CHAPTER VIII

RELIGION AND THOUGHT

Introduction:

Our republican lived through a period of great intellectual and emotional fermentation which took place in Sixth Century B.C. There was a great upheaval against the Vedic system of thoughts and practices, which came under a heavy attack by a number of heretical thinkers of whom the Buddha and Mahāvira proved to be the most powerful. In the words of Professor Rhys Davids "there is evidence of a leap forward in speculative thought, of a new birth in the ethics, of a religion of conscience threatening to take the place of the old religion of custom and magic." The conflict of ideas and practices produced a host of new religious and philosophical doctrines. The Brahmajāla Sutta mentions sixty-three such doctrines, and the Aṅguttara-Nikāya makes further additions. It is

1. HI., p.107.
2. Dialogues, I, pp.26 ff., 52-53; Cf. Rhys Davids, American Lectures on Buddhism, pp.31-33.
3. AN. III., pp.276-77; Eng. Tr., III., pp.199-200
quite significant that the protestant movement began in the half-brahmanised eastern territories of Magadh and Videha, while the stronghold of orthodoxy was the Kuru-Pañchāla of the west. This shows that the intellectual ascendancy shifted from the west to the east and from the Brāhmaṇas of Kuru-Pañchāla to the Ksatriyas of Magadha and Videha. These republics lying in the half Brahmanised eastern part of the country and also ruled by the Ksatriyas or Rājputas must have had a great share in the intellectual revolution. With this brief preface, we proceed to discuss the religious faiths and practices and metaphysical speculations in the republics.

A. RELIGION

BUDDHISM

As we pass to the younger religions which developed in the train of Brahmanism as a reaction, the first of these which presents itself to us is Buddhism. Buddhism had its growth in one of these republics and it also constituted a major faith of their peoples.

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Cf. Dialogues I, pp.220 f.


Buddha, the founder of this religion, belonged to the family of the Gautamas who were, it is said, the line royal of the Śākyas, a Rājputa clan which was settled at the time on the banks of the Rohini, a small affluent of the Gogra, about 137 miles to the north of Benaras.

Buddhism bears a deep and indelible impress of the mighty personality of its founder, just like the Christianity and Islam do of their respective prophets.

The general outline of the life of the Buddha, which has been culled from a mass of legends and myths, is a matter of common knowledge today and need not be repeated here.

Fundamental Principles:

The kernel of the fundamental teachings of Buddhism is contained in the Dhamma-chakka-pavattana Sutta of the Aṅguttara Nikāya (the Sermon of the Turning of the Wheel of the Law), which the Buddha is said to have preached to his first disciples at Benaras. This contains the 'Four Noble Truths' (Ārya Satyāni) and the 'Noble Eightfold Path,' which together constitute the basic categories of Buddhism. The Four Noble Truths are:

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that the existence is full of sorrow (Dukkha); that the
desire (Tanha), which increases with the gratifications, is the cause of the existence (Samudaya); that the worldly existence could be ended (Nirodha) by the destruction of the desire; that there is the Noble Eightfold Path - Right Views, Right Resolve, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Recollection and Right Meditation - which leads to the destruction of the desire. The 'Eightfold Path' is described as the Middle Path; because it avoids both the extremes of Self-Indulgence and extreme asceticism. In the 'Four Noble Truths' we have the oldest authentic expression of Buddhism and they may be considered to form the early Buddhist creed. The Buddhists describe the ignorance (of the 'Four Noble Truths') as being the ultimate and most hidden root of all the sufferings in the Universe, and as a corollary, the knowledge and observance of them bring about the end of the painful existence or Nibbana. The ultimate aim of the Buddhist religieux to attain Nibbana (Nirvana) which is the 'Eternal state of peace and bliss, free from sorrow and desire, decay and disease, from further births

9. For the technical and implied meanings of each of them refer to Rhys Davids, SBE., XI, pp.144-45.
and death* or 'the extinction or the cessation of existence.' Of course, it must be admitted here that, in the face of numerous contradictory and confusing interpretations given to 'Nirvāṇa' by eminent scholars, it appears to be a hopeless task to explain it in the terms of worldly experience better than that given above. As pointed out by S.N. Dasgupta, any one who seeks to discuss whether Nirvāṇa is either a positive and eternal state or a mere state of non-existence or annihilation, takes a view which has been discarded in Buddhism as heretical. However, the Buddha's doctrine of salvation was "to be found here, in this life, in an inward change of heart, to be brought about by perseverance in a mere system of self-culture and self-control." Thus, "in brief, Buddha taught that Samsāra is Dukkha, Nirvāṇa is peace ineffable, the Mārga is primarily Thanic practice" and in this way he preached a "World-Gospel, a course of better life for every man." 16

Ethical Doctrines:

Buddhism contains a set of moral doctrines which are quite simple. It declares that man is the architect of his own destiny, and not any god or gods. If he does

good deeds in this life, he will be reborn in a higher life and so on till he attains salvation or the final emancipation from the evils of births. On the other hand, evil deeds are sure to be punished, and not only salvation will be retarded thereby, but man will be reborn into lower and lower life. Man was to follow the Middle Path, avoiding both the extremes - a life of self-indulgence and a life of self-mortification. The fourth tenet of the Sacred Truths and the group of thoughts which it covers, may be treated as the ethics of Buddhism. The Buddhist ethics are divided into three successive categories - Uprightness (Sīla), Self-concentration (Samādhi) and Wisdom (Pāñña). Sīla briefly means the desisting from committing all sinful deeds (Sabbapāppsassa akaraṇam), which serves to remove the 'kilesas' and leads one to the first two successive stages of sainthood - Sotāpannabhāva (the stage in which one is put in the right current) and the Sakadāgāmibhāva (the stage when one has only one more birth to undergo). Samādhi means concentration of mind on right endeavours together with its states upon one particular object so that they may completely cease to shift and change. It

21. ibid.
is a more advanced effort which leads to the destruction of the old roots of the old Kilesa and directly brings in Panna or true wisdom, which is right knowledge of the Four Noble Truths and which brings in final emancipation.

The entire code of the Buddhist morality is to be found in the Ten Vows and the Eight Commandments taken by and given to the Buddhist monks. Sometimes, the whole is summed up in simple formulas, apparently negative, but really positive, which say, kill no living things, do not steal, do not commit adultery, do not speak untruths, do not drink intoxicating liquors. These rules emphasise the need for self-control in five different directions. Positively, they mean control of anger, the desire for material possessions, the lust of the flesh, cowardice and malevolence and craving for unwholesome excitaments. Sometimes the ideal virtues are stated to be ten in number—charity, purity of conduct, patience, strenuousness, meditation, intelligence, employment of right means, resoluteness, strength and knowledge. Further, the Buddhist morality appears to be highly individualistic. One is asked to imitate the example of the Buddha, and there is no emphasis on convention and authority. This is fully

22. ibid.
25. ibid.
demonstrated by the answer given by the Buddha to Ananda when he asked him for his instruction about the order:

"Be ye to yourselves, Ananda, Your own light, Your own refuge: Seek no other refuge. Let the Truth be your light and refuge." But at the same time, it is not devoid of social contents; rather it has a strong ring of egalitarianism and philanthropy. In the prescribed meditations there is a set of four called the 'Stations of Buddha,' which are meant to regulate one's attitude to other people and aim at the cultivation of social emotions as friendliness (Maitrī), compassion, sympathetic joy (muditā) and impartiality. It emphasises the essential equality of man, and its unbounded philanthropic spirit could be seen in the famous command of the Buddha to the monks "Walk, monks, on tour, for the blessing of the many folk, for the happiness of the many folk, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare, the blessing and the happiness of gods and men." Besides the first five of the Ten Precepts, the sermon of the Buddha to Sigala constitutes the code of the Buddhist lay morality. It

26. The Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (Buddhacarya, p. 495); See also Chunda Sutta, ibid., p. 482; Cf. Oldenberg: Buddha, p. 198.
27. Vide Edward Conze: Buddhist Thought in India, p. 80
lays down the norm of behaviours to one's fellow-beings and also the duties of the parents and children, teachers and pupils, husbands and wives, friends, and masters and servants. Of these precepts of lay morality, which Buddhism shares with other religions, specially remarkable are the duties of husbands to wives and masters to servants which according to Basham, "seem to anticipate the 20th century idea on the rights of women and employees." The Jātaka, which constitutes the most important vehicle of the Buddhist ethical teachings, offers us the most impressive demonstrations of it in its numerous stories, such as, the story of Prince Vassantara who gave away everything including his wife and children; of the Monkey who saved the lives of his fellows at his own cost; and of the parrot who sacrificed his life for his friends.

31. Goomarswamy opines that "most likely the earliest Buddhism had no other moral code than that of the mental and moral discipline appointed for those who renounced the world and entered the Paths-(Buddha and the Gospel of Buddhism, pp.120-121); Cf. Rhys Davids who very rightly holds the Sigālovāda Sutta to be a treatise on the 'Whole Domestic and Social Duty' of the laity. Dialogues, III, pp.168 ff.
32. Wonder . . . , p.286.
33. Jat. (Cowell's), VI, p.145 f.
34. Jat. ibid., III, p.225 f.
35. Jat. ibid., IV, p.176 f.
Thus the standard of moral law in the early Buddhism appears to have been very high and it must have greatly improved the current social ethics or morality.

Monastic Order and Discipline:

The Buddhist ethical ideal discloses the monastic character of the Buddhist morality: "the true holy life is the life of the monk; the worldly life is imperfect, necessarily unsatisfying life, the preliminary step of the weak." The primary demand made upon the monk is not; thou shall live in this world and make this world a something which is worthy of life; but it is; thou shall separate thyself from this world. Thus the early Buddhism centred round the Samgha or the monastic order, which was included in the Sacred Triad - the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Samgha. The Buddhist monastic fraternity appears from very beginning to have been a society governed by law. The law prescribed a procedure of admission, course of action and omission and a judicial procedure for the maintenance of the law.

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37. ibid., p. 338. He opines that the formula of Sacred Triad originated after the Buddha’s death.
As a rule, entry into the Order was open to everyone, but slaves, soldiers, debtors, and other persons under obligation or in membership could not enter it without the prior permission of their superiors. Persons afflicted with serious ailments or bodily deformities and also criminals were not admitted. The minimum age limit for membership was put at 20 years, though novices could be admitted from the age of eight years upwards.

The initiation ceremony was completed in two grades: Pabbajā (the outgoing) and Upasampadā (the arrival). The first one consisted in the candidate putting on the yellow robes of the order, ceremonial shaving of the hair and the beards, and pronouncing the Three Jewels: "I take refuge in the Buddha, I take refuge in the Dhamma, and I take refuge in the Sangha or order." Any fully accredited monk could receive this declaration. By the performance of the second rite, Upasampadā, the novice was raised to the full membership.

39. Vinaya, Mahāvagga I.76 for Bhikkhus: Gullāvagga, I.17.1 for Bhikkhunis.
41. ibid., I.76; ibid., pp.230 ff.
of the order. This ceremony was completed before the Buddhist chapter. The postulant makes a reverential appeal for initiation thrice. His candidature is proposed by an accredited monk, after his necessary qualifications have been examined. Then a formal resolution granting him full membership is moved thrice before the order which allows it by silence. Thereafter the four rules of monastic austerity in external life are communicated to him viz., that his food will be what he receives by begging, that his clothes be made out of rags collected by him, that his resting place will be under the trees of the forest, and that his medicine will be the stinking urine of the cattle. However, meal, clothing, shelter and medicine offered by a pious layman was not forbidden. And finally, the four great Prohibitions are communicated to him, which formed the fundamental duties of monastic life and whose infringement led to the inevitable expulsion from the order. The communication of these four great Prohibitions marked the end of the Ordination Ceremony.

