

Jainism and Buddhism Two Religion in Ancient India

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ABSTRACT

The sixth century B.C marked an important stage in the Indian history as far as the development of new religions is concerned. Numerous religious sects arose in the mid-Gangetic plains as a result of an upheaval of new ideas and the resulting rise of new philosophical tenets. These ideas were so diversified that the philosophical speculations based on them varied from religious speculations to the search for the truth which the Upanishads had emphasized. The efforts in this direction brought about results in this century. In this period, we notice a growing resentment to the ritualistic orthodox ideas of the Brahmanas. In other words, the old Vedic religion had ceased to be a living force. the spiritual unrest and the intellectual stimulation led to the rise of various heterodox religious movements. The religious sects were based on regional customs and rituals practiced by different people living in north-east India. Of these sects, Jainism and Buddhism were the most important and they developed into most potent well organized popular religious reform movements.

Keywords: Brahmanas, Jainism, Buddhism, Hinduism

INTRODUCTION

Sixth century B.C also witnessed many religious movements in different parts of the world. Heraclitus in Eoinia Island, Socrates in Greece, Confucius in China, Zoroaster in Persia, Isaiah in Babylon preached new ideas. These widely separated parts of the world displayed a wave of discontentment with the traditions of Kingships, priesthood and ritualistic sacrifices. People were waking up to find answers to their questions regarding salvation and the ultimate Truth. At the same time, Hinduism by this time had made its influence so widely spread on Indian soil that people started realizing that the degeneration in Indian society was mainly because of the evils of Hinduism. Hinduism was associated with perverted values. The emphasis on sacrifices, rituals and the dominance of Brahmanas had vitiated the original doctrines of Hinduism. Society was largely guided by Brahmanism

which was firmly established by now and priesthood had also become predominant .It was against this background of exploitation of the masses by the Brahmanas and discrimination among people on the basis of caste system that Mahavira and Buddha revolted. They came forward as reformers very much determined to clean Hinduism of its innumerable evil practices and evils. They did not want to start new or independent religions but drew their inspiration from the teachings as embodied in the Upanishads. They provided a rational approach to handle the problems that had crept in the Indian society as a result of the prevailing complexities. They did not approve the costly religious rituals and bloody sacrifices. There was hatred against the prevailing social order which led to pitiable conditions of the low born. The changing features of social and economic life, such as the growth of towns, expansion of the artisan class and the

rapid development of trade and commerce also focused on the necessity to bring about changes in society and religion. The new ideas brought about by the reform movements challenged the established social order particularly the caste-system, the religious rituals and sacrifices, the supremacy of the Brahmanas, particularly by the Kshatriyas and all the dead customs of the society.

Outwardly, this spirit of the age was against the existing organisation of the society and inwardly against the caste system. It was based on elevation of man individually and spiritually. It emphasized personal liberty and purity and claimed that every individual had the right to attain Nirvana. These new religious ideas emerged out of the prevailing socio-economic and religious conditions of the times.

JAINISM

The changing scenario of the socio-economic order of the 6th century B.C led to the establishment of Jainism and Buddhism as heterodox sects later to be popularly known as reform movements. Jain tradition speaks of twenty four Tirthankaras (prophets). In the Rigveda Mantras there are references to Rishaba, the first Tirthankara as claimed by Jains, However, the first twenty two Tirthankaras have no historical foundation. Only the last two, Parsva and Mahavira, are historical personages. Very little is known about the life of Parsva. It is believed that he was the son of the King of Banaras who became an ascetic at the age of thirty, got enlightenment after 84 days of penance, gave his message to the people upto the age of 100 years and died in Bihar nearly 250 years before Mahavira. In fact, the real founder of Jainism was its 24th Tirthankara Mahavira. It is difficult to fix the exact dates of birth and death of this reformer. Most Tirthankaras upto the fifteenth, were supposed to have been born in eastern UP and Bihar but their historicity is

