

India is considered the birth place of many great religions. Indian culture is assimilation up of many such religions. Consequently Indian culture and religion have become the synonyms of each other. From ancient times, in the brahmana tradition Hindu religion along with its branches and in Shramana tradition Jain and Buddhist religions have developed. In the first half of the Vedic period, pure thought was replaced by offerings and rituals. The emergence of Jain and Buddhist religions took place when Hindu religion gave enormous importance to rituals.

Jain Religion

Mahavir Swami and Preceding 23 Tirthankaras to Mahavir Swami :

The meaning of Tirthankar is “one who makes holy.” In Jain religion the person who by his own non-worldly and wonderful energy as well as by scripture and excellent character builds a bridge to cross the river of samsara is considered the superman, super human being Tirthanaka.

According to Jain scriptures, there have been totally 24 Tirthankars, of which, Mahavir Swami is the 24th Tirthankara. The other 23 names are given below:

24 Tirthankaras and their Emblems

Tirthankara	Emblem	Tirthankara	Emblem	Tirthankara	Emblem
1. Rishabhdev (Adinath)	Bull	9. Suvidhinath	Crocodile	17. Kundunath	He goat
2. Ajitnath	Elephant	10. Sheetalnath	Kalpa-vriksha	18. Aranath	Fish
3. Sambhavnath	Horse	11. Shreyansnath	Rhinoceros	19. Mallinath	Water pot
4. Abhinandan	Monkey	12. Vasupujya	Buffalo	20. Munisuvrat	Tortoise
5. Sumitnath	Curlew	13. Vimalnath	Pig	21. Naminath	Blue lotus
6. Padmaprabhu	Red lotus	14. Anantan	Falcon	22. Aristanemi (Neminath)	Conch
7. Suparschanath	Svastika	15. Dharmanath	Vraja	23. Parshvanath	Serpent
8. Chandraprabhu	Crescent	16. Shantinath	Deer	24. Mahavirswami	Lion

Mahavir Swami: Mahavir Swami was born in 599 B.C. in a village named Kundgram (Kshatriyakund) of Vaishali in Bihar. His original name was “Vardhman”. His father was a leader of Kshatriyas. His mother, Trishala devi was a princess of the city of Vaishali. According to Jain scriptures, at an appropriate age he married a princess named Yashoda and started living a married life to satisfy his mother. He also had a daughter named Priyadarshana.

At the age of 30 with the permission of his brother Nandvardhana, he renounced Samsara. He acquired self-knowledge through intense penance and suppression of body for 12 years. Thereafter on the thirteenth year, at the bank of river Rujupalika, he received ‘Kaivalyagyan’ (perfect enlightenment). He became free from the bonds of joy and sorrows. He came to be called “Nigranth”. During penance he triumphed over senses through suppression of body.

Therefore he came to be called the conquerer of senses “Jin”. From the word Jin the followers of Mahavir Swami were called “Jain”. Having acquired the experience of Kaivalyagyan, Mahavir Swami preached to the people of Vaishali, Videha and Magadha (present day Bangal) for 30 years, about developing eternal qualities. At the age of 72 years in 527 B.C. he expired in Pavapuri near Rajgruhi, the capital of Magadha.



Mahavir Swami

Origin and Development of Jain Dharma :

Mahavir Swami obtained Kaivalyagyan at the age of 42 years. Through his preaching many listeners; monks-nuns became his followers. According to the belief of Jain Dharma, the Jain Dharma existed from the beginning. The predecessor of Mahavir Swami, the 23rd Tirthankara-Parshvanath preached about the ideology of Jain Dharma around 700 B.C. From that point of view, Mahavir Swami can be considered the follower of Parshvanath.

Mahavir Swami preached in a popular language – Ardhamagadhi, in which people could easily understand. Hence the people could accept this religion spontaneously. After the death of Mahavir Swami, approximately after about 200 years, the spread of Jain Dharma was accelerated by the followers of Jain tradition. Apparently in ancient times, the Jain religion spread in Kaling (Present Orissa). The Chinese pilgrim Yuan-swang has mentioned Kaling Desh as the main origin of Jain Dharma. Similarly in Bihar, the Jain Dharma was propagated at the behest of Nanda dynasty. History indicates that Chandragupta Maurya and Emperor Sankrati had adopted Jain religion.

