

ANTIQUITY OF JAINISM

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The origin of Jainism is shrouded in considerable obscurity. The available evidence to decide the questions is scanty, dubious and capable of different interpretations. Scholars have therefore come to widely divergent conclusions. Mrs. Stevenson is of opinion that Jainism originated as a protest against the sacrifice and casteism of the Brahmanism in the eighth century B. C. According to Jacobi, there are even traces of Jainism even in the Vedic period. Dr. Zimmer and Farlong observe that there was the existence of the Sramana culture before the Aryans in India. Dr. Zimmer calls it by the name of the Dravidan religion while Farlong considers it to be different from the religion of the Dravidans.

The divergence of views among the Scholars about the antiquity of Jainism is thus almost bewildering. The question has therefore to be examined and considered carefully, critically and exhaustively in order to arrive at some conclusion.

Jainism Older Than Buddhism

From the Buddhist and Jain records, it is clear that Jainism is older than Buddhism and was firmly established at the time of the origin of Buddhism. Mahavira was not the founder and author of Jain religion but simply a reformer. Many abuses had crept into Jainism at that time and he simply tried to remove them. His parents had, according to a tradition which seems to be trustworthy, been followers of Parsva.⁵ He himself, when he became a monk, returned to the chaitya of his own lawn called Duipalasa.⁶ The chaitya seems to be of the Jains. Even Buddha after giving up the worldly life lived in the company of the saints who practiced austerities and were possibly Jains.¹

In the Samannaphala Sutta of the Dighanikaya, there is a reference to the four vows (Chaturyama Dharma) in contradiction to the five vows of Mahavira. The four vows of Parsva were :- not to take life, not to tell a lie, not to steal and not to own property. To these Mahavira was forced to add the vow of chastity when the abuses had crept into the Jain church. The Buddhists could not have used the term Chaturyama Dharma for the Nigranthas unless they had heard it from the followers of Parsva. This is the proof for the correctness of the Jain tradition that the followers of Parsva actually existed at the time of Mahavira.

This sect of the Nigranthas was an important sect at the rise of Buddhism. This may be inferred from the fact that they are frequently mentioned in the pitakas as opponents of Buddha and his disciples. This conclusion is further supported by another fact. Mankkhali Gosala, a contemporary of Buddha and Mahavira divided mankind into six classes, of these the third class contained the Nigranthas. Gosala probably would not have ranked them as a separate class of mankind if they had recently come into existence. He must have regarded them as a very important and at the same time an old sect.

The Majjhima Nikaya 35th records a dispute between Buddha and Sakdal, the son of a Nigrantha. Sakdal is not himself a Nigrantha. Now, when a famous controversialist whose father was a Nigrantha, was a contemporary of the Buddha, the Nigranthas can scarcely have been a sect founded during Buddha's life.

The Uttaradhyayana Sutra 23rd relates a meeting between Gautama Indrabhuti, the disciple of Mahavira and Kesi Kumara, the disciple of Parsva at Sravasti which brought about the union of the old branch of the Jain

church and the new one. This again points out to the existence of the older Jain faith than that of Mahavira.

Historicity Of Parsvanatha

These discussions clearly show that Parsvanatha is a real historical figure. He must have been of a genial nature as he is always given the epithet Purisa-daniya 'beloved of men.' He is supposed to have attained liberation about 246 years before Mahavira at Sammetasikhara which is known by his name Parsvanatha hill. If 526 B. C. is taken as the year of Lord Mahavira's Nirvana, in 772 B. C. must have occurred the death of Parsvanatha. According to the tradition, he dwelt in the world exactly one hundred years and left home at the age of thirty to become an ascetic. From it, we may conclude that he was born about 872 B. C. and left this world in about 772 B. C. The Kalpasutra states that Parsva like other Tirthankaras was a Kshatriya and the son of the King Asvasena of Banaras and his wife Vama. His chief disciple was Gubhadatta who was succeeded by Haridatta. Then, came Arya Samudra and his disciple Prabhasuri. Next Kesi Kumara succeeded to the headship of the church who was the contemporary of Mahavira. Thus the history of Jainism goes back to 872 B. C.

