CHAPTER III

NON-VIOLENCE IN JAINISM

The Jains recount the names of twenty-four teachers (tirthankaras) through whom their faith is believed to have come down from unknown antiquity. The first of these teachers was Rasbhadeva. The last was Vardhamana, also styled Mahavira (‘the great hero’). He is said to have lived in the sixth century B.C. during the time of Gautama Buddha. The teacher who immediately preceded Vardhamana was Parsvanatha. The other twenty-two teachers belong to pre-historic ages. The word ‘Jina’ etymologically means a conquered all passions (raga and dvesa) and have attained liberation.

The Jains do not believe in God. They adore the Tirthankaras or the founders of the faith. These are the liberated souls who were once in bondage, but became, through their own efforts, free, perfect, omniscient, omnipotent and all blissful. The Jains believe that every spirit (jiva), that is in bondage now can follow the example set by the Jains and attain, like them, perfect knowledge, power and joy. This is the great element of optimism that inspires every true Jaina with absolute self-confidence. The possibility of the realization of absolute perfection, through personal effort, is for him not a mere speculation but a promise repeated by the life of every liberated saint.

In course of time the followers of Jainism were divided into two sects well known now as the Svetambaras and Digambaras. The difference between them lies, however, not so much in the basic philosophical doctrine as in some minor details of faith and practice. The teachings of the Jainas are accepted by both the sects. But the Digambaras are more rigorous and puritanic, while the Svetambaras hold that they should put on white clothes. Again, according to the Digambaras, a saint who has obtained perfect knowledge needs no food, and women cannot obtain liberation (without being born once more as men). The Svetambaras do not accept these views.

Jainism possesses a vast literature, mostly in Prakrta. The canonical or authoritative works accepted by all sects are said to contain the teachings of the last Tirthankara, Mahavira. They are too many to be mentioned here. Much of the early literature has been lost. When Jainism had to defend itself against the criticism of

other schools, it adopted, for this purpose, the technical philosophical terminology of Sanskrit and thus developed its literature in Sanskrit as well.2

The philosophical outlook of Jainism is common-sense realism and pluralism. The objects perceived are real, and they are many. The world consists of two kinds of reality, living and non-living. Every living being has a spirit or a soul (jiva), however imperfect its body may be. Avoidance of all injury to life (ahimsa) plays, therefore, an important role in Jaina ethics. Along with this respect for life there is in Jainism another great element, namely respect for the opinion of others. This last attitude is justified by a metaphysical theory of reality as many-faced (anekantavada) and a consequent logical doctrine (syadvada) that every judgment is subject to some condition and limitation, and various judgments about the same reality may, therefore, be true, each in its own sense, subject to its own condition.

The Jain doctrines may be broadly divided into (i) philosophical and (ii) practical. Jain philosophy contains ontology, metaphysics, and psychology. The practical doctrines are concerned with ethics and asceticism, monasticism, and the life of the laity.

(a) Philosophy- The Aranyakas and Upanishads had maintained, or were believed to maintain, that Being is one permanent, without beginning, change, or end. In opposition to this view, the Jains declare that being is not of a persistent and unalterable nature: Being, they say, ‘is joined to production, continuation, and destruction’.3 This theory they call the theory of the ‘Indefiniteness of Being’ (anekantavada): it comes to this: existing things are permanent only as regards their substance, but their accidents or qualities originate and perish. To explain: any material thing continues for ever to exist as matter; this matter, however, may assume any shape and quality. Thus, clay as substance may be regarded as permanent, but the form of a jar of clay, or its colour, may come into existence and perish. It is clear that the Brahmanical speculations are concerned with transcendental being, while the Jain view deals with Being as given in common experience.

2 Chatterjee, Satish Chandra & Datta Dhirendra Mohan, Indian Philosophy Calcutta University of Calcutta, 1968, p.74.
The doctrine of the Indefiniteness of Being is upheld by a very strange dialectical method called *Syadvada*, to which the Jains attach so much importance that this name frequently is used as a synonym for the Jain system itself. According to this doctrine of *Syadvada* there are 7 forms of metaphysical propositions, and all contain the word syad, e.g. syad nasti sarvam, syad nasti sarvaih. *Syat* means ‘may be’, and is explained by *kathamchit*, which in this connexion may be translated ‘somehow’. The word *syat* here qualifies the word *asti*, and indicates the Indefiniteness of Being (or *astitvam*). For example, one says a jar is somehow, i.e. it exists, if one means thereby that it exists as a jar; but it does not exist somehow if one means thereby that it exists as a cloth or the like. The purpose of these seeming truisms is to guard against the assumption of the Vedantins that Being is one without a second, the same in all things. Thus one has the correlative predicates ‘is’ (*asti*) and ‘is not’ (*nasti*). A third predicate is ‘inexpressible’ (*avaktavya*); for existent and non-existent (*sat* and, *asat*) belong to the same thing at the same time, and such a co-existence of mutually contradictory attributes cannot be expressed by any word in the language. The three predicates variously combined make up the 7 propositions, or *sapta bhangas*, of the *Syadvada*.

Supplementary to the doctrine of the, *Syadvada* and, in a way, the logical complement to it, is the doctrine of the *nayas*. The *nayas* are ways of expressing the nature of things: all these ways of judgment, according to the Jains, are one-sided, and they contain but a part of the truth. There are 7 *nayas*, 4 referring to concepts, and 3 to words, the reason for this variety of statement is that Being is not simple, as the Vedantins contend, but is of a complicated nature; therefore every statement and every denotation of a thing is necessarily incomplete and one-sided; and, if we follow one way only of expression or of viewing things, one is bound to go astray.

(b) **Metaphysics.** —All things, i.e. substances (*dravya*), are divided into lifeless things (*ajiva-kaya*) and lives or souls (*jiva*). The former are again divided into (1) space (*akasa*); (2) and (3) two subtle substances called dharma and adharma, and (4) matter (*pudgala*). Space, dharma and adharma are the

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5 Ibid.
necessary conditions for the subsistence of all other things, viz. souls and matter; space affords them room to subsist; dharma makes it possible for them to move or to be moved; and *adharma*, to rest. The function of space, is distributed among three different substances: this seems highly speculative, and rather hyperlogical. But the conception of the two cosmical substances dharma and *adharma*, which occur already, in the technical meaning seems to be developed from a more primitive notion. For, as their names dharma and *adharma* indicate, they seem to have denoted, in primitive speculation, those invisible ‘fluids’ which by contact cause sin and merit. The Jains, using for the latter notions the terms papa, and *punya*, were free to use the current names of those ‘fluids’ in a new sense not known to other Indian thinkers.

Space (*akasa*) is divided into that part of space which is occupied by the world of things (*lokakasa*), and the space beyond it (*alokakasa*), which is absolutely void and empty, an abyss of nothing. Dharma, and *adharma*, is co-extensive with the world; accordingly no soul or any particle of matter can get beyond this world for want of the substrates of motion and rest. Time is recognized by some as a quasi-substance besides those enumerated.

Matter (*pudgala*) is eternal and consists of atoms; otherwise it is not determined in its nature, but, as is already implied by the doctrine of the Indefiniteness of Being, it is something that may become anything, as earth, water, fire, wind, etc. Two states of matter are distinguished: gross matter, of which the things which one perceives consist, and subtle matter, which is beyond the reach of one’s senses. Subtle matter, for instance, is that matter which is transformed into the different kinds of karma. All material things are ultimately produced by the combination of atoms. Two atoms form a compound when the one is viscous and the other dry, or both are of different degrees either of viscousness or dryness. Such compounds combine with others, and so on. They are, however, not constant in their nature, but are subject to change or development (*parinama*), which consists in the assumption of qualities (*gunas*). In this way originate also the bodies and senses of living beings. The elements—earth, water, fire, and wind—are bodies of souls in the lowest stage of development, and are, therefore, spoken of as ‘earth-bodies,’ ‘water-bodies,’ etc.

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we meet with animistic ideas which, in this form, are peculiar to Jainism. They probably go back to a remote period, and must have prevailed in classes of Indian society which were not influenced by the more advanced ideas of the Brahmans.

Different from matter and material things are the souls (jīva, lit. ‘lives’). There is an infinite number of souls; the whole world is literally filled with them. The souls are substances, and as such eternal; but they are not of a definite size, since they contract or expand according to the dimensions of the body in which they are incorporated for the time being. Their characteristic mark is intelligence, which may be obscured by extrinsic causes, but never destroyed.

Souls are of two kinds: mundane (samsarīn), and liberated (mukta). Mundane souls are the embodied souls of living beings in the world and still subject to the Cycle of Birth; liberated souls will be embodied no more; they have accomplished absolute purity; they dwell in the state of perfection at the top of the universe, and have no more to do with worldly affairs; they have reached nirvana (nirvṛti, or nukti). Metaphysically the difference between the mundane and the liberated soul consists in this, that the former is entirely filled by subtle matter, as a bag is filled with sand, while the latter is absolutely pure and free from any material alloy.