In the latter part of the rule of Chandragupta, due to famine, leader Bhadrabahu went to South with his followers. The followers who remained in Magadha, under the leadership of Sthulibhadra, called the first Jain council in Patliputra, the capital of Magadha, to organize and write the preaching of Mahavir Swami as well as to restructure the Jain books.

When the followers, who had gone to South India, returned to Magadha, they had theoretical disagreement among them, which caused two sects of Jain Dharma; Shwetambara and Digambara. Shwetambara means the followers of those monks who advocated white clothes. These Jains advocated idol worship. Digambara (dik = dig meaning direction) means one who accepted direction as cloth, (the one who has the opinion that Jain monk must not wear clothes). The followers of the latter opinion were called Digambara. Despite the emergence of the above two sects of Jain Dharma, the Jain Dharma is well spread in India.

From the stone-inscription of second century B.C. of the king of Kharvel in the Elephant- caves of Chaul dynasty in Udaygiri near Cuttack in Orissa, it is known that these kings had followed Jain Dharma. In the first century of Jesus, the stone-inscription found from Mathura in North India, indicates that Mathura was the centre of Jain Dharma for a long time.

In Mysore of South India (first century of Jesus) at Shravanbelgoda, as well as in the kingdoms of Gang, Kadamb, Chalukya and Rashtrakut dynasty kings (Jesus' fifth to the twelfth centuries) allowed the preaching of Jain Dharma. Hence even here, there was a good spread of Jain Dharma. Likewise Jain religion was propagated and spread in Maharashtra, Rajasthan (Marvad) and other regions of India.

Main principles of Jain Dharma :

In Jain religion, the thought about how a soul attains salvation (Moksha), is at the centre. In Jain philosophy, three things are essential to acquire self knowledge: faith, knowledge and conduct, which are famous as three jewels right conceptualization, right knowledge and right character. By its imitation, one gets liberated from all prior karmas. Jain Dharma shows the path of three-gems to attain salvation (moksha), namely, right knowledge, right conceptualization and right conduct. It is known as triple gems principle (triratnasidhant).

For right conceptualization, right knowledge and right character, man must follow the following five vows, five samitis, three guptis and four emotions.

Five vows	Five Samitis	Three Guptis	Four emotions
Non-violence	Iriya Samiti	Mana Gupti	Maitri (Freindliness)
Truth	Bhasa Samiti	Vach Gupti	Pramad (Idleness)
Non-stealing	Esnna Samiti	Kaya Gupti	Karuna (Mercy)
Chastity	Adana Nikshepana Samiti		Madhyastha (Mediation)
Non-attachment	Parishthayan Samiti		

Philosophy and Spiritual matters in Jain Dharma

Jain religion distributes every element on the earth into divisions like living being (jiva) and non-living being (ajiva). Every living being on the basis of one's righteousness (punya) becomes god, man or animal. Jiva has three levels, baddhjiva, muktajiva and siddhjiva. Karma is bondage for soul. In such karma, new karma is not to be performed for liberation but destruction of it to be done through the generated heat (tapa).

Spiritual matters :

There is a great importance of penance and renunciation of mundane life in Jain religion. The spiritual matters are included in forgiveness, gentleness, innocence, generosity, penance, sense control, truth, holiness, akinchittata as well as pratikraman and the act of samayik . Through pratikraman, move towards good and through samayik, sit in one place and do self-reflection, praise and bowing. Get rid of desires, by doing posah, poshadhavrata for five times in a month. On appointed days visit pilgrimage places like Shetrunjay, Girnar, Champapuri, Pavapuri and Samet peak. It is mentioned in Jain scriptures that such pilgrimages have special importance.

Expressions of the spirituality of Jain religion is seen in the prayers the recitation of navakar mantra, the holy symbols on places like shrines and in places of worship, as well as the greatest religious feast known as Pajushan (paryushan), and sentences like michchhamidukkadama (mi kshamamee dushkrutyam).

