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Study of Jaina Art as a Source of Indian History and Culture : A Perspective

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Art is the living visual account of our tradition, including the concept in religion and philosophy that prevail during an epoch in society. And yet, while discussing history or religion, philosophy and culture, we take into account only literature as the main narrative alongwith inscriptions and coins and miss out the artistic creations of temples, *stūpas*, sculptures and paintings, or the other forms of art embodying the spirit of the time.

In the Jaina context, art has been the main vehicle for the wide and dynamic expression of spirituality, the absolute renunciation of all possessiveness, and the ideal of non-violence and austerity, besides ample informations about the patronage of ruling, traders and merchantile classes. The Jaina sculptures also reveal tremendous variety and grace in dress, ornaments, hair style, attributes and contemporary daily life which are important source of social-art history of India. A unique feature of Jaina art and thought was that the *ācāryas* never compromised on the basic tenets of Jainism. These tenets found idealistic expression in their images of the victorious Jinas or *Tīrthamkaras*, and of *Gommaṭeśvara Bāhubali*, the first *kevali* of present aeon and the son of first Jina *Rṣabhanātha*. The reverence for

purity was uppermost in the Jaina consciousness, so much so that only the highest point of spiritual attainment was sought to be reflected in art.¹

The poetries of the Jaina concepts, woven into the attitudes, gestures and postures (*mudrās*) of the images, brought forth multiple layers of meanings in a visual language. The subject chosen was depicted in the human form – whether legend, deity or sage. However, the person was revered for the ideal quality epitomized. Thus, the inspirational quality of a *Jina* (*Arhat*) was his invincibility as the soul of perfection. Other qualities and states of being worthy of adoration were : the *vītarāgi* - free from desire and passion; *nirgrantha* - free from knots of bondage; the postures of *kāyotsarga-mudrā* – the erect figure in the attitude of dismissing the body and the *dhyāna-mudrā*-figure seated cross-legged, indicating deep meditation; and finally the absolute *aparigraha* (non-possession) and *ahiṃsā* (non-violence).

Of course, the subject most often chosen by the artist to project the wholeness of his inspiration was one of the 24 *Jinas*. The other main legendary subjects were – *Bāhubalī*, the personification of endurance, non-violence and non-acquisition (*aparigraha*) and *Bharata Muni*, the prince who is worshipped not as *Chakravartin* or emperor, but as *Muni* after absolute renunciation. The *Mahāpurāna* clearly states that *Bharata* prior to renunciation was worshipped only by the kings of his country but after renunciation he attained lordship over three worlds and was worshipped even by the *Indras*² Besides these, there were also the images and paintings depicting ascetics and holy mendicants – *ācāryas*, *upādhyāyas*, *sādhus* and *sādhvīs*. The subject of art always remained close to the popular imagination and art sought to enhance it with the artistic and social experience, taking great care to acknowledge the perfection of the ideals projected.³

It may be noted that Jainism remained a popular religion throughout, having the support mainly of the masses, and the business class. There are ample incriptional evidences found at Kankālī Tilā, Mathurā; Osian, Khājūrāho, Bilhari, Deogarh, Jalore, Kumbhariya, Delvada and at several other places which frequently refer to the

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śreṣṭhin (merchant), *sārthavāha* (trader), *gandhika* (perfumer), *svarnakāra* (goldsmith), *vardhakin* (carpenter), *lauhakarmakār* (ironsmith), *nāvika* (sailor), *nāpita* (barber), *nartaka* (dancer), *veśyās* (prostitute), and different *gosthis* (guilds) of traders which made significant contributions to Jainism, including the erection of temples, carving of images and also commissioning of painters. The Jaina images from Mathura belonging to Kushan period bear several inscription on pedestal showing that all classes of Kushan society were contributing to the carving of Jaina images. Apparently the liberal Jaina social concept of equality without disparity of cast or class encouraged the business class people to accept Jainism and contribute to its development by different means. This remained the socio-economic feature of subsequent period also. Most of Kushan inscriptions from Mathura refer that Jina and other images were installed/prepared for the welfare and happiness of all.

The Jaina inscription of VS 1011 (AD 954) in the *Pārśvanātha* temple (originally dedicated to *Ādinātha*), Khājūrahō (MP) refers to the construction of the temple by a Jaina trader Pahila of *Grahapati* family, who was honoured by the then Chandella ruler Dhanga for this magnificent contribution which in its sculptural and inscriptional content was the example of socio-religious harmony and mutuality between Brahmanical and Jaina faiths.⁴ This inscription also alludes to the donation of several *vāṭikās* (gardens) by Pahila for the maintenance of that temple. Interestingly these gardens in inscription are named as : Pahila, Chandra, Laghuchandra, Sankara, Panchayatana, Amra and Dhanga *vāṭikās*.

The fourth century images of Chandraprabha and Pushpadanta Jinas from Durjanpur (Vidisha, MP) refer to *Mahārājadhira* Ramagupta, who, according to subsequent sources and some coins was seemingly a ruler of *Gupta* dynasty but his historicity was shrouded in mystery. These Jina images thus reinforce the historicity of Ramagupta (with *Mahārājadhira* epithet) as *Gupta* ruler.⁵

The Jainas never hesitated in borrowing anything suitable for them or their religion to make it acceptable to the masses. Therefore,

they assimilated several Brahmanical deities with adequate honour and grace. The amicable relationship of the Jainas with other faiths could be witnessed not only in terms of assimilation of deities and according them adequately honourable position but also in terms of erection of Jaina *stūpas*, caves and temples together with Brahmanical and Buddhist ones at different sites like Mathura, Deogarh, Osian, Khājūrahō, Gurgi, Bilhari, Gyarpur, Aihole, Badami, Ellora, Halebid and Kumbhariya. The iconic data at these sites bear testimony to the multidimensional mutual influences. The *Pārśvanātha* Jaina temple at Khājūrahō (c. 950-70 AD) containing all around its facade the figures of *Vaidik-Purāṇic* deities like Śiva, Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Rāma, Balarama, Kāma, Agni and Kubera along with their respective *śaktis* in *ālīngana*-pose, is a remarkable example of coherence and mutuality.⁶ On the otherhand the Jinas also find representation on some of Brahmanical temples at Khājūrahō (*Devi Jagadambi* and *Viśvanātha* temples – 11th cent. AD and also recently excavated *Śiva* temple of 11th cent. AD in *Bijamaṇḍala* area of Khājūrahō), Osian (*Surya* and *Harihara* temples ,8th-9th cent.AD), Bhubanesvara (*Muktesvara* temple-10th cent. AD) and Sringeri (*Vidyāsankara* temple-14th cent.AD-Karnataka).

The assimilative character of Jainism could also be seen in numerous other examples at different Jaina sites. The figures of *Navagrahas* (on door-lintels and on the pedestals of Jina images), *Aṣṭadikpālas* (on eight cardinal points of Jaina temples), *Saraśvati* (earliest known image of 132 AD from *Kaṅkālī Tila*, Mathura in Jaina context), *Lakṣmi*, *Indra*, *Gaṇeśa* (Osian, Kumbhariya), *Kṣetrāpala* (Deogarh, Khājūrahō, Kumbhariya) and many other *Vaidik-Purāṇic* deities like Śiva, Brahmā, Kārttikeya, Gauri, Vaiṣṇavi shown both in independent renderings and in the forms of Jaina *Yakṣas* and *Yakṣis* either with same or somewhat changed names and iconography bear testimony to this assimilation. Mathura, Khājūrahō (*Pārśvanātha* Jaina temple, c.950-70 AD) and *Vimala-vasahi* (c.1150 AD) and *Luna-vasahi* (c.1230 AD) are the most important examples of Jaina temples, which contain the figures of the *Vaidik-Purāṇic* deities alongwith the Jinas and *Yakṣas-Yakṣis*. Besides Khājūrahō (*Pārśvanātha* Jaina

temple) and Mathura (images of *Neminātha* with *Balarāma* and *Kṛṣṇa* and that of *Ambikā* with *Gaṇeśa-Kubera*), *Vimala-vasahi* and *Luna-vasahi* have also yielded some very interesting renderings of *Kṛṣṇa-līlā* and other *Vaiṣṇava* themes including *Kāliyadamana* (*Vimala-vasahi*, cell 33), *Kṛṣṇa* playing *Holi* (sprinkling coloured water on each other) with *Kanakasringakoṣa* (cow horn shaped golden sprinkles as found in *Harṣacarita*) with *Gopa-Gopikās* (cowherd boys and girls), the episode of *Bali* and *Vāmana*, *Samudra-manthana* and vivid carvings pertaining to *Kṛṣṇa* birth and his *Bāla-līlās*. The scene of *Holi* carved in the ceiling of the *bhrāmika* (corridor) at the *devakulika* 41 of the *Vimala-vasahi*, is a singular instance of *Holi* in plastic art.⁷ It becomes all the more important in view of its Jaina context. The ceiling accommodates nine figures of *Gopas* and *Gopikās* and *Kṛṣṇa* playing *Holi* with each other in a joyful mood. *Kṛṣṇa* wears small *kirita-mukuta* and a long flowing *uṭṭariya* (*pitāmbara*). All other figures are leaning towards *Kṛṣṇa* in rhythmic postures. The *Luna-vasahi* contains depictions of *Kṛṣṇa's* birth (*Janma*) under close vigil, his *bāla-līlā* and the killing of demons by him. The second ceiling (no.49) of *Vimala-vasahi* exhibits a remarkable figure of 16-armed *sthauna Narasimha* (man-lion incarnation of *Viṣṇu*) killing the demon *Hirṇyakaśipu* with sharp nails of his two hands. The entire representation is so dynamic that it is taken to be one of the best representations of *Narasimha* in Indian art. These and many more such examples of borrowing suggest the course of social mutuality so important for the reconstruction of social history of harmony and mutuality.

Of all the deities borrowed from the *Vaidik-Purāṇic* tradition, *Rāma* and *Kṛṣṇa*, the two great epical characters occupy undoubtedly the most exalted position in the Jaina worship and religious art. They were incorporated in Jaina canonical works in Kushan-Gupta period. The rendering of *Kṛṣṇa* and *Balarāma* associated with the 22nd Jina *Ariṣṭanemi* or *Neminātha* as his cousin brothers begins as early as the Kushan period. The images of *Neminātha* from Mathura and Deogarh do show the flanking figures of *Balarāma* and *Kṛṣṇa* with customary attributes.