The defilement of the soul takes place in the following way. Subtle matter ready to be transformed into karma pours into the soul; this is called ‘influx’ (asrava). In the usual state of things a soul harbours passions (kasaya) which act like a viscous substance and retain the subtle matter coming into contact with the soul; the subtle matter thus caught by the soul enters, as it were, into a chemical combination with it; this is called the binding (bandha) (of karma-matter). The subtle matter ‘bound’ or amalgamated by the soul is transformed into the 8 kinds of karma, and forms a kind of subtle body (karmanasarīra) which clings to the soul in all its migrations and future births, and determines the individual state and lot of that particular soul. For, as each particular karma has been caused by some action, good, bad, or indifferent, of the individual being in question, so this karma, in its turn, produces certain painful, or pleasant, or indifferent conditions and events which the

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8 Ibid.
10 Ibid.
individual in question must undergo. Now, when a particular karma has produced its
effect in the way described, it (i.e. the particular karma-matter) is discharged or
purged from the soul. This process of 'purging off' is called nirjara. When this
process goes on without interruption, all karma-matter will, in the end, be discharged
from the soul; and the latter, now freed from the weight which had kept it down
before the time of its liberation (for matter is heavy, and karma is material), goes up in
a straight line to the top of the universe where the liberated souls dwell. But in the
usual course of things the purging and binding processes go on simultaneously, and
thereby the soul is forced to continue its mundane existence.12 After the death of an
individual, his soul, together with its karmanasarira, goes, in a few moments, to the
place of its new birth and there assumes a new body, expanding or contracting in
accordance with the dimensions of the latter.

Embodied souls are living beings, the classification of which is a subject not
only of theoretical but also of great practical interest to the Jains. As their highest duty
(parama, dharma) is not to kill any living beings (ahimsa), it becomes incumbent on
them to know the various forms which life may assume. The Jains divide living
beings according to the number of sense-organs which they possess: the highest
(panchendriya) possess all five organs, viz. those of touch, taste, smell, sight, and
hearing, while the lowest (ekendriya) have only the organ of touch, and the remaining
classes each one organ more than the preceding one in the order of organs given
above; e.g. worms, etc., possess the organs of touch and taste; ants, etc., possess, in
addition, smell; bees, etc., seeing. The vertebrates possess all five organs of sense; the
higher animals, men, denizens of hell, and gods possess an internal organ or mind
(manas), and are therefore called rational (samjinin), while the lower animals have no
mind (asamjinin).13

The four elements are animated by souls; i.e., particles of earth, etc., are the
body of souls, called earth-lives, etc. These one may call elementary lives; they live
and die and are born again, in the same or another elementary body. These elementary
lives are either gross or subtle; in the latter case they are invisible. The last class of
one-organed lives are plants; of some plants each is the body of one soul only, but of
other plants each is an aggregation of embodied souls which have all functions of life.

12 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
as respiration and nutrition in common. That plants possess souls is an opinion shared by other Indian philosophers. But the Jains have developed this theory in a remarkable way. Plants in which only one soul is embodied are always gross; they exist in the habitable part of the world only. But those plants of which each is a colony of plant-lives may also be subtle, i.e. invisible, and in that case they are distributed all over the world. These subtle plants are called nigoda they are composed of an infinite number of souls forming a very small cluster, have respiration and nutrition in common, and experience the most exquisite pains. Innumerable nigodas from a globule and with them the whole space of the world is closely packed, like a box filled with powder. The nigodas furnish the supply of souls in place of those who have reached nirvana. But an infinitesimally small fraction of one single nigoda has sufficed to replace the vacancy caused in the world by the nirvana of all the souls that have been liberated from the beginning less past down to the present. Thus it is evident that the samsara, will never be empty of living beings.

From another point of view mundane beings are divided into four grades: denizens of hell, animals, men, and gods; these are the four walks of life (gati), in which beings are born according to their merits or demerits.

The Jains believe that the cause of the soul's embodiment is the presence in it of karma-matter. The theory of karma is the key-stone of the Jain system; it is necessary, therefore, to explain this theory in more detail. The natural qualities of soul are perfect knowledge (jnana), intuition or faith (darsana), highest bliss, and all sorts of perfections; but these inborn qualities of the soul are weakened or obscured, in mundane souls, by the presence of karma. From this point of view the division of karma can be understood. When karma matter has penetrated the soul, it is transformed into 8 kinds (prakrti) of karma singly or severally, which form the karmanasarira, just as food is, by digestion, transformed into the various fluids necessary for the support and growth of the body. The 8 kinds of karma are as follows.

(1) Jnana varaniya, that which obscures the inborn right knowledge (i.e.

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14 Chatterjee, Asim Kumar, A comprehensive History of Jainism, Calcutta, Firma KLM Private Ltd., 1978, p.22.
16 Ibid., p.56.
omniscience) of the soul and thereby produces different degrees of knowledge and of ignorance; (2) darsana-varaniya, that which obscures right intuition, e.g. sleep; (3) vedaniya, that which obscures the bliss-nature of the soul and thereby produces pleasure and pain, (4) mohaniya, that which disturbs the right attitude of the soul with regard to faith, conduct, passions, and other emotions, and produces doubt, error, right or wrong conduct, passions, and various mental states. The following 4 kinds of karma concern more the individual status of a being: (5) ayuska, that which determines the length of life of an individual in one birth as hell-being, animal, man, or god; (6) nama, that which produces the various circumstances or elements which collectively make up an individual existence, e.g. the peculiar body with its general and special qualities, faculties, etc.; (7) gotra, that which determines the nationality, caste, family, social standing, etc. of an individual; (8) antaraya, that which obstructs the inborn energy of the soul and thereby prevents the doing of a good action when there is a desire to do it.

Each kind of karma has its predestined limits in time within which it must take effect and thereby be purged off. There is another doctrine which is connected with the karma-theory, viz. that of the six lesyas. The totality of karma amalgamated by a soul induces on it a transcendental colour, a kind of complexion, which cannot be perceived by our eyes; and this is called lesya. There are six lesyas: black, blue, grey; yellow, red, and white. They have also, and prominently, a moral bearing; for the lesya indicates the character of the individual who owns it. The first three belong to bad characters, the last three to good characters.17

The individual state of the soul is produced by its inborn nature and the karma with which it is vitiated; this is the developmental or parinamika state. But there are 4 other states which have reference only to the behaviour of the karma. In the common course of things karma takes effect and produces its proper results; then the soul is in the audayika state. By proper efforts karma may be prevented, for some time, from taking effect; it is neutralized (upasamita), but it is still present, just like fires covered by ashes; then the soul is in the aupsamika state.18 When karma is not only prevented from operating, but is annihilated altogether (ksapita), then the soul is in the ksayika state.

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17 Ibid., p.57.
state, which is necessary for reaching nirvana. There is a fourth state of the soul, *ksayopasamika*, which partakes of the nature of the preceding ones; in this state some karma is annihilated, some is neutralized, and some is active.\(^\text{19}\) This is the state of ordinary good men, but the *ksayika* and *aupasamika* states belong to holy men, especially the former. It can be easily understood that these distinctions have an important moral bearing; they are constantly referred to in the practical ethics of the Jains.

How the Karma theory can be applied to non-violence & ethics. The highest goal is to get rid of all karma (*nirjara*) and meanwhile to acquire no new karma—technically speaking, to stop the influx (*asrava*,) of karma, which is called *samvara*, or the covering of the channels through which karma finds entrance into the soul.\(^\text{20}\) All actions produce karma, and in the majority of cases entail on the doer continuance of worldly existence (*samparayika*); but, when a man is free from passions and acts in strict compliance with the rules of right conduct, his actions produce karma which lasts but for a moment and is then annihilated (*iryapatha*).\(^\text{21}\) Therefore the whole apparatus of monastic conduct is required to prevent these formations of new karma; the same purpose is served by austerities (*tapas*), which, moreover, annihilate the old karma, more speedily than would happen in the common course of things.

It is evident from the preceding remarks that the non-violence and ascetics of the Jains are to be regarded as the logical consequence of the theory of karma. But from a historical point of view many of their ethical principles, monastic institutions, and ascetic practices have been inherited from older religious classes of Indian society, since Brahmanical ascetics and Buddhists resemble them in many of their precepts and institutions.