The four rules of monastic austerity in external life and the four-fold prohibition as detailed above, formed the hard core of the monastic discipline. The fraternity of the fully ordained monks was called by

42. Bhikk., VII, p. 213.
43. Mahāvagga. I.78.
the name Bhikkhu Samgha* (community of mendicants) which indicates that, next to chastity, poverty ranked as the great monastic virtue. The monk was not allowed to seek anything beyond the bare necessaries viz., clothings, food, lodging, and medicine. Land, slaves, house and live-stock were not accepted and owned by the order, and the monks were not permitted to cultivate land and also receive gold and silver. There were detailed regulations regarding the dwellings, food, clothings, sleeping, sitting, bathing, the bowl etc. These rules were highly comprehensive, embracing the whole life of the monks. According to the Buddhist monastic rule, the monk could not perform the most insignificant and also necessary things without a positive legal sanction. Thus the conduct of the monk down to the minutest details was regulated by specific ordinances whose slightest violation was sure to invite an appropriate punishment to him. The daily life of the monk was chiefly spent in study and religious exercises. He also performed his share in the work of cleanliness and sanitation of his cell and the monastic buildings. Among the most important of the spiritual exercises of the monk were the Four Sublime Moods - 'Brahma Vihāra' i.e., sitting cross-legged he endeavored to fill his mind with

44. See Mahāvagga, V, VI, VII; Cullavagga, V, VI,
Cf. ERE., VII, p.214.
45. Vide Cullavagga, V and VII.
the four cardinal virtues of Buddhism viz., love, joy, pity and serenity, and to consider all living beings in the light of these virtues. Every fortnight, on the evenings of the full and the new moon, the monks assembled for Uposatha, which was an act of general Confession. The long list of the monastic rules (pātimokkha) from the Vinaya Text was read, and each monk was required to confess any infringement committed by him in the preceding fortnight. The case of the serious breaches were referred to the Committee of Elders which punished the offender either by penalty of penances or expulsion from the Order.

In the early Buddhism women were regarded as the most dangerous of all the snares which the tempters had spread for men. Buddha had a very low opinion of women in spiritual matters, which he expressed on many occasions to Ānanda. However, he admitted, against his will, women to his order at the insistent pressure of his foster-mother Mahārajaśāli for whom Ānanda interceded. His great unhappiness on their admission is well expressed in his bitter lamentation to

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47. Mahāvagga, II; SBE., XIII, pp.239.; Cf. Sukumar Dutt : Early Buddhist Monachism, pp.84 ff.
49. ibid., pp. 165-66; the relevant portions of the conversations are quoted herein.
Ananda that his Norm, which would have lasted a thousand years, would now, after the admission of the women, would last only five hundred years. And thus the Buddhist Nun’s Order was founded. The Nuns wore yellow robes, shaved their heads and their discipline was very similar to that of the monks as described above. However, strict rules were laid down for preserving their respectability and separation: The Eight High Ordinances enjoined by Buddha on the first batch of the nuns at their initiation constitute the special code of discipline for the nun. These Ordinances are to the effect that the nun shall show due respect to monk, even if she be senior by hundred years, shall not pass rainy season in any district in which monks are not residing, shall go once in a half month to the monks for confessional ceremony and for preaching sermon, shall at the end of rainy season, in the presence of both the Orders, invite enquiry regarding things seen, heard and suspected, shall do penance for half a month for wrong doing to both orders, shall apply for ordination from both orders after a probationary period of two years in the six rules, shall not revile a monk in any circumstance and they were forbidden to the path of speech against brethren and not the path of speech against nun of the brethren. These Eight High

50. Prajāpatī-Prabbajā Sutta, Gullavagga, X.1.6; SB3., XI, pp.325 f.
51. Gullavagga, X.1.4; X.6.27.
Ordinances demonstrate the utter subordination of the nuns to the order of the monks.

Existence, Propaganda and Main Centres:

Buddhism in its early form as described above in the text was one of the important religions which were widely prevalent in these republics. In the Sakyan republic, wherein the Buddha, the Light of Asia, was born, it was the predominant faith. The Vajjis, who formed an extensive confederate republican state, were extremely reverential to the Buddha, and his teachings were very popular among them. Among the Mallas its importance and popularity are indicated by the fact that they (the Mallas of Kusinārā) had issued an edict asking every one to pay homage to the Buddha on his visit to their land and in default to pay the penalty of five hundred pieces. In the other minor republics, too, this religion was quite popular.

The spread of Buddhism in these republics was brought about by the religious itinerant operations so untiringly conducted by the Master. Except for the three months of the rainy seasons when 'Vassa' was kept, throughout the year he used to move from town to town.

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52. Cf. Mrs. Rhys Davids: Psalms of the Sisters, Introd., p. XXVI.
54. ibid., p. 148.
55. Vinaya, Mahāvagga, VI. 36. 1; SBE., XVII, p. 135.
and from village to village preaching his new religion. In this religious circuit, he was ever attended by a great band of disciples whose number is indicated between three hundred to five hundred. The territory over which their wandering excursions generally extended was the circuit of the 'Eastern Land' which included these free states or the republics. While the main centres of the itinerary ministrations of the Buddha and his disciples, outside the republics, were the capital cities of the kings of Kosala, Magadha-Srāvastī and Rajagriha, inside them such centres were Vaiśālī, the capital city of the Vajjian Republic, Kapilavastu, the capital of the Sakyan republic, Pāvā and Kusinārā, the headquarters of the two branches of the Mallas. On the out-skirts of these republican cities, the community possessed numerous parks and gardens in which structures of various kinds were erected wherein its members used to put up. Such a place was the Mahāvana wherein the famous Kūtagarsala was erected and which was the seat of numerous immortal discourses of the Buddha; the celebrated 'Ambapali-Vana' donated to the Buddha by the famous Vaisāleneesee courtesean Ambapāli; the Migrodha-Park where the Buddha delivered

56. Oldenberg: op. cit., p. 142.
57. Ibid.
58. DPPN., I, pp. 659 ff.
60. MN., I.239; Vinaya. III.235, 244; IV.55, 101, 167, 181, 262, 314.
Important sermons; Anūpiyā Mango-grove in the Walls country and the Bheskalavāna in Sumsumārasiri in the country of the Bhaggas etc. In these gardens were the residences of the Brethren-houses, halls, cloisters, store-rooms, surrounded by lotus-pools, fragrant mango trees and slender fan-palms that lift their foliage high over all else, and the deep green foliage of the Nayagrodha tree, whose roots dropping from the air to the earth become new stems and with their cool shady arcades and leafy walks seem to invite to peaceful meditation. Such were the surroundings in which the Buddha used to put up and preach to the masses of peoples, lay and monks, who flocked together to see and hear him. The fame of the Buddha's person also drew together from far and near crowds of such as stood without the narrow circle of the community. Often when he happened to halt near the residences of potentates, kings, princes and dignitaries came on waggons or on elephants to put questions to him or to hear his doctrines. We find such an instance in the story which tells us that when the Buddha was staying in the Amabapāli-Vana the distinguished youths of the Lichāhavas drove out to him with their splendid teams, some in white garments with white trimmings, and

62. The Buddhavamsa Commentary (p.3) speaks of the Buddha having spent eight rainy seasons at this place.
   Cf. DEPN., II, pp.392 f.
others in yellow, black and red. To complete the picture of the Buddha's ministration in these republics, we should take note of the stiff opposition which he encountered from the class of dialecticians and theological disputants of all shades already flourishing in India at the time. We find such instances in the story of Prince Abhaya who was instigated by his teacher Nātaputta to confuse the Buddha, in the episode of the conversion of the Liśchhāvī general Siha who, in spite of many dissuasions by his teacher Miganthaputta, became a convert to the new faith, at which the Migantha's followers started a campaign of vilification against the Buddha and his disciples, saying that the latter had taken beef at a dinner given by Siha in the Master's honour for which a number of fat animals (oxen) were killed, and finally, in the story of the Migantha's Sachchaka who sought an interview with the Buddha, while he was staying at Mahāvana, with a view to engage him in a discussion on metaphysical subjects before a large audience, and, defeating him in it, to destroy his influence upon the Liśchhāvīs.

However, in spite of very stiff opposition offered by the leaders of the Brahmanical, the Jaina and other

64. Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (Buddhacaryā, p. 494)
65. Infra
heretical faiths, the gospel of the Buddha spread far and wide, sinking deep into the life of the republicans. This fact is very impressively borne out by a large number of converts which it found among the people of the different republics. Mass conversions among the Lichchhavīs are referred to by the Pāli texts. For example, the Dīgha-Atthakathā says that during the first visit of the Buddha to Vaiśāli, he stayed there for two weeks preaching the Ratana-Sutta for seven consecutive days and on each day 84,000 beings realised the truth. Although this number is traditional, it is highly indicative. We have plentiful references in the Pāli texts showing how the Lichchhavīs had a very earnest and deep veneration for the Buddha and his gospel. We are told that on one occasion a large band of the Lichchhavī youths, while on their way to see the Buddha, gave out such a hilarious cry at his sight that it broke through the silence of the Mahāvāna with a great resounding. On another occasion, five hundred Lichchhavīs in colourful garments and ornaments and trappings drove out to worship the Buddha while he was at Vaiśāli, and they offered five hundred garments to Pimgiyani who sang a Gāthā in the praise of him, and he presented them to the Buddha who taught them the Five Ratanas. We may...

70. AN., V, p.133.
71. ibid., III, pp.239-40; Eng. Tr. III, pp.174-75.
also note here that the Buddha too had a deep affection for the Lichchhavis. He compared them in their brightness to the divine host of thirty-three gods. It was among them that he preached some of his important Suttas, formulated some of the Vinaya rules, laid the foundation of the Nun's Order, spent his last rainy season and announced his impending death, and when he left Vaisali, handing over his alms-bowl to the bemoaning Lichchhavis, he experienced a deep sigh. After the death of Buddha, the Lichchhavis expressed their reverence and loyalty to him and his gospel by constructing a stūpa on their share of his last remains and held a feast in his honour.

73. The Mahāli Sutta, the Mahā-Sihaṇḍā Sutta, Culla-Saṅghhaka Sutta, Tevijja-Vaṭṭhagottā-Sutta, and Ratana-Sutta, etc.; Cf. DFPN., II, p.943.
74. SBE., XVII, pp.118, 210-12, 119-21; XX, pp.101-102, 110-11, 102, 115-16; of the Pātimokha Rules, ten were framed at Vaiśāli, comprising three under Pārijātā, two under Nissagātiyā Pācittiyā, and three under Pācittiyā; Cf. DFPN., II, p.942.
75. Vinaya, Cullavagga, I; SBE., XX, pp.320 ff.
76. Dialogues, II, p.106.
77. ibid., p.112.
78. Seal's Buddhist Records, I, p.111.
80. ibid., pp.187. Late Dr. Altekar excavated in March, 1956, "a flat low stūpa which he identified with one (Contd.)
The progress of Buddhism among the Lichchhavīs, in the face of stiff oppositions from Brahmanism and Jainism which were already well established in Vaiśāli, is highlighted by the conversion of a few leading figures of the rival faiths by the Buddha viz., Pimigivāni and Pañcīta Kumārka who were staunch Brāhmanas and of Sachchaka, Abhaya, Siha, Mahāli, Mahānāma, Uṣaṇa-sahāpati, Nandaka, the minister, Cūthadhā Lichchhavī and Bhārgava 81 Paribbājaka and Ambapāli.