extremely doubtful. No part of the mid-Gangetic plains was settled on any scale until the fifth century B.C. Evidently, the mythology of the Tirthankaras, most of whom were born in the mid-Gangetic basin and attained nirvana in Bihar, seems to have created to endow Jainism with antiquity. According to one tradition, Vardhaman Mahavira was born in 540 B.C in a village near Vaishali, Being the son of the head of a Kshatriya clan, he also had connections with the royal family of Magadha. Initially, Mahavira led the life of a householder but in his quest for truth, he abandoned the world at the age of 30 and became an ascetic. After wandering from place to place for 12 years, he attained omniscience (Kaivalya) through which he conquered misery and happiness. Because of this conquest, he is known as Mahavira or the great hero or Jina that is the conqueror and his followers are known as Jainas. He propagated his religion for thirty years and his mission took him to Koshala, Magadha, Mithila, Champa.

He passed away at the age of 72 in 468 B.C at Pavapuri near modern Rajgir. Religious texts written in Pali do not recognize Mahavira as an originator of a new religion but as a reformer of an existing religion. Mahavira accepted mostly the religious doctrines of Parsva but certainly made some alterations and additions to them. Parsva emphasized self control and penance and advised his followers to observe Satya (truth), Ahimsa (non-violence), Aprigraha (no possession of property), Asteya (not to receive anything which is not freely given). To these Mahavira added Brahmacharya (celibacy). As regards philosophy, Jaina philosophy shows a close affinity to Hindu Sankhya philosophy. It also ignores the idea of God, accepts that the world is full of sorrows and believes in the theory of Karma and transmigration of soul. Jaina philosophy is that of dualism. It believes that human personality is formed of two elements:



Jiva(soul)and Ajiva (matter).While Ajiva is destructible, Jiva is indestructible and the salvation of an individual is possible through progress of Jiva. In short, the living and non-living (soul and matter)by coming into contact with each other create energies which cause birth, death and various experiences of life. These energies already created could be destroyed by a course of discipline leading to salvation or nirvana. This means seven things:

- There is something called the living.
- There is something called the non-living.
- The two come in contact with each other.
- The contact leads to production of energies.
- The process of contact could be stopped.
- The existing energies could be exhausted.
- Salvation could be achieved.

These seven propositions are called the seven Tattvas or truths or realities by Jainas .On the basis of these propositions, Jaina philosophy states that if one desires to attain Nirvana ,it is important for him to destroy Karma .One could gradually do it by avoiding evil Karma first and later other Karma. To equip himself for such a task a person should observe the five principles of the religion namely Satya, Ahimsa, Aprigraha, asteya and Brahamacharya. Jainism is essentially atheistic the concept of God being irrelevant. But it accepts a group of prophets or Tirthankaras who were deified men .Every mortal possesses the potentiality of becoming as great as they were. Jainism represents the universe as functioning according to eternal law continuously passing through a series of cosmic waves of progress and decline. According to it , the sole purpose of life is the purification of soul. Unlike the Upnishada, Jainism preaches that the purification of soul cannot be attained through knowledge but only through rigorous ascetic

punishment of the body thereby freeing the soul from the sorrows of life .In other words, right belief, right knowledge and right action or Ratnatreya or three jewels of Jain religion formed the basis of man's life.

Jainism believed that the highest state of a soul was God. According to Mahavira man is the architect of his own destiny and he could attain salvation and even the status of a God by pursuing a life of purity, virtue and renunciation. A monastic life was essential for full salvation. No lay jaina could take up the profession of agriculture since this involved not only the destruction of plant life but also of many living things in the soil. That is why strict limitation of private property enforced by Jainism was interpreted to mean only landed property. There was no restriction on amassing wealth by means of trade and commerce. The practice of non-violence in Jainism had more of negativity since it lays greater emphasis on vegetarianism and precaution against killing of insects and animals rather than on loving them.