The representations of amorous couples engrossed in different erotic activities on the Jaina temples of *Svetāmbara* and *Digambara* affiliations from 10th century AD onwards are indicative of the social change in Jaina community. The main examples of erotic figures are found from the Jaina temples at Khājuraḥo (*Pārśvanātha* temple), Deogarh, Taranga (*Ajitanātha* temple built by *Kumārāpāla Chālukya* of 12th century A. D.), Arang (Chhattisgarh) and Kumbhariya (*Neminātha* temple of 12th century A. D.). The rendering of erotic figures on Jaina temples is a gross violation of the Jaina belief, which does not even conceive of any god with *Śakti* in *ālīngana*-pose. Hence it was probably due to the impact of *tāntrik* influence and changed mindset during the early medieval times (c.7th- 10th century A. D.). However the Jaina *Harivaṃśa-Purāṇa* (783 AD) provides an interesting reference in this respect. It refers to the construction of a Jaina temple by *Sreṣṭhi Kāmadatta*, who for the sake of attraction of masses (*prajāyah kautukaya*) also caused the installation of the figures of *Kāmadeva* and *Rati* in the temple (*Jinagara*). It also alludes to the worship of *Rati* and *Kāmadeva* alongwith the *Jina* images.⁸ This interestingly explains the need for such renderings.

It is usually believed that the Jaina art has been monotonous, repetitive and mainly spiritual in content. But after making detailed study of the Jaina art we find that they are full of life, vigour, dynamism and aesthetic qualities representing material world including world of beauty. The Jaina works endores for house holders (*Śrāvaka-Śrāvīkās*) a balanced life which includes virtuous and spiritual life alongwith aspirations for worldly pleasures and possessions. As a result, we find that the figures of the *Yakṣa* and *Yakṣis* were associated with each of 24 *Vitarāgi* Jinas to fulfil the worldly aspirations of the worshippers. The incorporation of 24 *Yakṣas* and *Yakṣis* (or *Śāsanadevatās*) were intended to cater to the needs of common worshippers aspiring for worldly and material possessions. These deities bestow on their worshippers desired materials boons. The *Harivaṃśa-Purāṇa* (783 AD) speaks of the relevance of the adoration of the *Śāsanadevatās*, who are capable of conferring boons and pacifying the malefic power of the *grahas*, *rogas*, *bhūtas*, *piśācas* and *rakṣasas*.⁹

The examples of Jaina sculptures, architecture and paintings distinctly reveal enormous variety of forms and innovations in reference to time and space and also aesthetic appeal which bear testimony to the fact that like *Vaidik-Purāṇik* and Buddhist art, Jaina art had also all the plastic and aesthetic qualities which could invite and engross any art lover as well the adherent of Jainism. The beautiful figures of damsels (*Apsarās* or *Nāyikās*) and dancers are carved over –whelmingly at all the Jaina temples. The figures of *Yakṣis*, *Vidyādevis*, *Saraśvati* and *Lakṣmi* are also radiant with grace and beauty. The *Digambara* Jaina text *Mahāpurāṇa* (*Ādipurāṇa* and *Uttarapurāṇa* of 9th-10th century A.D.) and *Svetāmbara* text *Triṣaṣṭiśālākāpuruṣacaritrā* (12th century A. D.) provide enormous references to material world, specially of personal decorations (*vaiyaktika Śṛṅgārā*), beauty (*saundrya*), jewellery and the rhythmic and joyful world of dance and music. If we look at the Jaina images of any prolific site namely Mathura, Deogarh, Khajuraho, Ellora, Delvada, Kumbhariya carefully, we find that artists were always concerned about getting rid of monotony, irrespective of the fact that the Jinās had to be shown only with two hands and in two customary postures (*dhyāna* and *kāyotsarga-mudrās*) of austerity. They introduced several figures and elements to suggest difference from one Jina image to the other by way of cognizances, *Yakṣa-Yakṣi* figures, *aṣṭapratihāryas*, small Jina figures in the *parikara* (surround) and also the figures of *navagrahas*, *Lakṣmi* and *Saraśvati*. Through the changes in the order of figural representations, their placements, compositions and decorative motifs the monotony of *Jina* images was broken. The *Jinas* no doubt were highest object of worship, and their images denote spirituality but at the same time their proportionate body, benign face and youthful appearance radiant with spirituality had aesthetic appeal. The *Bṛhatsamhitā* (c. 6th century AD) of Varahamihira, while envisaging the iconographic features of *Jina* images mentions that sky-clad *Jinas* should have long hanging arms, the *Śrivatsa*-mark, the calm face and youthful and beautiful (*rupavāna*) form.¹⁰ The *Manasara* (c. 6th cent. AD) of southern tradition also visualizes *Jinas* as sky-clad and beautiful in form (*surūpa*) but without

ornament and drapery.¹¹ The Jaina texts like *Pratiṣṭhāsārasaṃgraha* (12th cent. AD) mention that the form of *Jina* images (*Arhat Bimba*) must be beautiful and excellent.

Foot-Notes-

1. Tiwari Maruti Nandan Pd. – “Aparigraha : As Reflected in Jaina Art”, *Kala* (Journal of Indian Art History Congress), Vol. XI, 2004-05, pp. 97-102.
2. *Mahāpurāṇa*, Vol. I, Pt. II, 47.396
3. Shah U.P. – *Jaina Rupamaṇḍana*, New Delhi, 1984
4. Tiwari Maruti Nandan Pd. – *Khājūrāho Ka Jaina Purātattva*, Khajuraho, 1987, pp.94-96; *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. I, pp. 135-36.
5. Agrawal R.C. – “Newly Discovered Sculptures from Vidisa”, *Journal of Oriental Institute*, Baroda, Vol. 18, No. 3, pp. 252-53.
6. Tiwari Maruti Nandan Pd. – *Khājūrāho Ka Jaina Purātattva*, pp. 23-32.
7. Tiwari Maruti Nandan Pd. – “Landmarks of Jaina Iconography”, *The Ananda-Vana of Indian Art* (Dr. Anand Krishna Felicitation Volume), Eds.- Naval Krishna and Manu Krishna, Varanasi, 2004, pp. 105-114.
8. *Harivamśa-Purāṇa*- 29.1-10.
9. *Harivamśa-Purāṇa*-66.45.
10. *Bṛhat-Samhitā*-58.45.
11. *Manasara*- 55.46,71-95; *Pratiṣṭhāsārasaṃgraha*- 4.1-4.

Linguistic Philosophy in Jainism¹

Pradeep P. Gokhale*

By 'linguistic philosophy' one can mean either of the two things. One possible meaning which could be associated with the term is 'Philosophy of language'. The other possible meaning which is more common in the western philosophical parlance is 'philosophy which has language at the center, which considers philosophical issues as linguistic issues in their core'. I am using the term linguistic philosophy in both these senses. I want to claim on the one hand that Jaina philosophers thought about the nature and function of language seriously such that they can be said to have what can be called a philosophy of language. On the other hand I want to suggest that we can also find linguistic philosophy in the second sense in Jainism. Jainas considered at least some philosophical issues from a linguistic view point. Or to make a humbler claim, the treatment of some problems offered by the Jainas makes a better sense if it is interpreted as a language-centric approach.

I want to claim here that the two senses of the term linguistic philosophy should be clearly distinguished from each other. They should not be mixed up. One may develop an understanding of language, a philosophy of language, but that does not make one's philosophy linguistic in the technical sense of the term. One may have a very rigid ontological or epistemological perspective on different philosophical views - and one may look at language also in a rigid

ontological way, but one may not look at them from a language-centric point of view. For example, for *Pūrvamīmāṃsā*, language - particularly Vedic language - in its core is an ontological given. The words, meanings and their interrelation - they are all fixed. We have only to understand them. On the other hand one may look at language as a fluid and elusive entity and be sensitive to the way it influences our understanding of reality. In this sense one may have a language-centric approach to different philosophical problems. But one may not develop a philosophy of language as such, because one may not be interested in giving a detailed positive account of language. Nāgārjuna, I think, was a philosopher of that kind. His philosophy was linguistic in the second sense, but in the first sense his approach to language remained a general perspective; it did not grow as a theory of language. But this is not my main point. My simple point is that Jainism contains both - a philosophy of language and a linguistic philosophy in its modern sense.

Hence the paper is divided into two parts. In the first part I will give a brief account of the Jaina discussion of the nature and function of language. There I will concentrate on the Jaina theory of language. In the second part I will propose a language-centric interpretation of Jaina philosophy.

(I) Jaina Theory of language

In Indian philosophies of language the question that one is concerned with first is that about the nature of *śabda*. Is *śabda anitya* or *anitya* is a question pertaining not only to sound which is a natural sensible phenomenon, but it is also a question pertaining to word or sentence, which is a meaning-bearing unit. Again the question of *śabda* is not handled in Brahmanical and Non-Brahmanical schools in the same way.

The Question of the Ontological Status of *Śabda* (Sound):

For example the Brahmanical systems generally uphold a close connection between *ākāśa* and *śabda*, where *ākāśa* is understood as

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mahābhūta, a gross element. For example in the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* system the auditory sense-organ is said to be constituted by *ākāśa* and sound is regarded as a quality of *ākāśa*. It is doubtful whether this view is acceptable commonsensically and scientifically. When we hear a sound, we feel that the sound in the form of vibrations or waves has come in contact with the ears. It appears to be a case of physical contact, that is, *saṁyoga*, though the contact may be subtle. But it does not appear to be a case of an inseparable relation, namely *samavāya*. Contrary to this *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas* hold that there is *samavāya* between *śrotrendriya*, which is *ākāśa* and *śabda*. Secondly, for its origination and its journey, sound needs a physical medium. It cannot exist in an empty space or a vacuum. If sound were a quality of *ākāśa*, it would have been capable of existing even in an empty space. One wonders what must have led *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas* to present such a counter-intuitive theory of sound and of the auditory sense organ.

It seems that *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas* have tried to correlate mechanically the five sense organs with the five *mahābhūtas*. In systems like *Sāṁkhya* and *Vedānta* sound is not regarded as a quality of *ākāśa*, but sound is treated as *tanmātra* (a subtle element) and is regarded as a constitutive condition of *ākāśa*. The idea that *ākāśa* arises from *śabda-tanmātra* is again counterintuitive. In fact the idea of *ākāśa* as *mahābhūta* itself is dubitable. *Ākāśa* as something ubiquitous seems to be more like space, a container of all things - than something contained in space. As against this tendency in *āstikadarśanas* we find a general tendency in *Nāstika-darśanas* of not treating *ākāśa* as a material substance. In the mainstream *Cārvāka-darśna*, only four *mahābhūtas* are accepted as *tattvas*. In Buddhism the term *rūpa* stands for matter and it consists of earth, water, fire and air; it does not contain *ākāśa*. Similarly in Jainism the term *pudgala*, which stands for matter is distinguished from *ākāśa*, which is an independent substance. Though Jainism does not classify *pudgala*

into *mahābhūtas*, when it classifies *jīvas* in term of bodies, it talks about *pṛthvīkāyika* (earth-bodied), *apkāyika* (water-bodied), *tejaḥkāyika* (fire-bodied) and *vāyukāyika* (air-bodied) *jīvas* and also *vanaspatikāyika* (plant-bodied) *jīvas*, but does not include *ākāśa* in this list. *Ākāśa* is defined as a substance which makes the passing-through of matter and souls possible (*avagāhana-nimitta*). Buddhists and Jainas treat *ākāśa* more as vacuum or container or space than a material substance contained in space.