Jain ethics has for its end the realization of *nirvana*, or *moksa*. The necessary condition for reaching this end is the possession of right faith, right knowledge, and right conduct. These three excellences are metaphorically named the ‘three jewels’ (*triratna*), an expression used also by the Buddhist but in a different sense; they are not produced, but they are manifested on the removal of obstructing or obscuring species of karma. To effect this, the rules of conduct must, be observed and

\(^{19}\) Ibid, p.322.  
\(^{20}\) Ibid. p.188.  
\(^{21}\) Ibid. 126.
corresponding virtues must be acquired. Of first importance are the five vows, the first four of which are also acknowledged by Brahmans and Buddhists. The five vows (vratas) of the Jains are: (1) not to kill; (2) not to lie; (3) not to steal; (4) to abstain from sexual intercourse; (5) to renounce all interest in worldly things, especially to keep no property. These vows are to be strictly observed by monks, who take them on entering the Order, or, as it are commonly expressed, on taking diksa. In their case the vows are called the five great vows (mahavrata). Lay people, however, should observe these vows so far as their conditions admit; the five vows of the lay people are called the small vows (anuvrata). To explain: not to kill any living beings requires the greatest caution in all actions, considering that nearly everything is believed to be endowed with life. Endless rules have been laid down for monks who aim at preventing the destruction of the life of any living beings whatever. But if a layman were to observe these rules he could not go about his business; he is, therefore, obliged to refrain only from intentionally killing living beings, be it for food, pleasure, gain, or any such purpose. And so it is also with the remaining vows; their rigour is somewhat abated in the case of laymen. A layman, however, may, for a limited time, follow a more rigorous practice by taking one of the following particular vows or regulations of conduct (Silavrata): (1) digvirati; he may limit the distance up to which he will go in this or that direction; (2) anarthadandavirati; he may abstain from engaging in anything that does not strictly concern him; (3) upabhogaparibhogaparimana; he may set a measure to his food, drink, and the things he enjoys, avoiding besides gross enjoyments. (It may be mentioned in passing that certain articles of food, etc., are strictly forbidden to all, monks and laymen alike, e.g. roots, honey, and spirits; and likewise no food may be eaten at night.) The preceding three vows are called gunavrata; the next four are the disciplinary vows (siksavrata): (4) desavirata, reducing the area in which one will move; (5) Somayika; by this vow the layman undertakes to give up, at stated times, all sinful actions by sitting down motionless and meditating on holy things; (6) pausadhropavasa, to live as a monk on the 8th, 14th, or 15th day of the lunar fortnight, at least once a month; (7) atithisamvibhaga, lit, to give a share to guests, but it is understood in a less literal

23 Ibid.
24 Ibid. p.118.
sense, viz. to provide the monks with what they want.

Most of these regulations of conduct for laymen are intended apparently to make them participate, in a measure and for some time, in the merits and benefits of monastic life without obliging them to renounce the world altogether. The rules for a voluntary death have a similar end in view. It is evident that the lay part of the community were not regarded as outsiders, or only as friends and patrons of the Order, their position was, from the beginning, well defined by religious duties and privileges; the bond which united them to the Order of monks was an effective one. The state of a layman was one preliminary and, in many cases, preparatory to the state of a monk; in the latter respect, however, a change seems to have come about, in so far as now and for some time past the Order of monks is recruited chiefly from novices entering it at an early age, not from laymen in general. It cannot be doubted that this close union between laymen and monks brought about by the similarity of their religious duties, differing not in kind, but in degree, has enabled Jainism to avoid fundamental changes within, and to resist dangers from without for more than two thousand years, while Buddhism, being less exacting as regards the laymen, underwent the most extraordinary evolutions and finally disappeared, altogether in the country of its origin.

A monk on entering the Order takes the five great vows stated above; if they are strictly kept, in the spirit of the five times five clauses, or bhavanas no new karma can form. But, to practice them effectually, more explicit regulations are required, and these constitute the discipline of the monks. This discipline is described under seven heads.

(1) Since through the activity of body, speech, and mind, which is technically called yoga by the Jains, karma, pours into the soul (asrava) and forms new karma, it is necessary, in order to prevent the asrava (or to effect samvara to regulate those activities by keeping body, speech, and mind in strict control: these are the three guptis (e.g., the gupti or guarding of the mind consists in not thinking or desiring anything bad; having only good thoughts, etc.). (2) Even in those actions which are inseparable from the duties of a monk, he may become guilty of sin by inadvertently

transgressing the great vows (e.g., killing living beings). To avoid such sins he must observe the five samitis i.e. he must be cautious in walking, speaking, collecting alms, taking up or putting down things, and voiding the body; e.g., a monk should in walking look before him for about six feet of ground to avoid killing or hurting any living being; he should, for the same reason, inspect and sweep the ground before he puts anything on it; he should be careful not to eat anything considered to possess life, etc. (3) Passion being the cause of the amalgamation of karma-matter with the soul, the monk should acquire virtues. The 4 cardinal vices (kassaya) are anger, pride, illusion, and greed; their opposite virtues are forbearance, indulgence, straightforwardness, and purity. Adding to them the following 6 virtues, veracity, restraint, austerities, freedom from attachment to anything, poverty, and chastity, one has what is called the tenfold highest law of the monks (uttamadharma). (4) Helpful for the realization of the sanctity of which an earnest searcher of the highest good stands in need are the 12 reflexions (anupreksa or bhavana) on the transitoriness of all things, on the helplessness of men, on the misery of the world, and similar topics, which form the subject of endless homilies inserted in their works by Jain authors. (5) Furthermore, it is necessary for a monk, in order to keep in the right path to perfection and to annihilate his karma to bear cheerfully with all that may cause him trouble or annoyance. There are 22 such troubles (parisaha) which a monk must endure without flinching, as hunger and thirst, cold and heat, all sorts of trying occurrences, illness, ill treatment, emotions, etc. If we consider that the conduct of the monk is regulated with the purpose of denying him every form of comfort and merely keeping him alive, without, however, the risk of hurting any living beings, it may be imagined to what practical consequences the endurance of the parisahas must lead. (6) Conduct (charitra) consists in control and is of 5 degrees or phases. In the lowest phase all sinful activities are avoided, and the highest leads to the annihilation of all karma, preliminary to final liberation. (7) The last item is asceticism or austerities (tapas), which not only prevents the forming of new karma (samvara) but also purges off the old (nirjara), provided that it be undertaken in the right way and with the right intention; for there are also the ‘austerities of fools’ (halatapas) practiced by other religious sects, through which temporary merits, such as supernatural powers, birth as

a god, etc., can be accomplished but the highest good will never be attained. Tapas is, therefore, one of the most important institutions of Jainism. It is divided into (a) external and (b) internal tapas; the former comprises the austerities practiced by the Jains, the latter their spiritual exercises, (a) Among austerities fasting is the most conspicuous; the Jains have developed it to a kind of art, and reach a remarkable proficiency in it. The usual way of fasting is to eat only one meal every second, third, fourth day, and so on down to half a year. Another form of fasting is starving oneself to death. Other kinds of abstinence are distinguished from fasting properly so called: reduction of the quantity of the daily food; restrictions as regards the kind of food selected from what one has obtained by begging (for monks and nuns must, of course, beg their daily meal and must not eat what has been specially prepared for them); rejection of all attractive food. To the category of external austerities belong also sitting in secluded spots to meditate there and the postures taken up during meditation. (b) Internal austerities embrace all that belongs to spiritual discipline, including contemplation—e.g., confessing and repenting of sins. Transgressions of the rules of conduct are daily expiated by the ceremony of pratikramana; greater sins must be confessed to a superior (alochana) and repented of. The usual penance in less serious cases is to stand erect in a certain position for a given time (kayotsarya); but for graver transgressions the superior prescribes other penances—in the worst cases a new ordination of the guilty monk.\textsuperscript{32} Other kinds of internal austerities consist in modest behaviour, in doing services to other members of the Order or laymen, in the duty of studying, in overcoming all temptations. But the most important of all spiritual exercises is contemplation (dhyana). Contemplation consists in the concentration of the mind on one object; it cannot be persevered in for longer than one muhurta (48 minutes), and is permitted only to persons of a sound constitution. According to the object on which the thoughts are concentrated and the purpose for which this is done, contemplation may be bad or good, and will lead to corresponding results. The good contemplation, is either religious (dharma), or pure or bright (sukla).\textsuperscript{33} The former leads to the intuitive cognition of things hidden to common mortals, especially of religious truths. Indeed, it cannot be doubted that the pretended accuracy of information on all sorts of subjects, such as cosmography, astronomy, geography, spiritual processes, etc., which the sacred books and later treatises contain

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid.p.160.
\textsuperscript{33} Tatia, Nathmal, In Jaina Philosophy, Banaras, Jain Culture Research Society, 1951 p.245.
is in great part due to the intuition which the ‘religious contemplation’ is imagined to produce. Higher than the latter is the ‘pure’ contemplation, which leads through four stages to final emancipation: first, single objects are meditated upon, then only one object; then there is the stage when the activities of the body, speech, and mind continue, but only in a subtle form without relapse. At this stage when the worldly existence rapidly draws towards its end, the remaining karma may be suddenly consumed by a kind of explosion called samudghata. Then, in the last stage of contemplation, all karma being annihilated and all activities having ceased, the soul leaves the body and goes up to the top of the universe where the liberated souls stay for ever. It must, however, be remarked that ‘pure contemplation’ is not by itself a means of reaching liberation, but that it is the last link of a long chain of preparatory exertions. Even its first two stages can be realized only by those in whom the passions (kasaya) are either neutralized or annihilated; and only kevalins, i.e. those who have already reached omniscience, can enter into the last two stages, which lead directly to liberation. On the other hand, the nirvana is necessarily preceded by 12 years of self-mortification of the flesh, which should be the closing act of a monk’s career, though it no longer lends to liberation, for Jambusvamin, the disciple of Mahavira’s disciple Sudharman, was the last man who reached kevala, or omniscience, and was liberated on his death (64 after Mahavira’s Nirvana); accordingly during the rest of the present Avasarpini period nobody will be born who reaches nirvana in the same existence. Nevertheless these speculations possess a great theoretical interest, because they afford us a deeper insight into the Jain system.