The principal sects of the Jainism are two, Svetambara and Digambara. There are differences between the two sects regarding versions of some incidents of the life of Mahavira ,the type of food taken by Jaina preacher or munis and the question whether women could attain Nirvana or not.But the basic difference is on the use of clothes .the preachers of Svetambara wore white clothes while the preachers of Digambara sect practice complete nudity. Some scholars maintain that Prasva did not ask his followers to discard clothes but Mahavira insisted on nudity. Jain sacred texts known as 12Angas were also non-acceptable to Digambaras as authentic. The original doctrines taught by Mahavira were contained in 14 old texts known as purvas. In the first council at Pataliputra, the Jaina canon was divided into 12 sections which the Svetambaras accepted but

Digambaras refused to accept this claiming that all old scriptures were lost. At the second council held at Vallabhi new additions were made in the form of Upangasa minor sections.

Among the 12 Angas the Acharayanga Sutta and the Bhagwati Sutta are the most important. While the former deals with the code of conduct which a Jaina monk is required to follow, the latter expounds the Jaina doctrines in a comprehensive manner. Teachings of Mahavira became very popular among the masses and different sections of society were attracted to it.

One of the important causes for the success was the popular dialect (Prakrit) used in place of Sanskrit. The simple and homely morals prescribed to the masses attracted the people. The royal patronage by the rulers of Magadha later made Mathura and Ujjain great centres of Jainism. Jain councils collected the material of the sacred texts to write them down systematically, in Ardhamagadhi. But in the absence of popular religious preachers after the death of Mahavira, its division into two important sects, absence of protection by the later rulers, revival of Hinduism under the Guptas, Cholas, Chalukyas and Rajput kings also contributed to its slow decline but its contribution to Indian culture particularly literature, architecture and sculpture has been remarkable.

Though the language of its religious texts had been Prakrit, it helped in giving a literary shape to some spoken languages of India. The temples and idols still existing in various cities as Mathura, Gwalior, Junagarh, Chittor, Abu have been accepted as some of the best specimens of Indian architecture and sculpture particularly the temples of Abu, the Jaina tower at Chittorgarh, the elephant caves of Orissa and the 70 feet high idol of Bahubali in Mysore.

BUDDHISM

Of all the religious preachers of the sixth century B.C., Gautama Buddha is the best known. Gautama Buddha or Siddhartha was a contemporary of Mahavira born in a royal family of the Sakyas at Kapilavastu in the southern part of present Nepal in the year 566 BC. Siddhartha (original name of Gautama Buddha) renounced the world at the age of twenty nine. He moved from place to place in search of truth for seven years and then attained enlightenment at Bodhi Gaya under pipal tree. From this time onwards, he began to be called the Buddha or the enlightened one. Though his life was spent in royal splendor, it failed to attract the mind of Gautama. As traditions describe, he was deeply affected by the sight of an old man, a sick person, a dead body and an ascetic. The misery of the human life left a deep impact on Gautama. To find a solution to the misery of mankind, he spent years as a wandering ascetic. From a sage called Alara Kalama he learned the technique of meditation and the teachings of the Upanishads. After attaining the supreme knowledge, he proceeded to Sarnath near Varanasi to deliver his first sermon which is known as Dharma Chakra Pravartana (setting in motion the wheel of Dharma).

Asvajit, Upali, Magallana, Sariputra and Ananda were the first five disciples of Buddha. His message laid down the foundation of both Buddhist religion and philosophy which in course of time spread far and wide to Ceylon, Burma, Siam, Tibet, China, Korea, Japan etc.

