people do not perform the Vedic rites from conception to the funerary rites even though they might sometime describe them as conventional'. Apparently the Buddhist laity did not wholly cut themselves away from the mores of the society in which they lived. The fact seems to be that the Buddhist protest was satisfied when the Buddhist monks obtained a venerable position in society without reference to their caste origin. They did not carry out any sustained vendetta against the caste system itself. That system proved so flexible indeed that it allowed all those who disputed it to be themselves regarded as a distinct community within the broader framework of caste.

Views similar to the Buddhist, indeed, found mention even in the *Mahābhārata*. In the famous dialogue in the *Ājagaraparvan* in the *Vanaparvan*, Yudhiṣṭhira is asked "*brāhmaṇah ko bhavedrājan*" 'who, O King, is a Brāhmaṇ?' and his answer is "*Satyam dānam kṣamā śīlamānṛśamsyam tapo ghrṇā | dṛśyante yatra nāgendra sa brāhmaṇa iti smṛtah* ||" 'A Brāhmaṇa is one who evinces truth, liberality, forbearance, virtue, mildness, austerity and pity'. At this the questioning python promptly points out that such qualities may be found in the Sūdras also. Yudhiṣṭhira, however, sticks to his definition and declares that anyone possessing these qualities should be called a Brāhmaṇa and any one bereft of these should be called a Sūdra "*yatraitallakṣyate sarpa vṛttam sa brāhmaṇah smṛtah | yatraitanna bhavet sarpa tam sūdra-miti nir-diṣet* ||" The python, then logically asks – If the Brāhmaṇa is to be defined in terms of conduct, then birth would cease to be a criterion of caste. "*Yadi te vṛttato rājan brāhmaṇah prasamīkṣitah | vṛthā jātistadā yuṣman kṛtiryāvanna vidyate* ||" Yudhiṣṭhira answers that on

account of intermixture the purity by birth of the *Varnas* is impossible to discover. What is more, men are alike in social as well as sexual behaviour. It is conduct alone which distinguishes them. All men are alike Sūdras before they are born through Vedic studies. One becomes a Brāhmaṇa only through refined and purified conduct.

‘*Jātiratra mahāsarpa manuṣyatve mahāmate |  
saṅkarāt sarvavarṇānām duṣparikṣyēti me matiḥ ||  
sarve sarvāsvapatyani janayanti sadā narāḥ |  
vāṅ maithunamatho janma maraṇam ca samam nṛṇām ||  
tāvaccchūdra samo hyeṣa yāvad vede na jāyate |  
tasminnevaṃ matidvedhe manuḥ svāyam̐bhuvō bravīt ||  
yatredānīm mahāsarpa saṃskṛtam vṛttamiṣyate |  
tam brāhmaṇamaham pūrvamuktavān bhujagottama ||*’

“O wise and great serpent, it is my belief that caste is extremely difficult to ascertain among men because of miscegenation among all classes. Any man is capable of begetting a child in any woman. All human beings are alike in speech, sexual behaviour, birth and death. A man remains a Sūdra till he is born in the Veda. In this dilemma such is the decision of Manu, the son of Svayambhu. O great serpent, if sacramentally purified conduct is to be found in some one, I would call him Brāhmaṇa”.

It is worth noticing that in this context the supreme end of man is described as one which is free from pain and pleasure – ‘*nirduḥkhama-sukham ca yat* /’ Such a state is attainable through truth, liberality and non-violence. The stress on *Ahimsā*, the emphasis on an end beyond desires, and on conduct as the basis of social respect, not birth, these ideas together constitute a world of belief which is distinctly Śramaṇic and appears to represent a kind of adaptive reform movement within orthodoxy, a situation which is illustrated most conspicuously by the *Gītā* and the *Śāntiparvan*.