Jain Dharma Books and Statues

Jain Dharma Books :

The main contents in Jain dharma books are spiritual feelings, religious stories, sculpture and sources of tirthankara. Besides these, science, poems, stories, plays as well as articles and books on household subjects have promoted Jain religion. Jain literature is written in different Aryan as well as in non-aryan Dravidian languages and sub-languages.

Jain Statues :

There are many statues of goddesses and tirthankaras in Jain religious places. Among them Ambika, Chankeshwari, Jwalinee or Jwalamalinee, Padmavati, Chamunda, Mahadevi, Bharti or Sarasvati are main goddesses.

In religious places of Jain religion, the statues of tirthankaras are identified by yaksh, shasandevi and emblem on the statues.

The emblems of animals indicate the non-violence of Jain religion towards all living beings.

Special Contribution of Jain Religion to Indian Culture

Field of Literature :

Mahavir Swami and his predecessor tirthankaras had only practised oral preaching. But their principal disciples had compiled the preaching of Mahavir Swami and preserved it carefully. The ancient literature of Jain religion is distributed in 14 parvas and 12 angas, which include the rules and ideals for the monks-nuns and Jain followers. Angas and dashvaitalik sutra are written in prakrut or ardhmagadhi languages. In Jesus' seventh and eighth centuries they had begun to write the criticism of these books as well as other Jain darshan scriptures. Bruhatkatha written by Gunadhya; Harivanshpuran written by Jain Suri Jinsen; Vasudevahindi written by Sanghadasgani are very famous books. Besides these, the grammar book "Siddhahemshabdanushasan" written in prakrut language by Hemchandracharya of Gujarat nicknamed as "kalikalsarvagna", as well as mahakavya (great poem) explaining the rules of grammar named "drayashray" are famous. In Gujarat the state secretary of Vaghela dynasty, Vastupal—Tejpal was an able literary personality. The great poem 'Kirtikaumudee' written by poet Someshwar is very famous.

The hand-written copies of ancient books by the Jain monks in Patan city of Gujarat are well preserved. The Jain writers have contributed a great deal in the development of regional languages by writing in Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Gujarati, Rajasthani etc. along with Sanskrit and Prakrit languages.

The construction of some parts of famous book "Kural" of Tamil language was done by Jains. From the point of view of language, the prakrit language and distorted language of Jain literature is a link between the modern Indian languages and ancient Sanskrit language.

Social Field :

The Jain ideology has contributed a great deal to Indian society and culture. The asceticism of Jain monks, strict control and renounced life as well as the execution of non-violence in a special way give immense inspiration to live a moral and honest life. According to Gandhi's opinion, "The greatest preacher of the element of non-violence was Mahavir Swami." This principle of non-violence was the mission of Mahatma Gandhi. Jain religion emphasises on the execution of non-violence towards all animals in mind, word and deed. Jain religion raised the status of everyone without the discrimination of caste, gender, language, region as well as female-male distinctions. Mahavir Swami became the social reformer by giving privilege to women for taking diksha, living a life of nun and choosing the path of welfare and moksha.

Field of Art :

The statues of tirthankaras in Jain shrines manifest the sculpture and the art of sculpture of the ancient and middle ages. The temples of Parshvanath, Shaktinath, and Adinath are situated at Khajuraho in Central India. Among many of those statues of Hindu god and goddesses, there is a combination of the Hindu and Jain notions. Innumerable statues of Jain tirthankaras Adinath, Neminath, Parshvanth and Mahavir Swami, their emblems, yaksho, yakshini, vahako, sculptures of dancers and artifices on the walls of temples, ceilings, pillars and entrances are the excellent master pieces of the art of sculpture. The tall and majestic statue of Gotmeshwar (Bahubali) on the Chandragiri mountain of Mysore in South is an excellent example of the Jain sculpture.

35 caves carved out in the hills of udaygiri and khandgiri of Puri district of Orissa by king Kharwela, manifest the beauty of the art of sculpture and architecture, and among them rani cave and ganesh cave are enchanting.