Especially the conversion of Siha, who was a military general of the Lichchhavīs and wielded a great influence in the country, appears to have administered a rude shock to the Mahānāma Nāṭaputta’s followers who, out of sheer jealousy, started a vilification campaign alleging that Siha had killed animals for feeding Buddha and his followers. Mr. Nalinaksha Dutt’s suggestion that the number of Buddhist converts was not very large in Vaiśāli (as Ānanda excludes Vaiśāli from the list of the places where the lay devotees lived in large numbers - DN., II, p. 164), should not be taken to deny the fact that

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of the original relic Stūpas of Buddha built by the Lichchhavīs in the first quarter of the 5th century B.C. (JNRS., Buddha Jayanti Special Volume, II, pp. 501-11).

82. Vinaya, VI, 31.12.
Buddhism was no lesser a religious force in Vaiśali than any other faiths. The Brahmayu-Sutta of the Majjhima-Nikāya suggests the prevalence of Brahmanism in Videha in the time of the Buddha. The Nikāyas are generally silent about Buddha's missionary work in this place. However, the Majjhima-Nikāya tells us that once Buddha stayed at Makhādeva-ambavana of Mithilā and converted a greatly distinguished Brāhmaṇa teacher named Brahmayu.

The Mallas also entertained a deep reverence for the Buddha and had faith in his teachings. The Malla rulers had issued an order imposing a penalty of five hundred pieces on those who failed to turn up to pay respect to the Buddha when he was in their country. They invited him to inaugurate their newly constructed Mote-Hall, expressing the faith that this will be for the lasting good and happiness of the Mallas of Pāva. On that occasion he delivered a discourse on the norm to the Mallas, which they sat listening to till late hours in the night and were highly inspired and enlightened by it. The Mallas have become immortal in the history of Buddhism for the fact that it was in their land in Fāvā that the Buddha fell ill and entered Nirvana at

84. SBE., XVII, p. 135.
86. Dialogues, II, pp. 162-64.
Kusinārā. On the receipt of the news of Buddha’s death the Mallas, who were busy in transacting business in the Sākhārāra, went out to the Sāla-Grove with their wives, young men, girls, retinue and friends, aggrieved and afflicted in their heart, to pay homage to him. It was here that he delivered his last sermon to the brethren, exhorting them to work out their own salvation with diligence. Both the Mallas of Pāvā and Kusinārā demonstrated their reverence to the Buddha and his teachings by erecting a Carion or Stūpa over their respective shares of his last remains and holding a feast in his honour. Of the famous converts from the Mallas, one was Dabba Mallaputta, the distributor of food and assignor of residences to the monks at Rājagriha and the other was Chunda Kāmmāputta who has become immortal in the Buddhist tradition for serving to the Buddha his last meal. The Śākyas were the followers of the Brahmanic religion and were, in the beginning, opposed to the idea of the Buddha spreading a new religion among them. This is borne out by the cold and unfriendly attitude shown by them to the Buddha and his disciples.

88. ibid., Buddhacārya, p.505.
89. Dialogues, II, p.163.
90. ibid., p.173.
91. ibid., p.187.
in their first visit to Kapilavastu. The Buddha had to contend also against the followers of Mahāvīra among whom the Sakyan rājā Mahānāma was very influential and whom the Buddha tried to convert. But soon Buddha was successful in having a large following among them. Many a prince and noble became his followers, and among them a good number renounced the world and became arhants or reclusés. It is interesting to note that the Sakyan women in large number renounced the world and became arhants. Buddhism was an important and very popular faith among the other minor republics also. Among the bhaggas it gained a great foothold. Buddha and his chief disciple Moggallāna visited this place more than once and stayed at Samaññārāgiri Bhass-Kalāvana-mrigadava. He also delivered a few discourses there at the instance of Nakulapitā and Nakulamātā, two of his favourite lay disciples. The another important disciple of the Buddha was Bodhirājakumāra who requested Buddha to sanctify his newly built palace Kokanada by staying therein for a day. Three of the minor Pātimokha rules, one under Pāchittiyā and two under Sekhiyā were framed here. Buddha was more successful among the Koliyas than

96. AN., I, p. 219; III, 286; IV, p. 220; MN., I, nn. 91
98. MN., II, p. 91.
among the other minor republics. The geographical contiguity to the Sākyas and personal relation of the Buddha through his mother and wife aside, helped him much in his mission among them. The Buddha's intervention to avert the imminent bloody war with the Sākyas by his pacifying discourse impressed the Koliyas so much that many of them renounced the world. The influential converts among the Koliyas were Punnagovatika and Seniya Kukkuravatika who were orthodox Brāhmaṇas, Kakudha Koliyaputta, Suppihavangī, Koliyadhīta and Pātalīyagāmāni. Finally, we know from the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta that all of these republicans claimed and received a share of the last remains of the Buddha which they honoured by enshrining in stūpas and holding feasts.

The existence of god in the early Buddhism has been a subject of great controversy. Somehow, in the popular opinion for long

Buddhism has been held to be a 'godless' religion.

Even some great scholars have subscribed to this view.

100. AN., III, p. 132.
102. SN., IV, pp. 540-58.
103. Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, Buddhacaryā, p. 503.
104. For example see, Coomaraswamy : op. cit., p. 3, and also see Hilaire who observes: "We have already shown, as an undeniable fact, that in the whole of Buddhist (Contd.)
But recent researches have revealed that the Buddha did not deny the existence of god. The early Buddhism took over 'Pantheon as it existed in the popular belief and even multiplied.' But while not denying the existence of spiritual beings, the Buddha treated them as dim figures, or demi gods, or fairies or angels, who belonged

(Contd.)

system there is not a vestige of the idea of god. It does not precisely deny, nor did it contest the idea of god; but it seems not to have known that such an idea existed in the human soul nor that it was indispensable; in fact, it completely ignored it."

(The Buddha and His Religion, p. 164).


106. Cf. Edward Conze, who observes: "Like the Catholics, the Buddhists believe that a faith can be kept alive only if it can be adapted to the mental habits of the average person. In consequence, we find that in the earlier scriptures, the deities of Brahmanism are taken for granted and that, later on, the Buddhists adopted the local gods of any district to which they came." (Buddhism, Its Essence and Development, p. 42). Cf. Mrs Rhys Davids, who makes similar observations: "Soeloingly Gautama is shown referring to those who believed that by merely and repeatedly invoking this and that manifestation of Deity-Indra, Varuna, Prajāpati - a happy rebirth could be ensured at death.
to the Empirical Order, and had no controlling power
over the Universe and its destiny, and who were them-
selves subject to the inexorable Law of Karma. Thus
by admitting the reality of Brahmā and other gods, the
Buddha adopted the popular theology to build other worlds
to suit his own purpose of religious propaganda. In fact
the early Buddhism adapted the old gods to its new
doctrines by making them all subordinate to the Buddhist
monks aiming at Nirvāṇa. The pantheon of the early
Buddhism consisted of the following; Brahmā, Sūrya,
Chandra, Indra, Varuṇa, the Four Great Kings, Tāvatimsa

(Contd.)

And it is just in this hitherto vague word "Dharmas"
Pali, 'Dhamma,' that so far from teaching anti-theism,
be taught a new theism.’ (Wayfarer’s words, p. 448-49).
"Buddhism at its birth was in a finer, truer way
theistic than other world-creeds". (ibid., p. 451).

107. Dialogues, I, p. 142; Cf. E.J. Thomas: The Life of
Buddha, p. 208.

108. Tevijja Sutta; Mahānāma Sutta (Buddhacarīya, pp.199 ff.
257 ff.).


110. Tevijja Sutta (Buddhacarīya, pp.189 ff.)

111. ibid.

112. ibid.


115. Mahānāma Sutta (Buddhacarīya, p. 237).
The Nidāsā discusses the meaning of the 'Deva' (God) and divides gods into three classes as follows: (i) 'Gods by convention' like the kings, princes and queens; (ii) 'Gods by birth' like gods in the ordinary sense from the Four Great Kings to the Brahma-and gods beyond; (iii) 'Gods by purity' like the disciples who are Arahants and the Mahāpokya-Buddhas.

Further, we may note that the Buddha himself is described as the God, the super god (Atideva), the God beyond the gods (Devatīta), over the conventional gods and over the gods by birth and purity. Every Arahant is described to possess qualities which place him above the conventional gods. Here the gods should be taken in the Buddhistic sense.

116. ibid.
117. ibid.
118. ibid.
119. ibid.
120. ibid.
121. Mahānidāna Sutta (Buddhacaryā, p.120).
122. ibid.
123. Kevaddha Sutta, Dialogues, p.208; Cf. ibid., p.280ff
   "here important deities are enumerated."
124. ibid.
The early Buddhism believed in the existence of the Hell and Heaven. It held that one was born in them according to their evil or good actions. The Kokāliyavagga Sutta gives a list of the hells and also the estimate of the duration of the sinner's suffering in them. The Mahāparinibbāna Sutta describes a happy state in the heaven for the well-doers after their death. It should be noted here that the hell and heaven are held to be a temporary state and the final goal is Nirvāṇa, which is reserved only for the fully emancipated Arahants.

The religious practices in the early Buddhism must have been free from ceremonials and sacrifices, for it looked upon 'man's own heart as the sole place in which decisions between happiness and ruin can be carried into effect - what the lips utter and the hand

127. DN., II, p.86; Dialogues II, p.91.
128. For a detailed treatment of the subject, refer to Edward Conze: op.cit., pp.50-52.
129. Cf. N.Dutt: Spread of Buddhism, pp.3 ff.
does, can have a value only in so far as it is a concomitant of a symbol corresponding to that internal process. In the early Buddhist community the opposition to the Vedic ritualistic and sacrificial practices must have been kept alive by scrupulously keeping the faith free from every non-essential. This is fully borne out by some passages from the Dhammapada which speak of a moment’s veneration to an Enlightened man as better than any regular sacrifice with a thousand offerings for a hundred of years, and of homage to an enlightened man as better than tending sacrificial fire in the forest for a hundred of years. Further, another Pāli text says that ‘by things without none is made pure, the wise say and the Middle Way is the way to Brahma attainment.’ However, in the actual practice, Buddhism had become associated with certain religious acts and observances which are discussed below.

Twice in the month, at full moon and the new moon, the monks of each district, wherever they may happen to be sojourning, came together to celebrate the Fast Day. This was a confessional celebration whose sole purpose was to determine whether

132. ibid. v. 107.
the obligations of spiritual life had been sincerely and fully performed by the brethren. The eldest among the monks in every district was to call the meeting. At the evening of the Fast Day, all the brethren within the district were to assemble at the appointed place and none was to absent from it except in the case of insanity or serious sickness, or if he could send an assurance of his purity to reach the assembly through a comrade; otherwise, the invalid monk was to be brought in his chair or on his bed to the assembly. In case of serious illness, the order was to go in a body to his bed-side for the celebration. Under no circumstance the business could be undertaken in an assembly short of the full members. By the light of the torch the monks took their seats in the assembly; lay man, novice and nun were not allowed, for the confessional formula was a reserved possession of the monks only. Then the oldest of the brethren would recite in a loud voice the Confessional formula (Pātimokha). The members present were asked to confess the transgression (non-transgression was expressed by silence) and then the transgressions to be confessed were enumerated. Non-confession was held to be intentional lying and as such considered to be the worst sin which brought spiritual destruction. The

134. Cf. Mahāvagga II, SBE., XIII, pp.239 ff;
Oldenberg : Buddha, pp.239 ff.
Sabbaths in general were the days of rest and fasting, when no trade or business was allowed, hunting and fishing were forbidden and schools and courts of justice were closed. Preaching and hearing sermons were a common feature of the celebration of every Sabbath Day. But the regular time for this was the retreat during the rains (Vassa), an institution dating from the very commencement of Buddhism. The retreat began on the day of the full moon in the month of Asādha (June-July) and ended with the day of full moon in the month of Kārtika (about the middle of October).