It is worth mentioning at this point that some scholars have proposed to link the anti-caste attitude of Buddhist and Jaina thinkers with the fact of their affiliation with the Kṣātriya republics of north-eastern India. Just as it was held at one time that these reform movements were championed by the Kṣātriyas against Brāhmaṇic orthodoxy,



it is now proposed by some scholars to connect them with the fact that the emergence of the caste-system served as a social solvent of the *Gaṇas* so that the thoughtful or leaders of this passing clan society were led to protest against the Brāhmanically formulated caste-system. However, it is not really established that the *Gaṇas* lay outside the purview of the *Varṇa* system. So far as clearly known the *Gaṇas* were a form of polity rather than society. Even the Vedic clans or *Janas* were not free from the distinction of *Varṇas*. When the *Janas* turned into *Janapadas*, whether these were *gaṇādhīna* or *Rājādhīna*, they did not exclude the *Varṇas* which all along stood primarily for a class distinction, arising functionally but gradually becoming more and more hereditary, especially on account of the privileged position of the upper classes and sacerdotal theory. Even as regards polity, the new empires rising into prominence at the time were not firmly wedded to either Brāhmaṇism or Śramaṇism so that to seek to explain these ideologies in terms of social and political set-up does not appear convincing.

If we turn to the early Jaina canon we discover an anticaste attitude similar to that of the Buddhist texts. In the famous legend of Hariesa Bala from the *Uttarajjhayana* we find that a monk who belonged to the lowest caste of the *Śvapāka* or *Cāṇḍāla* is reviled by the Brāhmaṇas engaged in a sacrifice who feel that the presence of the outcastes will pollute the ritual. The incident makes one recall the ancient Vedic legend of Kavaṣa Ailūṣa where a priest having been discovered of low birth is turned out by the others as ineligible and inauspicious. At another place a Brāhmaṇa turned monk instructs the Brāhmaṇas about what is a true sacrifice and who is a true Brāhmaṇa. "The binding of animals (to the sacrificial pole), all the Vedas, and sacrifices, being causes of sin, cannot save the sinner, for his *Karman* is very powerful, one does not become a Śramaṇa by tonsure, nor a Brāhmaṇa by the sacred syllable *Om*, nor a Muni by living in the woods, nor a Tāpasa by wearing clothes of Kusa-grass and bark. One becomes a Śramaṇa by equanimity, a Brāhmaṇa by chastity, a Muni by knowledge, and a Tāpasa by penance. By one's actions one becomes a Brāhmaṇa. or a Kṣatriya, or a Vaiśya, or a Sudra ... him who is exempt from all *Karman*, we call a Brāhmaṇa".<sup>1</sup>

1. Jacobi, *Jaina Suttras*, Vol. II, pp. 130-40.

The Mīmāṃsakas who were the champions of Brāhmaṇical orthodoxy sought to rehabilitate the most extreme view about the nature of caste. Kumārila stated in the *Tantravārtika* that Brāhmaṇahood is not a mere collection of moral qualities, or a character produced by them or a species manifested by them. It is a physical class character which is apprehended in perception as aided by the knowledge of the person's heredity – ‘*na ca tapa ādīnām samudāyo brāhmaṇyam na tajjanitah saṃskārah na tadabhivyaṅgyā jātiḥ | kiṃ tarhi ? mātāpitṛjāti-jñānābhivyaṅgyā pratyakṣasamadhigamyā* |’<sup>1</sup> It may be recalled that the phrase ‘*na ca tapa ādīnām samudāyo brāhmaṇyam*’ recalls a view which was already mentioned by the *Mahābhāṣya*. The *Nyāyasudha*<sup>2</sup> explains the *Pūrvapakṣa* as asserting that since no distinct Brāhmaṇical form or appearance is apprehended, Brāhmaṇahood should be deemed an *Upādhi* or accident, not a *jāti* or species – ‘*na ca kṣatriyādibhyo vyāvṛtto brāhmaṇeṣvanuvṛtaḥ kaścidākāra-viśeṣo mātāpitṛsambandhajñenāpi pratīyate | tasmād brāhmaṇādiśabdavyapadeśyamātāpitṛsantānajanmatva-upādihiko brāhmaṇādiśabdo na jāti vacanaḥ* |’ One cannot apprehend a common and specific form for all the Brāhmaṇas, which might be distinguished from the Kṣatriyas etc. Thus one cannot do even by knowing the relationship with the parents. Hence the words Brāhmaṇa etc., refer not to a *jāti* but to an *Upādhi* depending on one's heredity. This is answered by saying that *Jāti* is a peculiar character which is not necessarily a distinct physical form – ‘*yaccākāra-viśeṣo na pratīyate itiyuktam | tatra yadyākāraśabdena saṃsthānam mudrāparanāmadheyamabhipretam tatastasya jātitvānaṅgīkārādadoṣaḥ | brāhmaṇapratīyaya-vedyastu dharmā-viśeṣo'nubhava-siddhatvānnāpahnāmarhati* |’ As for the statement that one cannot perceive any specific physical character, it is not a relevant objection because we do not regard *jāti* as consisting in a visible physical character. This does not mean that we can deny the fact of an empirically attested characteristic corresponding to the idea of Brāhmaṇahood. Brāhmaṇahood, thus, is known by perception aided by information about lineage and such information not being rendered suspect by rumours about its unreliability, would deserve to be accepted as true.’ The whole argument rests on the assumption that