Buddhism stood between the two extremes: unrestrained individualistic self-indulgence and equally and individualistic but preposterous ascetic punishment of the body. Hence its steady rise and its name. The Middle Way. The central theme of Buddha's religion is the eight step path (Ashtangamarga). The first step is the proper vision leading to the realization that the world is full of sorrows caused by desire, greed. The



second is right aim which seeks to avoid the engagement of the senses and luxury. It aims to love humanity and increase the happiness in others. Right speech is the third step, it implies the practice of truthfulness promoting mutual friendship. Right action includes abstention from killing, stealing and unselfish deeds. Right livelihood instructs a man to live by pure and honest means. Right effort means proper way of controlling one's senses so as to prevent bad thoughts. The seventh step is correct awareness or right mindfulness which means understanding the idea that the body is impermanent and meditation is the means for the removal of worldly evils. The last step is right concentration which will lead to removal of evils generated by attachment to the body and the mind. This will lead to peace and unravel the real truth. Anyone who would follow the noble eight fold path would attain nirvana irrespective of his social origin. Lord Buddha emphasized four noble Truths to mankind.

He said that the world is full of suffering. All sufferings have a cause: desire, ignorance and attachment are the causes of suffering. The suffering could be removed by destroying its cause. In order to end suffering, one must know the right path. This path is the eight fold path. Buddhism laid emphasis on the law of Karma by which the present is determined by the past actions. If an individual has committed no sins, he is not born again. This is an important part of lord Buddha's teachings. Buddha preached that the ultimate goal of one's life is to attain Nirvana, the eternal state of peace and bliss, which is free from desire and sorrow, decay or disease and of course from birth and death. Therefore, annihilation of desire is the real problem. Prayers and sacrifices will not end desire nor will rituals and ceremonies as emphasized by Vedic religion but he stressed on moral life of an individual. Buddha neither accepted nor rejected the

existence of God. He was a practical reformer who took note of the realities of the day. He said everything is transient in this Universe. There is no immortal soul. The Universe is soulless. The transmigration is no transmigration of soul. In transmigration nothing passes over from one life to another only a new life arises as part of events which include the old or rather it is the reaction of one's own actions. He believed that one's ignorance makes a person believe in existence of God or soul and this ignorance creates desire in man, then leads to action and that action leads to impulse to be born again to satisfy desire. This leads to chain of birth and rebirth which is the primary cause of misery of a man.

The chain of ignorance, desire, attachment, can be snapped by knowledge or Gyan. According to him, the time knowledge is to acknowledge the absence of soul. He who realises the absence of soul knows that he does not exist as an individual and as such there can be no relationship between him and the objects around him. Therefore, nothing in this world can make him happy or sad. So he is free (Vimukta) he is an Arhat. Those who wish to attain this knowledge to attain salvation should have faith in four noble Truths and eight fold path. For this, he has to work out mental training for concentration. Briefly, it is to Buddhism what gymnastics was to the Greek body. The moral doctrines of Buddha were simple. He believed that every individual is the maker of his own destiny. We are born time and again to reap the fruits of our Karma. Good deeds, lead to higher life till salvation is achieved while evil deed hinder our spiritual elevation. One should neither lead a life of luxury nor a life of severe ascetism.

The best course to be pursued by an individual is the Middle Path (Madhyama Pratipat or Tatha Grah Marg). Buddha laid stress on truth, charity, purity and control over passions and advocated for cardinal virtues. Maitri (Love), Karuna

(Passion), Mudita (joy at other's success) and Upeksha (Equanimity) towards all living beings in order to lead a better life in the next birth. Besides one should avoid pursuing bad instincts such as ill-will, anger, deceit, jealousy, arrogance etc. One should not steal, speak lies or get drunk or have illicit relations. Thus, Buddha preached moral and ethical conduct for the common man. He stressed that the noble eight fold path by which a person could attain Nirvana, is not a matter of belief or knowledge alone but also conduct. The teaching of Buddha put forward a serious challenge to the existing Brahmanical order. Buddha's liberal and democratic approach quickly attracted the people of all sections. His attack on the caste system and the supremacy of the Brahmanas was welcomed by the lower orders. Irrespective of caste, creed and sex, people were welcomed in the new order. Buddha rejected the authority of the Vedas and condemned animal sacrifices. He detested the complex and meaningless rituals. He strongly believed that sacrifices and rituals could neither help a person to wash away his sins nor benefit any sinner by performing various ritualistic practices. Max Muller wrote What was felt by Buddha had been felt more or less intensely by thousands and this was the secret of his success. The practice of social equality on which Buddhism was based was the call of the day. Buddha understood and preached what masses desired at that time. Thus Buddhism represented the spirit of its age. Lord Buddha was a living example of righteousness, chastity and holy ideals. He was a prince yet he accepted the life of a monk. He attained knowledge not by studying religious texts but by self realization and self-emancipation.