In Western India among the Jain caves of Elora, the two storey cave named Indrasabha is famous. In middle ages, the Jain temples in Palitana, Girnar mountain, shrines of Kumbhariya in Gujarat and Jain shrines of Delwada on mount Abu and Ranakpur are the excellent pieces of sculpture and architecture.

The shrines of Delvada on Mount Abu, peaks of temples of Vimalasahi, built by Jain minister of Gujarat, Vimal Shah and lunavsahi, built by Vastupal look like the peak of Khajuraho temple. Ceilings made of marble and the minute attractive sculpture on the columns is famous in the world. This sculpture is a unique and unforgettable heritage and an invaluable gift to the Indian culture.

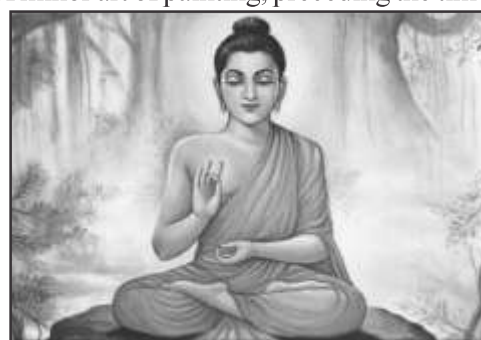
Like sculpture and architecture, art of drawing is manifested on the ceilings and walls of Jain shrines, palaces, residences, clothes that are used for religious rituals, in the margins of the hand written books in colourful pictures and in vallariyo velbutt. It expresses the richness of minor art of painting, preceding the time of Indian middle age

Buddhist Religion

Life of Gautam Buddha :

Gautam Buddha was born in 566 B.C. in Kapilvastu nagar of Nepal, near Lumbini forest. His birth name was Siddharth and family name was Gautam. His father was a leader of Kshatriya caste named Shuddhodhan Shakya. His mother Mayadevi was a princess of Devadhavana. His childhood and youth were bestowed with fondness and richness. He was married to a princess named

Yashodhara at the age of 16. His son's name was Rahul. Since the time he saw a sick man, an old man, a corpse and a monk he felt their suffering, old age and death were bondages. Among all, he experienced that, only the life of a monk could give liberation. Since then, in order to free human race from the bondage, he renounced samsara. In history this event is known as 'mahabhinishkraman'. There after for about 6 years Gautam undertook strict penance ordered by gurus, yatis and tapasvis. Despite it, when he did not receive true message for the liberation of mankind, he sat under a pipal tree in Bodhigaya with a pledge that even if his body



Gautam Buddha

would be destroyed he would not get up from the asana till he received true and complete enlightenment-bodha. Ultimately on the full-moon day of the month of Vaishakh, he received enlightenment in the shadow of bodhi tree (vruksh) and he became Buddha. Since his family name was Gautam, he was called Gautam Buddha. In Buddhist literature he is also addressed by the words Tathagat and Shasta. While preaching and propagating Buddhist religion he expired at the age of 80 in 486 B.C. in Kushinagar, the capital of Malla gana state.

Dhamma (Dharma)

Buddha showed, having received bhuddhatva, in order to give the knowledge and the education of truth to the people the marga or path which is called is 'Dhamma'. Dhamma is a way of living a spiritual life. Buddha himself told that whatever is helpful in the spiritual development of a person is dhamma; such as sheel, Samadhi, donation, pragna etc.

Principles of Buddhist Religion

First of all Buddha gave his preaching to five monks, which is known in Buddhist Religion as dharmachakra pravartanmantra. Buddha gave very easy and simple message to get liberated from the suffering of samsara. According to his opinion, there are four arya truths. Only by following them, man can achieve the path of Nirvana (salvation). The four aryasatya explained by Buddha are known as principles of Buddhist Religion.

(1) Samsar is full of suffering. (2) Desire is the cause of suffering (3) Destruction of suffering is leaving of desire (4) Desires can be ended by adopting Ashtangic.

Astangik marga means right seeing, right resolution, right speech, right action, right earning, right exercise, right memory, right Samadhi. Like chaturvaiddha he showed the path to suffering people of getting rid of suffering. Along with the conduct of truth and non-violence; concentration; wellness; and alertness one must learn to walk on that path. This astangik marga is also called Madhya marg because it is a path which is between extreme extravagance and complete giving up. Man by his actions only could achieve liberation from the sufferings of samsara or a status of nirvana.