1. *Tantra Vārtika*, 1.2.2.

2. Vol. I, pp. 10-11.

an uninterrupted tradition of pure heredity exists reliably and corresponds to a real physical difference of a genetic kind and that the Śāstric pronouncements as well as social belief relating to such genetic distinctions do not furnish any reasonable ground for doubt. *Jāti* is not a species or race but a distinctive heredity. It has a physical and genetic base but it is not a characteristic bodily form.

This mode of argument was severely criticized by both the Buddhists as well as the Jainas. Thus Prajnākaragupta says in his *Vārtikāṅkārā* that Brāhmaṇahood may mean either a species or *Jāti* or a lineage or *Gotra*, or a distinctive capacity (*Kriyāsāmarthyātisaya*). Since Brāhmaṇas and Sūdras look alike, *Jāti* is clearly not in question – ‘*na tāvad gotvādi jātimiva tajjātimākāraviśeṣādeva kecidavadhārayitumīṣate | ākṛtisaṅkarasya darśanāt | śūdrādyabhimatānāmapi saivākṛtirupalabhyate | |* No one can determine the caste by the inspection of the physical appearance as we can determine the species of cows etc. In the case of men, appearances are all mixed up. Moreover, those who are held to be Sūdras have the same form as others. As for lineage one cannot be certain of the past. In fact, it only pushes the problem to the unknown past. ‘*avicchedasca gotrasya pratyeturṃ śakyate na ca*’. The uninterruptedness of the *gotra* cannot be known. What is more, one cannot know of the purity of distant heredity. Nor is any distinct capacity seen in the Brāhmaṇas now. Brāhmaṇahood cannot be perceived without instruction where the instruction itself constitutes no authority. Nor can the Vedas establish the Brāhmaṇahood of any given person since the Vedas have no relevance to particular persons at all. Hence – ‘*naivam brāhmaṇatvādikam pratyakṣādūpadeśādubhayād vedādvāpratīyate | tatoḥ samvyavahāramatraprasiddham brāhmaṇyam*’<sup>1</sup> Thus Brāhmaṇahood is not known by perception or instruction or both or the Vedas. Hence it is only a social convention. Against this Kumarila has in turn argued that because the perception of something requires a special vantage point for the perceiver, it does not cease to be perceptible. Similarly the possibility of misalliance does not mean that one should hold it as an actuality without further evidence. ‘*na hi yadgiriśṛṅgamāruhya gṛhyate tadapratyakṣam | na ca strīnām kvacid vya-bhicārdaśanāt sarvatraiva kalpanā yuktā |*’ If something is perceived by

1. pp. 10–12.

climbing the hill top, it does not cease to be regarded as perceptible. If women are occasionally unfaithful it does not follow that we must always imagine them so.