His religion was a religion in practice. He preached what he himself practiced in real life. He was an embodiment of truth and a living example of a holy life based on love and

simplicity. Therefore, he could attract not only the common people but also princes, rulers and upper Strata of the society to his faith, who in turn, helped in the propagation of his faith. The teachings of Buddha were not only simple but quite practical. Buddha prescribed a middle path for the attainment of Nirvana. For the common man, it did not mean acquisition of difficult knowledge, observance of costly rituals, severe ascetism or abandoning family life but it meant observing certain simple rules of morality to attain salvation. This factuality was not catered to by contemporary religions. Moreover, Buddha preached in the language of the masses, Magadhi which facilitated the spread of Buddhist doctrines among the common people. Gautama Buddha also organized the samgha or the religious order whose doors were open to all irrespective of caste, creed and sex. However, slaves, soldiers and debtors could not be admitted. The Buddhist Samghas proved to be the best instruments in the propagation of Buddhism. Each local Samgha was like a workplace or an assembly for the followers of Buddhism where teachings of Buddha were imparted to the followers. The Samghas were also centres of learning, spiritual exercise for the monks, exchange of ideas among the members. These Samghas prepared religious teachers or monks into a well-organized body to propagate the teachings of Buddha. These monks worked selflessly for propagation of Buddhism. According to V. Smith, The well organised body of monks and nuns was the most effective instrument in the hands of this religion. Besides various scholars like Nagarjuna, Vasumitra, Dinang, Dharmakirti etc.

SUPPORT OF VARIOUS RULERS OF BUDDHA

Produced vast literature on Buddhism which provided the base for its strength. From its inception, Buddhism got the protection and



support of various rulers. Bimbisara and Ajatashatru of Magadha, Prasenjit of Kosala and Udayana, king of Kaushambi, were either followers or admirers of Buddha. Pradyota, king of Avanti too had invited Buddha to his kingdom. King Ashoka also played an important role in the propagation of the religion. Emperor Kanishka also patronized Buddhism and took measures to propagate it outside India. Asoka's son Mahendra and daughter Sanghamitra were sent to Sri Lanka to preach Buddhism. Many monasteries were established by him and the Samghas were also liberally donated by the Mauryan Emperor. Buddhism also came to be adopted by merchant class. Merchants like Anathapindika and courtesans like Amrapali accepted the faith because they got due respect in this religion.

According to tradition shortly after the death of Buddha, the first Buddhist Council was held in 483 B.C near Rajgriha where an attempt was made to compile the teachings of Buddha. Since the scripture of Buddhism grew by a long process of development over several centuries, this council did not meet with much success. The second council was held at Vaishali in 383 B.C which ended in a permanent split of Buddhist order into Sthaviravadins and Mahasangikas. The former upheld the orthodox Vinaya Pitaka dealing with the teachings of Buddha while the latter favoured the new rules and their relaxation. In the third council at Pataliputra, the philosophical interpretations of the doctrines of Buddha were collected into the third Pitaka called Abhidhamma Pitaka. An attempt was made to define true canonical literature and eliminate all disruptive tendencies. The fourth council held in Kashmir under the auspices of Kanishka compiled three commentaries of the three Pitakas. By this time, Buddhism was already divided into eighteen important sects but the two most important and major ones were Hinayana or

the lesser vehicle and the Mahayana the great vehicle. The Hinayanists believed in the original teachings of Lord Buddha and did not want any relaxation in them. Whereas Mahayanists accepted many Buddhisattvas who were in the process of obtaining but had yet not obtained Buddhahood. Both the sects agreed that the Buddha had taken birth several times and in several forms as bodhisattvas before the attainment of Buddhahood and would take birth in future also. But both differed with regard to the cause of these births and deaths.