Next to the Fast Day, Pavāraṇā was the other important Buddhist ceremony. It was held yearly. After the end of Vassa (rainy season) and PAVĀRAṆĀ before the start of the next religious itinerary the monks in each district met in a solemn conference. In this, every one irrespective of age and rank sat in a reverential attitude on the ground and raising his clasped hands asked his spiritual comrades to name him any sin of which he was guilty during the Vassa, so that he may realise it and atone for it. This was made an occasion for giving presents, especially in the form of clothes, to the

monks, for inviting them to dinner, and for celebrating processions. In later times, there was also a quinquennial festival, called Pañcavāsika, on a grand scale, its distinctive features being the practice of extraordinary liberality to the order.

The early Buddhism believed in the practice of certain spiritual abstractions which were considered as preparatory stages to the final triumph or Enlightenment. In such exercises, "the religieux withdrew from the external world with its motley crowd of changing forms to anticipate in the stillness of his own ego, from the pain and pleasure, the cessation of the impermanent." The devotion to abstraction is to Buddhism what prayer is to other religion.

The pilgrimage to the Holy Places associated with the life of the Buddha was another very important and popular form of the Buddhistic practices. This is clearly borne out by a passage in the Pāli text wherein the Buddha speaks to Ananda of the four places which the believing brethren and sisters and lay brothers

and lay sisters should see them and their hearts should be moved by them viz., the place where the Buddha was born, the place where he attained Enlightenment, the place where he set in rolling the unsurpassed wheel of Law and the place where he entered into the perfect Nirvana. The Buddha spoke of the merit of this practice to the effect that whosoever "dies in the faith to the pilgrimage to such holy places will, when his body dissolves, beyond the death walk the good road and be born again in the heavenly world."

Paying honour to the sacred relics of the Buddha and his great disciples was another important religious practice of the early

HONOUR TO SACRED

RELICS AND MONUMENTS

The Buddha himself got constructed stupas or shrines over the relics of his beloved disciples Sāriputta and Moggallāna. Further, the Buddha himself is recorded to have advised his disciples to set up at the Four Cross-roads a carin to the Tathāgata and remarked that whoever shall there place garlands or perfumes or paint, or make salutation there, or become in its presence calm in heart, that shall long be to them for a profit and joy. After the

140. Udāna Aṭṭhakathā, 8.6; Cf. E.J. Thomas: on cit., p.142; Buddhacaryā, p.491, f.n.1.
death of the Buddha, his last remains were distributed among the princes and nobles who enshrined their share in a stūpa and instituted festivals at which offerings of flowers, oblations and illuminations on a grand scale usually formed their important features. Initially there were eight stūpas as suggested by the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta which tells us that after the cremation of the Buddha his relics were divided into eight parts over which the various recipients built stūpas. The veneration of relics later became a much developed form of worship. Among those, the tooth relics, with which a whole Sutta is concerned, played a prominent part. The record of the Chinese pilgrims show that the stūpas were also erected over the relics of the Buddha's disciples and of Saints in various cities including Vaiśāli, etc.

A text belonging to the Sacred Canon of the Buddhists indicates that festivals were observed at

FESTIVALS AT THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE

Their main features consisted in the planting of banners and profuse offerings of sweet-smelling water on the Sacred Tree.

143. Apadāna. Fol.ghi, of the Phyares M.S., quoted by Oldenberg in Buddha, p.376 f.n.
JAINISM

Founder:

Vardhamāna Mahāvīra has been popularly known to be the founder of the Jaina religion. But the Jaina ancient tradition speaks of twenty-three earlier Tīrthāṅkaraś (Ford-makers). All the Tīrthāṅkaraś, except Pārāśva, who was the predecessor of Mahāvīra, are described as superhuman beings. It is in the teachings of Pārāśva that we have the first historical beginning of Jainism. He is said to have lived 250 years before the death of Māhāvīra. He is also said to have promulgated the practice of the Four Vows - Not to injure life, To be truthful, Not to steal and Not to possess property. Vardhamāna is said to have added the Fifth requisition of chastity, and also to have insisted upon the rigid rule of complete nakedness on the part of the ascetic. These additions appear to have made the important difference between the teachings of Pārāśva and Mahāvīra. Thus Mahāvīra was not so much the founder of a new faith as the reformer of the previously existing creed ascribed to the twenty-third Tīrthāṅkara Pārāśvanātha. It may be

See also H.Jacobi : Studies in Jainism, No.1, p.7 f.
146. Uttarādhyāyana Sūtra, XXIII,12; SBE.,Vol.XLV, c.121ff.
147. ibid., XXIII.29: SBE., Vol.XLV., no.128 f.
noted here that the teachings of the Buddha and Mahāvira offer large similarities in many important respects, and this fact led to the formation of opinions among certain eminent scholars that these two religions were the same. It is thanks to the two German scholars Bühler and Jacobi that we have come to know for certainty that the Buddha and Mahāvira were the founders of two independent religions. The most ancient name of this sect is Nīgranta (Nīgantha), a body of tireless men, emancipated from the bonds of Karma.

Doctrines:

The misery of existence and seeking deliverance from it through the attainment of Nīrūna constitutes the central core of the teachings of Mahāvira like that of the Buddha. Jainism is atheistic in the sense that it denies gods any important role in the Universal scheme.

151. Cf. Mrs. S. Stevenson who observes: "Jainism is definitely atheistic, if by atheism we mean the denial of a divine creative spirit. In the philosophy of the Jainas no place is reserved for God. Indeed it seems probable that the first Jainas did not acknowledge gods at all. They early taught that
It denies that the Universe is created, maintained and destroyed by personal deity or deities. On the other hand, it states that the Universe is eternal and functions through the operation of the Universal Law of interaction of the Jīvas (souls) and the Five Ajīvas (inanimate entities). The misery of the existence is due to the fact that the Jīva does not know itself as such and allows itself to be invaded by the matter and entangled in it. The matter is called Karma which is conceived as fine atomic particles quite invisible to the eye. The Karma attaches to the soul (Jīva) as the result of activity. Any and every action invariably induces the same kind of Karma; but the cruel and selfish actions induce more and more dangerous Karma than the other kind of actions. The existing Karma leads invariably to the acquisition of further Karmas, and thus the cycle of transmigration continues indefinitely. The deliverance from this sorrowful existence can be obtained by the dual action of eliminating the existing Karma and preventing fresh influx of Karmas into the soul. The annihilation of Karma is accomplished through austere penance and the influx of Karma is stopped by carefully disciplined

(Contd.)

one should not say 'God rains', but just 'the cloud rains.' (The Heart of Jainism, Introd., nn.XIII r.1;


conductor as a result of which it does not enter in dangerous quantity and is dispersed immediately. The attainment of Moksha is the ultimate aim of the religieux. Moksha is a state of complete shedding off Karma; the state of the soul in pure happiness; of pure and infinite knowledge and of infinite perception. Moksha is not annihilation of the soul, but its entry into blessedness that has no end; it is an escape from the body, though not from the existence. It is a release, a salvation, but it is of such a kind that in regard to it 'speculation has no place and the mind cannot conceive of it.'

Like Buddhism, Jainism advocates 'Three Jewels' (Tri-ratnas) - Right Knowledge, Right Faith and Right Conduct - whose observance leads to the attainment of Moksha. Right knowledge is the true knowledge of relation between spirit and non-spirit, the latter being immortal like the former. The Right Faith means absolute belief in the teachings of the Jainas, and the Right Conduct means abandon attachment and aversion and also killing of living beings.

It should be noted here that Jainism denies the possibility of full salvation to layman unlike Buddhism.

Twelve years of asceticism involving rigorous self-mortifications is considered necessary to full salvation.

Jaina Ethics:

The ethical code of Jainism is to be found in the last element of the Tri-ratna - the Perfect Conduct or Chāritra. The Chāritra consists in the five-fold conduct viz., Non-injury, Kindness and speaking what is true. Honourable conduct typified by 'non-stealing,' chastity in word and deeds and thought, and renunciation of earthly pleasures. The last one was interpreted in an extreme way to mean that the good men should go naked. The nakedness was considered to cause destruction of the consciousness of distinction and sense of shame which retarded salvation. And further, the doctrine of Non-injury was interpreted and observed in an extreme way. Lest animate things, even plants and animalcule be destroyed, a Jaina sweeps the ground before him as he goes, walks void lest he inhales a living organism, strains water, rejects honey and even cooked foods, and eats not in the night lest he might eat a living thing by mistake. There is also the concept of Punya (Merit) and Paśa (Sin). All actions which induce peace of mind

158. ibid.
are Punya and such actions are, giving food to the deserving, water to the thirsty, clothes to the poor, shelter to the monks, patience, humility, simplicity and contentment. Among the actions called Pāpa are mentioned untruthfulness, dishonesty, untruthfulness, covetousness, anger, conceit, deceit, avarice, hatred, quarrelsomeness, slander, abuse of others, hypocrisy, lack of self-control, false faith and 'Himsā' (violence). 'Himsā' or inflicting suffering is considered the greatest sin. The women are looked upon as the object of temptations.

The Jaina ethical prescriptions are different for the layman and the ascetic. The standard of conduct proposed for the layman or the house-holder is quite workable. The strict observance of the rules of conduct was binding only on the ascetic who was bent upon attaining Nirvāṇa. A milder form of the practice of general virtues as described above is expected from the layman, and such virtues are called 'Anuvrata' (small vows). For example, Brahmacharya for a house-holder would mean merely noncommittal of adultery, while for the ascetic it would mean absolute abstention from sex-thought, sex-words and sex-deeds. Similarly, 'Ahimsā' for layman would require

160. Āchārāṅga Sutra, I,5.4; SBE., XXII, p.48.
abstention from killing animals, while for the ascetic it would require all the rigour and carefulness to prevent oneself from being the cause of any kind of injury to any living being in any way. Besides, a house-holder was to observe a number of minor duties which are based upon the cardinal virtue of Ahimsa. In short, the ethical conduct of the Jaina laity is to accord with the custom of their country. According to some authorities, the Samlekhānā Anuvrata of the laic required starving to death which was considered not a sinful but a meritorious act. Most of these regulations of conduct for layman were intended apparently to make them participate, in a measure and for sometime, in the merits and benefits of monastic life without obliging them to renounce the world altogether. The rules for a voluntary death had a similar end in view.

Finally, some scholars have opined that Jainism has no social aspect and it is fundamentally selfish. But the doctrine of Ahima which is the fundamental and pervading element of the Jaina ethic is not simply negative. It does not only mean abstention from inflicting positive injuries, but also rendering active service to others, for

162. Ibid.
it says that we shall be really injuring a person when we can help him, but do not help. Thus it is quite clear that the social side of ethics is not ignored in Jainism. Further, its social spirit is fully demonstrated by a Jaina prayer wishing for the victory of the righteous king, seasonal rains, absence of famine and disease and theft, and the Law of the Jaina may give all happiness to all living beings of the world.