Bauddha Sangha

Here Sangha, according to religious view is spiritual society. Baudhasangh was established, with an intention to continue the unity among his followers forever, even in his absence. In this sangha, servant, soldier, indebted person, criminal, sick or the one below 15 years who had no consent of parents, were not given admission. The anointed person in the sangha, based on the conduct according to rule and performance of penance, was known as upasak, shraman or bhikshu. The Baudha sangha was made up of four divisions: (1) Bhikkhus, (2) Bhikkhunis (3) gruhasthas, (4) women – there was unity and respect among all these four classes. With the increase in the number of bhikkhus, Buddha had made rules. They were collected in “vinaypatak” part. In Baudh dharma the surrender in the three well known things are, “Buddham sharanam gachchhami, dharmam sharanam gachchhami, sangham sharanam gachchhami”. That is, first surrender to Buddha, then to dharma and finally to sangha. From that point of view, sangha was more important and not the individual. The possession of sangha was collective. In the session of sangha the decisions were taken after formal proposal and discussion. Actually in bauddhdharmasangha the present day democratic society’s thought was practiced.

Organization of followers of Bauddha – Sangha and its history

Already from the time of Buddha, there was difference of opinions among his followers. However because of the influential personality of Buddha, it did not surface. But after the death of Buddha, it became stronger and two groups, sthavir vadis and mahasanrikas came into existence. After the death of Buddha, to prevent this division, a meeting of Bauddh sangha dharma (sangitee) met at Rajgruha, in which the preaching and ideals of Buddha were integrated orally. But the difference of opinion was not settled. After that, almost after 100 years second meeting (sangitee) was held at Vaishalee, in which the rules and regulations for Bauddh dharma were relaxed. However, the controversy intensified. There after, in the time of Ashoka, a third dharmaparisad met in Patliputra. In all the three meetings other works were done except that of removing the difference of opinion. The fourth meeting (sangitee) in the time of emperor Kanisk was held in Kashmir. The president of that was a

Bauddh scholar Vasumitra and vice president was great poet Ashvaghosh. This council (sangitee) too could not resolve the difference of opinion among the followers. Consequently Baudha dharma was divided into sects Hinyana and Mahayana. Hinyana meant minor opinion (heen = small, yan = vehicle) and Mahayana meant majority opinion (maha = big, Yan = vehicle). The followers of Hinyana sect do not give importance to granthas other than Bauddh tripitak dharmagranth, whereas Mahayana gives importance to Buddha and the literature that followed him. The heenyana –followers believe that there is no need of assistance for any other-worldly power to attain nirvana. According to them the parables and preaching of Buddha presented the ideal of completeness, therefore there should be attitude of veneration towards them.

The followers of Mahayana have progressive and liberal view. In order to propagate Budhist religion they adopt temples of Buddha, statues, idol worship, Prasad (offering), aarti (prayer), geet (song), sangeet (music), dance etc.

After the rule of Samrat Ashok, Mahayana became more famous. Emperor Kanishk supported it. The Bhikhkhus sent by him to Tibet, Sikkim, China, Japan, Brhamdesh, Siyam and elsewhere were followers of Mahayana.

Thus, the Sangha was divided into Heenyana and Mahayana sects. There was no central authority which could keep the entire sangha together. Misconduct increased among them. Along with it tantriks (person doing black magic) and other malpractices entered, hence it could not maintain its status in the minds of people. After Emperors Ashok and Kanishka, no one gave refuge to them till the 7th century of Jesus when Emperor Harsh gave state refuge.