Neminatha as a Historical Figure

There seems to be no doubt about the existence of Jainism in the ninth century B. C. but the history of Jainism goes back even earlier than of Parsvanatha. The Jain record mentions the names of twenty two Tirthankaras before him. Neminatha, the 22nd Tirthankara of the Jains, was the son of Samudra Vijaya and grandson of Andhakavrishni. He is said to be a cousin of Krishna, the lord of the Bhagvadgita. Krishna negotiated his marriage with Rajamati, the daughter of Ugrasena but Neminatha taking compassion on the animals which were to be slaughtered in connection with the marriage feast, left the marriage procession suddenly and renounced the world. If the historicity of Lord Krishna is admitted, we may as well admit that Lord Neminatha, the 22nd Tirthankara is not a mere myth.

The Andhakavrishnis of Dwaraka in Kathiawar as a republic is referred to in the Mahabharata, Arthashastra and Ashtadhyayi of Panini. The name of the Vrishni corporation is also found on a coin which on paleographical grounds belongs to the first and second century B. C. It seems that the republic was named after Andhakavrishni, the grand father of Neminatha. As this republic is mentioned in the Ashtadhyayi of Panini who according to Gold Stucker must have lived in the seventh century B. C. at the latest. It must have been well known at this time and must have come into existence long before eighth century B. C. If Andhakavrishni is the real person, there seems to be little doubt that his grand son Neminatha was a reality.

There is a mention in the Chhandogya Upanishada III, 17, 6, that the sage Ghora Angirasa imparted a certain instructions of the spiritual sacrifice to Krishna, the son of Devaki. The liberal payment of this sacrifice was austerity, liberality, simplicity, non-violence and truthfulness. These teachings of Ghora Angirasa seem to be the tenets of Jainism. Hence, Ghora Angirasa seems to be the Jain saint. The writers of the Jain scriptures say that Tirthankara Neminatha was the master of Krishna.¹ Now the question arises whether Neminatha and Ghora Angirasa are the names of the same individual.

The word Ghora Angirasa seems to be an epithet given to him because of the extreme austerities undertaken by him. It may be possible to suggest that Neminatha was his early name and when he had obtained salvation after hard austerities, he might have been given the name of Ghora Angirasa.

In fact the Jain traditions about Neminatha or Arishtanemi as incorporated in the Harivamsa, Arishtanemi Chariu and other works may be corroborated to some extent by the Brahminical traditions. He is mentioned in some of the hymns of the Vedas but their meaning is doubtful.² In the Yajurveda, he seems to be clearly mentioned as one of the important Rishis. He is described as one who is capable of crossing over the ocean of

life and death, as the remover of violence, one who is instrumental in sparing life from injury and so on.³ The Yajurveda probably belongs to the twelfth century B. C. This indicates that Neminatha seems to be known at this time and flourished even before.

The literary evidence seems to be supported by an epigraphic evidence.¹ In Kathiawar, a copper plate has been discovered on which there is an inscription. The king Nebuchadnazzar (940 B. C.) who was also the lord of Revanagara (in Kathiawara) and who belonged to Sumer tribe, has come to the lace (Dwarka) of the Yaduraja. He has built a temple and paid homage and made the grant perpetual in favour of Lord Neminatha, the paramount deity of Mt. Raivata. This inscription is of great historical importance. The king named Nebuchadnazzar was living in the 10th century B. C. It indicates that even in the tenth century B.C. there was the worship of the temple of Neminatha the 22nd. Tirthankara of the Jains. It goes to prove the historicity of Neminatha.

Thus, there seems to be little doubt about Neminatha as a historical figure but there is some difficulty in fixing his date. He is said to be the contemporary of Krishna the hero of Mahabharata. The scholars differ in their opinions as to the exact date of the Mahabharata which vary from 950 B.C. to 3000 B.C.