Coming back to the question of *śabda* or sound we find that *Nāstika* philosophers do not associate *śabda* with *ākāśa*, but with matter. Buddhists include it in *rūpa* and Jainas associate it with *pudgala*. Sound, according to Jainas, is the character which can arise only in *pudgala*; it does not exist independently of *pudgala*. Here Jainas seem to talk about the characteristics of matter at two levels. Some characteristics are essential and common to all *pudgala* as whereas some are accidental and uncommon. Colour, odour, taste and touch are the common characteristics or defining characteristics of *pudgala* whereas sound, bondage, subtleness, grossness, configuration, division, darkness, shadow, sunshine and light are uncommon characters. The former can be called *guṇas* of *pudgala*, whereas the latter are *paryāyas* of *pudgala*. Hence *śabda* is *pudgala-paryāya* for them.

The Nature of a Linguistic Sign:

Now although sound is the major medium of linguistic communication; every type of sound may not be used as a linguistic sign; and every type of linguistic sign may not have the nature of sound. This discriminative and yet comprehensive understanding of sound and language (*śabda* and *bhāṣā*) is vividly seen in Jaina literature. Hence we find *śabda* to be classified as *bhāṣātmaka* and *abhāṣātmaka*; (that is linguistic and non-linguistic) and again linguistic sound is further classified into alphabetical and non-alphabetical (*akṣara* and *anakṣara*).

Sagarmal Jain remarks that non-alphabetical language includes not only sound-symbols generated by human and non-human beings, but it also includes body-movements of rational as well as non-rational living beings as well as of the dumb and the child. This extends the scope of language beyond verbal language. Jainas were also clearly aware of the difference between written words and uttered words - *ākṛti-rūpaśabda* and *dhvani-rūpaśabda*. They were also aware that when these words enter into the process of communication, they do not remain material, but attain cognitive status. So they also recognized *jñānarūpaśabda* (Jain: 26). This is virtually the distinction between word as a written or uttered material object and word as a meaning-bearing unit; or word as token and word as type. Around this distinction there are typical metaphysical issues of identity and difference and permanence and impermanence. For example the word 'cow' uttered now and uttered after five minutes are different as token words but they are identical as type words. So I can say that I am uttering the same word 'cow' on both the occasions because as a meaning-bearing unit it is the same. Taking this distinction seriously, the philosophers of *Pūrvamīmāṃsā* and *Vyākaraṇa* schools are inclined to treat the token word as impermanent and type word as permanent. *Mīmāṃsakas* do this by distinguishing between *dhvani* and *śabda* whereas *Vaiyākaraṇas* do this by distinguishing between *nāda* and *sphoṭa*. The former regard *śabda* as *nitya* whereas the latter regard *sphoṭa* as *nitya*. On the other side *Naiyāyikas* and Buddhists regard *śabda* as *anitya* even if it is conceived as a meaning-bearing unit. In this debate Jainas join *Naiyāyikas* and Buddhists and do not join *Mīmāṃsakas* or *Vaiyākaraṇas*, because according to the Jainas *śabda* is after all a *puṅgalā-paryāya* and *paryāya* cannot be eternal. So the sameness of a type word that appears to us is due to similarity and not due to real sameness according to them. (Jain: 45)

Words and Sentences: The Theories of *Nikṣepa* and *Naya*:

After the nature of a word, one has to discuss words in relation to sentences and both words and sentences in relation to their

meanings. Jaina philosophers have elaborately discussed these issues as well. The theories of *nikṣepa* and *naya* are important in this context. These theories are sometimes presented as theories about the determination of meaning. For example, Prof. Sagarmal Jain does so (Jain: 96-103). But I interpret these theories in a slightly different way.

The theory of *nikṣepa*, as I understand it, is the theory of naming, that is, that of coining or employing words for designating objects. *Nikṣepa* literally means throwing. While applying words to objects, we as it were throw the words on objects either arbitrarily or with some consideration. For example *nāma-nikṣepa* is the arbitrary application of a word for designating an object. The word we apply to an object under *nāma-nikṣepa* may not have any etymological or conventional meaning. Or sometimes it may have such a meaning, but we may apply it to a thing or a person irrespective of its meaning. This is a primary type of naming. At the next stage the same name could be applied to something similar to the thing a something which represents that thing. For example a picture of a cow may be called a cow or even a stone may be worshipped by calling it by the name of a deity, when it is believed to represent the deity. This is called *sthāpanānikṣepa*. In a way this second type of naming suggests that a word which primarily has a limited application gradually assumes a wider application through similarity and representation. The application of a word can be made still wider in terms of continuation of the thing in time. This is called *dravyanikṣepa* because 'dravya' is defined in Jainism as the thing having continuity in spite of changing *paryāyas*. Hence a retired professor could still be called a professor and a scholar aspiring for doctorate may be called a doctor. And lastly *bhāvanikṣepa* refers to applying a word to an object by delimiting the scope of its application to a particular state or function of the object.

Whereas the theory of *nikṣepa* is concerned with naming, the theory of *naya* is concerned with describing. The Jaina theory of *nayas* in fact opens the possibility of the Jaina linguistic philosophy

in a restricted sense of the term. Here by linguistic philosophy I mean a language-centric approach which influences other dimensions of one's philosophy. Hence one's ontology, epistemology, ethics and even one's meta-philosophy are guided by one's perspective on language.

(II) Language–Centric Approach to Philosophy

Ordinary Language: A System of Nayas:

Though Jainas have talked about descriptive as well as non-descriptive usage of language, they attach special importance to descriptive sentences. According to Jainas a descriptive sentence of ordinary language generally expresses a partial truth intended by its utterer, which reflects a partial view-point of the utterer. Hence one and the same thing can be described by different speakers in different ways depending upon their partial viewpoints. Here the speaker's view-point can be called *naya* whereas the descriptive expression used by the speaker can be called *nayavāda* or *nayavākya*. Hence *naya* is also defined as the specific intention of the speaker - *abhiprāya-viśeṣa*. The view-point reflected in a description is called partial because it focuses on a specific aspect of a thing. And because it focuses on a specific aspect of a thing, it is also said to contain partial knowledge, *pramāṇāṃśa*. The seven-fold classification of *nayas* is well-known. It consists of *naigama*, *saṃgraha*, *vyāvahāra*, *ṛjusūtra*, *śabda*, *samabhirūddha* and *evambhūta*. We will not go into their details, though we will refer to some of them in due course. The seven-fold classification of *nayas* is not exhaustive. It only indicates that a variety of view-points about any given thing are possible. Instead of talking about the seven-fold classification, we can talk about two broad classifications of *nayas*.

One broad classification is into *dravyanaya* and *paryāyanaya*. *Dravyanayas* are those which focus on enduring characteristics of objects; and *paryāyanayas* are those which focus on the changing characteristics of objects. This gives us an notion of reality as an

amalgamation of durable and changing characteristics. In fact the reality according to Jainas is the amalgamation of many binaries - one and many, identity and difference, particular and universal, permanence and impermanence. Out of the two poles of a binary, a *naya* focuses on one of the two poles and neglects the other. The other broad classification is *arthanaya* and *śabdanaya*. *Arthanaya* is about the thing's own characteristics. *Śabdanaya* is about the characteristics caused by the association of the thing with language. Through the broad category of *śabdanaya* Jainas indicate the fact that many a time our understanding of things is colored by the linguistic categories imposed on the objects.

We have seen that the Jaina doctrine of *naya*, which is basically a theory of ordinary language, substantiates the Jaina ontology of *Anekāntavāda* in which all the binaries get reconciled in the nature of reality without real contradiction.

Epistemology of Language:

Similarly we can now see how, like their ontology, the epistemology of the Jainas is closely connected with their perspective on language.

In their epistemology, Jainas classify knowledge into five kinds - *mati*, *śrūta*, *avadhi*, *manaḥparyāya* and *kevala*. Out of them *avadhi*, *manaḥparyāya* and *kevala* are said to be direct in the sense that they are not mediated even by the sense-organs or the mind. As against this *mati* and *śrūta* are called the forms of indirect knowledge or *parokṣapramāṇa*. Out of them *śrūtajñāna* is the knowledge based on verbal testimony and *matijñāna* is based on other *pramāṇas*. In the later development of *pramāṇa* theory *matijñāna* was classified into five *pramāṇas* namely *sāṃvyaavahārikapratyakṣa*, *smṛti*, *prayabhijñā*, *tarka* and *anumāna*. But at a deeper level questions were raised about the relationship between *matijñāna* and *śrūtajñāna*. It was generally accepted that *matijñāna* is presupposed in *śrūtajñāna*. That is because when we have knowledge through verbal testimony, first we have to

hear a sentence or read it; or recollect what we have already read or heard. This means that visual or auditory perception or recollection has to precede the knowledge from verbal testimony. In this sense *matijñāna* is a necessary prerequisite of *śrūtajñāna*. But then a question is raised from another side: Is *matijñāna* entirely non-linguistic? That is because *matijñāna* as the Jainas have described it, is not just an instantaneous flash of awareness, but it is a developing process. The first stage in this process is *avagraha* which can be roughly translated as sensation and can be called non-linguistic in nature. But the succeeding stages namely *ihā* (doubt or inquiry), *avāya* (determination) and *dhāraṇā* (retention) presuppose the use of concepts or thoughts, which are not possible without a linguistic apparatus. This point has been underlined by Sagarmal Jain (Jain: 20-21). This close interrelation between *matijñāna* and *śrūtajñāna* led some Jaina philosophers to regard *mati* and *śrūta* as one.