According to Hinayanism, the different births were simply different stages of progress of the Buddha till salvation. Thus they believed that Buddha was a man and his birth as Gautama was his last stage in the attainment of Nirvana. But Mahayanism believed that Buddha was an incarnation of god. He took birth several times not to attain Nirvana for himself but to help others in the attainment. Secondly, whereas the Hinayanism regarded the salvation of one's own self as the highest goal, Mahayanism believed that the greatest ideal is to help the society in self elevation. Thirdly, Hinayanism regarded Nirvana as a state of permanent bliss or peace away from the cycle of birth and death while the Mahayanism regarded it as the union of an individual with Adi Buddha, an idea quite simpler to the union with the Brahman of the Upanishadas. Fourthly, Hinayana did not regard the Buddha free from the bond of birth and death while Mahayana regarded the Buddha as god and believed in his different incarnations, all free from the cycle of birth and rebirth. Fifthly, Hinayanism believed in the practice of self-culture and good deeds as the only way to salvation. Mahayanism was based on faith and devotion to various Buddhas to attain salvation.

Finally, while the religious texts of Hinayanism were written in Pali, those of Mahayanism were written in Sanskrit. The Mahayanism remained

closer to the concepts of Hinduism with regard to Nirvana, Brahma, incarnations of god, faith, devotion. thus forming a bridge between the old Buddhism and modern Hinduism. Buddhism remained one of the foremost religions of not only India but the whole of Asia for many centuries but slowly it lost its hold over Asia and practically became non-existent in India. Corruption had crept in Buddhist Samghas because of the free entry of wealth and women in the monastic order. The division of the Buddhism into different sects also contributed to the destruction of the image of the movement among the people. The adoption of Sanskrit as language of the Buddhist texts made Buddhism lose popular contact and hold over the masses, since Sanskrit was not the language of the masses. The moral corruption of monks led to intellectual bankruptcy of the Samgha and when Hinduism was reviewed particularly under the patronage of Gupta rulers, Buddhism failed to meet its intellectual challenge and therefore lost popular support. Moreover, Buddhism basically was an atheistic system which did not regard god as an essential creator and preserver of the Universe. On the other hand, Hinduism a strong faith based on the existence of god preached the masses about the god as saviour and perpetual merciful helper of mankind. The ruling class also realised might as the order of the day and need of the time where non-violence and other teachings were becoming increasingly irrelevant, and thereby withdrew its support to Buddhism. Hinduism bounced back with the spirit of toleration and the acceptability of new ideas in its fold. But the final blow to Buddhism came with the invasion of Hunas and the Turks. Thus, Buddhism lost its control over the country of its birth. Nevertheless, Buddhism made positive contribution to Indian culture. It gave to Indian people a simple, economical and popular religion. It rejected rituals and sacrifices, authority

of the Brahmanas which had made Hinduism unpopular. The monastic system or the organisation of religious devotees in disciplined communities or orders was another contribution of Buddhism to India. It also provided religious unity to Indian people by raising the public morality by its adherence to a high moral code. At the same time, it gave serious impetus to democratic spirit and social equality. The philosophers of Buddhism had a rational approach towards religion and individualistic in its approach. It preached that the self-emancipation could alone help an individual to attain Nirvana. As far as the Indian education and literature is concerned, the Samghas became the centres of learning and Taxila, Nalanda, Vikramshila became centres of Buddhist learning. In the domain of architecture, sculpture and painting, the stupas of Sanchi, Sarnath, Nalanda, Amravati and Ellora are regarded as the best specimens of Indian architecture. The famous lions of the Sarnath columns, the beautiful bull of Rampurva column, the carvings on the gateways of the great Buddhist sites at Bharhut, Ganga and Sanchi are remarkable specimens of sculpture. The schools of Gandhara and Mathura produced the first images of Buddha which are appreciable pieces of art. The statues of Buddha carved in stone, copper and bronze are also some of the best examples of Buddhist art. The mural paintings of Ajanta caves earned world-wide fame. Thus, Indian architecture, sculpture and painting owe a large debt to Buddhism. Finally, the power to assimilate foreigners into its fold and the spirit of toleration has been a source of great inspiration from Buddhism to Indian society.