Against the Mīmāṃsakas, the great Jaina Ācārya, Prabhācandra argues that nothing distinctive can be perceived by the senses as Brāhmaṇahood since a Brāhmaṇa does not look different from a non-Brāhmaṇa. ‘*na khalu yathā mahiṣyādisaṃghe gavāṃ gojatiḥ vailakṣaṇyena pratibhasate...tathā brāhmaṇyamapi* /’ A Brāhmaṇa cannot be distinguished from non-Brāhmaṇas as cows from buffaloes. Nor can one adduce any other sufficiently valid factor which would produce such perception. It cannot be the knowledge of the father’s Brāhmaṇahood (*brāhmaṇabhūtapitṛjanyatvaṃ*) which is similarly in need of being known. Nor can the uninterruptedness of a pure lineage be known without doubt since there is no definite way in which impurity of lineage manifests itself. Nor, again, can Brāhmaṇahood be deciphered in terms of conduct which may equally belong to Brāhmaṇas as well as non-Brāhmaṇas. The fact is that Brāhmaṇahood is a social description which depends on function and socially acquired characteristics. Human beings constitute one race which is distinguished into *varṇas* not by birth or *Jāti* but by functional social ascriptions. ‘*manuṣya-jātirekaiva jātīnāmodayodbhavā | vṛtti-bhedaḥhitādbhedāccāturvidhyamihāśnute* ||’<sup>1</sup> A single human race is divided into four classes by social functions.

The denial of the hereditary caste system was closely connected with the denial of the authority of the *Vedas*. The Mīmāṃsakas sought to defend the authority of the *Vedas* by logical argumentation. They began with the doctrine *Svataḥprāmāṇyavāda*, i. e., the self-validating character of knowledge. If knowledge were not to be self-validating, nothing would ever suffice to validate it because any other knowledge advanced as an argument to validate the earlier one will itself need validation and thus we would be led to an infinite regress. As Mādhavācārya puts it *kiṃ ca tāvakamanumāṇaṃ svataḥ pramāṇaṃ na vā | ādye anekāntikatā | dvitīye tasyāpi parataḥ prāmāṇyamevaṃ tasya, tasyāpṛtyanavāsthā duravasthā syāt* /’<sup>2</sup> “Is your inference against self-valid by itself or does it have to be validated by another? If it is self-valid, then your reason

1. *Ādipurāṇa*, 38.45. 2. *Sarvadarśanasāṅgraha*.

becomes uncertain since you have yourself produced a counterexample. If on the other hand, your inference needs further validation that would need still another and one would be caught in a vicious infinite regress.” The very causes which produce knowledge also produce the validity of knowledge and the reflective awareness of knowledge is thus accompanied by its certitude also. ‘*pramāññaptirapi jñānajñāpaka-sāmagrīta eva jāyate* /’ As for error or doubt it arises from the operation of a defect or *doṣa* in addition to the normal causal factors in knowledge.

To this principle of *Svataḥprāmāṇyavāda* the Mīmāṃsakas add the doctrine of the eternity of the word. The principal argument on which they rely is that we recognize the words and letters to be the same. We recognize the phonemes or *Varṇas* as identical with what have been encountered earlier. The Mīmāṃsakas have certainly hit upon a very subtle principle, that of the ideality of the phonetic distinctions. They have, however, chosen to forget the equally evident impermanence of words as sounds. While phonemic distinctions have an element of ideality, the phonetic elements themselves are sensuous and ephemeral particulars. Apart from the ideality and recognizable identity of phonemic elements, the Mīmāṃsakas argue from the persistence of the semantic force of words, which shows that words must themselves be identically persistent to be able to signify the same meaning at different times and places to different persons. The words could only refer to universals as meanings and as such would be as ideal as the concepts themselves. ‘*pratyabhijñā yadā śabde jāgarti niravagrahā | anityatvānumānāni saiva sarvāṇi bādhatē ||*’ ‘The unrestricted liveliness of recognition in words is alone sufficient to contradict all the syllogisms proposed to prove the impermanence of words.’

Combining *Svataḥprāmāṇyavāda* and *Śabdanityatvavāda* the Mīmāṃsakas hold the Vedas to be eternal as well as authoritative. They also add to this the principle of the impersonal character or *Apauruṣeyatva* of the Vedas. The principal argument used here is that we have an uninterrupted tradition of Vedic study without any memory of any personal authorship of the Vedas. ‘*apauruṣeyā vedāḥ sampradāyāvicchede satyasmāyamaṇakartrkatvādātmatvat |*’ ‘The Vedas have not been composed by any person because while there is no interruption of the tradition of Vedic study, no one remembers such an author’.