In this connexion one must notice a doctrine to which the Jains attach much importance, viz. the doctrine of the 14 gunasthanas i.e. the 14 steps which, by a gradual increase of good qualities and decrease of karma, lead from total ignorance and wrong belief to absolute purity of the soul and final liberation.

In the first stage (mithyadrsiti) are all beings from the nigodas upwards to those men who do not know or do not believe in the truths revealed by the Tirthakaras; they are swayed by the two cardinal passions, love and hate (raga and dvesa), and are completely tied down by karma. In the following stages as one advances by degrees in true knowledge, in firmness of belief, and in the control and repression of passions,

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different kinds of karma, are got rid of and their effects cease, so that the being in question becomes purer and purer in each following stage. In all stages up to the 11th (that of a *upasantakanyavitaragachchhadastha*) a relapse may take place and a man may fall even down to the first stage. But as soon as he has reached the 12th stage, in which the first four kinds of karma are annihilated (that of a *ksinakasayavitaragachchhadmastra*), he cannot but pass through the last two stages, in which omniscience is reached; in the 13th stage (that of a *sayogikevalin*) the man still belongs to the world, and may continue in it for a long period; he retains some activities of body, speech, and mind; but, when all his activities cease, he enters on the last stage (that of an *ayogikevalin*), which lends immediately to liberation, when the last remnant of karma has been annihilated.

A question must now be answered which will present itself to every critical reader, viz. Is the karma-theory as explained above an original and integral part of the Jain system? It seems so abstruse and highly artificial that one would readily believe it a later developed metaphysical doctrine which was grafted on an originally religious system based on animistic notions and intent on sparing all living beings. But such a hypothesis would be in conflict with the fact that this karma-theory, if not in all details, certainly in the main outlines, is acknowledged in the oldest parts of the canon and presupposed by many expressions and technical terms occurring in them. Nor can we assume that in this regard the canonical books represent a later dogmatic development for the following reason; the terms *asrava samvara nirjara*, etc., can be understood only on the supposition that karma is a kind of subtle matter flowing or pouring into the soul (*asrava*), that this influx can be stopped or its inlets covered (*samvara*), and that the karma-matter received into the soul is consumed or digested, as it were, by it (*nirjara*). The Jains understand these terms in their literal meaning, and use them in explaining the way of salvation (the *samvara* of the *asravas* and the *nirjara* lead to *moksa*). Now these terms are as old as Jainism. For the Buddhists have borrowed from it the most significant term *asrava*; they use it in very much the same sense as the Jains, but not in its literal meaning, since they do not regard the karma as subtle matter, and deny the existence of a soul into which the karma could have an influx. Instead of *samvara*, they say *asavakkhaya* (*asravaksaya*), destruction of the

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36 Ibid., p.345.
asravas and identify it with magga (marga, ‘path’). It is obvious that with them asrava has lost its literal meaning, and that, therefore, they must have borrowed this term from a sect where it had retained its original significance, or, in other words, from the Jains. The Buddhists also use the term samvara, e.g. silasamvara, restraint under the moral law and the participle samvuta, ‘controlled,’ words which are not used in this sense by Brahmanical writers, and therefore are most probably adopted from Jainism, where in their literal sense they adequately express the idea that they denote. Thus the same argument serves to prove at the same time that the karma-theory of the Jains is an original and integral part of their system, and that Jainism is considerably older than the origin of Buddhism.

Present state of Jainism.—The Jains, both Svetambaras and Digambaras, constitute a small part of the population of India. On account of their wealth and education the Jains are of greater importance, however, than might be expected from their number. There are communities of Jains in most towns all over India. The Digambaras are found chiefly in Southern India, but also the North, in the North-Western provinces, in Eastern Rajputna, and the Panjab. The headquarters of the Svetambaras are in Gujarat (whence Gujarati has become the common language of the Svetambaras, rather than Hindi) and Western Rajputana, but they are to be found also all over Northern and Central India. Very much the same distribution of the Jains as at present seems, from the evidence of the inscriptions, to have prevailed ever since the 4th century. Splendid temples bear testimony to the wealth and zeal of the sect, some of which rank among the architectural wonders of India, as those on the hills of Girnar and Satrunjaya, on Mount Abu, in Ellora, and elsewhere.

The outfit of a monk is restricted to bare necessities, and these he must beg: clothes, a blanket, an almsbowl, a stick, a broom to sweep the ground, a piece of cloth to cover his mouth when speaking lest insects should enter it. The nuns' outfit is the same except that they have additional clothes. The Digambaras have a similar outfit, but keep no clothes and use peacocks' feathers instead of the broom. The monks shave the head, or remove the hair by plucking it out (locha). The latter method of getting rid of the hair is to be preferred and is necessary at particular times; it is peculiar to the Jains and is regarded by them as an essential rite.
Originally the monks had to lead a wandering life except during the monsoon, when they stayed in one place. Thus Mahavira in his wandering stayed for one day only in a village and five days in a town. But this habit has been somewhat changed by the introduction of convents (upasraya) corresponding to the viharas of the Buddhists.

The upasrayas ‘are separate buildings erected by each sect for their monks or nuns. An Upasraya is a large bare hall without bath-rooms and cooking places, furnished only with wooden beds’.

The Svetambaras, as a rule, go only to those places where there are such upasrayas; and now they stay as long as a week in a village, in a town as long as a month. It is in the upasraya that the monks preach or explain sacred texts to laymen who come to visit them. The daily duties of a monk are rather arduous if conscientiously performed; e.g. he should sleep only three hours of the night. His duties consist in repenting of and expiating sins, meditating, studying, begging alms (in the afternoon), careful inspection of his clothes and other things for the removal of insects, for cleaning them, etc. There are various monastic degrees. First there is the novice (saiksa), who is not yet ordained. When he or any other man takes the vows (vratadana), he renounces the world (prajyajya) and is initiated or takes diksa. The most important ceremony at that time is the shaving or pulling out of the hair under a tree. From a common monk he may rise to the rank of a teacher and superior called upadhyaya, acharya, vachaka, ganin etc., according to degrees and occupations.

The ideal of conduct is that of the monk, which a layman, of course, cannot realize, but which he tries to approach by taking- upon himself particular vows. But in practical life also, apart from asceticism, the Jains possess a body of rules composed by monks which lay out a rational course of life for laymen and bend to improve their welfare and moral standard. The monks have also to provide for the religious wants of the laity by explaining sacred texts or religious treatises and delivering sermons; this is done in the upasrayas where the laymen visit them; similarly the nuns are visited by, or visit, the lay women. But the most conspicuous habit of the laity is attendance in emples, and worship of the Tirthakaras and the deities associated with them.

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One must now advert to a peculiarity of the Jains which has struck all observers more than any other viz. their extreme carefulness not to destroy and living being, a principle which is carried out to its very last consequences in monastic life, and has shaped the conduct of the laity in a great measure. No layman will intentionally kill any living being, not even any insect, however troublesome; he will remove it carefully without hurting it. It goes without saying that the Jains are strict vegetarians. This principle of not hurting any living being bars them from some professions, e.g. agriculture, and has thrust them into commerce, and especially into its least elevating branch of money-lending. Most of the money-lending in Western India is in the hands of the Jains, and this accounts in a great measure both for their unpopularity and for their wealth. A remarkable institution of the Jains, due to their tender regard for animal life, is their asylums for old and diseased animals, the panjarapolas, where they are kept and fed till they die a natural death.

In contrast to Buddhism, Jainism accepted the essentials of the classical atman doctrine. Like Samkhya, however, it bypassed the Brahman doctrine, the concept of the divine soul of the universe. It was heterodox particularly because of its rejection of Veda education, of rituals, and of the Brahmans. The absolute atheism of the doctrine, the rejection of any supreme deity and of the total Hindu pantheon would have been no absolutely compelling reason for the charge of heterodoxy, since other ancient philosophies of the intellectuals, particularly the Samkhya doctrine, were of the same bent.

Certainly Jainism rejected all orthodox philosophies, not only the Vedantic but also the Samkhya doctrine. Yet it was close to the last in certain metaphysical presuppositions. This holds especially for its view of the nature of the soul. All souls, i.e. the actual, ultimate I-substance of the Ego, are alleged to be equal and eternal essences. These and only these, not an absolute divine soul, are jiva, the carries of life. And indeed they are (in sharpest contrast to Buddhistic teaching) a kind of soul-monad which is capable of infinite wisdom (gnosis). The soul is no mere passive, receptive spirit as in the case of orthodox accentuated interrelation with the ancient active asceticism and self-deification; the soul represents an active principle of life to which the inertia of matter is opposed as a contrast (ajiva).

Within Jainism the interrelation with mortificatory magic remains close within the qualitative limits established through its intellectualistic anti-orgiastic origin. The tie was closer than in any other salvation religion of India. An expression of this is the fact that Jainism in place of the world of completely dethroned deities gives divine honors to great virtuosi of asceticism: the arhat, the jina, and as supreme, the Tirthankaras. They are worshiped during their lifetimes as magicians and after death as exemplary helpers in virtue. From a total of twenty-five Tirthankaras, Parsvanatna (allegedly in the ninth century B.C.) was, according to the legend, the next to the last. Mahavira, however, was the last. With them the “prophetic age” came to a close. After them no one has attained the stage of omniscience or the penultimate stage (manahparyaya).