COMPARISON AND CONTRAST BETWEEN JAINISM AND BUDDHISM

Mahavira and Buddha were contemporaries and there was much in common



between them. It is because of the similarities between the two that some scholars think that Jainism owes its origin to Buddhism. Berth wrote Jainism is a sect which took rise in Buddhism. Others like Weber and Lassen believe that Jainism branched off from Buddhism. But modern scholars disagree with the above views and maintain that the two religions have a lot in common but the basic difference in the philosophies of the two makes each of them a distinct religion. Both of them were the products of intellectual, spiritual and social forces of their age which arose as a challenge to the existing Brahmanical order. Both possessed Aryan cultural background and were inspired by Upanishads especially the Samkhya-Yoga, Atheism, pessimism about human life being full of misery, doctrines of transmigration of soul and theory of Karma and the belief in dualism about spirit and matter are all essence of Samkhya Yoga which Jainism and Buddhism adopted with some modifications. Both were started by Kshatriya class who appealed and gave social status to the Vaishya and Sudra castes. They emerged in eastern India, a place which had retained some feature of pre-Aryan culture. Their common place of origin and their newly acquired support from the economically prosperous Vaishyas and socially oppressed Sudras all together helped in the publicity of their principles. Their attack on caste system, rituals and sacrifices, supremacy of the Brahmanas led the people to acquire new dimension to deal with problems of life and living. Both aimed at Nirvana or salvation from the cycle of birth and death as the ultimate aim of life. Both laid stress on pure and moral life for spiritual upliftment. Both emphasized Ahimsa or non-violence. Both denied authenticity of the Vedas as an infallible authority. Both emphasized the doctrines of transmigration of soul and laid stress on the

effects of Karmas on individual's future birth. Both discontinued with Sanskrit and Jain text took to Prakrit and Buddhist to Pali, which was the language of the masses. In order to preach their religion, both established Samghas or orders for monks and nuns and encouraged criticism as means to attain enlightenment. Though Jainism and Buddhism resembled each other very much, yet there were distinctions between the two religions. Jainism is a much more ancient religion as compared to Buddhism. According to Jain tradition, it had twenty-four Tirthankars of whom Mahavira was the last. In this light, Mahavira has been regarded as a reformer of an already existing religion while Buddha is the originator of a new one. Jainism believes that all elements of nature have a soul whereas Buddhism believed in life in animate things only. As far as non-violence is concerned, Jainism laid lot of emphasis on it and believed in extremities but Buddhism is liberal in approach and even permitted eating of flesh to its followers where it is a traditional diet of the people. Buddhism emphasized love to all beings which is a positive virtue and more affirmative concept of Ahimsa than the concept of non-injury to all beings as emphasized by Jainism. Jainism advised practice of strict ascetism to attain Nirvana while Buddhism preached the middle path to attain salvation while Jainism thought women and men householders could not fulfill the eligibility to attain salvation, Buddhism believed both could attain and were eligible for the Nirvana. According to Jainism, salvation is possible only after death while according to Buddhism, it is possible during one's own life if one is able to detach oneself from the worldly existence. While Jainism describes nirvana as freedom from body, Buddhism describes it as an end of the self and breaking the cycle of birth and death by detriment from the worldly attractions. Buddhism was more practical in approach