The Relationship Between Knowledge, Language and Reality: A Comparison Between Nyāya and Jainism

This in fact raises the issues concerning the relationship between knowledge, language and reality. Setting aside the transcendent perception - that is, *pāramārthikapratyakṣa* for the time being, it seems that all our knowledge except the sensation - that is *avagraha*- is linguistic in nature. Does it mean that even the reality, as we can know it, is enclosed by language? And what about *avagraha*? Even in the sensation of an object, what do we exactly sense? Is it a bare particular or a particular characterized by a universal? For Jainas, reality is *sāmānyaviśeṣātmaka*- having both a universal and a particular character. But if universals are the contributions of intellect and language, one might say that even our sensation is influenced by language. One can even extend this argument further to the so-called *pāramārthikapratyakṣa*. Even *pāramārthikapratyakṣa* involves the knowledge of *dharmas* and *dharmins* - properties and property-bearers. But the distinction between property and property-bearer itself

is guided by language. So if *kevalajñāna* means the knowledge of all property-bearers with all their past, present and future properties, then even *kevalajñāna* will have a complex linguistic form. This type of criticism will be levelled mainly from a Buddhist point of view.

According to Buddhists like Dīnāga and Dharmakīrti only particulars are directly known through *nirvikalpaka* whereas the universals are mentally constructed through *vikalpa* and superimposed on particulars - These constructed universals are the proper objects of language. Particulars are ultimately real whereas universals are only conventionally real.

As against this *Naiyāyikas* hold that both particulars as well as universals are cognized in immediate perception (*nirvikalpaka-pratyakṣa*); only they are known without the qualificatory-relation between them. In this way the complex ontology of particulars and universals is preserved in the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* system. On the other hand the *savikalpakapratyakṣa* is given the status of *pratyakṣapramāṇa*. Hence the common-sense epistemology of ordinary perception is preserved.

The Jaina approach is similar to the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* approach in this regard. For them too, the immediate sensory perception, which is called *avagraha*, cognizes the object, which is *sāmānyaviśeṣātmaka*. Secondly, perception is interpreted as a developing process and not as a momentary event so that even determinate perception, that is *avāya*, is given the status of *sāmvyavahārikapratyakṣa*. Here it should be kept in mind that though *sāmvyavahārikapratyakṣa* in Jainism can be called 'conventional perception', the latter according to Jainism does not give distorted or false awareness of the reality. Only it perceives it in a mediate way - that is, through the mediation of sense-organs. In general we can say that the ontology and epistemology of *Naiyāyikas* and Jainas is commonsense-preserving whereas those of Buddhist logicians are, to a certain extent, common-sense-challenging. Different schools of Buddhism challenge commonsense or common

presuppositions to a greater or lesser extent. *Sarvāstivādins* challenge them the least; whereas *Mādhyamikas* challenge them maximally. Hence the contrast between *Syādvāda* of Jainas and *Śūnyavāda* of *Mādhyamikas* becomes glaring.

Just as Jainas and *Naiyāyikas* tried to preserve the common sense view of the world and of knowledge, they also tried to preserve the authenticity of ordinary language, though they were aware of its limitations. Hence *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* thinkers, in their adherence to the authenticity of ordinary language, accepted a correlation between *astitva*, *jñeyatva* and *abhidheyatva* (that is, between existence, knowability and nameability), so that every word of our language is said to stand for a real entity. Jainas preserved the sanctity of ordinary language through the doctrine of *nayas*; so that different expressions of our language express at least partial truths, though none of them expresses the complete truth. In spite of these broad similarities between Jainism and *Nyāya* on this issue, there are some major differences between the two schools in terms of their linguistic approaches.

- (i) Unlike in *Nyāya*, an anti-Brahmanical approach is clearly seen in Jaina ontology. For example although Jainas accept *sāmānyas* which are also called *jātis*, they do not accept *brahmaṇatva*, *kṣatriyatva* etc. as genuine *jātis*.
- (ii) *Naiyāyikas* have a tendency for regimentation, and systematization in their ontology, epistemology and also philosophy of language. They have always tried to build a rigid and compact system. As against this Jainas, because they try to follow *ahimsā* even in the intellectual and linguistic realm, are ready to let many factors remain unclear, and avoid rigid, watertight systematization.
- (iii) *Nayāyikas* are never ready to allow apparent contradictions in their system. They always try to remove the contradictions by introducing technical devices. As against this, Jainas are ready to allow apparent contradictions in their system. They do use

devices such as *Syādvāda* to resolve them. But even the technique of *Syādvāda* does not remove the contradiction but only indicates or suggests that the contradiction is only apparent and not real.

***Nayābhāsas*: Results of Crossing the Limits of Language:**

Jainas hold that although our language allows apparently contradictory descriptions, due to ambiguities and contextualities inbuilt in it, one has to be clear about this limitation of language. And this is precisely the role the Jaina doctrine of *Syādvāda* plays. It indicates that any given sentence can be accepted only in a certain context and in a certain sense. On the contrary if one makes a statement in an absolute way, as if it is true in all contexts and all possible senses, then one is likely to be misled by language. It would amount to crossing the limits of language which Jainas call *durṇaya* or *nayābhāsa*. Jainas try to show how different philosophical systems have committed *nayābhāsas* by going beyond contextual limits and making absolutist use of language. Take the case of *saṃgrahanaya*. When we describe something in terms of its general characteristic shared by other things, we are using *saṃgrahanaya*. Jainas also refer to the most comprehensive form of *saṃgraha*, that is, *parasamgraha*, by using which one can say that everything in this world is real. Such a statement is not problematic according to Jainas. But now Jainas point out that an *Advaita-Vedāntin* is misled by this general statement; he overgeneralizes it and says that everything is real and real alone, it is *sat* and *sat* alone, and all the other properties are delusory. Jainas claim that here Vedāntins are misusing language; they are committing the fallacy called *parasamgrahābhāsa*. There is a point in what the Jainas are saying. In the *Upaniṣads* there is an argument that different patterns of earthen pots are just names and forms; whereas the clay, which is common to them all, is real “*mṛttikāityevasatyam*”. By applying this line of argument to realness itself as the common property, Vedāntins argue that realness, which is the very nature of

Brahman, being the most common property of all things, is the only thing that is real; diversity, which consists of names and forms, is not real.

According to the Jainas, the Buddhists go to the other extreme; they misuse another *naya* called *rjusūtranaya*. This can be explained as follows. Sometimes we are concerned with our immediate present experience. We may describe an experience as “now here is the pleasure appearance” (*sukhavivartaḥsampratyastī*) Now the Jainas claim that the Buddhists are misled by such contextual descriptions. They regard only such expressions which describe immediate momentary experiences as true and others as false. Whether the Buddhists are really misled by linguistic expressions in their arguments for momentariness can be doubted. Because the Buddhists are saying that such a momentary experience of a unique particular is actually indescribable, because its object, a *svalakṣaṇa*, is ineffable.

The third example would be *naigamanaya*. According to one interpretation of *naigamanaya*, it involves focusing on different types of *dharmins* and *dharmas* as real. In our language there are different words for substances, qualities, motions and relations. Describing them as different is not itself problematic. But this has misled the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas* to accept different categories - *padārthas*- as absolutely distinct from each other. Hence the Jainas accuse the *Naiyāyikas* for committing the fallacy called *naigamābhāsa*.

Similarly, according to Jainas, *Vaiyākaraṇas* have over-generalized *śabdanaya*. One who is using *śabdanaya* is focusing on the influence of the verbal form including its grammatical form reflected in the thing described. In our descriptions of things, the nature of a thing is as it were colored by the form of the words used in the description. The grammarian over-emphasizes this feature of *śabdanaya* and starts saying that only *śabda* is real, it is Brahman in its essence, and the objects referred to by words are mere appearances.

It is difficult to say that every example of *nayābhāsa* that Jainas give is a genuine example of breach of the contextual rules of language by the respective philosophical systems. However, the general point that Jainas are making is well-taken. It is a fact that many a time philosophers are misled by language and they commit *nayābhāsa* of one kind or the other².

Syādvāda: Recognition of the Limits of Language:

In fact three doctrines together constitute *Anekāntavāda* of the Jainas and the three together can be said to form the core of their linguistic philosophy. They are the theories of *Syāt*, *Naya* and *Nayābhāsa*. In a famous verse in *Anyā-yogavyavacchedadvātrimśikā*, Siddhasena describes them respectively as concerned with *pramāṇa*, *naya* and *durṇaya*. ‘*Sadeva*’ (‘Only real.’) is an example of *durṇaya*, ‘*sat*’ (‘Real.’) is an example of *naya* and ‘*syāt-sat*’ (‘In a way, real.’) is an example of *syādvāda*³. I have already discussed the doctrines of *naya* and *nayābhāsa*. Now let me elaborate a little on the doctrine of *syādvāda*. Modern scholars have given different interpretations of the doctrine of *syādvāda*. Some scholars like Sangamlal Pandey thought that since the doctrine seems to violate the basic laws of thought, namely the law of excluded middle and that of non-contradiction, it should be interpreted in terms of many-valued logic or deviant logic. Hence *avaktavya* or the inexpressible should be interpreted as the third truth-value in the scheme of *Syādvāda* and a contradictory statement of the form ‘both p and not p’ should also be permissible. So *Syādvāda-saptabhaṅgī*, or seven-fold formula of possibilities can be stated as- (1) p is true, (2) p is false, (3) p is both true and false, (4) p is neither true nor false but has a third truth value namely *avaktavya*, (5) p is true and *avaktavya*, (6) p is false and *avaktavya* and lastly, (7) p is true and false and *avaktavya*. Here there are two questions: one, are Jainas really inclined to violate the law of non-contradiction? As we have seen, because of their non-violent attitude in the intellectual realm, Jainas allow apparently contradictory

views, but by using the device of *syāt*, they indicate that the contradictions are only apparent and not real. The second question is: when we say that p is neither true nor false, but is *avaktavya*, is this third truth-value a logical truth-value or only an epistemic value? We can say that here we are not saying that the statement itself has the third truth value, but that we are incapable of assigning a classical truth-value- either true or false- to it, and hence the third value is an epistemic value and not a logical one. The second interpretation of *Syādvāda* is a Modal-logical interpretation. Accordingly the term *syāt* is interpreted as ‘may be’ or ‘possibly’. According to this interpretation it is held that although ‘p and not p’ is a contradiction, ‘possibly p and possibly-not-p’ is not a contradiction. The difficulty in this interpretation is that ‘*syāt*’ does not really mean ‘may be’ or ‘possibly’ - because if it does, then it would indicate some kind of uncertainty. Jaina philosophers interpret ‘*syāt*’ as ‘*kathañcit*’ - ‘in a way’ or ‘somehow’, which does not mean uncertainty or doubt. Here Jainas are saying that ‘*syāt*-p’ means ‘in a way, p is true’, and ‘*syāt* not-p’ means ‘in a way, not-p is also true’. This point is taken care of by the third interpretation which treats *syāt*-statements as conditional statements. It suggests that *syāt*-p really means $C_1 \rightarrow p$ and *syāt*-not-p means $C_2 \rightarrow \sim p$. Since C_1 and C_2 refer to two different conditions, the contradiction is removed. A difficulty about this interpretation is that although it can be called a further *explanation* of *syādvāda*, it is not the *interpretation* of *syāt*-statements. In *syādvāda*-formula the same word *syāt* is used everywhere. It cannot be interpreted differently as ‘under-condition-1’, ‘under-condition-2’, ‘under-condition-3’ etc. The beauty of *Syādvāda* lies in expressing conditionality without specifying the conditions. So in my interpretation of the doctrine (vide Gokhale: 1991), I have claimed that *syāt*-statements may be interpreted as existentially general statements, where the existential quantifier $\exists x$ ranges over senses of the given sentence. Secondly I have claimed that *Syādvāda* is more about sentences expressing true or false propositions than about things having contradictory properties. When