As the quality of Brahmanical gnosis increases by steps, so Jain charisma is graded, according to the Kalpa Sutra, into seven statuses according to the stages of knowledge: from knowledge of the writings and holy traditions to the stage of enlightenment concerning the things of this world (avadhi), first stage of supernatural knowledge; second the ability to have vision (Hell-sehens); third the possession of magical powers and fourth the ability of self-transformation; (fifth step) to knowledge of the thoughts of all living beings (manahparyaya, the second stage of supernatural wisdom); and freedom from all suffering (sixth step) and, therewith, finally, (seventh step) to certainly of the “last birth”. Therefore says the Charanga Sutra, the soul of the perfectly redeemed is qualityless, bodyless, soundless, colourless, tasteless, without feeling, without resurrection, without contact with matter, knowing and perceiving “without analogy”, hence directly and without imagery thus leading an “unconditional” existence.

Whoever in life has attained the proper intuitive knowledge sins no more. He sees, like Mahavira, all deities at his feet, and is all-knowing. Mahavira’s is the (earthly) final stage which the perfect ascetic enters and is also called nirvana (in this case identical with the later jivan mukti). This stage of Jainistic nirvana means, in contrast of Buddhist nirvana, but salvation from “existence” in general, but, “salvation from the body”, the source of all sin and lust and of all limitation of spiritual power. One may clearly discern in this the historical relation to miraculous magic. For the

39 Ibid., pp. 15.16.
40 Ibid., p. 155.
Jains, too, knowledge is the supreme in fact magical means of salvation, as with all classical soteriologies. However, the path to this, in addition to study and meditation, is asceticism to a higher degree than was the case with other sects of literati.

Indeed with the Jains asceticism has been pushed to an extreme point. He achieves supreme holiness who starves himself to death. On the whole, however, this asceticism, as compared to the primitive asceticism of magicians, is spiritualized in the direction of “world renunciation”. “Homelessness” is the basic holy concept. It signifies the break of all worldly relations, thus, above all, indifference to all sense perceptions and avoidance of all action based on worldly motives. It aims at seeking to cease to “act”, to hope, and to wish. A man who only feels and thinks “I am I” is “homeless” in this sense. He yearns neither for life nor for death. Both desires would be last capable of awakening karma. He has no friends and declines the aid of others toward himself (for example, the usual foot-washing which the pious perform for the holy man). He acts according to the principle that one should not resist evil and that the individual’s state of grace in life requires proof through the endurance of hardship and pain. Therefore, the Jains were from endurance of hard the outset not a community of a individual wise men who, as old men or temporary students, devoted themselves to ascetic life. Nor were they individual virtuosi of life-long asceticism; nor did they represent a plurality of schools and monasteries. Rather they were a special order of “professional monks”. Perhaps they were the first, certainly they were among the older confessions of cultured intellectual who were the most successful in carrying out the typical dualistic organization of the Hindu sects: the community of monks as the nucleus, the laity (upasaka, adorers) as a community under religious rule of the monks.

The reception of the novitiate into the community of monks in classical times took place under a tree, after the laying aside of all jewels and clothes as a sign of the renunciation of all possessions, and it consisted of tearing of the hair and smearing the head, and ended with the communication of the mantra (the magical and stereological formula) by the teacher into the ear of the novitiate. The severity of the flight from the world appears to have varied. According to the tradition, it must have increased; originally it entailed neither absolute lack of possessions nor unconditional chastity. It

42 Ibid.
is controversial which of the two forms was introduced at a late time as an absolute to the Mahavira, in contrast to the milder commandments of the penultimate Tirathankara, it is identical with the formation of the order of monks itself.

A lasting schism of the order occurred through innovation in the first century A.D. when one part of the monks followed the commandment of absolute nakedness, at least for holy teachers, and another part, indeed the majority, declined. As the gymnosophists in many points of their ritual followed more archaic practice and were also mentioned by Hellenic writers— they disputed with the Hellenic philosophers— and as their later name was originally known only to Indian sources, whereas the name “Jaina” would seem to be of later origin, the case probably represents an accommodation of the majority of the monastic community to the world in the interest of easier propaganda, which in the following centuries had great external successes. The gymnosophists seceded with the claim that only they were the true nigrantha (unfettered ones). As Digambera they separated themselves from the rest—the Shwetambera—and ended by excluding women completely from the possibility of salvation. During the nineteenth century the Digamberas were driven from public life by the British police.43

Lest he be entangled in personal or local relationships, the classical rules of Jainism laid upon the monk the duty of restless wandering from place to place. A painstaking casuistry regulated the manner of his mendicancy such that the voluntary nature of giving and the avoidance of all (karma-engendering action of the giver (for which the monk could become answerable) seems to have been secured. To avoid all “action” the monk should live as far as practicable from what nature freely and abundantly offers or from what the household (laity) without any intention has as a surplus on hand, hence, to that extend, resembles nature's gift. The commandment of wandering homelessness quite naturally gave the order a strong missionary power. In fact, propaganda was expressly recommended.44

In complete reversal of the duty to wander for the monks was the rule for the laity against travel, for travel puts them in danger uncontrolled and, ignorant as they are, of falling into sin. The familiar Hindu suspicion of change of place, at least any

43 Ibid., p.124  
44 Ibid., p.125.
change of place without the accompaniment of the controlling religious man, was pushed to extremes among the Jains.

For any trip the guru had to give permission and instructions, to determine in advance the route of travel, maximum duration of travel as well as the permissible maximum of travel expenses. These prescriptions are characteristic of the position of the Jain laity in general. They were treated as incompetent minors and held under disciplinary control by means of inspection trips of the clergy and the guardians of morality.

In addition to “correct knowledge” the second “gem” of the Jain was “correct insight”, which meant blind submission of the laity to the insight of the teacher. In contrast to the rather far-reaching “organic” relativism of orthodox Hinduism, in classical Jain soteriology there was only the one absolutely holy goal of perfection over and against which all other things represent but way stations, provisional arrangements, immaturity, and inferiority. The holy was achieved through a series of steps—according to the most widely diffused Jain doctrine, after eight rebirths reckoned from the time one set out upon the proper path.

The laity also was required to meditate for a definite time (forty-eight minutes) daily. On definite days (usually four times a month) it was required to lead a full monkish existence. The lay individual was also compelled to take upon himself special austerity on definite days, not to leave the village, and to eat only one meal a day. Lay dharma could only mean a possible approach to the dharma of monks. Hence, above all, the laity by special vows should take up obligatory duties. Thus, the Jain confession acquired the typical character of a “sect” into which one was especially received.

The discipline of the monks was severe. The acharya (superior) of the monastery was ordinarily designated by age. Originally, however, he was chosen because of his charisma, by the predecessor, or by the community. He accepted confessions of the monks and imposed penance. The competent monastic superior controlled the life of the laity, which for this purpose was divided into samghas (dioceses), these further into ganas (subdioceses) and these, finally, into gachchas (parishes). Any laxity on the part of an acharya was revenged through magical evil, loss of charisma and particularly, impotence against demons.
In substance, the commandments of Jain asceticism, the “gem”, “right practice” placed supreme importance on ahimsa the absolute prohibition of the killing (himsa) of living beings. Without question the Jain principle of ahimsa originated in the rejection of the meat sacrifice which the Brahmans had illogically preserved out of ancient Vedic sacrificial ritual.\(^45\) As well as the sharp polemic against this Vedic practice is the proof that the Jains carried through this commandment of non-killing with unheard-of vehemence. The Jain was allowed to take his own life and, in the opinion of some, should do so when either he could not control his worldly lust or, in reverse, had reached the holy. But he must not touch another's life, not even indirectly nor unwittingly.

Perhaps, this prohibition was first transposed in meaning from the anti-orgiastic origin of vegetarianism to the meaningful unity of all life. When Jainism became the official state religion in some kingdoms an accommodation had to occur. Even today correct Jains refuse to sit in criminal courts while they are quite useful in the administration of civil law. However, some safety valve had to be provided with respect to military service. Thus, according to the revised doctrine conduct of the kind and the warriors was just in “wars of defense.” The ancient prescription was now reinterpreted to mean that for the laity it precluded only the killing of “weaker” beings, that is, unarmed enemies. In this form the ahimsa of the Jains has been pushed to the extreme. During the dark season the correct Jain will burn no lights as it might burn moths. He kindles no fire, because it would kill insects. Water is strained before boiling. The Jain goes about with his mouth and nose covered with a cloth to prevent the inhalation of insects. Only after carefully sweeping every bit of earth with a soft broom does he step on it. Lest he kills lice with the scissors he does not cut the hair on his head or body (instead, he plucks the hair out by the roots). He never goes through water lest he steps on insects.\(^46\)

The practice of ahimsa led to the exclusion of the Jain from all industrial trades endangering life, hence from all trades which made use of fire, involved work with sharp instruments (wood or stone work); from masonry; and, in general, from the majority of industrial callings. Agriculture was, of course', completely excluded:

ploughing, especially, always endangers the lives of worms and insects.