Buddhists as well as Jainas have attacked these formulations of the orthodox Vedicists in many ways. The Buddhists argue that the validity of knowledge is not a constant feature of knowledge, which proves that the causes producing knowledge are not the same as those which produce its validity or invalidity. As for the eternity of the word it is sufficiently disproved by the consideration that words are produced and hence cease to be, ‘*anityaḥ śabdah kṛtakatvāt* /’ Again, it is neither possible to prove the beginninglessness nor the uninterruptedness of Vedic study. Besides, the authorship of the Vedic hymns is found to be ascribed to sages. The Vedas refer to particular persons and places and hence could not be prior to these. What is more, the Vedas preach faulty doctrines and hence cannot be regarded as authoritative.

‘*sambhāvyate ca vedasya vispaṣṭam pauruṣeyatā /  
kāmamithyākriyāprāṇihimsāsatyābhidhā tathā ||*’

‘The human authorship of the Vedas may be clearly surmised from the fact that it speaks of passions, violence and falsehood’. Like the *Tattvasaṅgraha*, Prabhacandra’s *Nyāyakumudacandra* also deals at length with the Mīmāṃsaka orthodoxy about the Vedas. The argument that recognition proves the identity of *Varnas*, is held to be unreliable because it mistakes similarity for identity. That such recognition is mistaken is proved by the perception of the word being produced and ceasing to be. That the word is able to convey a stable meaning does not mean that the word itself is an identically stable entity. Different words serve the same function by virtue of their similarity. As to the Mīmāṃsaka assertion that the utterance of the word is not the production but the manifestation of the eternal word, such an assertion really suffers from a *petitio principii*. There is no reason to suppose that the word exists prior to its utterance.

Again to argue that the Vedas have no author because none is remembered is to adduce a reason which is unproven and non-existent in the subject or *Pakṣa*. The probandum or *Apauruṣeyatva* belongs to the Vedas while the reason *Kartuḥ smaraṇābhāva* does not belong to them. Besides, that someone should fail to remember the authorship of the Vedas

proves precisely nothing except the failure of his memory. If someone fails to remember something it does not follow that something does not exist. On the other hand, one cannot universalize the proposition that no one remembers the author of the Vedic texts since there is no way of substantiating such a universal proposition. What is more, the so-called *Abhāva Pramāṇa* does not apply in such cases since that *Pramāṇa* functions only when all the other five *Pramāṇas* fail to apply. In the present case the Vedas themselves speak of their author. The various Vedic recensions are thus ascribed to different sages like Kaṇva etc. Decisive, again, is the consideration that the Vedas are compositions like other human compositions. ‘*Pauruṣeyo vedah racanāvāt bhāratādivat padavākyātmakatvādā |*’ The argument that Vedic composition is wholly distinctive and singular is difficult to countenance. Wherein lies the distinctiveness of Vedic composition – in its unpronunciability, harshness of sounds, deviation in grammatical usage, use of uncommon rhythm and metre, propounding of supersensuous meanings, or having magical power? Now none of these features is superhuman since they can all be paralleled in human compositions. In particular, the magical character of Vedic utterances (*mahāprabhāvopetamantrayuktatva*) is in no way different from the similar power of non-Vedic *mantras*, which is all due to the will of some superior or powerful person.

The doctrine of the *apauruṣeyatva* of the Vedas was not accepted by the Naiyāyikas also who concurred with the Buddhists and the Jainas in rejecting the doctrine of the eternity of the word and the authorlessness of the Veda. But the Naiyāyikas like all the other Brahmanical schools accepted the authority of the Vedas. For the Naiyāyikas the authoritative character of the Vedic texts rested on the assumption that they are texts revealed by God. It is here that the Jainas and the Buddhists combined again to oppose the doctrine of theism as much as the authenticity of the Vedas.