Jainism in the Period of Ramayana

The period of Ramayana is earlier than Mahabharata. The majority of the scholars believe most of the events and persons connected with the story of Ramayana to be real and historical. The oldest available Jain version of Rama epic is Paumachariya in Prakrit which was composed in 530 years after the Mahavira-nirvana according to the statements of the author named³ Vimala Suri. It belongs to about the same period as the oldest Brahminic version, the Ramayana of Valmiki i.e. to the first century B. C. No doubt Vimal seems to be acquainted with the other works on the life of Rama but he criticizes them as giving false and fantastic statements. On the other hand, he himself claims to give a real and true account of the life of Rama, based on the words of Tirthankara Mahavira. The story of Ramayana as stated in the Jain Puranas is substantially similar to the account of Valmiki¹ But the way in which the Jain version differs from the Brahminic Ramayana throws a very significant light on the position of Jainism. According to the Jain version, Ravana and Raksas were highly cultured people belonging to the race of the Vidyadharas and were great devotees of Jina.² But the Hindu tradition depicted them as evil natured and irreligious demons because they were antagonistic to the sacrificial cult of the Vedic sages. At the same time, they were defeated, therefore, they become the demons in the hands of the poets. Considering these two accounts together, it seems that the Vedic people denounced the Rakshas because they were the followers of Jainism. F. E. Pargiter also asserts the Jains were treated as Asuras and Daityas by the³ Hindus. Rama, his brother Laksamana and their enemy Ravana were 63 prominent personages (the trisastisalaka purushas) of the Jain traditions where in the Raksas and Vanaras of the Ramayana have been described not as semihuman or demons but as highly civilized and cultured human beings of the Vidyadhara race who were mostly devotees of the Jina.

Even in the Yoga Vasistha Ramayana in the Chapter of Vairagya, Rama expresses to be of a peaceful nature like⁴ Jinendra. There is also mention in the Ramayana of Valmiki that the king Dasaratha, the father of Rama entertained the sramanas as the⁵ guests. The word sramana indicates the Jain saints and not saints of Buddhism which is of late origin.

Thus, it seems that Jainism was in existence in the period of Ramayana according to the Jain traditions. Lord Munisuvarta, the 20th Tirthankara is said to be the contemporary of Rama.¹ Munisuvratnatha seems to be as real person as Rama himself.

Jainism in the Rig Vedic Age

In the Vedic period, there were two kinds of saints-Yati, the enemy of Indra, the Vedic God and Muni-the friend of Indra.² It seems that the saints of the Aryans who honored them were called the Munis while persons corresponding to the saints among non-Vedic people were probably called the Yatis. In the Tai. S. VI. 2. 75, we read 'Indra threw Yatis to the Salavrikas (wolves)³, they devoured them to the south of the Uttaravedi. The same words and story occur in the Kathaka Samhita VIII 5, the Ait. Br. 35. 3 and the Kausitaki Up. III, 1; in the last, Indra said to Pratardana, "do know me only. I regard this as the most beneficial thing to man that he should know me. I killed the three headed Tvashtra, I gave to the Salavrikas, the arunmukh yatis" In the Kathaka Samhita 10 and the Tai. S. II 4, 9, 2, it is stated that the heads of the Yatis when they were being devoured, fell aside and they (the heads) became the Kharjuras (date palms). Atharvaveda II, 53 says 'Indra who is quick in his attack, who is Mitra and who killed Vritra as he did the yatis. In the Tandya Mahabrahmana VIII 1, 4, Brihadgiri is said to be one of the three Yatis who escaped from slaughter and who were then taken under his protection by Indra. All these passages taken together suggest that the Yatis were the people who had incurred the hostility of Indra, the patron of the Aryas and their bodies were therefore thrown to the wolves. A few of them who escaped slaughter were subsequently won over and became the worshippers of Indra. They therefore, in Rg. VIII, 6, 18; are described as praising Indra. These Yatis may probably represent the Jain Saints. Some of the saints are described as naked which indicates that they were Jain saints. It seems that at the coming of the Aryans in India, the austerity was practiced by the natives. This idea of renunciation did not appeal to the society of the Aryans who had the optimistic outlook on life which is clearly reflected in hymns. The Rig-Veda is full of prayers for long life, freedom from disease, heroic progeny, wealth, power, abundance of food, drink, the defeat of the rivals etc. The people who liked renunciation were few in society. It seems that the invasion of the Aryans brought the destruction of the native culture and religion. The natives were forced to give up their own religion and to accept the culture of the invaders.