Propagation of Buddhist Religion

Buddhist religion was free from ideologies and controversies from the beginning. There weren't profound religious mystery stories or understanding of deep philosophical knowledge. This religion was easy and simple and there weren't any extravagant rituals. Its preaching was also simple and in easy pali language. There weren't quarrels based on caste system or gender discrimination. Also people were attracted towards Buddhist religion because of the truth, humility, saintliness, and modified and kind personality of Buddha. Along with it, because of the well organized propaganda, Buddhist religion began to spread far and wide. The kings of Magadha and Kaushambi, many gana kings, many gana states and their people adopted Buddhist religion. Famous Maurya emperor Ashok adopted Buddhist religion in third century B.C. This was the most revolutionary event. Ashok propagated this religion in central Asia, western Asia and Shreelanka, consequently it became a world religion. Having given state refuge to Buddhist religion, Buddhist monks were sent to Burma, Tibet, China, Japan, Siyam, Malaya and other countries by Ashoka to propagate principles of religion and rules of good conduct.

The monks and nuns of the sangha lived in the caves, praying and meditating. Magadha was named as Vihar (Bihar –distortion) because of the numerable accommodating places (Viharas) for Buddhist monks in this region. Thus the simplicity, ease and the monks and nuns of Bauddha sangha played a vital role in making the Buddhist religion a world religion.

Buddhist Art of Sculpture

The drilling work on the pillars and walls of stupas and the statues bear witness to the sculpture of this time. Most of the columns of this time were made because of the encouragement from Maurya emperor Ashoka. In all the monuments of Ashoka, the erected columns are very attractive. Some of the columns are as tall as 50 feet and weighing 50 tons. They are useful not only for the inscribed messages but are also the best pieces of architecture. These columns are sculptured only from a single stone. The policing of the column shines even today, as it was shining in the time period of Ashoka. The stone, that were laid on top, also had sculptured up side down lotus and on the peak of it lions were sculptured. And below it, there were the figures of elephant, horse and bullock. Some scholars believe that the figures of animals are seen on the architecture of this time because of their contact with the sculpture of Iran.

On the pillars of Ashoka near Sarnath, there is a figure of four lions touching one another's back. And the dharmachakra in it is given a place in the national flag of India, which is considered the best specimen of the sculpture of Buddha. The critics of art have named it as one of most beautiful images of the samsara.



For the column of Sarnath Vincent Smith said, "It is difficult to get such an image of ancient animal-statue, which is an excellent beautiful piece." This can be considered an achievement of sculpture and architectural skill of that time.

In the decoration on the columns of Chaityas, campus walls and gates of stupas, the art of sculpture is seen. In them the jataka stories of Buddha, and the life-events of Buddha, yaksh, sculptures of eunuchs, and the carved out organs and sub-organs of the statues with emotions are depicted.

At this time, because of the contact of region of Gandhar, Takshashila with the Greek sculpture, the statues of Buddha and Bodhisatvas (former incarnations of Buddha) were made like the Greek gods and goddesses. The pattern of Greek sculpture first began in Gandhar region of India hence, it is known as Gandhar pattern.

In Gandhar pattern, the organs and sub-organs of man's image is depicted proportionately

and beautifully. In it the muscularity of the body as well as the beautiful stripes of the clothes of the figure of man are carved. In some statues, different organs are made to be seen through the semi transparent clothes put on them. In Gandhar pattern sculpture, there might be the Greek imitation but the emotions of the face and the various parts of statues represent the spiritual aspects of the Indian art.

The statues found from Mathura have pure Indian pattern in which the importance is given to the emotion-depiction of the statues. Whereas the Gandhar pattern gave importance to the exhibition of the organs and beauty of the body. These statues seem to clarify the basic difference between the art of East and West.

The statue of Buddha of Sarnath exhibits its special feature of beauty, mental attitude and spiritual beauty of Indian sculpture pattern. Similarly the copper statue of Buddha of height 2.5 m discovered near



Gandhar shaileenu buddh shilpaas

Nalanda; and the brass statue of 2.5 m height and one ton weight discovered near Sultanganj of Bhagalpur district in Bihar exhibit the art of sculpture of making statues by melting and mixing different metals in the Gupta period. These statues indicate the knowledge and skill of sculpture, chemistry and metallurgy of that time.

Buddhist Literature:

After the nirvana of Gautam Buddha, 'tripitak' was constructed to give an organized form to the preaching of Buddha in the first dahrmaparishad (meeting) held at Rajgruh. The ancient Buddhist literature is integrated in the famous samhita 'tripitak', which is in pali language. It was constructed in the first dharmaparishad held immediately after the nirvana of Buddha. It contains a summary of the lectures of Buddha.