a Jaina says – “*Syāt, jīva* is *nitya*; and *syāt, jīva* is *anitya*”, he is saying that there is a sense in which the sentence ‘*jīva* is *nitya*’ expresses a truth and there is a sense in which the sentence ‘*jīva* is *anitya*’ expresses a truth. In the further explanation the Jaina will say that if we interpret the term *jīva* in terms of its essential quality namely consciousness, then ‘*jīva* is *nitya*’ is true, but if we interpret the term *jīva* in terms of its changing characteristics, that is, *pariyāyas* - such as its embodiedness, then ‘*jīva* is *anitya*’ is true. This interpretation of *Syādvāda* can be explained by referring to the distinction between sentence and proposition. We are told in logic that an indicative sentence itself is not true or false, but the proposition expressed by it is either true or false. Now suppose we take ‘*jīva* is *nitya*’ as a sentence, then it will express a true proposition under one interpretation and a false proposition under another interpretation. Now the basic *syāt* statements can be interpreted as follows - *syāt*-p means there is an interpretation under which the sentence p expresses a true proposition and *syāt*-not-p means there is an interpretation under which the sentence p expresses a false proposition. *Syāt*-*avaktavya*-p means there is an interpretation under which whether p is true or false cannot be determined. Hence according to my interpretation *Syādvāda* does not compel us to deviate from the classical two-valued logic. Secondly we are treating *avaktavya* as the epistemic third truth-value and not logical third truth-value. Lastly we are interpreting *Syādvāda* not as an object-linguistic doctrine, but as a metalinguistic doctrine. The doctrine is not directly about things but about things via sentences.⁴ We have seen that through *Syādvāda* Jainas indicate that there is a sense in which p is true and that there is a sense in which p is false. But they do not specify the sense in which p is true or the one in which p is false. This is an important point of contrast between Jainism and *Nyāya*. Jainas and *Naiyāyikas* - particularly *Navya-Naiyāyikas*, both are concerned with the ambiguities of ordinary language, but their approaches to the ambiguities are different. The point can be explained with the help of a simple example. Suppose a monkey is sitting on a branch of a tree.

Then the situation can be described as “The tree has a monkey sitting on it”. But the monkey is not sitting on the trunk of the tree. So we can say that “The tree possesses the absence of the monkey”. Both the statements, namely ‘*vrkṣaḥkapisamyogī*’ and ‘*vrkṣaḥkapisamyogābhāva-vān*’ are true. How to reconcile these two statements? Jainas would reconcile them by applying the word ‘*Syāt*’ to both the statements. *Naiyāyikas* would not be satisfied with this. They would use the technical device of ‘*avacchedaka*’ - delimiter. They would say that the tree is accompanied by a monkey as delimited by the branch; the same tree is accompanied by the absence of monkey as delimited by the trunk. ‘*śākhāvacchednavrkṣaḥkapisamyogī; mūlāvacchednavrkṣaḥkapisamyogābhāvavān*’. Hence we find in *Navya-Nyāya* literature that *Naiyāyikas* raise a network of technical terms for removing ambiguities and for making philosophical claims with utmost clarity.

We can say in this way that *Syādvāda* amounts to recognition of the contextual limits of language and not an attempt to overcome them. *Naiyāyikas* on the other hand try to remove the contextual limits of Language by devising an ideal language. This difference between the Jaina approach and the *Nyāya* approach to philosophical language can be compared with that between ordinary language philosophy and ideal language philosophy respectively. Wittgenstein and Russell both were vividly clear about the way the structure of ordinary language expresses and also hides the inner structure of facts and hence becomes misleading. Russell thought that the inner structure of facts can be brought to the surface by devising an ideal language and hence he wrote *Principia Mathematica*. Wittgenstein did not regard this as the right way of doing philosophy. He preferred not to go beyond ordinary language for showing the limits of ordinary language. Similarly the whole *Navya-nyāya* literature exhibits an attempt to devise an ideal language for doing philosophy. As against this Jainas only used the device of *syāt* in order to show how language has semantical

limitations; but did not try to replace natural language by an artificial language. Jainas were probably right in their approach because the reality, as Jainas rightly point out has infinite characteristics (*anantadharmātmaka*), and language, which is a human-made tool devised for describing it (and also for doing other functions) has essential human limitations. Howsoever we stretch the limits of language, the language cannot capture the ultimate-faceted reality with accuracy and comprehension. The expression ‘*syāt*’ can be understood as an indicator of this fact.

Linguistic Analysis in Jainism: Some Limitations:

Before I close, it is necessary to acknowledge the contributions of Professor Sagarmal Jain in highlighting the linguistic philosophy in Jainism. He has discussed in his work *Jaina Bhāṣā-Darśana*⁵ the role of linguistic analysis in contemporary western philosophy in comparison with that in Jainism. He has opened up a new field of enquiry by bringing out the points of similarity between the Jaina analysis of language and the western analysis. But it is necessary to go further. At least three issues are very much relevant in this context.

- (1) Philosophical analysis is a general term applied to various ways of analyzing language and thereby solving or dissolving philosophical problems. Wittgenstein (the Early and the Later), G. E. Moore, Bertrand Russell, A. J. Ayer, Gilbert Ryle, and others represented different styles of analysis, with some similarities and differences. So when we are talking about the linguistic analysis proposed by Jainas, it is necessary to be clear as to which style of analysis they are adopting. Sagarmal Jain assimilates Jaina theory of language with that of many of them. He seems to suggest that Jainas can accept and synthesize insights derived from all of them. But such assimilation could be misleading. The comparisons should be made carefully and along with similarities, differences should also be highlighted.

- (2) Philosophical Analysis was a movement which marked a linguistic turn in western philosophy. It placed language at the center and developed new critical perspectives about metaphysics, ethics and religion. This model does not apply fully to the Jain linguistic analysis. Jainas developed a critical approach to metaphysics and religious beliefs of other systems through their linguistic analysis, but they did not apply the same critical apparatus to their own metaphysics and religious beliefs. Linguistic philosophy is therefore only one facet of Jainism, it is not the only facet.
- (3) Sometimes the whole of Jaina philosophy is identified with *Anekāntavāda*, with *Syādvāda* and *Nayavāda* as its two wings. Now if all the three doctrines, namely *Anekāntavāda*, *Syādvāda* and *Nayavāda*, are subsumed under the Linguistic philosophy (in its restricted sense) of the Jainas, then the whole of Jaina philosophy will be treated as linguistic philosophy. But again this will be misleading. Though Jainas would dissolve many philosophical problems by taking recourse to *Syādvāda* and *Nayavāda* and by claiming that the rival philosophers are misled by the ambiguities in language, dissolving problems in this way can sometimes do injustice to other systems. To take a simple example, when Jainas say in *Syādvāda* language that things are both *nitya* and *anitya*, they explain it by saying that things are *nitya* from *dravya*-point of view and *anitya* from *paryāya* point of view. This answer will satisfy neither *nitya-ekānta-vādins*, that is, Vedāntins nor *anitya-ekānta-vādins*, that is, Buddhists. Buddhists would say that the *dravya* that Jainas are talking about does not exist; only the so-called *paryāyas* exist. Vedāntins on the other hand would say that according to their definition of *sat*, *paryāyas* are not *sat*. So the issue does not get dissolved by *Syādvāda*, it is only transferred to a higher stage of philosophical inquiry.

When the problem is stated clearly by removing ambiguities, the role of *Syādvāda* is over. This is a limitation of the Jaina linguistic philosophy.

Footnotes

¹The article is based on the *Rishabhdasji Ranka Memorial Lecture* delivered by the author on 11.03.2014, arranged by the department of Philosophy, SP Pune University.

²For a more detailed account of *nayābhāsa*, see Gokhale (1989).

³“*sadeva, sat, syātsaditi tṛdhārtho, mīyetadurnītinayapramāṇaiḥ/ yathārthadarśītinayapramāṇapathenadurnītipathamtvamāsthaḥ/*” AVD, verse no. 28 [Meaning: A thing is cognized in three ways: through a perverse view-point (*durnaya* or *durnīti*) as “It is real only”, through a partial view-point (*naya*) as “It is real” and through right knowledge (*pramāṇa*) as “In a way, it is real”. You, the seer of truth, abandon the path of perverse view-point by the path which consists of partial view-point and right knowledge.].

⁴For the author’s detailed account of the logical structure of *syādvāda*, see Gokhale (1991).

⁵The author did not have an access to the Hindi work, but to its English rendering, namely *Jaina Philosophy of Language*.

Bibliography with Abbreviations

- (1) AVD: *Anyayogavyāvachchedadvātriṃśikā*, as included in Dhruva A. B. (Ed.): *Syādvādamañjarī of Malliṣeṇa*, Poona, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1933
- (2) Jain, Sagarmal: *Jaina Philosophy of Language*, Parshvanath Vidyapeeth, Varanasi, 2006.
- (3) Gokhale, Pradeep: “The Jaina Doctrine of *Nayābhāsa*”, *Sambhāsā*, University of Nagoya, Vol. 11, 1989.
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The Science of Winds as Gleaned from Ancient Jain Literature

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Introduction :

Several natural phenomena like Lightning, Rain, Winds and Cosmic events have astounded ancient men that they recorded these observations in their texts or in form of myths and legends. The writings of Theophrastus of Eresus (372-287 B. C), 'Meteorologica' - a book on Atmospheric Phenomena by Aristotle (384-322 B.C) deal extensively on Wind observations. Pliny the Elder (23-79 A. D) mentions 20 Greek scientists who had collected Wind observations. These texts documented the close relationship between the weather and direction of Wind. The ideas were also expressed artistically in the 'Tower of Winds' built in Athens in 2nd c. B. C where an iron vane with a road showed the direction when Wind blew, the attributes of weather in that direction depicted by mythological figures on its octagonal walls. Contributions of ancient India were also marvelous that not much of it has been studied adequately. The present paper discusses how winds were observed and classified from ancient times especially in Jain texts.