The Aryan invasion which overwhelmed the North Western and North Central provinces of the Sub-continent in the second millennium B. c. did not extend beyond the middle of the Ganges valley. The possession of the Aryans at the Rig-Vedic time was probably confined to Sapta Sindhu. The pre-Aryan nobility of the north eastern states were therefore not all annihilated. Many of the old families survived. Probably, the people of Kasi, Magadha and other neighboring countries were the followers of a different culture on whom curses used to be showered and troubles used to be invoked. Jainism was probable popular in the east where the Tirthankaras were born. Even when the eastern part of India was aryanised, it preserved considerable differences from the midlands in the points of language, ethnic elements and culture. Probably, the Vratyas mentioned in Atharva Veda¹ and Panchavimsa Brahmana of Samaveda lived there.² The Panchavimsa Brahmana describes peculiarities of the Vratyas. They did not study the Vedas. They did not observe the rules regulating the Brahmanical order of life. They called an expression difficult to pronounce when it was no difficult to pronounce (?) and spoke the tongue of the consecrated through un-consecrated³. This proves that they had some Prakritic form of speech.⁴ The Prakrit language is specially the language of the canonical works of the Jains. Jayaswal states that they had traditions of the Jinas and Buddhas amongst them even before the sixth century B.C. It seems that they were the followers of the Jainism which is known to have come into existence even before the sixth century B. C.

Jainism as a Dravidan Religion

Dr. Zimmer considers Jainism to be an older religion even than Vedic religion and called it the dravidan religion. Both are simple, unsophisticated, clear cut and direct manifestation of the pessimistic dualism. Jainism believes in pessimism, a conviction that human life is full of misery, no trace of which is to be found in the optimistic attitude of the Vedic Aryans. The doctrine of transmigration of the Dravidans unknown to the early Brahmanas suddenly emerges in the Upanishads and forms an essential element in the Jain religion. What is more important, is the fact that the doctrine assumes it (x) peculiarly Indian form by its association with the doctrine of Karman and we know that the most primitive ideas of Karman are found in Jain

Metaphysics. An atheistic attitude and a kind of dualism between soul and matter characterize both Dravidan religion and Jainism. From this religion also arose the heterodox sects namely Sankhya, Yoga and Buddhism.

Dr. Zimmer further observes that Jainism and Zoroastrian religions seem to be the forms of the Dravidan religion. Both arose as a protest and as parallels against the Vedic religion and the religion of Avasta respectively in about 8th Century B. C. for the revival of the older religion which we may call the Dravidan religion. There are elements of similarity in both the religions. Parsvanatha and Zoroaster were contemporary in time and they were against the sacrificial ceremony and polytheism of the gods. The enemy of Parsva was Kamatha, while of Zoroaster is Dahaka. Both gave troubles to Parsva and Zoroaster respectively for a long time but at the end, they were overcome by love. The serpents springing from the shoulders of both the images are well known. It seems that the snake played an important part in the lives of both.

Dr. Zimmer's arguments are held plausible but our main difficulty in accepting them is that our knowledge of the Dravidan faith is very meagre and perfunctory.