The second most important commandment for the laity was the limitation of possessions. One should have no more than the “necessary”. Personal effects in some Jain catechisms are restricted to twenty-six definite articles. Moreover, the possession of riches in general beyond those necessary for existence is dangerous to the holy. One should give his surplus to the temple or the veterinary in order to gain service merit. This occurred in Jain communities famous for their institutions. It maybe noted that the acquisition of considerable wealth was in no way forbidden, only the striving after wealth and attachment to riches; this was rather similar to the ascetic Protestantism of the Occident. As with Protestantism, “Joy in possessions” (parigraha) was the objectional thing, but not possession or grain in itself. The similarity extends further: a Jain commandment forbids saying anything false or exaggerated; the Jains believed in absolute honesty in business life, all deception (maya) was prohibited, including especially all dishonest gain through smuggling, bribery, and any sort of disreputable financial practice (adattu dama).47

All this excluded the sect, on the one side, from typical Oriental participation in “political capitalism” (accumulation of wealth by officials, tax farmers, state purveyors) and, on the other it worked among them and among the Parsees, just as for the Quakers in the Occident, in terms of the dictum (of early capitalism) “honesty is the best policy.” The honesty of the Jain trader was famous. Their wealth was also famous: formerly it has been maintained that more than half the trade of India passed through their hands.

That the Jainas, at least the Shwetambera Jains, nearly all became traders was due to purely ritualistic reasons, a case similar to the Jews! Only the trader could truly practice ahimsa. Their special manner of trading, too, determined by ritual, with its particularly strong aversion against traveling and their way of making travel difficult restricted them to resident trade, again as with the Jews to banking and money-lending. The compulsory “saving” of asceticism familiar from the economic history of Puritanism worked also among them toward the use of accumulated possessions, as investment capital rather than as funds for consumption or rent. That they remained confined to commercial capitalism and failed to create an industrial

organization was again due to their ritualistically determined exclusion from industry and as with the Jews their ritualistic isolation in general. This must have been added to by the now familiar barriers which their Hindu surroundings with its traditionalism put in their way besides the patrimonial character of kingship.

The commandment to retain no more than is “necessary” (parigraha viramana vrata)\(^48\) provided but a very elastic restriction to their extensive accumulation of wealth. As with the Puritans the strict methodical nature of their prescribed way of life was favorable to such accumulation. Abstinence from intoxicants and from the enjoyment of meat and honey, absolute avoidance of any sort of unchastity and strict loyalty in marriage, avoidance of status pride, of anger, all passions are, among all cultured Hindus, self-evident commandments. Possibly the principle that any emotion leads to hell is even more strongly applied. And even more strongly enjoined than for the Hindu laity is the warning against native surrender to “the world.” One can avoid entanglement in karma only through rigid, methodical self-control and composure, through holding one’s tongue, and studious caution in all life situations.

Among merits their social ethic counts the feeding of the hungry and thirsty, the clothing of the poor, the forbearance of and care for animals, care for the monks (of their own confession), saving another’s life, and kindness toward others. One should think only good of others, not hurt their feelings, and seek to win them through high morality and politeness. However, one should not bind oneself to others.

The five great vows of the monks contain, in addition to ahimsa asatya tyaga (prohibition of dishonesty), ashaya vrata (prohibition against taking anything which is not freely offered), brahmaharya (chastity), and aparigraha vrata (the renunciation of love for anyone or anything). Love must be eliminated for it awakens a desire and the processes of karma.\(^49\)

**Ahimsa:** Abstinence from all injury to life- Life exists not simply in the moving beings (trasa), but also in some non-moving ones (sthavara) such as plants and beings inhabiting bodies of earth. The ideal of Jaina is, therefore, to avoid molesting life not only of the moving creatures but also of the non-moving ones. The Jain saints who try to follow this ideal are, therefore, found even to breathe through a

\(^{48}\) Ibid.
\(^{49}\) Ibid. p.129.
piece of cloth tied over their noses lest they inhale and destroy the life of any organism floating in the air. Ordinary laymen would find this ideal too high. They are advised, therefore, to begin with the partial observance of ahimsa by abstaining from injury to moving beings which are endowed with at least two senses.

The Jains attitude of ahimsa is the logical outcome of their metaphysical theory of the potential equality of all souls and recognition of the principle of reciprocity. i.e., one should do to others as one wants other to do for him/her. It is unfair to think that ahimsa is the remnant of the savage’s primitive view for life, as some critics have thought. If every soul, however lowly now, can become as great as any other soul, then one should recognize the value and the claims of every life, as his own. ‘Respect for life wherever found’ becomes then an irresistible duty.

The Jain tries to perform this duty in every minute act in life, because he wants to be thoroughly consistent with the basic principle he has accepted. He also thinks, therefore, that it is not sufficient simply not to take life; one should not even think and speak of taking life, nor even permit, nor encourage others to take life. Otherwise the vow of ahimsa cannot be fully maintained.

**Satyam:** Abstinence from falsehood- This vow also is taken very rigorously. Truthfulness is not speaking what is only true, but speaking what is true as well as good and pleasant. Without these qualifications the practice of truthfulness would be of little use as an aid to moral progress. Because, merely speaking what is true may sometimes descend into garrulity, vulgarity, frivolity, vilification, etc. truth set as the ideal of this vow is sometimes called, therefore, *sunrta*, to suggest the fuller meaning of truth which is also wholesome and pleasant. It is also pointed out that for the perfect maintenance of this vow, one must conquer greed, fear and anger and even restrain the habit of jesting.

**Asteyam:** Abstinence from stealing- This vow consists in not taking what is not given. The sanctity of the property of others, like that of their lives, is recognized by the Jains. A Jain writer wittily remarks the wealth is but the outer life of man and to rob wealth is to rob life. If human life is impossible without wealth in the some form or other there is no exaggeration in the Jaina Thought that depriving a man of his wealth is virtually to deprive him of an essential condition on which his life depends.
This vow, therefore, may be said to be logically inseparable from the vow of ahimsa, the sanctity of property being a logical sequence of the sanctity of life.

**Brahmacarya:** Abstinence from self-indulgence- This vow is generally interpreted as that of celibacy. But the Jain attach to this also a deeper meaning that raises the standard of this vow far above mere sexual self-continence. It is interpreted as the vow to give up self-indulgence (*kama*) of every form. The Jain, bent on self-criticism, discerns that though outward indulgence may stop, it may continue still in subtle forms—in speech, in thought, in the hopes of enjoyment hereafter in heaven, even in asking or permitting others to indulge themselves. For the complete maintenance of this vow one must, therefore, desist from all forms of self-indulgence—external and internal, subtle and gross, mundane and extra-mundane, direct and indirect.

**Aprigraha:** Abstinence from all attachment- this is explained as the vow to give up all attachment for the objects of the five senses—pleasant sound, touch, colour, taste, and smell. As attachment to the world’s objects means bondage to the world, and the force of this causes rebirth, liberation is impossible without the withdrawal of attachment.

Knowledge, faith and conduct are inseparably bound up and the progress and degeneration of the one react on the other two. Perfection of knowledge and faith. When a person, through the harmonious development of these three, succeeds in overcoming the forces of all passions and karmas, old and new, the soul becomes free from its bondage to matter and attains liberation. Being free from the obstacles of matter, the soul realizes its inherent potentiality. It attains the fourfold perfection (*ananta catustaya*), namely, infinite knowledge, infinite faith, infinite power and infinite bliss.

**Absolute Ahimsa in Jainism**

The commentator of *Tattvartha Sutra, Sruta Sagara Suri,* is of opinion that one is not liable to sin, even if vitalities are separated in the absence of passionate activities. He quotes ‘*Pravacaabnasara*’ wherein, it is written that if a minute insect comes under the feet of a sage observing the principle of *Iryasamiti* (walking and looking ahead in a manner, so as not to cause injury to any creature), or if that insect dies, having come under the feet of the sage, he (the sage) is not bound by any sinful
karma.\textsuperscript{50} According to the author of \textit{Tattvartha Vriti}, a pramatta is an object of sin of himsa, no matter whether a life is destroyed by him or not, whereas a dispassionate man does not commit himsa, even if any life is destroyed by him.\textsuperscript{51}

The conviction of the commentator is supported in according to which, if a person is not moved by any kind of passion and is carefully following the right conduct, he does not commit himsa, even if vitalities are injured. It is further said with great assurance that non-appearance of attachment and other passion is ahimsa and their appearance is himsa.

This is the summary of the Jaina scripture. A person actuated by passion runs on carelessly with no thought of avoiding injury. He commits himsa even though he may not have killed any creature, for he certainly injures his conscious vitalities.