The Jaina monastic order existed before Mahāvīra. For we know that Mahāvīra himself joined the order of the Niganthas and after a rigorous MONASTIC ORDER ascetic life for twelve years, AND DISCIPLINE: he attained full enlightenment (Kevala) and thereafter came to be known as Jina (the conqueror) or Mahāvīra (the Great Hero). Mahāvīra was a great organiser and he appears to have brought in a great change in the order, which caused disaffection in the old members of the church as established by Pārāvā. The Pārāvaites did not accept his leadership in the matter of the rule of nudity. And this initial difference ultimately caused a major breach in the order in the later period when the two sects of Dīsambaras and Śvetāmbaras were established. The Jaina order was divided into many sections whose number corresponded to

166. J. Jain: Outlines of Jainism, p. XXIV.
167. Hiriyanna: Outlines of Indian Philosophy, p. 167.
168. Uttarādhyayana-Sūtra, XXIII; SBE., XLV, pp. 119 ff.
the number of the chief disciples of Mahāvīra which was eleven. Their heads were called Gandharas. Of his eleven close disciples, only Āryasudharman survived him and became the Pontiff of the Jaina church after the Master's death. Although women were looked down upon, there was no bar to their admission as ascetics. But the order of female ascetics was entirely separate from that of the males. We know of one female ascetic Chandanā in the later period as the head of the community of the nuns.

The monastic order was governed by a set of strict regulations. At the initiation, the hair of the candidate was not shaved but pulled out by the roots. His equipments consisted of clothe (or better none), alms-bowl, broom and veil. After initiation the monk remained under the jurisdictions of the hierarchy, and was subject to the authority of the doctor (Pandita or Upādhyāya) and Pontiff (Sūri). He had to undergo rigorous ascetic exercises like fasting, graduated abstention from a full meal of 3 or 2 tol morsel, begging, giving up delicious food and meat etc., and mortification of the flesh through various torturous practices like meditating in the scorching Sun of the summer and maintaining uneasy postures for long

170. Āchārāṅgasūtra, 1.2.4; SBE.XXII, p.21. "The world is greatly troubled by women. People say that the woman are vessels of pleasures. But this leads them to pain, to delusions, to death, to hell, to birth as hell-beings or brutes or beasts."

171. Dr. A.C.Sen: op.cit., p.15.
period on end. Sometimes, the monk starved himself to
dead in the imitation of the master (Mahāvīra). A monk
on entering the order took the Five vows viz., 'Not to
injure any living being (Ahimsā), Not to utter falsehood
(Satya), Not to steal (Asteya), To lead a celibate life
(Brahmacharya) and To renounce the world (Aparigraha).
These vows were interpreted in the most strict and compre-
hensive way, and these were called Mahāvrata to distingui*
from similar prescriptions for the layman which were
 called Aṇuvrata as it was interpreted in a liberal way.
And these more explicit regulations constituted the
 Discipline of the monks which is described under seven
 heads. The act of violence in any circumstance and in
 any form was considered the greatest sin and highly
 prejudicial to the cause of moksha, as it was the most
 potent cause of the influx of the Karma. Thus injury to
 any living being was strictly forbidden. The monk was
 not to eat meat, and was to strain water, to carry feather-
duster to brush ants and other insects from his path so
that they might not be trampled upon, to wear veil on the
mouth to prevent the minute living things in the air
from being inhaled and killed. The monk was to avoid
festivals, frivolities and entertainments, to keep 'Vasa'
during the rainy season and in other time to go on begging

172. Refer to S.N. Das Gupta: op. cit., pp. 199 ff.;
173. See for details, Jacobi: op. cit., pp. 31 ff.
in least clothings or preferably naked, to speak politely, beg modestly and to accept any quality of food if not of wrong sort, to behave uprightly avoiding any suspicion while remaining a guest with a house-holder and not to indulge in discussions and retort. He was also to devote himself to meditation, teaching and preaching while waiting for the Moksha.

Besides Buddhism, Jainism was another important religion among these republicans. It appears to have been the principal religion of the Jñātrikas, the Lichchhavvis and the Mallas. It is quite natural that, as Mahāvīra was born among them, the Jñātrikas, who were spread over a large area including Kundagrāma or Kundapura, Vaniyagrāma and Nātika, must have been his ardent followers. The Lichchhavvis too were the staunch followers of this religion. This fact is borne out by a number of evidences. For example, the Buddhists looked down upon Vaiśāli, the seat of the Lichchhavvis, as the 'seminary of heresies and dissent'. Mahāvīra made frequent preachings at Vaiśāli and spent nearly twelve rainy seasons there, which contrast very significantly with the fact that the Buddha, his great rival, spent only two rainy seasons there. Even the Buddhist canonical texts refer to the frequent preachings of the Mīgrantha doctrines at Vaiśāli. The Anguttara-Nikāya speaks of the propounding of the faith of the Mīgrantha by a learned Lichchhavi prince Abhay of Vaiśāli.

174. Āśārāṅga Sūtra, II.1-16; SBE., XXII, pp.120-213.
175. Cf. Jacobi : SBE., XXII, Introd., p. XIII.
The Mahāvagga offers an account of important discussions between the Lichāhāvā General Siha and Mahāvīra. It appears that the Lichāhāvā rāja Chetaka, who was maternal uncle of Mahāvīra, exerted his great influence in favour of Mahāvīra against his rival (the Buddha) in religious propaganda; for, while the Jainas cherished the memory of Chetaka, the Buddhist completely ignored him. Further, a text speaks of how king Chetaka, under the assumed name of Jitāsatru which he had adopted by way of rivalry with his enemy Ajatāsatru, went out to hear Mahāvīra just as another Lichāhāvā king Kunlya had done on another occasion. Thus the teaching of Mahāvīra found a great response from his own Lichāhāvā people who made Jainism their state religion. Mahāvīra was regarded as the first citizen of Vaiśāli and was called Vaiśali or Vaiśālikā, while the city was correspondingly named as Mahāvīra-Janani - the motherland of Mahāvīra. Thus Vaiśāli was the stronghold of Jainism. Jainism appears to have made large conversion among the Lichāhāvās and among them a few were highly influential viz., the Lichāhāvā rāja Chetaka, Sachchaka, Abhaya, Pāndita Kumāraka, Siha etc.

177. Sth at Kūṭāgārā ślā and 45 at Beluvaagrama.
178. AN., III, p.74.
179. BE., XVII, pp.108 f.
180. Jacobi : BE., XXXII, Introd., p.XIII.
184. Supra
Mithilā, the capital of Videha which was a constituent of the Vajjian Republic, was its another stronghold. Mahāvīra spent six rainy seasons there and the city provided the Jaina ascetics with a proverb 'If Mithila burns, what have I to lose.' It found wide acceptance and large followings among the Mallas also. The Malla king Hastipāla was his great supporter. We find a large number of Jaina ascetics and the Jaina lay followers among them. It is said that Ananda, while he was staying at Sāmagāma in the Malla land, received the news of Mahāvīra's death with great pleasure and rushed to convey it to the Buddha who thereupon delivered a very long discourse. Mahāvīra spent one rainy season at Pava and died at the palace of its king Hastipāla. The Mallas instituted a great illumination at Pava to mark the death of their great teacher with the view that 'since the Light of Intelligence is gone, let us make an illumination of material matters.' It may be noted

185. Mrs. S. Stevenson: op. cit., p. 42.
186. Kalpa-Sūtra (122); SBE., XXII, pp. 264.
188. Ibid.
189. Kalpa-Sūtra (123); SBE., XXII, pp. 264–65. Cf. Mrs. S. Stevenson who remarks that the Jainas ascribe to this illumination the origin of the yearly festival of lamps - Divāli. op. cit., p. 44.
190. Ibid. (123); SBE., XXII, p. 266.
here that it was at Pāvā that, after the death of Mahāvīra, the final schism in his church took place, leading to the establishment of the sects of the Digambaras and the Śvetāmbaras. Jainism had found a foothold among the Śākyas. Nigantha Nāṭaputta had been to the Śākya country and won some followers there. Mahānāma, a relation of Buddha, had strong Jaina leanings and the Buddha had to exert much to convert him by preaching the uselessness of the self-mortifications practised by Jains. Devadaha near Kapilavastu appears to have some important Jaina followers among whom Vappa was very influential whom Moggallāna made a convert.

Unfortunately, we have little information about the practice of this faith in the minor republics which, it may be assumed, might not have remained unaffected by the ministration of Mahāvīra and his disciples which covered the entire North-Eastern India. Finally, we may note that the wide prevalence of this faith in these republics was caused by the strenuous and systematic propaganda conducted by Mahāvīra and his close disciples. For nearly thirty years Mahāvīra wandered constantly, except for a brief period of Vassa, from place to place, preaching his doctrine, halting not longer than a night in a village and not longer than five nights in a town.

192. MN., I, pp.91-95.
In the beginning he wandered about alone, but later on he was accompanied by a large number of disciples, each one of whom was well versed in the doctrine. Although his religious itinerary was spread over a large area, his activities were mainly confined to the region between Rājagriha and Nālandā which included these republics.

Jainism did not recognise Supreme Being and its atheism meant only the denial of a divine creative spirit. The God according to the Jainas JAINA PANTHEON is Paramātman, but not Ishvāra i.e., the God is not a creator and ruler but he is a perfect Being who cannot be set back to the imperfect condition of this world, and as such he is worshipful. Unlike Hinduism which believes in a large number of additional gods, in Jainism there is no room for any one in the class of gods except perfect Man. However, it did not deny, like its rival Buddhism, the existence of the popular Vedic gods and goddesses. It also believed in the deification of perfect man. It considered gods as 'disembodied souls like men and animals, different from them in degree but not in kind.' It considered liberated souls (Arhant) as above gods. The Jaina pantheon consisted of the followings.

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195. Śūtrakritāṅga, II.6 (1); SBE., XLV, p. 409.
196. Vide Kalpa-Sūtra (122).
Tirthankaras: - The twenty-four Tirthankaras constituted the principal order of the Jaina divinities, beginning with Rishabha or Adinātha and ending with Mahāvīra.

Subsidiary Divinities: - Each of the Tirthankaras had his own Upāsakas and Śāsanadevatās who are sometimes described as the attendant Yaksha and Yakshini. The subsidiary divinities were grouped under four classes viz., Jyotishī, Vimānvāśī, Bhavanapati and Vyantara, according to their natural and individual affiliation.

Other Groups: - The other groups of the Jaina divinities were Navagrahas, the Dikpālas, the Śruta or Vidyādevatās, the Matrikās and the sixty-four yoginīs.

Other Deities: - The other important divinities of the Jaina Pantheon were Indra, Ganesa, Khetrapala, Śrī-Śrī Lakṣmī, Kuvera, Naigamesha, Yaksha and Yakshinī etc.

200. ibid.
201. ibid., p. 428.
202. ibid.
203. ibid.
204. The list of the Jaina Pantheon is available in the life story of Mahāvīra and his chief disciples.
Five Parmeśwaras: - They were Sadhu, Upādhyāya, Achārya, Tīrthaṅkara and the Siddha.