Jainism in The Time of Indus Valley Civilization

The discovery of the Indus Civilization seem to have thrown a new light on the antiquity of Jainism. The time assigned by the Scholars to this culture is 3000 B. C. on the archaeological evidence and on the evidence of the relations with the cultures of the other countries. The religion of the Indus culture seems to be quite different from the religion of the Indus culture seems to be quite different from the religion of the Aryans in the Vedic period. At Mohenjodaro and Harappa, iconism is every where apparent. But it is extremely doubtful whether images were generally worshipped in the ancient Vedic times. In the Rig-Veda and the other Vedas, there is worship of Agni, Sun, Varuna and various other deities. But they were worshipped in the abstract form as manifestations of a divine power. There are no doubt passages where the deities of the Rig-Veda are spoken of as possessed of bodily attributes. R. G. VIII 175 speaks of the limbs and sides of Indra and prays Indra to taste honey with his tongue. In Rig. I. 155-6 Vishnu is said to approach a battle with his huge body and as a youth. It is possible to argue that all these descriptions are poetic and metaphoric. But there are two passages of the Rig-Veda that cause much more difficulty than the above. Rg. VIII 1. 5. says, 'o Indra, I shall not give thee for even a great price, not even for a hundred, a thousand or ten thousand. It may be argued that here, there is a reference to an image of Indra. But it is not convincing. It is equally possible to hold that these are hyperbolic or boastful statements of the great devotion of the worshipper to Indra and that there is no reference to an image of Indra. In most of the earlier and more authoritative Brahmanas which lay down in detail the rules of the rituals, associated with the Vedic sacrifices, there is no reference to images which would certainly have been explicitly mentioned, had they been regarded as necessary. In the subsequent period, when the image worship had come to play a definite part in Brahmanic religion, detailed descriptions of these are not lacking. But the cult of symbols and images seems to have been current among the people who continued the traditional religious practices of the settlers of the Indus Valley region. These people seem to be the Jains because the image worship was prevalent among them in the times of Nandas and Mauryas.¹ It seems that the image worship might have been copied by the Brahmanas from the Jains.

It is possible to suggest from the evidence of articles discovered that Jainism was not unknown among the people of the Indus Valley. Some nude images and the nude figures on the seals have been discovered at Mohenjodaro and Harappa. Nudity has been the special characteristic of Jainism. Even Rishabha, the first Tirthankara observed the vow of nudity. The pictures 1. JBORS. Vol. III. Pt. IV, P. 458, & JBORS 1937 P. 130-32. Nos. 15 & 16 of plate XIII represent a seated image with a hood over its head attended by a half kneeling figure in respectful attitude.² This may be the representation of the seventh Tirthankara Suparsvanatha. The bull is the cognizance of Rishabha Deva. The standing deity figured on seals three to five with a bull in the fore ground may be the proto-type of Rishabha.³ Some statues have been discovered also in

the meditative mood, the half shut eyes, being fixed on the tips of the nose both in the sitting and standing poses. These statues and images on the seals may be taken to indicate that the people of the Indus Valley at this time not only practiced Yoga but worshipped the images of Yogis. In the Adipurana (Book XXI) there are the instruction given about the meditation. With regard to the eyes, it is stated that they should neither be kept wide open, nor totally shut up. The Kayotsarga posture of standing is peculiarly Jain. In the Adipurana Book XVIII, it is described in connection with the penances of Rishabha. This is also the characteristic of the Jain images at present.

These images have been described by Marshal as the proto-type of Siva. But with due difference to the illustrious scholar, an argument can be hazarded that the word Siva meaning the auspicious occurs as an epithet of Rudra in the Rigveda, Yajur Veda and Atharva Veda. It is only Rudra and not Siva who is praised in all hymns. He is represented in these hymns as a malevolent deity causing death and disease among men and cattle. The physical description of Rudra is found in a number of hymns in great detail. For instance in some places, he is said to be tawny in color and other of a very fair complexion, with a beautiful hair on his head. He carries in his hands a bow and arrows and is described in some hymns as wielding the thunderbolt. This type of Rudra can not be identified with the prototype Siva whose portraits are found on the seal because his attributes are quite different from the attributes stated in the Vedas about Rudra. Rudra occupies the minor position in the Vedic period but Siva seems to be dominant among the people of the Indus Civilizations. Siva with the puranic attributes can not be identified with the images on the seals because these puranas were composed about three thousand years after the Indus Civilization.