Winds In Vedic, Epic And Puraṇic Literature :

Ever since Vedic times, *Vāyu* is regarded as the God of Winds. He is always moving and swift. The *R̥gveda*¹ [RV I. 64. 5] says that

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the *Maruts* gave origin to the *Vātas*. *Vāyu* travels with the *Maruts* (the Wind Gods) as stated in RV [8.7.4]. Regarding the functions of *Vāyu*, the RV [8.7.3] says that *Vāyu* makes the clouds go up, they are downpourers of rain [RV I.122.3], *Vāyu* dries up everything [RV 6.37.3]. *Vāyu* is born from *Puruṣa* (*Vājasaneyi Samhitā* YV XXXI.12). *Vājasaneyi Samhitā*² [YV I.24] says that the Mid-region shines at night by *Vāyu* particles. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* gives several legends regarding his birth. The *Atharvaveda*³ [AV 6.102.2] and [AV 25.2.1] refer to a strong intensity winds.

The *Atharvaveda Pariśiṣṭha*⁴ states that the influence of omens of whirlwinds extends to 6 *Yojanas*. *Nirukta*⁵ of *Yāska* states that wind originates from space and possesses sound and touch (14.4). *Durgācarya's* commentary on the *Nirukta of Yāska* states that there are seven atmospheric streams namely – *Bahulā*, *Aśva*, *Titutra*, *Abhrapatnī*, *Varśayantī* and *Arundhā*.

Winds are regarded as omens in the Epics. References to favorable and unfavorable winds occur in *Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa*⁶ and Sage *Vyāsa's Mahābhārata*⁷ also refers to such winds in [III.181.43], [VIII.31.5]. It also refers to whirlwind as in *Mauṣala Parva* (1.2). Also in *Vana Parva* (155.2), such winds are stated to forebode wars.

References to favorable and unfavorable winds are given in the *Purāṇas*. The *Vāmana Purāṇa*⁸ [17.2ff] gives a strange origin to different *Maruts*. The *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*⁹ [II.3.5.79f] says that there are seven groups of winds each having its own region and limit. These are given as below –

Āvaha (Extends from earth to clouds), *Pravaha* (Extends from clouds to sun), *Udvaha* (Extends from sun to lower regions of moon), *Saṁvaha* (extends from moon to stars), *Vivaha* (Extends from stars to planets), *Anuvaha* (Extends from seven stars to North Pole), *Parāvaha* (Extends from planets to seven stars).

This list is also upheld by the *Mahābhārata* and *Nārada Purāna* with slight variations. The *Agni Purāna*¹⁰ [219.28-34] gives the names of the 49 wind Gods (*Maruts*).

Winds In Post Vedic Texts

Several Post-Vedic texts also deal extensively on winds. Outstanding among them are the *Samhitā* texts. The *Bṛhatsamhitā*¹¹ of *Varāhamihira* deals on different winds. It gives description of Winds observed during month of *Āṣāḍha* [XXVII.1-9]. The *Garga Samhitā*¹² proclaims – ‘Winds from east generate clouds, those from west destroy clouds, winds from north causes rain and so also those from south.’ The *Parāśara Samhitā*¹² gives predictions of Winds based on the directions. These have been elaborately discussed in literature¹³. The *Vaimānika Śāstra*¹⁴ of *Maharshi Bhāradvāja*, though being a text on aeronautics throws interesting light on higher atmospheric regions. It quotes Sage *Shounaka*’s view on 5 layers of atmosphere. The regions of sky are five namely.

Rekhāpatha– High air density – whirlpools of energy.

Maṇḍalpatha– Clear air turbulence - whirlpools of winds.

Kendrapatha– Extreme heat – whirlpools by collision.

Śaktipatha – Extreme cold – whirl pool of cold currents.

Kakṣyapatha – Radiation hazards. Whirlpool of solar rays, radiations.

These regions can be equated to Stratosphere (upper two paths), Mesosphere (*Kendrapatha*) and Thermosphere (*Śaktipatha*) and Van-Allen belt (*Kakṣyapatha*)

It also mentions an elaborate treatise titled *Vāyutattva Prakaraṇa* of *Śākaṭāyana Ṛṣi* that deals extensively on winds. Even more interesting details of upper regions are found in the work titled ‘*Prapañcasāra*’-

‘In the middle of two spheres above *Kaśyapa* (region of sky) there is *Vāruṇi* force; between the sphere and the force, there are 5000 wind

currents. Another ancient text ‘*Gatinirṇaydhikāra*’ which states about motions of winds as –

“In the *Āvaha* and other giant wind spheres there are 122 kinds of different motions of wind”.

The ‘*Āmśubodhiniśāstra*’¹⁵ of *Maharshi Bhāradvāja* throws further light on the text of *Vāyutattva Prakaraṇa* that may further astound the modern Wind scientists as to how the sages could understand the mysteries of the universe so deeply. The total airs of the *Brahmāṇḍa* are divided into 3 kinds – Winds supporting the Cosmos, those that support *Lokas* on the *Brahmāṇḍa* and those supporting beings under creation. The text further states that -

“Winds supporting creation are of 122 different groups. The 67th of these groups belongs to whirlwinds which are 32 varieties of them”. Further elaborating on this the text speaks of one class called *Pravāhika* (wind blowing from place to place) which is of 1,00,005 varieties.

Winds In Jain Literature

The Jain canonical texts consists of the 12 *Āngas*, 12 *Upāṅgas*, *Chedasūtras*, *Mūlasūtras* and *Chūlikasūtras* with their commentaries. The Jain text *Mūlācāra*¹⁶ of *Āchārya Vaṭṭakera* [212] mentions different types of winds-

vādubbhāmo ukkali maṇḍali guṅjā mahā ghana taṇū ya |

te jāṇa vājīvā jāṇittā pariharedavvā|

‘Whirlwind, wind that moves downwards (*ukkali*), wind turning around (*maṇḍali*), wind producing sound (*guṅjā*), stormy wind (*mahāvayu*), humid wind (*Ghana vayu*), thin wind (*Tanu vayu*) know them as living body and do not cause injury to them’. The *Bhagavati Sūtra*¹⁷ mentions 4 kinds of wind namely *iṣatpurovāta* (Moist Breeze), *Pathyavāta* (Wind healthy for vegetation), *Mandavāta* (soft or gentle breeze), *Mahāvāta* (Stormy wind or gale) that blow in

East and West as well as the other 6 directions. It states that these winds are different and opposite for continents and seas. They do not violate limits of Salt Sea. It adds that these winds come into existence when air bodied beings indulge in movement by creating secondary transmuted body [*Uttara Vaikriya Śarīra*]. Continental winds and Oceanic winds do not blow at the same time [*Shatak 2, Chap. 1*]. The *Uttarādhyāyana Sūtra*¹⁸ [Chap. 36] mentions that winds are of 5 types –squalls or intermittent winds (*Utkalikā*), whirlwinds (*Mandalikā or Vātoli*), thick winds (that blow on ocean below *Ratnaprabha* hell or which support *Vimānas*) high winds and low winds. *Devendra Sūri*, a commentator speaks of *Samvartaka* winds that carry grass from outside to a particular place and are likened to hurricanes. The Jain text ‘*Rāyapāseniya Sūtra*’¹⁹ while describing the question–answer conversation between king *Pradeśi* and *Keśikumar śraman* gives some details about winds. *Keśikumar śraman* poses a question to the non-believing king as to whether he could hold the air (Wind) in his palm. When the king replied that it couldn’t be done, *Keśikumar śraman* replies-

etassa vākāyassa saruvissa sakāmassa sarāgassa samohassa saveyassa salesassa sasarīssa ruvaṃ

“The wind has shape, attachment, likes, feelings, physical body. Can you see its shape? Thus when even wind cannot be held in palm, how could a formless soul be shown by holding it in hands?”

The *Bhadrabāhu Samhitā*²⁰ attributed to Jain *Bhikṣu Bhadravāhu* deals about winds in an exclusive chapter. It states that winds from south direction that blow in southern direction are called ‘*Samudrānuśaya*’ and create pregation of clouds [IX.4]. The text also exclusively deals on the prediction of winds blowing from various directions on the day of *Āṣāḍha Pūrṇimā*. These are as tabulated in Tab.1 .They also vary on the time at which the winds blow (Morning, Noon, Evening or Night) as well as the direction. Likewise, the effects

of winds occurring on *Āṣāḍha Pratipad* (*Prathama* after *Pūrṇima*) are also observed.

On the same day, if the East wind gets struck by South wind then there will be no rain and one must not sow grains. Famine prevails and hence one should collect grains [IX. 31].

The *Bhadrabāhu Samhitā* also gives the omens of winds blowing in anticlockwise direction.

yadā tu vātāścatvāro bhṛṣaṃ vāntyapasavyataḥ|alpodakam śastrāghātam bhayaṃ vyādhiṃ ca kurvate|| pradakṣiṇaṃ yadā vānti ta eva sukhaśītalāḥ| kṣemaṃ subhikṣamārogyaṃ rājyavṛddhirjayastathā||

“If the winds from 4 direction blows in anti-clock wise direction, then less rain, fear from weapons and diseases occur. If they all blow in clockwise direction and move further, they cause good welfare, prosperity to kingdom, health and victory”.

If all the 4 winds strike against each other then fear from weapons, calamities to subjects, diseases, destruction of crops are to be predicted [IX.35]. In general, the text sums up the effects of winds in all directions as below-

purvo vātaḥ smṛtaḥ śreṣṭhaḥ tathācāpyuttaro bhavet| uttamastu tathaiśāno madhyamastvaparottaraḥ|| aparastu tathā nyūnaḥ śiṣṭo vātaḥ prakīrtitaḥ| pāpe nakṣatrarakarāṇe muhūrte ca tathā bhṛṣam|| - (IX.28-29)

“Winds from East, North, North East are auspicious and best. Those from Northwest, West are of medium nature. Those from South, South East and South West are inferior. At the particular time, asterism, *Karāṇa* and *Muhūrta* which is inauspicious, if such inferior winds blow, the inauspiciousness is increased.”

Tab. 1 Predictions of Winds based on directions in the *Bhadravāhu Samhitā*.