\textbf{Primary duty of a true Ahirmsaka}

The commentator, Ajita Prasada Jaina, demands that a true ahimsaka should take a vow of Ahimsa. He who does not take a vow, has an inclination towards himsa whether he practically commits or not. His attitude makes him liable for himsa.\textsuperscript{52}

\textbf{Ahimsa lies in control of the dualities of mind}

It is concluded from the above statements, that ahimsa in reality means control of the dualities of mind, love, hate, heat, cold and so on. Only a balanced mind can be dispassionate. Dispassion is in his hands who has control over senses. It is motive behind an action that determines himsa or ahimsa virtue or sin. Where can a dispassionate self-controlled and selfless man have chances of committing himsa? If at all he commits himsa, that will be for the preservation of righteousness, for the benefit of others.

\textbf{The virtue of Ahimsa includes all other virtues}

Ahimsa is not an exclusive virtue. It embraces all other virtues that help in its understanding and practice.

Ahimsa is Universal Mother, \textit{Laksni} of heaven, giver of bliss, the best state and eternal wealth. Ahimsa emancipates does good to soul and destroys distressing

\textsuperscript{50} Upadhya, A.N., Pravacanasara of Kundakundacarya, Varanasi, Motilal Banarasi Das. 1935, p.17.
\textsuperscript{51} Tattvartha Vritti VII:13.
\textsuperscript{52} Walli, Koshelya. The Conception of Ahimsa in Indian Thought, Varanasi, Bharat Manisa.1956.p.60.
miseries. Ahimsa is the mother of all virtue; i.e. austerity, knowledge of scriptures, restraints, meditation, charity, and vows like truth, etc. just as there is nothing smaller than atom and bigger than sky, similarly there is nothing greater than ahimsa.

Ahimsa protects creatures like mother, gives happiness to mind like a woman and advises like Sarasvati. Ahimsa is the chief of all the austerities, just as moon is the chief of all planets, as Indra is chief among all gods, sun among all grahas (planets), desire-yielding tree (kalpataru) among all the trees, ocean among all the reservoirs, Meru among all the mountains and Vitaraga Deva among all the sages.\textsuperscript{53} Yamas and niyamas (restraints and observances) were practised by God Jina for the protection and development of ahimsa only, for ahimsa, if stained by untruth is not perfect ahimsa. The virtue of protecting a single creature is greater than the charity of the whole earth, for life is dear to a man so much so that even by receiving the whole earth in his sway he does not want to die.

In a word, whatever is pure and good is ahimsa and whatever is impure and harmful to others is himsa.

**Classification of ahimsa**

Ahimsa can be said to be of five parts.

1. *Manogupti (Restraint of mind)*- An ahimsaka is to control his mind, so as not to think evil thoughts and meditate on good thoughts only to think only that which makes him purer, nobler and selfless that leads him nearer to perfection.

2. *Vacanagupti (Control of tongue)*- A practiser of ahimsa practises restraint of tongue and refrains from uttering bad language that may insult others, hurt their sentiments or prove harmful to them. An ahimsaka speaks only what is true and pleasant. He does not flatter. Control of tongue means to speak little but to speak sincerely and truthfully.

3. *Iryasamiti (Carefulness in using paths trodden by men and blasts in such a manner as not to cause injury to any creature)*- An ahimsaka looks ahead of the path he is following in order to avoid death of any insect that may be going on the roadside.

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\textsuperscript{53} Ibid.p.61.
4. *Adananiksepana samiti*- To keep a thing on the earth or life it from the earth, after seeing and cleaning the spot is called ‘Adananiksepana samiti’.

5. *Alokita panabhajana samiti*- To eat and drink in the light of the sun is called ‘Alokita panabhajana’. Evidently a Jain follower of ahimsa does not take food after sunset.

All these kinds of ahimsa have been formed to make it a success in practice and to enable a follower to practice it in every thought, word and deed. Development of friendly ideas also help in the practice of ahimsa.

**Friendly feeling is the positive aspect of ahimsa**

Not to nourish the thought of misery with regard to all creatures of the world, in thought, word and deed, or cause its development in other’s mind or approve its development in other’s mind is termed as friendly feeling.

Such ideas of friendship (*Maitri*), expressions of gladness and devotion to see the self-controlled and the wise, equipped with knowledge austerity and penance (*pramoda*) and indifference towards those who are against Jain Dharma (*madhyastha*) help in practicing ahimsa.

All the vows have been classified in two sections.

1. Mahavrata (Great Vow)

2. Anuvrata (Small Vow).

**MAHAVRATA** - when a person does not kill mobile and immobile beings in thought, word and deed even in dream; he is following Mahavrata (great vow).

**Mahavrata for monks**

The great vow is meant for *Sadhus*. It is fallowed by those who have gone out of house to wonder as houseless monks.
The practical conduct to be observed by a Brahmana is of thirteen types which include five restraints. Ahimsa is the foremost of those restraints. He also observes five samitis. These are:

1. **Irya Samiti** - (Carefulness is using paths trodden by men and beasts in such a manner as not to cause injury to any creature)- An ahimsaka looks ahead of the path he is following in order to avoid death of any insect that may be going on the roadside.

2. **Bhasa Samiti** - A monk renounces backbiting, ridiculing, talking ill of others, self-praise and harsh words. He speaks what is good for others and for himself. This carefulness in speech is termed in Bhasa samiti.

3. **Esana Samiti** - means to take food that is given by others out of regard for ahimsa.

4. **Addnanikfepana Samiti** - vide types of ahimsa.

5. **Utsarga Samiti** - means to discharge excrement in a secret place, free from living beings, where there is no objection on behalf of anybody. This is also called pratisthapana samiti.

These five practices help in avoiding himsa of living beings and are means to practice ahimsa.

**Anuvrata**

When the five vratas are practiced conditionally at certain times, under certain circumstances and at certain places, it is known as the small vow. It is followed by householder.

**Anuvrata followed by householders**

When householders abstains from killing mobile and immobile beings he is following *anuvrata*. In other words a practiser of *anuvrata* is called ‘Agari’ or ‘Grhastha’ (householder).

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54 Tattvartha Sutra. IX.5.
Classification of Anuvrata

Anuvrata can be further subdivided in seven classes-

1. **Digvraia**- According to this vow, a householder moves and acts within a restricted area and abstains from going outside the restricted area. Observance of this vow makes a householder a follower of Mahavrata, living in the limited area fixed by him, for he gives up himsa of mobile and immobile beings, except in the area utilized by him. This vow further helps in conquering greed, for a householders can acquire money only in the area fixed by him.

2. **Desa Vrata**- means not to go certain places within the restricted area for a definite time, for example, places that are impure and do not help in the purification of mind. The practice of this vow also helps in overcoming greed and in following Mahavrata.

3. **Anarthadarddha Vrata**- means to give up sinful actions that do not serve any purpose.

4. **Samayika Vrata**- means to meditate on the equality of all beings, at the time of praying to favourite gods.

5. **Prosadha-Upavasa Vrata**- The eighth and the fourteenth days of a month are called ‘Prosadha’. A practiser of this vrata keeps fast on these two days.

6. **Upabhogaparipbhogaparimana Vrata**- the use of food, drink, fragrances etc. is termed as ‘upabhoga’. ‘Paribhoga’ means the frequent use of ornaments, bedding and conveyances. To use upabhoga and paribhoga within a fixed limit is termed Upabhogaparipbhogaparimana Vrata.

7. **Atithisamvibhaga Vrata**- he who goes for getting food on any tithi (date), is Atithi. Atithisamvibhaga Vrata means, to serve such a guest, with special food.

Transgressions of Ahimsa (Anuvrata)

Ahimsa (Anuvrata) is transgressed in the following five ways-

1. **Bandha**- means to tie down an animal or to restrain any being from going freely to the desired places.
2. Vadha- means to punish with a stick etc.

3. Cheda- means to make hole in nose, ear and other limbs.

4. Atibhararopana-means to load creatures beyond their strength.

5. Annapananirodha-means to desist from giving food and drink to human beings or cattle, in time, or when they require nourishment.

From these five transgressions of ahimsa (Anuvrata), it is concluded, that a true ahimsaka should give due independence to his dependants and animals to exercise their own will to live and move freely. He is to instruct others with love and not by the rod. He is to treat others, as he would like himself to be burdened more than he, she, or it can take. He is not to be mercilessly indifferent to hunger and thirst of his dependants and to provide them with their requisites in time.

**Transgressions of Digvrata**

*Digvrata* has given five kinds of transgressions\(^5\)

*Vyatikrama* means to go beyond the boundary, fixed in a direction:

1. *Urdhvavyatikrama*- means to cross the limit. He has fixed of the mountain.

2. *Adhovyatikrama*-means to go down in a well etc.

3. *Tiryagvyatikrama*-means to enter ‘boles’ and caves without paying attention to restrictions.

4. *Ksetmvrddhi*- means to increase the limited area being overpowered by greed due to *pramada* (carelessness) or due to infatuation. It means to go outside the limited area to sell or purchase the articles in order to get more profit.

5. *Smrtyantaradhyana*-means to go anywhere forgetting the restrictions put by himself sometime before.

**Transgressions of Desavrata**

*Desavrata* also can be transgressed in five ways-

1. *Anayana*- means to purchase the articles from outside the restricted area and sell the same or buy the articles, bought from the area outside the limited area.