The idea of God arose in the Vedic tradition in terms of the worship of His visible or manifest forms in nature. As the greatest poet of India prayed, ‘*pratyakṣābhistanubhiravatu vastābhiraṣṭābhirīśah*. This was, in effect, the Vedic view. The visible deities of the Vedic age hardly required any proof. In the later Vedic age the many gods

were gradually merged into one God who was believed to be the creator of the universe, a function formerly shared by many. That the world with its diversity should be understood as the product of some primordial substance under the will of a primal person, is naturally assumed in the *Upaniṣads*. How diverse things are produced from the same material like pots from clay appeared a sufficient analogy for Upaniṣadic seers to conclude that there is an overarching sentient reality determining the universe. The fact of creation is taken for granted. Natural things are like human artifacts and God is the prime artificer. While another line of argument of a transcendental nature developed into the theory of Advaita Vedānta, emphasising divinity as the ground of world appearance rather than as its active cause, later theism continued to rest primarily on the argument that the world needs a first cause and that can only be God. As the idea of God was attacked by materialists and the Śramaṇa schools, the Nyāya system arose to furnish a logical defence of theism and this debate went on for a thousand years, culminating in the great work of Udayana, *Nyāyakusumāñjali*.

Udayana interprets the concept of God in a broad catholic sense as that of the supreme person who is omniscient, gracious and the creator of the universe. He considers and answers five sets of objections against theism. In the first place he rebuts the *Cārvāka* contention that there is no supernatural means assuring afterlife (*alaukikasya paralokasādhanasyābhāvāt*). It is really a denial of any non-natural force determining human life and ensuring the existence of life after death. Udayana rebuts it by pointing out that the human vicissitudes of pleasure and pain postulate their dependence on definite but individualized causal forces and all mankind believes that religious ritual is relevant for securing a desirable destiny.

‘*sāpekṣatvādanāditvāt vaicitryād viśvavyttitah |  
pratyātmaniyamād bhukterasti heturalaukikah ||*’

‘There is a supernatural cause of pleasure and pain because of the following reasons—causal dependence of such experiences, the beginninglessness of the chain of such causes, the diversity of human situation, the universality of the belief in ritual efficacy, and the specific



determination of individual destiny'. He then goes on to answer the atheistic Mīmāṃsakas who accept *Paraloka* and its *Alaukika sādhana* but substitute God by the Vedas. Udayana points out that the validity of utterances is not self-evident and that revelation itself has a beginning and its authority derives from the person who makes the revelation –

‘*pramāyāḥ paratantratvāt sargopralayasambavāt /  
tadanyasminnanāśvāsāt na vidhyantara sambhavaḥ ||*’

‘No other rule is acceptable since valid knowledge depends on a quality which the cause of knowledge may possess and because the creation and dissolution of the world occur periodically and, finally, because there can be no assurance of truth except from a revelation by God’.

Udayana then turns against the Buddhists who argue the non-existence of God as of the soul from their non-perception (*Anuplabdhi*). It may be rebutted that it is only *yogyānupalabdhi* which can prove nonexistence, not *ayogyānupalabdhi*. If something is by its nature perceivable in a certain manner and in fact not so perceived, then it would be right to infer its non-existence. But if something is by its nature not amenable to perception, we could not infer its non-existence from its non-perception. The atoms, for example, do not cease to exist because they are not perceived. Even the soul is not perceived during deep sleep but does not on that account cease to be. The Buddhists counter this by arguing that in that case even the hare’s horn could not be rejected and one could propound a syllogism like ‘*śaśaḥ śṛṅgī paśutvāt*’. ‘The hare has horns because it is an animal.’ Suppose it is argued that the ‘horn’ is as such perceptible and hence its non-perception on the head of the hare is its sufficient disproof. In that case it will have to be similarly accepted that being a sentient creator of the universe, God would have a body like the potter etc., and as such should be held amenable to perception. Udayana’s answer is that a sentient creator does not need to have a body and a bodyless creator not being amenable to perception, is in no wise disproved by non-perception.

The supposedly Jain objection that the knowledge which God has, not being the knowledge of something previously unknown, would cease to have the character of *Pramā*, is then disposed off by Udayana by

affirming that God's knowledge being the true knowledge of reality continues to be *Pramā*. *Pramā* is not to be defined either by *agrhitagrāhijñānatva* nor by *Pramānajanyatva* but only by *Yathārthānubhava* which is independent of another experience.