towards the problems of the time. It was more flexible to adopt changes into its fold with changing circumstances but Jainism was more rigid. While Buddhism spread all over Asia accommodating the traditions of the local population, Jainism remained confined to India only. Jainism remained closer to Hinduism than Buddhism. Therefore, conflicts between Jainism and Hinduism were negligible but Buddhism proved as a major rival to Hinduism. But with the bouncing back of Hinduism as a more positive religion with broader perspective, Buddhism practically disappeared from the land of its birth as a major reform movement. Thus, there is no doubt that Jainism and Buddhism, born at different intervals, though at about the same period of time, were marked by distinct characteristics along with possessing strong resemblances.(22)

CONCLUSION

So we can tell similarities between Buddhism and Jainism or compare both:

- (1) The source of both the religion is vedic religion and both are indebted to Upanishads
- (2) Both Gautam Buddha and Mahavir belonged to princely families and not to priestly families.
- (3) Both deny the existence of God.(4) Both denied the authority of the Vedas and the necessity of performing sacrifices and rituals.(5) Both have accepted the theories of Karma rebirth and Moksha.
- (6) Both taught in the language of the common people i.e. Prakrit and not in Sanskrit which was the language of the priests.(7) Both of them were opposed to animal sacrifices.
- (8) Both of them admitted disciples from all the castes and from both sexes.(9) Ahimsa is the prominent principle of both the religions.
- (10) Both Buddhism and Jainism put stress on right conduct and right knowledge and not on religious ceremonial and ritual as the way to obtain salvation.(11) Both, the religions came as

a sort of reform of Hindu religion.(12) Both the Religions were later on divided into two sects. Buddhism was divided into Mahayana and Hinayana. Jainism was divided into Svetambara and Digambara.

(13) Both had their own three gems or 'Tri Ratna'. Tri Ratna of Jainism was right philosophy right knowledge and right character. The Tri-Ratna of Buddhism was Budhha, Dhamma and Sangha.

(14) Both had three main religious texts. Tripitaka, i.e. Vinaypitak, Suttapitaka and Abidhamma pitak were the three religious texts of Buddhism, whereas Anga i.e. Anga, Upanga and Mulgrajitha were those of the Jainism.

And dissimilarities between them :

- (1) Difference regarding conception Moksha :According to Buddhism, a man attains Moksha when he ends all the desires and can attain it while living in the world. But according to Jainism Moksha is freedom from miseries and can be attained only after death.(2) Means of attainment of Moksha: According to Buddhist Sangha is proper for attainment of Moksha and they hate self-mortifications and severe penances. Jainism believes in fasts and severest penances.(3) Ahimsa :Though both emphasise the principle of Ahimsa, yet Jainism is more strict in this connection.(4) Soul: According to Buddhism, soul is an individuality that does exist in plants and animals, but not in non-living or inanimate things. According to Jainism, soul is present in every animate and inanimate object of the universe including its elements - earth, water, wind, fire and air. (5) Regarding Conduct: Buddhism emphasises the eight noble paths whereas Jainism emphasises Tri Ratna.(6) Language of Religious texts :Most of the Jain texts are in Sanskrit and Prakrit whereas Buddhist text are in Pali.(7) Their connection with Hinduism : Jain religion is nearer to Hinduism whereas Buddhism followed the policy of keeping away from Hinduism.(8) Caste system



:Jains opposed it but Buddhism opposed and attacked vehemently.(9) Royal support and patronage :Buddhism received the royal support and patronage of kings like Ashoka and Kanishka. But Jainism could never receive strong royal support and Patronage.(10) Propagation :Buddhism spread to foreign countries whereas Jainism did not travel outside the boundaries of India(11) On Non-Violence :Buddhism is a peaceful religion with non-violence at the heart of its thoughts and behaviour.Non-violence followed in action, thought, and speech is the highest morale in Jainism.

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