Hell and Heaven: - The Jainas believed in the existence of the Hell and Heaven and some Evil Spirits.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES:

Although the religion of the Jaina was atheistic, it was not free from certain cultus which consisted in the followings:

Worship:

The Jaina paid worship to the teacher, the popular divinities and the five Parmeśwaras. The mode of worship must have been singing prayers, making obeisance, offering flowers, rosaries, and garlands etc. So far as the Jainas are concerned, the best mode of worshipping them (gods) is to adopt their advice. It is significant to note that the "Jaina

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205. Age of Imperial Unity, op.cit.
206. Pañchāstikāyaśmasyaśāra, 16.
207. See Mrs. S. Stevenson : op.cit., no.264-267.
regards the practice of worshipping images of their Tirthankaras as coeval with the foundation of their creed. But we have no evidence of Icon-worship before the Mauryan period. However, epigraphic evidences indicate the practice of image-worship being current in the Pre-Mauryan age. But, it must be noted here that in Jainism the idea of worship is only that of walking in the footsteps of a model, to become like him; and in the beginning, there was no prayer, no offering of food and unguents to please the deity.

Stūpa Cult:

In its early period Jainism maintained the cult of Stūpa in same way as the Buddhist did, but it gave way to icon-worship in the temples in the beginning of the Christian Era.

Miscellaneous:

The other religious practices of the Jainas were fastings on special lunar days, Prāschityas (expiation of sins by confession and other prescribed ways), giving charities, alms, and shelter to the ascetics, especially to the Niganthas, starving to death, scripture reading, celebrations of Diveli, worship of Siddha-Cakras etc.

211. ibid., p.425.
214. For a full treatment of Jaina Cultus, See Mrs. S.
AJIVIKISM

Next to Buddhism and Jainism, the other important unorthodox religion prevalent in these republics was Ajivikism. Although this religion is associated with the name of Gosāla Maskariputra, he, like Mahāvira, was not the founder but the reformer of an already existing sect. He is considered to be the third pontiff of the sect of the Ajivikas which was founded by Nanda Vachanha and whose second pontiff was Kisa Samkischchha. Dr. Basham considers Ajjuna Goyamaputta, the immediate precursor of Gosāla, as a real person whose life period overlapped with that of the latter and who was well known to his contemporaries. He is also inclined to identify him with the Sakyan teacher Arjuna of Kapilavastu mentioned in the Lalitavistara as the future teacher of the Buddha. It has been suggested that even before the ministry of Gosāla, the regions of Kāśi, Kosala, Magadha, Videha and Vaiśāli and Champā were the homes of peripatetic naked philosophers of

216. History and Doctrines of the Ajivikas, pp. 32-33.
217. ibid., p. 34.
218. Leafman Ed., p. 146.
the Ājīvika type, who aimed at gathering support of the people and very often obtained it. The Bhagavatī-
Sūtra speaks of the soul passing from the body of a teacher (named) to the body of Ajjuma Gomayataputta at Koṇḍiyāyana Chaitya outside Vaiśāli and remained incarnate in his body for seventeen years and afterwards it passed to the body of Gosāla Mankhaliputra where it remained for sixteen years. We have no knowledge of any scriptures of the Ājīvakas and our informations about it are solely derived from the polemical literature of the Jainas and the Buddhists. The teachings of Gosāla are largely borrowed from that of Mahāvīra.

Mahāvīra met Gosāla for the first time at Nālandā and both lived together for six years practising extreme austerities at Paniyabhūmi near Kollaga. Then they developed differences on doctrinal matters, parted company and became bitter critics of each other. Gosāla settled down at Śrāvastī, putting up in a Potter's shop owned by a woman named Hālāhalā and became known as the founder of the Ājīvika sect.

According to Dr. Basham, the Ājivikas possessed a fully elaborate system of belief and had a canon of sacred texts in which their doctrines were codified. The Ājivika sect was definitely atheistic and its most distinguishing feature was a rigid determinism. It rejected the prevalent theory of Karma (Law of deeds) which stated that man's present state was determined by his past deeds and that he could improve his present condition and also influence his future life by performance of righteous actions. Instead, he propounded the 'Doctrine of Non-action' (ākhīryavāda) and of determinism. The Samaññaphala Sutta of the Dīgha-Nikāya gives the fundamentals of the religious and philosophical doctrines of the sect of the Ājivikas. The text in translation runs as follows: "All that have breath, all that are born, all that have life, are without power, strength and virtue, but are developed by destiny, chance and nature, strength and experience joy and sorrow in the six classes (existence). There are 8,400,000 great aeons (mahākappā) through which the fool, and the wise must alike take their course and make an end of sorrow. There is no (question of) bringing unripe Karma to fruition, nor of exhausting Karma already ripened, by virtuous conduct, by penance or chastity. That cannot

be done. Samsāra is measured as with a bushel, with its joy and sorrow and its appointed end. It can neither be lessened nor increased, nor is there any excess and deficiency of it. Just as a ball of strings will, when thrown, unwind to its full length, so fool and wise alike will take their course and make an end of sorrow. Thus the Ājīvakas under Makkhali Gosāla admitted human frailty and depravity. They denied both Karma and its consequences. They held that Karma (or depravity) could be worked out by transmigrations and not by one's own efforts. They held that "there is no power, no energy, no human strength or heroic endeavours. The repudiation of Puruskāra is associated with a special doctrine of rebirth and reanimation. The Ājīvika process of salvation is very significantly described in Pāli text as Samsāra-Suddhi or salvation by transmigration. Not only the monks but even the Ājivika house-holders practised austere exercises, although this sect did not believe in the efficacy of man's action.

228. Tevijja-Vachhagotta Sutta; Buddhacaryā, pp.231 ff.
The sect of the Ājīvikas was principally a body of ascetics. Makkhali is said to have knit together the loose band of the Ājīvika ascetics into a well organised order with a system of rules and procedure in regard to admission, initiation and expulsion. The initiation involved such ugly and painful practices as resulting in mutilation and deformity. Women were also permitted to enter the Ājīvika order. The Uvāsagadasāṅa speaks of an Ājīvika Sabhā at the town of Polāśpura. The Ājīvika monks indulged in severe ascetic practices, crossing the limit of naturality and morality. We may note some such practices like covering the body with dust, eating such obnoxious things as ordure of the calf, painful squatting on the heels, swinging in the air like bats, reclining on thorns, scorching the person with five fires etc. We are told that Masakari Gōśāla himself indulged in such shameful word and deeds like holding a mango in the hands, drinking, dancing, improperly soliciting the potter woman Hālāhalā (at whose house he lived for sometime).

229. Basham has given a detailed account of it in *The History and Doctrine of Ājīvikas*, pp.104 ff.
and sprinkling on himself muddy cool water from a potter's vessel. A Jātaka story throws very interesting light on this, saying that the Ājivikas remained naked (aehelako), covered with dust, solitary and lonely (ekvihāri), fled away like the deer from the face of man, ate small fish, cow-dung and other refuges, took abode in the jungle to avoid destruction, endured extremity of cold in winter and scorching heat in the summer. The rigorous discipline of the sect involved complete nudity like the Jainas, its community taking the vow: "As long as I live, I will be naked and will not put on garment" (Yāvaj-jīvan aehelako). The Doctrines of the Ājivikas were evidently conducive to luxury and licentiousness.

The sect of Ājivikas appears to be of older standing than that of the Jainas and the Buddhists. It was Masakari Gosāla who gave prominence and popularity to this faith. Gosāla was the contemporary of Manivira and Buddha, and like these two great teachers, he had a good number of followers and like them he wandered about preaching his faith and converting peoples. The

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233. Lomahamsa Jātaka.
234. Basham suggests modification in this rule in later period, op.cit., pp.107 ff.
235. Dr.B.M.Barua : Pre-Buddhist Indian Philosophy, p.392.
very fact that there were frequent altercations and encounters between the followers of the Buddha and the MahaVira and the Ajivikas, and also the fact that the Jaina and the Buddhist Sacred Literature are highly denunciatory of the Ajivikas, indirectly bear strong evidence to the great strength and influence of the Ajivika sect. A Jaina text tells us that Gosala died after a bitter altercation with Mahavira at Sravasti in about 484 B.C.

Existence, Propaganda and Main Centres: After his death, his followers seem to have combined with those of the other teachers like Purana Kasyapa and Pakudha Katysyana to form the Ajivika sect. This sect continued to flourish down to the Mauryan age, which is borne out by the fact that Asoka mentions it thrice in his edicts and that his grandson Dasarattha donated some cave-dwellings to the Ajivikas at Nagarjunâ and Barabar Hills.

The Ajivika sect was at one time spread over a large area from Avanti to Anga. Dr. Basham suggests that ever before Gosala's ministry, the regions of

237. Sutракritânga, II.6; SBE., XLV, pp.409 ff.

Bhagawati-Sutra, XIV, I.


240. ibid., pp. 80 ff.

Kāshi-Kosalā, Magadha, Videha, Vaissāli and Champa were the homes of the Proto-Ājīvikas or peripatetic naked philosophers. Śrāvasti was the headquarter of Maskari Gaśāla, where he lived for sometime in a potter woman's house and had a large following. Although Śrāvasti was the headquarter, this sect had a strong influence at several places in these republics. It had a great influence in Mithilā, the capital of the Videha Republic, where the famous Ājīvika teacher Purāṇa Kāśyapa lived in a near by park and had a large number of followers. Vaissāli, the metropolis of the Lichchhavi Republic, was another important seat of its influence, which is indicated by a very interesting story in the Vinaya Text. It says that the Buddhist followers at Vaissāli used to get more food than they required and gave their surplus to those ascetics who accepted the leavings. An Ājīvika, who had been thus fed by the Bhikkhus, was overheard by one of them telling a fellow Ājīvika of the food which he had obtained from the shaven-headed house-holder Gotama. The Bhikkhu reported this matter to the Buddha who forbade the distribution of surplus food to the mendicants of the other orders in future. Further, we are told that

242. op. cit., p.94.
244. Vinaya, IV, p.91.
Pūrṇa Kāśyapa had large following at Vaiśālī, among whom were such highly influential persons as the Līchchhavi rājās Abhaya and Mahāli. The Paṭika Sutta speaks of two naked ascetics (probably Ajīvikas) Kandaramasaka and Paṭikaputta (pātika's son) who were residing at Vaiśālī. If we accept Basham's identification of Ajjuna Goyaputtaka, the immediate precursor of Gōśala, with the Sakyan teacher Arjuna of Kapilavastu mentioned in the Lalitavistara as the future teacher of the Buddha, then Kapilavastu, the capital of the Ajīvika Sakyan Republic, must have been also a centre of the Ajīvikas. Thus we may conclude that the sect of the Ajīvikas was an important religion in these republics, next only to the Buddhism and Jainism.

The sect of Ajīvikas was out and out atheistic, and as such there could be no question of any pantheon in it. Being mainly a body of ascetics, its religious practices consisted in manifold and diverse austere exercises and hard and obnoxious self-torturing activities discussed above. However,

245. SN., V, p.126.
246. ibid., III, p.68.
It is interesting to note that the Bhagawati-Sutra speaks of the Ājīvikas having shifted their activities to the Pūndra country at the foot of the Vindhya mountain and also having a pantheon which included many Vedic and non-Vedic gods. As Basham opines, Ājīvikism, like Buddhism and Jainism, accepted the reality of the chief Hindu deities. While Dr. B.M. Barua suggests the Ājīvīka's Pantheon to include Pūnabhadra (Skt. Pūrṇabhadra), Manibhadra (Manibhadra), Sohamama, Saśa (Sākumāra), Bambhā (Brahmā), Mahāsukka, Anaya and Arāṇa (occurring in Bhagawati-Sutra), Basham rightly concludes: "Our attempts at reconstructing an Ajīvika pantheon must stop with Pūnabhadra, Manibhadra and Brahmet. Other gods there must have been, but we have no evidence of their names." It also believed in Hell and Heaven and in evil spirits.