During the time of the third Buddhist dharmaparishad "Sutpitak (sut)" and 'vinaypitak', along with part of 'abhidhammapitak' were written. In 'sutpitak' there are five parts which are known as nikay. 'abhidhammapitak' is one of the parts of nikay, in which along with the principles of Bauddha dharma matters related to morality are mentioned. Poems named therigatha are written by Bauddha monks and nuns. These poems are famous as lyrics.

Besides 'tripitak', other books in pali are written by the Bauddha Bhikhus, in which the main books are milindpanho and jataka stories. There is no information about their author but some scholars assume that they were constructed in North-West India. Greek Emperor Minender (first century B.C.) only was known as Milind. It contains conversation between Milind and Nagsena and hence it is called Milind panho (questions). This book attempts to solve complex questions.

Bauddha dharma has given the gift of scholar-gems like Vasumitra, Nagarjun, Ashvaghosh in the court of emperor of Kanishka, Kushan. Many other books are part of Bauddha literature, in which deepvansh and mahavansh have been received from Shreelanka. It provides lot of information of that time apart from the events of the life of Buddha. The great poem "Buddhcharita" written by Great poet Ashvaghosh on the life of Buddha is famous. Two books in Tibetan language on Bauddha, "kazar" and "tanzar" are well known. The

pilgrim reports of the pilgrims of China provide information about Bauddha dharma, philosophy and the status of Buddhist religion at that time. Thus Buddhist literature is an invaluable part of our great literature heritage.

India described in Buddhist Literature

The people at this time lived in villages, towns and cities. Varnashram was prevalent as mentioned in the books of Buddhist religion. The status of women in the family and society was low. Yet women were not barred from taking education. In some books of Jain and Buddha, there is mention of women who were life time virgin scholars. The women were skillful in music, dance, drawing and arts. It is to be noted that Buddhist religion and Jain religion gave more respectful positions to women than Brahman dharma. Similarly women soldiers too were held in high esteem. The Ganika of Vaishali is a glorious example of that. At that time, like the celebrations of various festivals, malla fights and bull fights too were organized. People of this time normally lived prosperous, simple and a life full of diversity.

During this time along with agriculture, there were industries like ironworks, carpentry, weaving, skin industry, stone and ivory workmanship. The street names were based on the industries people were involved in; for example, street of rangar, street of Vaishya-traders and the mention of vanker (weaver) are found in jataka stories. The trade used to take place by water and land ways. The societies of traders and sarthvahas (caravans) were established. It was a time when currency coins of brass were used for exchange of goods of things.

EXERCISE

1. Answer the following questions in detail :

- (1) Give introduction of Mahavir Swami
- (2) Give a detailed description of the contribution of Jain Religion in the fields of social and literature.
- (3) Mention the principle of the triratnas of Jain religion.
- (4) Write a short note on Bauddha sculpture.
- (5) What is the contribution of Buddhist religion in the field of literature?

2. Answer the following questions briefly :

- (1) Write about the five vows, five samitis, three guptis and four emotions of Jain religion.
- (2) Mention the spiritual matters of Jain religion.
- (3) Discuss: Mahavir Swami was a social reformer.
- (4) What is dhamma?
- (5) Mention the three famous matters of the surrender (sharnagati) in Buddhist religion.

3. Choose the correct option from the given alternatives and give answers :

- (1) Who was the spokesperson of Jain dharma in South India?
(A) Bhadrabahu (B) Sthalibhadra (C) Nagarjuna (D) Ashvaghosha
- (2) According to Jain scriptures how many tirthankaras are there?
(A) 42 (B) 23 (C) 24 (D) 18
- (3) In which language did Mahavir Swami preach to the people?
(A) Gujarati (B) Ardhamagadhee (C) Pali (D) Sanskrit
- (4) What was the family (gotra) name of Gautam Buddha?
(A) Siddharth (B) Gautam (C) Krunal (D) Vardhamana
- (5) In which language is Tripitak written?
(A) Ardhamagadhee (B) Tamil (C) Pali (D) Malyalam