Historicity Of Suparsvanatha

There are some legends about the Tirthankaras which may contain some historical matter. In the Mahavagga (1. 22. 13), there is a mention of a Jain temple of Lord Suparsva, the seventh Tirthankara situated at Rajagrih in the time of Lord Buddha. At Mathura, there is an old stupa of the Jains with the inscription of 157 A. D. This inscription records that an image of the Tirthankara Aranatha was set up at the stupa built by the gods.¹ Thus, in 157 A. D., this stupa was so old that it was regarded as the work of the gods. It was probably, therefore, erected several centuries before the Christian era. The later authors give us some information about this stupa. Jinprabha in the Tirtha Kalpa, a work of the 14th century based on ancient materials mentions that the stupa originally of gold was erected in honor of the seventh Jina Suparsvanatha by the Kubera for two Jain Saints named Dharmaruchi and Dharmaghosh. In the time of twenty third Jina, Parsvanatha, the golden stupa was enclosed in bricks and a stone temple was built outside. Even Somadeva, the author of the Yasastilaka who is nearly four hundred years earlier than Jinaprabha refers to it as built by gods.² From this type of legendary account, it seems that there was the worship of Suparsvanatha several centuries before the Christian era. The Yajurveda is also said to have mentioned the name of Suparsvanatha¹ but the meaning is not definite. A seated image with a hood over its head attended by a half kneeling figure in respectful attitude in the pictures No. 15 & 16 of plate VIII may be the representation of the seventh Tirthankara Suparsvanatha.²

Ajitanatha as a Historical Figure

The second Tirthankara is Ajitanatha, born in Ayodhya. The Yajurveda mentions the name of Ajitanatha³ but the meaning is not clear. His younger brother according to Jain traditions was Sagara who became the second Chakravarti. He is known from the traditions of both Hinduism and Jainism as found in their respective Purans. From the Hindu source, he is known to have many sons. One of them was Bhagiratha who brought the Ganges. From the Jain account, it is clear that Sagara in his last days adopted the life of asceticism from Ajitanatha and retired from the worldly life.⁴ Ajitanatha seems to be as real a person as Sagara.

Historicity Of Rishabhadeva

Even Rishabhadeva, founder of Jainism may be a historical figure. An image of Rishabha of V. S. 162 of the time of the Kushan Emperor Vasudeva has been discovered at Mathura.⁵ The inscription of Kharvela tells us that the image of Rishabha carried by Nanda three hundred years before was brought back by him to Kaling.⁶ There was thus the worship of Rishabha even in the fifth century B. C. in the time of Nandas. This points out that If mahavira or Parsva had been the founders of Jainism, it would not have been possible to find the images of Rishabha in the very early period. This indicates that he is not a mythical figure but a real personality. The name Vrishabha is mentioned in the Vedas,⁷ but the meaning is not certain. The different interpretations have been made by the scholars. The standing deity figured on the seals with a bull in the foreground may be the proto-type of Rishabha as we have already discussed. His parents were Nabhiraja and Marudevi. The name of his son was kept Bharata after which India said to be named.

Legendary Antiquity of Jainism

The Jain religion, according to the Jain scriptures¹ is eternal, revealed in every cyclic period of the world. The time is divided into two equal cycles namely Utsarpini Kala and Avasarpini Kala. Each cycle is again divided into six divisions into six divisions known as aras. (Spoke of a wheel).