MINOR HERETICAL SECTS

We have seen above how Buddhism, Jainism and Ājīvikism figured very prominently in the religious life of these republics. Besides these religious systems, there existed a number of small sects which cannot be

248. Quoted in the Imperial Age, pp. 463-64.
251. Ājīvikas, p. 274.
252. ibid., pp. 273-274.
ignored. These sects are classed as 'heretical' for their opposition to the Vedic religion and were generally associated with some eminent religious teachers of the time. The Buddhist texts describe such teachers as 'leaders in religious life, heads of Samghas or of schools, well-known and of high repute and as founders of systems and highly honoured by many people." All these sects were hard materialist and outright atheistic. Unfortunately, our sources do not shed light on these minor sects and therefore we are compelled to note them simply in their bare outlines.

The important religious teachers, with whom these heretical sects were intimately associated, were as follows:

He was a Brahmin and lived in a deer park adjoining Mithilā. He was held in high esteem as a man of wisdom and had a large following. He was called Pūrana Kāśyapa for his fullness of knowledge, and Kāśyapa for his being a Brahmin. He taught the Doctrine of Akiriyāvāda. He denied merit in any virtuous action and demerit in the worst of crimes. He declared that no action had any consequence of sin and merit. He was the "Indifferentialist, refused

253. Sabhiya Sutta; Sāmaññaphala Sutta.
to acknowledge moral distinctions, and adopted the view of Non-causation or fortuitous origin and passivity of soul." He moved about naked and had as many as 80,000 followers. Besides Mithila, the seat of the Videhan Republic, where he resided and had many followers, he appears to have had great influence in Vaiśālī where he had highly influential disciples in the Licchhāvī princes Abhaya and Mahāli.

He was a proto-materialist. He taught that there was nothing in charity, yajña, rituals, gods, good and evil deeds. Man

**AJITA KEŚAKAMBALIN:** was composed of four elements viz., earth, water, radiance and air, and that at his death, he is dissolved into original elements, leaving nothing behind of his virtues, soul or personality.

He was so called because of his birth at the foot of a Kakudha tree. His teaching is summed up as

**PAKUDHA KĀTYĀYANA:**

"What is, cannot be destroyed; out of nothing, emerges nothing." His doctrine thus excludes any responsibility. He assumed the permanence of seven uncreated substances viz., earth, water, fire, air, pleasure, pain and soul.

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258. Dialogue I, pp.73 ff. 259. ibid., pp.74f
He was an ascetic. He neither denied nor affirmed that good and evil deeds had good and evil fruits: or that there was or was not a world beyond. He repudiated all knowledge of self and limited his inquiries to the question of the attainment of peace. He enjoyed very high reputation, had a large following, and Moggallana and Sāriputta, before their conversion to Buddhism, were his disciples.

These republics, with whose religious life we are specially concerned here, lay in the eastern land which was the storm-centre of the existent Brahmanical religion. The very fact that both Mahāvīra and Buddha, the most towering personalities and the powerful leaders of the Protestant movements, brought forth all their intellectual ingenuity and unspARING efforts to attack Brahmanism, indirectly suggests that it was definitely a strong force to reckon within these republics. The Buddhist and the Jaina texts, which constitute our main source of information on this subject, speak of Brahmanism in general, and not of any particular region and people. And this makes it difficult to attempt any treatment of Brahmanism strictly confined to these republics. However, the predominance of Buddhism and Jainism in these republics did not mean complete disappearance of Brahmanism. On the other hand, we have numerous references to practices of the Vedic sacrifices in the early literature of the Jains and the Buddhists, which clearly indicate that "the Vedic

religion was still in full vigour in the North-East India." It was the same place (the country of the Vaijjas, the sacred land of the Videhas) where the great Samrāṭ Janaka held his sway and Yājñavalkya preached the White-Yajurveda. The Vedic gods Indra, Prajāpati or Brahmā were still very popular deities in the regions where the Buddha preached. The early Jaina and the Buddhist Literature refer to separate Brahmin settlements and villages like 'Dakhina Brāhmaṇa Kūṇḍapura' in Vaiṣālī, and Khaṇaduṣsa, Śilāvati, Sakkara, Śaṅgāra, Chāṭumā, Meḍalumpa in the Sakya country, to Brahmanas as the professional classes and also to a large number of Brāhmaṇa converts to the new faiths in these republics. This would clearly show that Brahmanism continued, in spite of the onslaught of Buddhism and Jainism, to be an important factor in the religious life of these republics. Of course, it must be conceded that majority of the people followed the new faiths and Brahmanism had now become like "Island in a sea." With this brief preface, we proceed to discuss in the

263. ibid.; Some Ksatriya Tribes, pp.69 ff.
266. BL., p.11.
267. Supra.
and also the Lord of the Oracle girls (Vārunī) who possessed by the god would, as the Greek Pithias, prophesy sooth-sayings. The god Vishnu mentioned under the name of Venu had scarcely as yet appeared above the horizon. Pajjunna was the rain-god. The other Vedic deities who continued in the time, though gradually fading away, were the Moon and Sun (Chandra-Sūrya), Apa (water), Yama (god of death), Sri (the daughter of Indra and Sakka and the goddess of wealth), Soma, Gandharvas (the heavenly musicians) etc. Besides, there were many other deities like Sirimā Devatā (goddess of luck, success and plenty), Ganga Devatā (presiding deity of the Ganges and rivers in general, and custodian of fishes), Manimekhalā (the divinity of the seas), Chātumahārājās (the guardian of the four quarters) the Nāgas (Siren serpents),

277. BL., p.105; Pre-Buddhist India, pp.322-23.
278. ibid.
279. ibid.
281. Pre-Buddhist India, p.322.
283. Pre-Buddhist India, p.323 f.n.5.
284. BL., p.100.
285. ibid., Mahānāma Sutta (Buddhaṣaṇā, p.120).
286. Cf. BL., pp.99 f. Sirimā is another name of Sūrya.
288. Pre-Buddhist India, p.323 and f.n.8.
Garulas (the Indian counterpart of the harpy and griffins), Pisāchas, Bheravas and Kumbhandas (evil-doing deities which were feared), Titans (souls or spirits supposed to dwell in wind, water, thunder, rain and tree gods). Further, the worship of the tree-gods, Yaksha and Chaitya was very popular among these republicans, whose main features were as follows.

According to Professor Rhys Davids, Tree-Worship, which has been very old and widely spread, continued to form a part of the religion of those people who were uninfluenced by the new teachings. It was not the tree as such, but the soul or the spirit within it or haunting it, that were looked upon as gods and worshipped. The worship to the tree-gods was made through Bali offerings, sometimes human sacrifice, hanging garlands upon its branches, lighting lamps around it etc. They were consulted as oracles, expected to give sons and wealth and to injure those who injured the tree in which they dwell.

290. Cf. BI., pp. 100 f.
291. Ibid.
292. Pre-Buddhist India, p. 325.
293. BI., p. 101.
294. Cf. Ibid.
Yakshas were held to be the most dreadful of the evil spirits and the people lived in perpetual fear of them. Vessavana was the Lord of the Yakshas. The popular belief was that the Yakshas infested the world, lived on the flesh of men and beast and haunted deserts and forests, and trees and waters. The Yakshas were considered to be more dreadful, as they by their various charms of beauty, music, smell, taste and comforts attracted men and made them their pray. Persons were supposed to be possessed by them. The Yakshas-worship was very popular among the Vajjians.

The Chaitya-worship was the most popular cult in these republics, especially among the Vajjians. The Chaitya-worship: of a large number of Chaityas existing in the country of the Vajjins where they used to pay worship. The interpretation of Chaitya cult has been a question of debate. Mr.

296. Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, (Buddhacaryā, p.495).
and Mrs. Rhys Davids describe it as pre-Buddhistic shrines which were probably trees and arrows. Kern considered it to mean not only shrines, but also sacred trees, memorials, stones, holy spots, images and religious inscriptions. Basham describes it as "often small groves of trees or a single tree on the outskirts of villages and might include also tumuli such as those in which the ashes of the chiefs were buried. The Chaityas were the abodes of the earth spirits and genii who to the simple folk were more accessible and less expensive to worship than the great gods of the Aryans. He further remarks that the popular cults associated with the earth spirits (Yakshas), snake spirits (Nāgas) and other minor deities centred round the sacred spots of the Chaityas.

Buddhaghosa explains Chaitya as 'Yakkha Chaityāni' which indicates that Yakshas were worshipped at the Chaityas. Rahula Sankrityayana interprets it as 'Chourā' or 'divine shrine.' In the face of the above conflicting opinions, we may safely conclude that the Chaitya was not the shrine of one particular deity, but of many.

297. Dialogues II, p.1,ff., f.n.2; See also R.P. Chanda, Calcutta University Journal (Arts), Vol.III, 'Medieval Sculptures in Ancient India'.
299. Wonder that was India, p.282.
300. ibid.
traditional deities who were worshipped for worldly gains and advantages.

The worship of Śālagrama stone as a symbol of Vishnu was in existence in the Vaiśālī region in the great days of the Vajjian Republic and might have been an important contribution of the republican period to the Brahmanical religion of this part of the country.

In actual practice the Brahmanism during this period consisted in performances of traditional Vedic sacrifices and observance of numerous rites and rituals.

The principal sacrifices were

Religious: 
- Aśvamedha, Purūshamedha, Vājapeyā,
- and Mirargala or Sarva-Medha.

Practical: 
- and Mirargala or Sarva-Medha.

Besides, there were many other minor sacrifices. The general features of these sacrifices were slaughter of animals, feeding a large number of Brāhmaṇa and the ascetics and giving rich presents to the officiating priests. The animals generally sacrificed were cows, bulls, goats, elephants, horses,

304. Brāhmaṇa Dhammiya Sutta (Buddhacaryā, p. 342).
305. Kūṭadanta Sutta (ibid., p. 216 f.); Brāhmaṇa Dhammiya Sutta, (ibid., 342 f.).
The sacrifice was made before an altar which is referred to as 'Sthūna', or a fixed pole. The number of the officiating priests varied according to the type of the sacrifice and the wealth of the sacrificer. The other accessories of the sacrifice included ghee, oil, butter, curd, honey, gur* etc. The gifts made to the Brāhmaṇas included cows, beds, clothes, women adorned with ornaments, horses-yoked chariots, buildings, lands and many other valuable things. The performance of such sacrifices were insisted on and also induced by the purohitas and Mahāsālas. The sacrifice was usually accompanied with big feasts to a large number of Brāhmaṇas and ascetics. The usual Brahmanic rites and rituals were in vogue.

There were also current beliefs in and practice of spells, charms, incantations, exorcism, witch-crafts, occult interpretation of dreams, signs, cries of birds and beasts indicating coming events, sooth-saying and so on.

307. ibid. (ibid., p.216).
310. ibid.
311. ibid.
312. For a detailed list of the Brahmanic rites, refer to V.M. Apte : Social and Religious Life in the Grihya-Sūtra, pp.207 ff. See also R.B. Pandey : Hindu Saṅkāra and B.C. Law : India as described.
We may note here that the Buddhists also adopted Parithas and formulated Mangalas.