Finally Udayana sums up the positive arguments for the existence of God in the famous verse –

‘ *kāryāyojanadhr̥tyādeḥ padāt pratyayataḥ śruteḥ |  
vākyāt samkhyāviśeṣācca sādhyo viśvavidavyayah ||* ’

Here eight reasons have been adduced to prove the existence of God. The eight syllogisms may be rendered thus – (1) The world consisting of the earth etc., has a maker because it is a product like the pot. (2) The initial motion of atoms at the beginning of creation presupposes voluntary effort since it is a movement like that of our own bodies. (3) The solar and celestial system are held in a fixed position in space by a force which presupposes effort. (4) Linguistic and social behaviour is acquired in a tradition which must have been originated by some first person. (5) The authority of the Vedas implies a reliable person from whom the Vedas must have proceeded. (6) The Vedas being compositions must owe their origin to a person who is God. (7) Vedic sentences imply a person as their author. (8) The law of numbers operates in the formation of compounds from atoms at the beginning of creation but since numbers are inconceivable without a mind which relates objects, there must have been a superhuman mind to explain the efficacy of numbers at that time when no human mind existed.

This last argument needs some explanation. On the Nyāya theory the magnitude of composite products arises in three different ways. It may arise from the summation of constituent magnitudes (*parimāṇayoni*) or it may arise from the interstitial spaces between the constituents (*pracayaśithilāvayavasamyoga*) or it may arise from the number or plurality of constituents (*samkhyāyoni*). When the atoms form an aggregate or binary compounds of atoms combine further to form *Tryaṇukas* an increase in magnitude takes place. Now what is its cause? The normal rule is that the aggregation of magnitudes increases the magnitudes in their own original kind. Thus the combination of

impartible atomic magnitudes would lead to atomic magnitudes of a still lower dimension if it were possible. Actually the magnitude increases and becomes partible. Hence the Naiyāyikas assume that this increase in magnitude must be due to the number or plurality of the atoms involved. Since numbers have meaning only in relation to a percipient mind, (*apekṣābuddhi*) such a mind must be postulated at the very beginning of creation to account for its possibility. Now such an original mind can only be the mind of God.

It is interesting to recall here the way in which the famous English philosopher Green has sought to prove the dependence of nature on the mind by emphasizing the element of relatedness in nature and by arguing that relations are necessarily dependent on the mind.<sup>1</sup> It might be remarked here that while Dignāga accepted the conceptual nature of relations (*na saṃbandha indriyeṇa gr̥hyate*), he used this as an argument against the ultimate unreality of relations themselves!

All these eight arguments can be summed up into two. The first of these is the cosmological argument which observes the meaningful structure and laws of nature and concludes that these are evidence of the working of a perfect mind as their cause. The second argument may be called theological and amounts to having faith in a supreme person which would be the basis of regarding the scriptures as authoritative revelations of truth beyond the ken of mere human knowledge.

Of these the second argument has no force with the Buddhists and the Jainas since they accept a personal authorship of the Vedas but deny their authority. Religious faith requires an authentic revelation but that does not need to be identified with the Vedas. Nor is it necessary that the revelation should proceed from the creator of the universe. To be authentic the revelation should come from a person who is fully knowledgeable about spiritual matters and is free from all motivation except that of compassion and helpfulness towards suffering humanity. The Buddhists and the Jainas thus accept omniscient human teachers as the source of their religious scriptures and do not feel the need of accepting any God for that purpose. It would be clear that the atheism of the Śramaṇa sects relates only to the idea

1. Cf. Pringle Pattison, *The Idea of God* (OUP, 1920), p. 203. Cf. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics* (OUP, 1907), p. 17.

of a personal creator of the world not to the idea of a religious saviour. The Buddha and the Jina are in one sense hardly to be distinguished from God. They are omniscient as also the saviours of mankind and are in this sense exactly like God in His aspect of grace. This doctrine of omniscient human teachers was in turn vehemently criticized by Brāhmaṇical thinkers especially the Mīmāṃsakas. The Jainas had, like Patāñjali, argued that from observing different degrees of knowledge we may infer someone with the highest perfection of knowledge. This is capable of being interpreted as a variety of the ontological argument but the Mīmāṃsakas refuted it empirically by arguing that some differences among men cannot be taken to be evidence for postulating unlimited differences. Some men jump more than others but from this it does not follow that some man can fly. The Buddhists reformulated the argument for omniscience by reinterpreting omniscience itself. It is the knowledge of spiritual truth that is relevant, not the knowledge of trivial or irrelevant things. This interpretation is more in harmony with the common belief of the Buddhists and the Jainas that omniscience is the spontaneous result of the purification of the mind which is thus set free to express its innate knowledge. Whether this innate knowledge of the soul or mind is only self-knowledge or also a knowledge of existence would remain disputable even if one accepts the view that spiritual experience is the revelation of some kind of reality.