Direction of Winds	Predictions according to direction of winds
East	Good rains in rainy season. Seeds sown sprout. Affects <i>sūdras</i> . If East winds blow upto forenoon, good rain occurs in first 2 months. If it blows after noon, good rain for the next 2 months.
South	Affects <i>Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas</i> , not to sow seeds or sell grains. Famine, disease and death occur.
West	Medium rain. Rates of grass and food are medium. Fight among kings affects the country.
North	Sow all seeds. Rain from dense clouds, Increase in health and prosperity. Dharmic activities prevails on Earth.
South East (<i>āgneya</i>)	Death of king. Crops and water gets affected. Grains get growing in some places. Fears of fire.
South West (<i>nairṛtya</i>)	Affects grains. Increase in thieves, No rains. Earth gets covered by ashes and dust. One must collect grains. Winds affect nation and cities. Earth becomes filled by white bones, flesh, blood.
North West (<i>vāyavya</i>)	Insect pests increase. Rains, grains are medium in some place, good in others. Rate of grains medium.
North East (<i>iśāna</i>)	Affects thieves. Good to sow seeds even in rough lands. Auspicious, Health everywhere. Copious rain and grains, Completion of <i>Pooja</i> and consecration.

Inauspicious winds

*Bhadravāhu Samhitā*²¹ deals on inauspicious winds in different number of verses. Those winds that blow for more than 7 ½ days indicate fear or excessive rain [IX.41]. Winds blowing in anticlockwise direction covering the twilight sunrise in East forebode that the city will be caught in by invaders who become victorious. If it blows in clockwise direction and covers the sunrise in East, then citizens of the city become victorious [IX.42-43]. If wind blows excessively in great speed either in afternoon, midnight or during Sunrise and Sunset then there will be no rains and it causes fear and disease [IX.44].

The *Bhadravāhu Samhitā* also has several prediction related to king, army and war based on direction of winds as well as other characteristics that are tabulated in Tab. 2.

Tab. 2

Characteristics of Winds	Prediction from the winds
Wind in anticlockwise direction when king on a march	Sways the King's army to another direction and causes destruction.
Wind in clock wise direction when king is on a march	Winds blowing in same direction as to the march, victory to citizens.
Inauspicious winds blowing for .10-12 days	Affects army, death of king. Problems to citizens
Portentious winds with dust, ashes bereft of clouds	Destruction of weapon, Great fear.
Winds with dust, lightning, blowing upwards with sounds of cruel birds	Great fear
Fragrant winds blowing in anticlockwise direction of king's march	Victory to King
Winds that are not fragrant in clockwise direction opposite to king's march	Victory and fame will not be obtained and become difficult
Winds in morning or evening twilight with clouds from <i>East</i> blowing with great speed	Destruction of East positioned army in the West direction.
Winds in morning or evening twilight with clouds from <i>West</i> blowing.	Destruction of West positioned army in the East direction.
Winds blowing in South West or South East in inauspicious times	Forebode wars.

Bhadravāhu Samhitā states that the *Tithi, Karaṇā, Muhūrtā, Planets, Asterisms* are governed by *Vāyu* and therefore where winds prevail their strength lies there [IX.59].

tithinām karaṇānām muhurtām ca jyotiṣām| māruto balavān netā tasmād yatraiva mārutaḥ||

The text adds that winds from Southwest, South-East and South direction destroys even big clouds and do not allow them to pour rains [IX.63]. *Bhadravāhu Samhitā* also discusses about effects on wind and their prediction on the prices of various items such as Food, gold, silver, molasses, cattle, horses, grains, coconuts, silk and also so on²². Likewise the effects of winds blowing in months of *Śrāvaṇa Bhādrapada, Āśvina and Āṣāḍha* are also discussed.

Several *Jain Kavyas* also portray rich information of winds. The *Chandraprabhā Purāṇa*²³ (7.38) of *Aggaladeva* (12th c. A.D.)

compares the *Chaitra* winds (winds blowing in month of *Chaitra*) to an elephant. Another meteorological text namely the '*Raṭṭamata Śāstra*'²⁴ by Jain author *Raṭṭa* of Karnataka gives interesting details of winds. According to it on an early morning on the day of *Āṣāḍha Pūrṇima* within 3 hours one has to hoist a square white cloth as a flag on a post 24 *Genus* (a type of measure) high and observe directions of winds. These observations are discussed in literature. The predications of winds occurring in different directions are also tabulated as in **Tab. 3.**

Tab. 3.

Characteristics/Direction of Wind	Omens
South West winds	Uneven rains but crops do not wither.
North East winds	Less or No rains. Inauspicious to people, crops and animals
Even rain in morning and night	No rains.
East-West winds	Uneven rains.
North West, North, South East winds	Cause copious rains in 3 days
South winds	Mixed results.
Western winds	Copious rain.

The text also gives other features of winds such as winds that blow with foul smell bring rains. Whirl winds destroy rains. If from Northwest and North directions winds blow for 3, 5 or 7 days then in 24 hours itself copious rains occur. From Northeast winds, fruits are destroyed so are also harmful to people. If wind blows in East, North or Northeast direction it is auspicious for the state. It also states that winds blow according to the *Yogas* formed by the planets. In this context, it speaks of making wind observations using a method termed as '*Vāyucakra*'. Several other predictions about winds made by '*Raṭṭamata Śāstra*' have been discussed in literature especially those occurring at different times of the day and based on directions²⁵.

Sea faring expeditions that are also described in Jain canons states that Naval people (mariners) had sound knowledge of winds that helped them to steer through dangerous seas so that ships were not wrecked²⁶. Thus from the above discussions that there were several observations made by Jain scholars apart from those found in Ancient

Sanskrit literature. These contributions are well deserved to be enriched by Modern Scientific observations and studies that will bring to light the richness of Scientific observations made by Jain texts.

Conclusion

From the above description of Winds, it is clear that Jain literature has recorded large class of winds, studied their characteristic and other aspects. Study of the upper atmosphere as well as wind flow patterns have been extensively researched by Modern Science that the descriptions of Winds given in ancient Jain text is to be correlated and further probed to give newer revelations. The wind predictions stated by these texts also need to be further supported by further research into the ancient views given by these Jain texts. Future scope of research into other Jain literature may bring up further new details of such wind observations and can be investigated as part of present day Atmospheric sciences so as to understand about the Wind behavior in these regions over several years.

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The Status of Women Monks in Jainism

Dr. Anupam Jash*

Introduction

From the time immemorial the unique feature of Jainism is that, it gave the womanhood the full right of progress on the path of spiritual exertion. Every woman regardless of any class, caste, or creed, in accordance with her stamina and desire could take initiation for either as female votary or female monk. The great Jaina *ācāryyas* have made a great contribution of a distinctive nature in the social field to the direction of raising the status of women¹.

While the *Tirthamkaras*, establishing the Jaina Order, they considered that women too, just like men are eligible and capable for spiritual exertion, created a four-fold order including them also². Jaina religion regarded the women as the equal partner of men in strong contrast to the common concept of women as an inferior being. In the Jain world religious and social function a women enjoys as many rights as a man does. The nunnery of the Jainas was affiliated to the monastery and the Jaina nuns could almost rise to the position of a head to the community of nuns under an *arhat*. Thus nuns Brāhmisundari³, Ārya Yākini, Puspachula, Chandrabālā and Revati were heads of the community of nuns under the *arhats* Ṛṣabha, Ariṣṭanemi, Pārśva and Mahāvira respectively. Kathrine Anne Harper⁴ says, the earliest historical references to female Jaina renunciators were connected to the twenty third *Tirthamkara*, Pārśvanātha, who lived in the ninth century BCE. There are, however, mythological references to at least

two Jaina women attainment enlightenment or salvation long before Pārśvanātha. The first was Marudevi, the mother of the first *Tirthamkara*, Ṛṣabhanātha, who upon seeing her enlightened, attained the highest spiritual state of *kevalajñāna*, she herself entered into *samādhi* and passed away⁵. Paul Dundas says, “it is particularly noteworthy that according to the *Śvetāmbaras*, it is a woman Marudevi, the mother of Ṛṣabha, who has the distinction of being the first person of this world age to achieve liberation”⁶. Yet another example of a woman attaining the highest spiritual level is found in the story of the *Jina* Malli, who according to the *Śvetāmbara* sect, choose the life of a renouncer as the prelude to *kevalajñāna*. The myths concerning Malli will be addressed momentarily; rather let us return to the *Tirthamkara* Pārśvanātha and reconstruct what we can of the role of women in his order. Jaina texts suggest that, at least as early as the ninth century BCE women with a high degree of spiritual commitment and aptitude far outnumbered men with similar inclinations and abilities. According to the *Kalpasūtra*, Pārśvanātha divided his community into four parts: monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen. A woman named Puspachula was placed at the head of the women’s order⁷. Furthermore the *Kalpasūtra* records that the four part *saṅgha* consisted of 16,000 monks, 38,000 nuns, 1,64,000 laymen and 3,64,000 laywomen⁸. Harper remarks, the sheer number of women alone indicates a religion in which the religiosity of woman was respected and female renunciation was encouraged⁹.

Bhagavān Mahāvira and the Status of Women

Bhagavān Mahāvira definitely changed the then lower position of women by many ways. Vilas A Sangave mentioned that, Mahāvira removed various restrictions imposed on women especially in the practice of religion. In fact *Tirthamkara* Mahāvira did not make any distinction between the men and the women in the observance of religion. The rules of conduct prescribed for the males and the females were exactly the same. Women can enjoy equal opportunities as men in different matters of religion like the study of sacred texts, observance of necessary duties, practice of *vratas*, i.e., vows, entrance into the

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ascetic order, practice of penance, making spiritual progress etc. Debendra Chandra Dasgupta says, the Jaina *Tīrthamkara* were extremely sympathetic in their attitude to women and admitted them freely into their order, no matter whether the candidates for admission were royal consorts, member of the aristocracy and those belonging to the common run of the society. There was not only equality but also ascendancy and superiority of women to men in Jaina India¹⁰.

The Nuns (Female Monk)

‘Nun’ is a term used for indigenous categories of women who have renounced the household life and have taken the mendicant vows (*mahāvratas*). In the Śvetāmbara tradition, this includes women with the title of *Sādhvī* or *Mahāsati*. In the Digambara tradition, it includes women with the title *āryikā*, who have taken the mendicant vow of non-possession (*aparigraha*). According to *Śvetāmbara Terāpanthis*, there is a class of female renouncers called *Śramaṇīs* who take the five *mahāvratas* but are given special dispensation to observe more relaxed rules that enable them to travel abroad.

