



International School for Jain Studies

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The Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute

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Invites Scholarly Papers for
Two Days International Seminar
on

TRACES OF ŚRAMANA TRADITION (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO JAINISM) PRIOR TO 650 BC

October 5th - 6th, 2019
(Saturday & Sunday)

Venue

Naval Veerayatan

Tiwai Hill, Chaskaman, Wada Road, Khed,
Pune, Maharashtra - 410513, India

Preamble

Śramaṇa means one who labours or exerts himself for some higher religious purpose or one who performs acts of austerity. Therefore, Śramaṇas are those who practice an ascetic, or strict and self-denying lifestyle in pursuit of spiritual purification. They are commonly known as recluse/yatis/munis/samāṇa. The Śramaṇa tradition includes Jainism, Buddhism, and others such as the Ājīvikas, Ajñanas etc.

Jains claim their religion as one of the oldest living religions of India. It is a religious faith of strictly human origin and is preached and practiced by one who achieved complete knowledge of his existence, *nirvāṇa* (total absence of pain) by his own individual efforts in his life and liberation from the *samsāra* (the cycle of births and deaths of corporal existence) on death.

Historicity of 24th Tīrthāṅkara Vardhamāna Mahāvīra and Lord Gautam Buddha in 6th century BCE is well established, barring the agreement on exact dates of each. Jains claim Rṣabhadeva, as their first Tīrthāṅkara followed by 22 more such Tīrthāṅkara before Mahāvīra.

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, in his book Indian Philosophy has observed, "Jain tradition ascribes the origin of the system to Rṣabhadeva, who lived many centuries back. There is evidence to show that as far back as the first century BC there were people who were worshiping Rṣabhadeva, the first Tīrthāṅkara. There is no doubt that Jainism prevailed even before Vardhamāna or Pārvīnātha. The Yajurveda mentions the name of three Tīrthāṅkaras - Rṣabha, Ajītanātha and Ariṣṭanemi. The Bhāgavat Purāṇa endorses the view that Rṣabhadeva was the founder of Jainism." (1923, p.287)

In the Buddhist scripture Majjhima Nikāya, Buddha himself tells us about his ascetic life and its ordinances which are in conformity with the Jain monk's code of conduct. He says, "Thus far, Sari Putta did I go in my penance. I went without clothes. I licked my food from my hands. I took no food that was brought or meant especially for me. I accepted no invitation to a meal." (S. C. Diwaker, Glimpses of Jainism, Jain Mitra Mandal, Delhi, 1964, p.1.)

Vedic texts [Rigveda (10/136/1-7), Bhāgavat Purāṇa (1/3), Atharva Veda (15/2/1-4), Lātyāyana Srauta Sūtra, 8/6] repeatedly refer to the composite character of their society and its pluralistic population. They mention the presence of several religions, cults and languages including individuals and groups who practiced, the pre-Vedic traditions; and rejected the validity of the Vedas and its rituals. Such persons were referred as *niggantha/nirgrantha*, *vrātya*, *kesin*, *vātarasana*, *śramaṇa* etc.

Both Vedic and Jain literature has common illustrious persons like Lord Rāma and Kṛṣṇa etc. belonging to their traditions.

Archaeological Evidences of Antiquity of Jainism and its 1st Tīrthāṅkara Rṣabhadeva

The excavations made at Mohenjo Daro and Harappa show that Jainism existed five thousand years ago. Terracotta seals and other evidences obtained from the excavation of Harappa and Mohenjo Daro provide a link between Rṣabhadeva and Indus Valley Civilization. Prof. Ram Prasad Chand, who supervised Indus Valley Civilization excavations, states that, "Not only the seated deities on some of the Indus seals are in yoga posture and bear witness to the prevalence of yoga in the Indus Valley Civilization in that remote age, the standing deities on the seals also show *kāyotsarga* position. The *kāyotsarga* posture is peculiarly Jain.

Indus Valley Civilization was an ancient civilization that thrived in the Indus and Ghaggar-Hakra river valleys, now in Pakistan, along with the north-western parts of India, Afghanistan and Turkmenistan. The civilization, which is also known as Harappan Civilization, lasted from 3300 BC to 1700 BC. The archaeological excavations in the past fifty years have changed the understanding of India's past and, by

extension, world history. The continuous excavations between 1974 and 1986 and again between 1997 and 2000 at Mehrgarh provide a link to prove Indian civilization as a precursor to the Indus Valley Civilization, displaying the whole sequence from earliest settlement and the start of agriculture, to the mature Harappan Civilisation. Mehrgarh is one of the most significant sites belonging to the Neolithic Age. Situated on the Kachi plain of Baluchistan (Pakistan), it lies to the west of the Indus River valley. The site of Mehrgarh, spread over an area of 495-acre, was a small farming village which was inhabited from circa 6500 BCE. At the same time, it is one of the oldest sites that indicate the introduction of the concept of farming and herding and later on use of much evidence of manufacturing activity has been found and more advanced technologies like use of stone and copper drills, updraft kilns, large pit kilns and copper melting crucibles. There is further evidence of long-distance trade in this period. (M. Sharif and B. K. Thapar, "Food-producing Communities in Pakistan and Northern India", in *History of Civilization of Central Asia*, Volume I, Eds. A. H. Dani and V. M. Masson, Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Pvt. Ltd, 1999, pp. 128-137).