**Brahmanic Monastic Orders:**

Monastic life constituted another important feature of Brahmanism of the time. Among numerous Brahmanical monastic orders, the Tapasa: 'Tapasa' was most important. In the Brahmanic scheme of life Vanaprastha stage was represented by the hermits, which in the Pāli is known as 'Isi pabbajjā' (retirement from the world). In this period Brahmanism rated 'Tapasa' as higher than sacrifice as the method of seeking spirituality. While sacrifice was considered to bring in simple worldly happiness, 'Tapasa' to give mystic and superhuman power which enabled the possessor to command anything and everything. A Brāhma Text declares that the 'Tapasa' constitutes the basis on which the Universe rests. 'Tapasa,' literally meaning 'burning' or 'glow,' specifically meant practice of austerity, involving self-mortifications by various exercises described by an ascetic in his dialogue with

313. B.C.Law : India as Described, pp.206-209; Cf.BI,p.99
314. See Mangala Sutta in the Khuddakka-Pātha, pp.2-3;
Sutta Nipāta, pp.46 ff.; Mangala Jētaka, Jat.No.453.
316. AB., XI, 6.4.
the Buddha. 'Tapasa,' which later became permanent idea and practice in the religious of India, was widely current and popular in Northern India in this time. Long before the rise of Buddhism and Jainism, the forests in the foot-hills of the Himalayas and the banks of the rivers like the Ganges, Yamuna and others were dotted with the hermitages where these Tāpasas lived and practised spirituality. We find the Buddha, in the course of his wanderings after the Great Renunciation, meeting a number of such hermits like Śākī, Padamā, Rāvata, Rājaka and Alara.

Next to the Tāpasas, there existed various orders of wandering sects in the Northern India during the life-time of the Buddha, who were called Paribbājakas (pari-brājakas). Professor Rhys Davids describes them as the "teachers or sophists who spent eight or nine months of every year wandering about precisely with the object of engaging in conversational discussions on matters of ethics and philosophy and nature and mysticism. Like the sophists among the Greeks they differed very much in intelligence, earnestness and honesty." We have references to the famous Paribbājakas

319. B.C.Law: India as Described ..., p.914.
321. BL., pp.III,f.
like Vachohhagotta who resided in Ekapundarike in Vaiśāli and to whom the Buddha taught the Tevijja Sutta, Pāṭika's son who lived at Patlakarama (Vaiśāli), Pāṭikaputta who lived with other Paribbājakas at Tindukhānu Paribbājakārāma, Sabhiya Kashehana, Sandaka, Sachoha, Lolē and Anavačaka and Patāchārā etc. This would suggest that the Paribbājakas had a great influence among these republics, especially, the Vajjis. They were given to philosophical disputation and controversies which usually took place in the parks of kings and aristocrats wherein they put up in the course of their wanderings. A large crowd generally gathered to hear them and sometimes the talks were so loud that the place became noisy like a fish market. During the rains, they restricted their movements to a particular place and resided in the shelters called Paribbājakārāmas built by their rich patrons and kings, and such āramas were found in large number in these republics.

323. Pāṭika Sutta (Dialogues III, 16 ff.).
324. ibid.
326. Sandaka Sutta (Buddhacaryā, pp.243 ff.)
328. Cf. B.C.Law : JASB., 1918 and 1925, "Wandering Teachers in Buddha's Time" and 'Gautama Buddha and the Paribbrajikas.'
They constituted another important monastic order of the time. They were so called because they were long matted hair on the head.

**Jatilas:** We find typical representation of the Jatilas in Kappitaka Thera who was at one time a Jatila and lived in Kapinachchanā near Vaiśālī with a large following of the Jatilas.

The mention of the Gotamaka Chaitya at Vaiśālī in the Pāli texts would indicate that the order of the Gotamakas existed among the Lichhavas and the other republics.

The other Brahmanic monastic orders of the time of the Buddha were Magandikas, Tendandikas (bearer of triple staffs), Other Orders: Avirudhakas (the not opposing), Devadhamikas (following the religion of the gods) etc. which find mention in the enumeration of the religious sects in the Anguttara Nikāya.

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331. IN., III, p.9 (Dialogue III, p.14), Buddhacarvā, p.292
332. AN., III, pp.276-77; Dialogues, I, p.220;
Suttaṇipāta (SB2., I, pp.15-15). The conclusion that these sects were Brahmanical is indicated by Buddhaghosa who says that No.9-10 sects in the list are the follower of Tithiya, the leader of all schools that were non-Buddhist (Dialogues, I, p.211).
Minor Sects:

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The Buddhist texts mention a number of Brahmanical and popular sects like the worshippers of the elephant, cow, horse, dog, crow, Vasudeva, Baladeva, Pūrṇabhadra, Manibhadra, Agni, the Nāgas, the Yakshas, the Asuras, the Gandharvas, the Maharājās Chandra, Śūrya, Indra, Brahmā, Deva, Dīk, etc.

Brahmanic and Popular Morality:

The Brahmanic code of ethics continued to be the same during this period as found in the early Vedic time. Right and Truth (Ritam and Satyam) were the mainstay of the moral order of the Rig-Vedic Aryans.

The ideal Brahmanic virtues were Brahmacharya, Śīla, Akūtilatā, Mrīdutā, Tapa, Surati, Ahimsā, Akshāntī (forgiveness), strict observance of the caste rule, not to kill cow, to respect one's husband, not to adulterate and not to purchase women. The Jātaka, which treats of the pre-Buddhist age, throws ample light on the popular morality which might have continued in the time of the Buddha among the followers of the Brahmanical

333. Mahānīdessa and Chullanīdessa.
336. ibid., p.343.
337. ibid., p.342.
338. ibid., p.343.
religion in these republics. The Jātaka speaks of the moral virtues grouped under the name of the 'Five Kurus' and the 'Dasarāja Dharma.'

B. T H O U G H T

The age of the Buddha (563-483) represents the spring-tide of speculative thought in India. The progress of philosophy is generally due to a powerful attack on a historical tradition when men feel themselves compelled to go back on their steps and raise once more the fundamental question which their fathers had disposed of by the older schemes. The revolt of Buddhism and Jainism, even such as it was, forms an era in the history of Indian thoughts, since it finally exploded the method of dogmatism and helped to bring about a critical point of view. In fact, as Professor Rhys Davids remarks, there was 'a leap forward in speculative thought' in this time. And our republicans, with whose metaphysical thoughts we are specifically concerned here, had a great share in this. They were intellectually very alive and also virile, and free thinking, independent

340. For details, refer to R.L.Mehta: Pre-Buddhist India, p.348.

341. Radhakrishnan and More : A Source Book of Indian Philosophy, p.349.

342. BL., p.107.
spirit of inquiry and genuine love for intellectual and philosophical discussion, constituted the outstanding trait of their intellectual life. This is strongly indicated by the Buddhist texts which give us numerous stories about the important philosophical discussions and debates held by the leading thinkers in these republics before a large audience. It will be highly rewarding in the pursuance of this topic to note a few of them here. One Miganthaputta Sachohaka, who was a Lichohhavi and an ardent follower of Mahāvīra, met the Buddha at Mahāvana and engaged him in a debate on the intricate points of Buddhist psychology and metaphysics like 'rūpa' (form), 'vedanā' (sensation), 'saññā' (perception), 'samkhāra' (confection), and 'vināññāna' (consciousness). The debate was held before an audience of 500 Lichohhavis and Sachohaka’s design to disgrace the Buddha by worsting him in arguments fell through and the latter emerged victorious. Another Lichohhavi named Mahālī discussed with the Buddha the Transcendental Theory of Pūrans Kāsyapa which denied the efficacy of the human action, and the Buddha refuted it with subtle arguments about five Khandhas. There was another Mahālī who was also a


344. AN., V, pp.86-87; SN., III, pp.68-70
Liobohhavi and who asked the Buddha about the cause of the sinful and virtuous actions. The Buddha explained them to him. Once a Liobohhavi prince Abhaya along with Paṇḍitakumāraka met Ānanda and expressed his great appreciation of the teachings of Mahāvīra, whereupon Ānanda explained to him the three kinds of purity which were not subject to decay as taught by the Buddha and which ended sorrow and brought Nirvāṇa. A paribbājaka named Sandaka met Sariputta at Ukkachalē and questioned him about Nirvāṇa and the latter explained to him the meaning of Nirvāṇa and the way to attain it. We are told that once the Buddha explained the five kinds of 'Rare Gems' to an assembly of 500 Liobohhavis who were engaged in a serious discussion on this subject. A Mallian Upāsaka named Bhadragākāgāmani asked the Buddha the cause of the arising and overcoming of suffering, which he explained to him. At Uruvelakappa in the Malla country the Buddha delivered a famous philosophical discourse in which he explained that the acquisition of sublime

345. ibid., V, pp.86-87.
knowledge could lead to the realisation of the four Indriyani viz., 'Saddhā,' 'Virya,' 'Sruti,' and 'Samādhi.' Just before his death, the Buddha delivered another important discourse at Kusinārā in the Sāla groves in which he enunciated the subtle metaphysical theory of 'Vyadhamma Samkhāra' declaring that all Samkhāras are subject to decay. Āḷāra was a highly renowned saint among the Kālāmas of Kesaputte to whom the Bodhisattva went for instructions before his enlightenment. The republic of Videha had a glorious tradition of philosophical lore, being the land of Yājñavalkya who composed the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and of the renowned philosopher king Janaka, and this tradition must have been alive among the Videhans in the time of the Buddha. Then Mahāvīra, the founder of the Jaina metaphysics, belonged to the Jñātīrika clan which was a constituent of the Vajjian republic. And finally, it was the Sakyān Republic which gave to the world one of its greatest preachers and philosophers, the Great Buddha, most fitingly described as 'The Light of Asia.'

350. ibid., V, pp.228-29.
351. SN.,I, p.158.
Thus the intense speculative activities of the Age of the Buddha (as noted above) led to the formulation of a pretty huge mass of new philosophical ideas belonging to different schools, which finally settled down in the well-known metaphysical systems of ancient India.

Besides the Buddhist and the Jaina metaphysics, the other noteworthy heretical doctrines were: the philosophy of Determinism (Niyati-Vāda) of Mākṣhayaka, of Non-Action (Akāriya-Vāda) of Sūrya Kaśyapa, of Annihilation (Vighnha-Vāda) of Ajita Kesakamblin, of Eternalism (Satyata-Vāda) of Pakudha Kaśchāyana, of Neutralism of Sānjaya Belāthaputta, of Naturalism (Svabhāva-Vāda) referred in the Mahābhārata (XII, 222, 27), of Accidentalism (Vedrochha-Vāda or Animitta-Vāda) referred in Svetāśvatara Upanisad (1-2), and of Materialism (Lokāyata) of Ārya. Further, under a powerful attack of the heretical thinkers, the Brahminic metaphysical ideas began to be systematised in the Sūtra Literature, resulting in the emergence of the six orthodox systems of Indian Philosophy. As all these metaphysical doctrines are fully treated in any standard work on Indian Philosophy, any further discussion on them is obviously unnecessary here.


Max Müller : History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature, pp. 252 and 353.
To conclude, we may note that these republicans have had the unique credit of making a most valuable contribution to the religious and philosophical heritage of our land, nay, even to some extent, of the world. And this was possible only in a republican set-up which could provide full intellectual freedom to critically discuss and re-evaluate the traditional human values. Therefore, it is no wonder, as it is clear from the above, that a large number of conflicting religious and metaphysical doctrines originated in the North-Eastern republics, and not in the contemporary monarchies.