Āryikā Chandanbālā (6th cent. BC)

Āryikā Chandanbālā was the first woman ascetic disciple of Lord *Mahāvira*. She was the head and the administrator of a vast community of *śramaṇīs*. *Chandanbālā* was the daughter of *Dadhivāhana*, the King of *Campā Nagari* and Queen *Dhariṇi* Devi. Lord *Mahāvira* during his ‘*Chadmastha*’ time (imperfect stage), performed a very long penance with a very severe pre-condition for breaking the fast (*abhigraha*) and broke the fast, accepting food from the hands of *Chandanbālā*. Hence, it is not an exaggeration to say that of all female monks of the current descending half cycle of time; *Chandanbālā* is the most fortunate one. This great lady ascetic gave initiation to thousands of women like princesses, daughters of merchants, queens, wives of attendants and the salvation-desirous women from all walks of life, into *śramaṇi dharma* and led them through the path of deliverance. Lord *Mahāvira* himself appointed her as the head of *śramaṇi* community and in that capacity she managed very efficiently a very large female monk-congregation of

36000 female ascetics. Serving the Jaina Order for a long time, and helping others progress in the spiritual path, she attained absolute, blissful, eternal liberation¹¹.

Jayanti and Mṛgāvati

Of the contemporaries of *Mahāvira*, *Jayanti*, the sister of King *Śatanika* of *Kausambi*, who used to attend the discourse of *Mahāvira* and discuss with him theological and metaphysical problems, ultimately discarded her royal comforts and became a devout nun¹². *Mṛgāvati* a very beautiful queen of this king, is a well known example of female chastity, political sagacity and heroism. Later *Mṛgāvati* turned her mind and went to the assembly of *Mahāvira* and expressed her desire to become a Jaina nun. After receiving necessary consent from the Lord, *Mṛgāvati* initiated into the order of Jaina nuns at the hands of *Mahāvira*¹³. *Bhagavati* sutra mentioned that it was *Jayanti* who took *Mṛgāvati* to the assembly of Lord *Mahāvira*.

Yākini Mahattara

More than any other nun, the contribution of *Yākini Mahattara* deserves special notice. *Prabandha Kośa* of *Rājasekhara Sūri* stated that, it was a leader (*Mahattara*) of Jaina nuns, *Yākini* by name, who defeated the then Brahmin scholar *ācāryya* *Haribhadra Sūri*, and converted him to the Jaina faith. U. P. Shah truly remarks ‘the greatness of *Yākini* can be understood if only one realizes the contribution of the versatile scholiast *Haribhadra Sūri* to Indian literature and the reform initiated by him in the Jaina sect. It was not an easy task to defeat such a dialectician in argument and convert him to such an extent that he should take special pride in calling himself *Yākini-Mahattara-Sunu* (son of the great Jaina nun *Yākini*)! She must have been a genius and must have contributed a good deal to the training of *Haribhadra Sūri*’¹⁴.

Āryikā Vijayavati and Vigatabhayā (approximately 44 V.N)

There is a mention of female monk *Vijayāvati* and her disciple *Vigatabhaya* in *Āvaśyaka Cūrṇi*. Female monk *Vigatabhayā* observed *sallekhanā* in *Kousambi*. On the occasion of her *sallekhanā*, the

community of votaries and female votaries organized a festival and showed their respect towards this noble Mahasati.

Āryā Poini (approx. 300-330V.N.)

The information about the great female monk Poini, the head of the order of the female monks and a scholar, and about 300 other detached female monks of the time of descriptive-*ācārya* *āryā* Balissaha, is available in the *sthabirāvali* written by Kimavanta. During early 4th century V. N. Mahāmeghavāhan Khāravela, the emperor of Kalinga convened a council on Kumara hills. Descriptive-*ācārya* *āryā* Balissaha and group-*ācārya* *Āryā* Susthita with their respective entourage of 500 *Śramaṇas* and ascetics, and 300 detached *Śramaṇis*, under the leadership of *Āryā* Poini, attended the council¹⁵.

One can assess the depth of knowledge and authority on *Āgama* scriptures, the excellent wisdom and unparalleled intellect of female monk Poini, by the fact that her contribution was requested and received by the council, for the pious and remarkable task of systematically compiling and protecting the *Āgama* literature.

She was respected and honored by monks and nuns, votaries and female-votaries of the congregation for her profound canonical knowledge. She enjoyed a prominent place in the congregation.

Āryikā Dhārini (approximately 24-60 V.N.)

Dhārini was the wife of *Rāṣṭravardhana*, the younger son of Avanti King Palaka. The life of female monk Dhārini is considered in Jain history as the symbol of an ideal woman. Before taking initiation into *Śramaṇi dharma*, she had to sacrifice great riches and even sever the loving bond towards her children to protect her chastity. After taking initiation, she prevented the probably merciless killing of people in the two kingdoms and gave an inspiring message of non-violence and non-war to the world¹⁶.

Āryā Saraśvati (approx. 5th century V.N.)

Approximately in the first half of the 5th century, along with Kalakācārya-II's sister Saraśvati also took initiation. *āryā* Sarasvati

bravely faced the difficulties which came on her way. Different type of political harassment and imprisonment did not budge her from the Holy path. *āryā* Saraśvati with full purity of heart and soul performed severe austerities, penance and practiced self-restraint throughout her life and finally attained liberation¹⁷.

Āryā Sunandā (Approx. 6th century V.N.)

After Saraśvati, who lived in 5th century after V.N. *āryā* Sunandā, the mother of *āryā* Vajra took initiation into *Śramaṇa dharma* from a *sthavira* female monk who was the disciple of *āryā* Simhagiri. Her name will always be written in golden letters in Jain history, as she was the mother of a famous epochal-*ācārya* *āryā* Vajra. She gave permission to her husband to renounce even though she was pregnant and in the prime of her youth. And in this way she setting an example of an ideal Indian wife rarely had seen anywhere.

Conclusion

Thus, as Kumarpal Desai¹⁸ says, the role of women in Jain religion is very progressive and ennobling on the whole. As mothers they have given birth to *tīrthamkaras*, as wives they have provided inspiration to their husbands. As individual they have managed large trade and commerce independently. In the Jain way of life woman has always been bold enough to protect her chastity and defeat her enemy. Her learning has for ever been honored everywhere. *Sādhis* have set an example for the society in matters relating to the ultimate achievements of spiritual progress. The liberation of women, the freedom of women and the advancement of women are integrated in Jain religion. These principles are sure to guide and lead the people in the ensuing decades towards the new path of attainment of the liberty of women.

JAIN BHAWAN : ITS AIMS AND OBJECTS

Since the establishment of the Jain Bhawan in 1945 in the Burra Bazar area of Calcutta by eminent members of Jain Community, the Jain Bhawan has kept the stream of Jain philosophy and religion flowing steadily in eastern India for the last over fiftyeight years. The objectives of this institution are the following:

1. To establish the greatness of Jainism in the world rationally and to spread its glory in the light of new knowledge.
2. To develop intellectual, moral and literary pursuits in the society.
3. To impart lessons on Jainism among the people of the country.
4. To encourage research on Jain Religion and Philosophy.

To achieve these goals, the Jain Bhawan runs the following programmes in various fields.

1. School:

To spread the light of education the Bhawan runs a school, the Jain Shikshalaya, which imparts education to students in accordance with the syllabi prescribed by the West Bengal Board. Moral education forms a necessary part of the curricula followed by the school. It has on its roll about 550 students and 25 teachers.

2. Vocational and Physical Classes:

Accepting the demands of the modern times and the need to equip the students to face the world suitably, it conducts vocational and physical activity classes. Classes on traditional crafts like tailoring, stitching and embroidery and other fine arts along with Judo, Karate and Yoga are run throughout the year, not just for its own students, but for outsiders as well. They are very popular amongst the ladies of Burra Bazar of Calcutta.

3. Library:

“Education and knowledge are at the core of all round the development of an individual. Hence the pursuit of these should be the sole aim of life”. Keeping this philosophy in mind a library was established on the premises of the Bhawan, with more than 10,000 books on Jainism, its literature and philosophy and about 3,000 rare manuscripts, the library is truly a treasure trove. A list of such books and manuscripts can be obtained from the library.

4. Periodicals and Journals:

To keep the members abreast of contemporary thinking in the field of religion the library subscribes to about 100 (one hundred) quarterly, monthly and weekly periodicals from different parts of the world. These can be issued to members interested in the study of Jainism.

5. Journals:

Realising that there is a need for reasearch on Jainism and that scholarly knowledge needs to be made public, the Bhawan in its role as a research institution brings out three periodicals: *Jain Journal* in English, *Titthayara* in Hindi and *Śramaṇa* in Bengali. In 37 years of its publication, the Jain Journal has carved out a *niche* for itself in the field and has received universal acclaim. The Bengali journal *Śramaṇa*, which is being published for thirty year, has become a prominent channel for the sbvgfr54pread of Jain philosophy in West Bengal. This is the only Journal in Bengali which deals exclusively with matters concerning any aspects of Jainism. Both the Journals are edited by a renowned scholar Professor Dr Satya Ranjan Banerjee of Calcutta University. The *Jain*

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Journal and *Śramaṇa* for over thirty seven and thirty years respectively have proved beyond doubt that these Journals are in great demand for its quality and contents. The *Jain Journal* is highly acclaimed by foreign scholars. The same can be said about the Hindi journal *Tithayara* which is edited by Mrs Lata Bothra. In April this year it entered its 25th year of publication. Needless to say that these journals have played a key-role in propagating Jain literature and philosophy. Progressive in nature, these have crossed many milestones and are poised to cross many more.

6. Seminars and Symposia :

The Bhawan organises seminars and symposia on Jain philosophy, literature and the Jain way of life, from time to time. Eminent scholars, laureates, professors etc. are invited to enlighten the audience with their discourse. Exchange of ideas, news and views are the integral parts of such programmes.

7. Scholarships to researchers :

The Bhawan also grants scholarships to the researchers of Jain philosophy apart from the above mentioned academic and scholastic activities.

8. Publications:

The Bhawan also publishes books and papers on Jainism and Jain philosophy. Some of its prestigious publications are :

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9. A Computer Centre :

To achieve a self-reliance in the field of education, a Computer training centre was opened at the Jain Bhawan in February 1998. This important and welcome step will enable us to establish links with the best educational and cultural organisations of the world. With the help of e-mail, internet and website, we can help propagate Jainism throughout the world. Communications with other similar organisations will enrich our own knowledge. Besides the knowledge of programming and graphics, this computer training will equip our students to shape their tomorrows.

10. Research :

It is, in fact, a premiere institution for research in Prakrit and Jainism, and it satisfies the thirst of many researchers. To promote the study of Jainism in this country, the Jain Bhawan runs a research centre in the name of *Jainology and Prakrit Research Institute* and encourages students to do research on any aspects of Jainism.

In a society infested with contradictions and violence, the Jain Bhawan acts as a philosopher and guide and shows the right path.

Friends, you are now aware of the functions of this prestigious institution and its noble intentions. We, therefore, request you to encourage us heartily in our creative and scholastic endeavours. We do hope that you will continue to lend us your generous support as you have been doing for a long time.

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