Rakhigarhi is another Harappan site in Hissar district of Haryana, excavated by the archaeologists from Deccan College. Excavations by a team of archaeologist from Kutch University and Kerala University at a site near Nani Khatia village in Lakhpat taluka, around 102 kms from Bhuj are throwing more light on the development of trades and skills and lifestyle changes.

Similarly the earliest proof of human activity in Bihar is Mesolithic habitational remains at Munger. Prehistoric rock paintings have been discovered in the hills of Kaimur, Nawada and Jamui. It was the first time that a Neolithic settlement (about 2500–1345 BC) was discovered in the thick of the alluvium, over the bank of the Ganges at Chirand (2500–1345 BCE, in Saran district now Chhapra, has an archaeological record from the Neolithic age). The 'rock paintings' depict a prehistoric lifestyle and natural environment. They depict the sun, the moon, stars, animals, plants, trees, and rivers, and it is speculated that they represent love for nature and simple life. The paintings also highlight the daily life of the early humans in Bihar, which are not only identical to those in central and southern India but are also akin to those in Europe and Africa.

Historical traces of other significant Jain Tīrthaṅkara prior to Mahāvīra

• 22nd Tīrthaṅkara Neminātha

The Jain records mention the names of twenty three Tīrthaṅkaras before Mahāvīra and Neminātha was the 22nd. He was the son of Samudra Vijaya and grandson of Andhakavṛṣṇī. He is said to be a cousin of Krṣṇa, the hero of Mahābhārata.

A number of scholars like Dr. Kailash Chandra Jain, in his paper on Antiquity of Jainism (available at <https://sites.fas.harvard.edu/~pluralsm/affiliates/jainism/article/antiquity.html>) points out the likely relationship between Andhakavṛṣṇīs of Dwarka in Kathiawar with Andhakavṛṣṇīs the real person, and his grandson Neminātha; Ghora Aṅgīrasa in Chāndogya Upaniṣad same as Neminātha and king Nebuchadnazzar (940 B. C.) who was also the lord of Revānagara (in Kathiawara) and who belonged to Sumer tribe, has come to the place (Dwarka) of the Yadurāja and built a temple and paid homage and made the grant perpetual in favour of Lord Neminātha. He later came there to worship Lord Neminātha. Lord Neminātha is mentioned as Ariṣṭanemi in Yajurveda Saṁhitā (25/19) and Krṣṇa's name and family in Antaḥkṛtdasā canon of Jains as well as in Jain purāṇas.

• 23rd Tīrthaṅkara Pārśvanātha

Pārśvanātha is now acknowledged as a historical figure by a number of scholars. Jain sources place him between 9th and 8th century BC while historians state that he may have lived in 8th or 7th century BC. The existence of Pārśva's Order in Mahāvīra's time is recorded as a discussion between the followers of Pārśva (*cāturyāma*) and those of Mahāvīra (*pañcayāma*) in Uttarādhyayanasutra. In the Buddhist

scriptures, there is a reference to the four vows (*cāturyāma dharma*) of Pārśva in contradiction to the five vows of Mahāvīra. The Buddhist could not have used the term *cāturyāma dharma* for the Nirgranthas unless they had heard it from the followers of Pārśva.

Keeping these facts in mind ISJS, in association with BORI, is organizing a two days National Seminar on *Traces of Śramaṇa Tradition (with special reference to Jainism) prior to 650 BC* on **October 5th - 6th, 2019** at Naval Veerayatan, Pune.

Objective of the Seminar

The seminar intends to explore the availability of archaeological, cultural, social and literary evidences to substantiate the existence of Jain tradition before 650 BC and build a database to promote further research and work on these lines.

Sub-themes of the Seminar

- Archaeological, literary, sociological & cultural evidences of India's religious traditions prior to 650 BC.
- Archaeological, literary, sociological & cultural evidences of Śramaṇa tradition prior to 650 BC.
- Iconographical evidences of Jainism before 650 BC.
- Archaeological, literary & Cultural evidences of Jainism before and during Indus Valley Civilization.
- Historicity of 22nd Tīrthaṅkara Neminātha.
- Historicity of 23rd Tīrthaṅkara Pārśvanātha.
- Jainism in early Vedic period (1700 BC to 1000 BC).
- Other historical persons of Jain tradition prior to 650 BC.

Paper Details

Language: English is the preferred language for presenting the paper. However, papers in Hindi are welcome as well.

Presentation: For English paper, soft copy using MS word, A4 size using Times New Roman, font size 12. For Hindi papers please use Krutidev010, font size 14.

Schedule for Submissions of Abstracts & Papers:

- Submission of Abstracts: August 21st, 2019
- Submission of Final Papers: September 15th, 2019

Facilities provided to first author: Honorarium (INR 2000.00), travel, board and lodge facilities to those scholars (first author) whose papers are accepted for presentation at the Seminar.

Coordinators

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