The Jainas analyse the notion of 'being an effect' or *Kāryatva* in some detail. Thus Prabhācandra asks – Is it being a whole with parts, or inhering in the actuality of its cause before becoming existent, or being the object of the notion of 'making', or being subject to change? '*yattāvat ksityāderbuddhimaddhetukatvasiddhaye kāryatvaṃ sādhanamuktaṃ, tatkiṃ sāvayavatvaṃ, prāgasataḥ svakāraṇasattāsama-vāyah, kṛtamiti pratyayaviṣayatvaṃ, vikāritvaṃ vā syāt |*' One must remember that of these the first had been specially emphasized by Nyāya-Vaisesika thinkers. Thus Vācaspati Miśra had argued – '*na caiṣāmutpattimatvamasiddham, sāvayavatvena vā mahatve sati kriyāvatvena vā vastradivat tatsiddheḥ ||*' i. e., 'nor is it unproved that bodies, trees, mountains etc., have an origin because they are composed of parts, or one could say, because, not being of atomic dimension, they are subject to action just as cloth etc. are.' Prabhācandra asks, does

*sāvayavatva* mean inhering in the parts ? In that case even partness (*avayavatva*) could become a whole ! Does it mean ' being produced by parts ' ? This would, however, beg the question; or does *sāvayavatva* mean ' having spatial parts or extendedness ' (*pradeśavatva*) ? If so, it is a plainly false reason because the sky too has *Pradeśas* but is not a product or effect. ' Being the object of the notion of production ' does not help, because such notions are not always literally or accurately applied. ' Inherence in causal existence ' is meaningless because inherence itself has no plausible meaning. To argue from the changeability (*vikāritva*) of the world would not prove its being an effect because everything that has being must change thereby. God himself must, to be real, have modal change. How else would He create the world, if He remained totally changeless ? If then, change means production and a producing cause, the notion of a First Cause become self-contradictory. The fact is that the world like God is ever-existent. It exists and changes and has always existed and changed. Even if one postulates cause for such production, it does not follow that the cause should be intelligent or perfect.

The Śramaṇic opposition to the idea of God as creator arises essentially from their belief in the autonomy and centrality of the doctrine of *Karman*. That there is some order and structure in the world and some purposiveness in the adaptation of life to environment need not be questioned. It may prove that the organization and happenings in the world have some relation to mental purposes and volitions but it does not prove that a single, perfect and eternal mind is the cause of such partial order. In fact, if we see structures like a city we have to conclude that they owe their origin not to one but to many and fallible minds. There are even accidental structures.

At best we can only be justified in thinking of the working of human minds, directly or through the unseen force of *Karman*, to understand whatever order we do find in the world. In the Vedic tradition the universe is the expression of a personal will. In the Śramaṇic tradition it is determined by an impersonal natural law. This view is distinguished from simple naturalism by its belief that the moral law is not merely a human idea but a causally operative law in nature.

Śramaṇic atheism is not a variety of irreligion but of religion. It faces the evil and suffering of life squarely and attributes it to human failings rather than to the mysterious design of an unknown being. It stresses the inexorableness of the moral law. No prayers and worship are of any avail against the force of *Karman*. It emphasizes self-reliance in the quest for salvation. Man needs to improve himself by a patient training of the will and the purification of feelings. Such purification leads to an inward illumination of which the power is innate in the soul or the mind. This is quite different from the Vedic view where illumination comes from outside, either from an eternally revealed word or from the grace of God. Śramaṇism represents a sterner variety of religion where the consolation of a personal God is replaced by the guidance of a spiritual teacher which must be practised by the individual himself on the basis of his own resources.

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