Avasarpini	Utsarpini
1. Sushama-Sushama	1. Duhshama-Duhshama
2. Sushama	2. Duhshama
3. Sushama-Duhshama	3. Duhshama-Sushama
4. Duhshama-Sushama	Sushama-Duhshama
5. Duhshama	5. Sushama
6. Duhshama-Duhshama	6. Suhshama-Sushama

Each Utsarpini and Avasarpini Kala extends over ten Kota-Koti sagaropama years. The first ara Sushama-Sushama of four Kota-Koti sagaropama years, the second ara Susama of three Kota-Koti Sagaropama years, the third ara Sushama-Duhshama of two Kota-Koti sagaropama years, the fourth Duhshama-Sushama of the duration of forty two thousand years less in one Kota-Koti sagaropama years, the fifth are Duhshama of twenty one thousand years and the last ara Duhshama-Duhshama will be twenty one thousand years duration. At present, Duhshama is going on of which nearly twenty four hundred and eighty one years have passed. In the Utsarpini Kala, the order of the aras is the reverse.

During the first ara of Sushama-Sushama of the Avasarpini Kala, the age of the yugalika people was three palyopama years. They took their food on the fourth day, their bodies were very tall and were marked by auspicious symbols. They were devoid of anger, pride, deceit, greed and other sinful acts. Various kinds of the kalpa trees fulfilled their wishes.

During the second ara named Sushama, the yugalika lived for two palyopamas. They took their food at an interval of three days. They were also tall. The kalpa trees less supplied their wants than before. The objects of land and water became less sweet and fruitful than they were during the first ara.

During the third ara of Sushama-Duhshama, the age limit of the yugalikas became one palyopama. They took their food on the second day. The earth and water as well as height and strength of the body went on

decreasing and they became less than they were during the second ara.

During the fourth ara Duhshama-Sushama, the height of the human being became five hundred dhanushyas and with ever progressing decrease it was reduced only to seven hands at the end of the fourth ara. Even the period of age limit was reduced approximately to one hundred years and less at the close of this ara. At this time, there was much happiness but the slight misery. People were happy and prosperous. The land was fertile and produced the abundant fruits.

At this time, the Tirthankaras were born and propagated Jainism. Lord Rishabha Deva, the first Tirthankara lived in the later part of the third ara and the remaining twenty three Tirthankaras lived during the fourth ara. In the time of Rishabha, the Kalpa trees ceased to fulfill the wishes, placing the people under difficulties. Under these circumstances, Rishabha instructed them to get on with the different occupations such as trade, agriculture etc. The people engaged in different occupations, formed different social groups. Lord Rishabha is very often described as a creator of the world in the sense of laying the socio-economic foundation.

In the fourth ara, Nami died 5,00,000 years before Nemi, Munisuvrata 11,00,000 or a crore; the following intervals can not be expressed in definite numbers of years but are given in palyopamas and sagaropamas. The length of the life and the height of the Tirthankaras are in proportion to the length of the interval. In connection with these proportion to the length of the interval. In connection with these items of the mythical history of the Jains, it may be added that they relate the life-length of twelve universal monarchs (Chakravartins); of nine Vasudevas, nine Baladevas, and nine Prati-Vasudevas who lived within the period from the first to the second Tirthankara together with the 24 Tirthankaras. They are the 63 great personages of Jain history.

During the fifth ara named Duhshama, the present age during which we are living, the height, age limit and the strength of the human beings will be reduced. The majority of the people will be miserable and there will be reduced. The majority of the people will be miserable and there will be little piety and honesty. After that, there will be the sixth ara Duhshama-Duhshama in which there will be no sense of reason and morality among the people. The age, height and strength of the human beings will decrease to a great extent. People will suffer from the various diseases and thus, their lives will be miserable.

Similarly, to the sixth and fifth aras of the Avasarpini Kala are first and the second of the Utsarapini Kala. At the end of the second ara named Dushama of the Utsarapini Kala, there will be seven Kulkaras. After the lapse of the Duhshama ara of the Utsarapini Kala, there will be sixty three excellent personages.

This is only an imaginary theory similar to several such theories in the Purans and it can not be scientifically proved and historically demonstrated. It is only based on the firm faith of the authors and the strong traditions of Jainism. According to them, Jainism is eternal and came into existence with the very dawn of the civilization.