\(^5\) Ibid. VII.30.
2. **Presyaprayoga** means to get the desired action done in the area outside the limited area.

3. **Sabdanupata** means to make the people, outside the restricted area, understand purpose by coughing etc.

4. **Rupaniupata** to get one’s work done by exhibiting one’s own body, to the people outside the restricted area, to achieve one’s end.

### Transgressions of Anarthadandavrata

There are five transgressions with regard to *Anarthadao avrata*:

1. **Kandarpa** means to use discourteous words mixed with mockery on account of excess of attachment and infatuation.

2. **Kautakucya** means to use discourteous words mixed with mockery and bad bodily movement.

3. **Maukharya** means to speak too much with obstinacy and without any purpose.

4. **Asamiksyadhikarana** means to act too much without any deliberation.

5. **Upabhogaparibhoganarthakya** to spend too much on the objects of *Upabhoga* (delicious food and intoxicants) and *paribhoga* (much property in the form of ornaments, furniture and conveyances) and to possess them in more than required quantity is called *Upabhogaparibhoganarthakya*.

### Aids to practice Ahimsa

No doubt, a mere contact with external objects will not make a person guilty of ahimsa. Even then, one ought avoid external causes, leading the himsa, for the purification of thought.

Some may argue, that contact with worldly objects, does not do any harm if one’s own thoughts are pure. Nothing external can affect, if one’s own convictions are unallied, but even then, the effect of contact cannot be neglected. Man is a fallible being and needs to be watchful about temptations that attack man at every step.

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56 Ibid.VII.32.
The mere possession of a gun would not make one guilty of himsa, but there is a likelihood of misusing it, in order to avoid every probability of intention to injury, one should not repeat such thoughts and deeds as have himsa as the root.

The commitment of himsa and its fruit depend on the nature of thought. If one is ceaselessly thinking of causing harm to others, but does not get the opportunity or has not the courage to do so, he is a himsaka, even though he does not actually harm others, whereas a doctor with no intention of harming a patient injects into him and the patient died suddenly. Here actually the doctor has committed himsa but since his injection was to cure the patient, he is not liable for such himsa.57

Sometimes himsa caused in greater degree bring small result, and little himsa produces serious result. For example, a charity-minded man, digging the well for public welfare, causes the death of innumerable insects, and another man may kill single insect just for the sake of sport. The amount of sin generated by a well digger is much less than the other person, who killed a single insect for the sake of the sport.

Two persons, committing himsa together, generate different degrees of evil karma. A servant accompanies his master to shoot a hare, much against his will. The sin due to the master is more than to a servant, who went only for fear of losing his job.

Himsa is culpable sometimes, before it is committed. For example, a man may have been contemplating and devising schemes to commit murder, but for some reason or other fails to practice his intention. Sometimes, himsa is committed at the time of commission actually. The example is of a man who actually commits it. Himsa is culpable even if it is not committed. For example, a person may attempt to commit a murder but may fail his attempt. Thus, all the three instances of himsa are culpable for it is the intention to commit himsa that makes one a himsaka or not.

The sin of himsa may be suffered sometimes by many although committed by one individual only. For instance a person may murder someone and he is applauded by many, the approvers also will be sinners. On the other hand, many people may commit himsa, but only one suffers. A commander orders his soldiers to shoot all the wild animals around his building. The soldiers not wishing to kill them have to go

against their wish to obey the commander. The sin committed there-through, clings in major portion to the commander.

Himsa may bring to one evil fruit and to another the fruit of ahimsa, for example, a duel may be taking place on the roadside, a number of people may come to witness it. One amongst the mob may come nearer to these persons (who are quarreling) and try to save the weaker from stronger, whereas the others may instigate both of them to fight each other. The former one gets the merit of ahimsa, the later that himsa.

Similarly, ahimsa gives one the demerit of himsa, to another gives the merit of ahimsa.

A man may save an innocent one from an assailant. The other may abuse him for having saved the victim. The former one gets, undoubtedly, the fruit of ahimsa and the latter one is bound by the sin of himsa. If a man fails in his attempt to save an innocent victim, he will get the merit of ahimsa even though he did not succeed.

Prohibitions for an Ahimsaka

An abstainer of himsa, is to renounce wine, flesh, honey, and five udumbara trees (Gular, Anjira, Pipal and Pakkar all belonging to fig class). Wine stupefies the mind. One whose mind is stupefied, forgets piety, and the person who forgets piety commits himsa without hesitation. Wine is said to be the birth of many creatures, which are generated in liquor. Those who are given upto wine, necessarily commit himsa. Pride, fear, disgust, ridicule, sensual passions, all these are concomitants of wine. Flesh cannot be had without killing creatures. Brides, mobile creatures are born in large numbers, in decaying matter. solid or liquid. Even touching of flesh is himsa, according to Jainism; for a group of spontaneously born creatures, constantly gathering on the cooked or raw piece of flesh are killed. Even the smallest drop of honey, very often represents the death of bees. A user of honey is a great destroyer. Even in the case where one uses honey which has been obtained by some trick from honey comb, or, which has itself dropped down from it, there is himsa because of the destruction of creatures of spontaneous birth born there. Honey, wine, butter and flesh are extreme fermentations. One, who has taken a vow, is not to eat them. Therein are born creatures of the game genus. The two Udumbaras, i.e., Gular and Anjira and fruits of Pipal, Pakkar and Banyan, are birthplace of mobile beings. Even when dry and free from himsa, there is himsa in using them for there is an existence of
excessive desire for them. A man unable to practise ahimsa in all its aspect need not
be discourage and should try to practise it to the best of his capacity. Householder
possessed of appropriate articles for enjoyment, have to commit some injury, but they
should not exceed the limit. Jainism urges upon treating all living creatures like one’s
own relatives in order to purify the ideas. In other words one should not have enmity
with anyone and should protect others in thought, word and deed.

**Result of himsa**

Sin is created by violence on creatures. It results in indescribable grief and
misery in hell etc. himsa is the main gate of hell. Himsa crucifies its victim. The tree
of dharma is destroyed in a minute by he axe of himsa. Himsa, if given place, even for
a little while does not, allow austerity restraint etc., to stay or develop property.

Those who commit himsa for their own peace for worshiping gods or for the
performance of sacrifice, also go to hell. Himsa is the gate to the evil path, to the
ocean of evil, to serve, darkness and to the worst hell. Desirelessness, greatness, want
to expectation, severe penance, self-mortification and charity-all are in vain and have
no value for a himsaka.

A man wants to have a smooth journey journey of life, happiness, welfare and
freedom from the fear of death, but the practice of himsa creates impediments, brings
trouble, non-welfare and death.

According to Jainism, virtue can never be gained by killing creatures, just as
one cannot cross the ocean by sitting on a stone, for definitely he will be drowned.
That scripture which teaches mercy is a true scripture for a Jain.

The sin of killing a person cannot be destroyed and expiated even by giving all
mountains and earth of seven islands in charity. He who commits himsa due to
influence of one for whom he has got affection or due to fear, at that time sends his
soul to hall. The strong one gets innumerable sorrows after death when he reads
scriptures or practises austerity, gives pain to his own self, for that does not bring any
welfare to him. Not only the killer but the praiser of the killer shares the sin equally.
Jainism prohibits himsa, completely and believes all the grief and misery in the world
to be the world to be the outcome of himsa.
A Bhiksu (Ascetic) is not to eat parts of plants and tree except when they have become detached spontaneously. The Jainas follow the same precept in its extreme form.

A Parivrajaka (Ascetic) is not to injure created beings with three means of punishment i.e. thought, word and deed. He makes the necessary purifications with water that has been taken (of a well) and strained. He is to carry a cloth for straining water for the sake purification.

Thus, it is found that ascetics (sanyasis, Bhiksus, vaikhanasas and Parivrajakas) also had to try to practise ahimsa in its complete form.

**Truth and Himsa**

According to Jainism as according to all schools of thought, *Yamas* (restraints) and *Niyamas* (observance) have been practised by God for the protection and development of ahimsa only, for ahimsa, if with a spot of untruth is not perfect ahimsa. This means that *Satya* (truth) and (Himsa) injury cannot go together, but (Satya and ahimsa) truth and non-injury work together, may truth is an essential virtue for the successful practice of ahimsa. Truth and ahimsa are related and not truth and himsa, according Jainism.

To conclude, Jainism lays stress on the indisputable principle that one should never act negligently without any sense of responsibility. It urges upon one not to indulge in unnecessary thoughtless acts, harmful to one’s own self and to others.

Ahimsa in its perfect form is rarely seen, but those, who have firm faith in this virtue, should not be distressed to see the improper behaviour of the ignorant.

It is evident that destruction does not lead always to ahimsa. As said already a doctor is not a himsaka, a murderer is. He, who inflicts pain upon jivas, with an evil intention is a himsaka, even if, for the good of many, he kills any living being out of duty.

The perfect practice of ahimsa is impossible in an imperfect state. Some life has to be destroyed to maintain existence, so it understood that a sincere ahimsaka should not destroy life, unless it is absolutely necessary for the maintenance of a higher kind of life. The idea limits himsa to the lowest possible limit.