Jain Epistemology

Over centuries, Jainism developed a complex theory of knowledge, and some of its elements, primarily the theory of the multiplexity of reality (*anekāntavāda*), can be reckoned as one of the most significant contributions of Indian philosophy in general that can be found intellectually inspiring also for a modern philosopher.

Periodization and Main Thinkers

The main periods in the development of Jain epistemology coincide with those of Jain philosophy and Jain literature and can be distinguished as follows:

(1) canonical period (c. 400 BCE–400/450 CE) with relevant works being the noncanonical Skt. *Ṛṣibhāṣitāni* (Pkt. *Isibhāsiyāiṃ*; Sayings of the Seers) and some portions of Jain canon; it consists of two phases: (a) precanonical, formative phase (400–200 BCE), with hardly any textual evidence; certain philosophical ideas were in nascent form; (b) main phase (200 BCE–475 CE), during which the presently available canon and doctrine were formed; philosophical ideas were present, but marginal, with hardly any noncanonical literature extant;

(2) classical period (350/400 –12th/13th cent. CE); it consists of two phases: (a) postcanonical phase (4th–7th cents. CE); the first philosophical works were composed, with a strong epistemological component; main philosophers include Umāsvāmin (Digambara or Śvetāmbara?; c. 350 CE), Umāsvāti (Śvetāmbara; c. 400 CE; Umāsvāmin and Umāsvāti are understood as two different authors, albeit often viewed as one individual), Kundakunda (Digambara; a range of authors flourished under this name between the 3rd and the 7th/8th cents.), Siddhasena Divākara (Śvetāmbara; 450–500 CE), Mallavādin (Śvetāmbara; c. 550 CE), Samantabhadra (Digambara; 530–590 CE), and Pūjyapāda Devanandin (Digambara; 540–600 CE); (b) golden ages of Jain philosophy and epistemology (7th–12th/13th cents.); main philosophers include Pātrasvāmin (Digambara or Śvetāmbara?; 660–720 CE), Siddhasena Mahāmati (Digambara or Śvetāmbara?; 710/720–770/780 CE), Akalaṅka Bhaṭṭa (Digambara; 720–780 CE), Haribhadra (Śvetāmbara; 740–800 CE), Vidyānanda (Digambara; c. 900–950 CE), Māṇikyanandin (Digambara; c. 900–950 CE), Abhayadeva (Śvetāmbara; c. 900–950 CE), Prabhācandra (Digambara; c. 1050–1100), Anantavīrya II (Digambara; second half of the 11th cent. or turn of the 11th–12th cents.), Vādidevasūri/Devasūri Vādin (Śvetāmbara; turn of the 11th–12th cents.), Hemacandra (Śvetāmbara; 1088/1089–1172), and Malliṣeṇa (Śvetāmbara; c. 1200–1250);

(3) epigonic period (from the 13th cent. until now); it consists of two phases: (a) medieval phase (13th–19th cents.), with main philosopher Yaśovijaya (Śvetāmbara; 1638–1688); (b) modern phase (from the 19th cent. until now).

Jainism shares the beginnings of its epistemology with Ājīvikism, to which it is historically closely linked. The present article focuses on Jain epistemology of the classical period.

Background

Over centuries, Jain epistemology developed against a backdrop of realist ontology of the world external to consciousness and populated by real, macroscopic objects, independent of consciousness and capable of being accurately reflected in the mind. It therefore levels criticism at all kinds of epistemological idealism, including Buddhist traditions, such as Yogācāra, or Vedānta traditions, especially the monistic Advaita Vedānta, all of which recognize that entities exist to the extent that they are present in consciousness, on which they are dependent in their existence. The metaphysical realism of Jainism impacts its epistemological realism, according to which one has immediate access to reality, which one directly cognizes the way it is. It rejects the claim, for instance, that one can only know the reflections of real things or phenomena. At the same time, Jain epistemological realism cannot be reduced to its naive version, namely that objects are reproduced in cognition in a completely unprocessed manner.

Nothing is found in the mind that has not first been present in the real world outside of it. Even fictitious images and hallucinations have their

realist foundation: they are produced by artificial and unreal synthesis of true, real elements deriving from the world. Jains, however, cannot be classified as empiricists: perceptions primarily understood as forms of experience are not merely sensory. As substantialists, Jain thinkers accepted that real things are reflected in one's knowledge as units consisting of three interdependent layers: substance (*dravya*) alongside its qualities (*guṇa*) and modes (*paryāya*), none of which can exist independently. Furthermore, there is even a fourth layer of directly experienced but inexpressible transient occurrences (*vivarta*, *vartanā*), which can be neither verbalized nor conceptualized. Substance as a property bearer accounts for the permanence of a thing, for the thing's extension in time and self-identity, whereas qualities make it perceptible to the senses. Both substances and their qualities not only endure in time but also incessantly undergo changes through their modes. This explains an apparent paradox of how a real thing can be both permanent, which entails its immutability, and impermanent, that is changing and mutable. Everything that exists is characterized by origination (*utpāda*), continued existence (*sthiti*), and annihilation (*bhaṅga*) in every moment of its existence, an idea developed under an influence of the Buddhist Sarvāstivāda and Abhidharma notions of the four conditioned factors, known as contingent markers (*saṃskṛtalakṣaṇa*), which characterize all momentarily existent things. Such an understanding of reality and the reals as complex, multifaceted entities is an ontological extension of the Jain theory of the multiplexity of reality (*anekāntavāda*), which takes every individual thing as a part interconnected with other entities through infinite relations and as having a complex nature. The epistemic-semantic aspect of the theory of the multiplexity of reality deals with the question of how one can effectively know and verbally express such a multifaceted world of complexities. Indeed, no phenomenon can be comprehended and analyzed without its individual ontological context, with its particular complex temporal, spatial, causal, and other relations being ignored. A vast range of properties can be predicated on a given entity with equal right, and each of such perspectives seems equally justified due to the infinite manifoldness of interdependencies.[1]

A corollary of Jain metaphysical realism is the correspondence theory of truth and objectivity.

Propositions (utterances, statements, beliefs, and concepts) are true if they correspond to reality, which is the ultimate point of reference. Accordingly, propositions are true not simply because they are consistent with other accepted beliefs (coherence theory of truth), or are practically useful and effective (pragmatic theory of truth), but only because they conform to the actual state of affairs and to the way that things are there. This realist foundation was laid well after the 2nd century CE, when Jain thinkers were confronted with the tradition of analysis and methodical inquiry, *ānvīkṣikī*, with the Brahmanical philosophical schools of Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika, and with Buddhism, and were forced to rationally justify their religious beliefs. Prior to that, the prime criterion of truth had been moral relevance and rectitude. Also later ethical and epistemological questions often overlapped, as did Jain ethics and ontology, which can be seen for instance in the case of the seven soteriological categories (*tattva*):

1. living beings (*jīva*);
2. lifeless elements (*ajīva*);
3. influx of karmic matter (*āsrava*);
4. karmic bondage (*bandha*);
5. control or stoppage of karmic matter (*saṃvara*);
6. eradication of karmic matter (*nirjarā*); and
7. liberation (*mokṣa*);

with optionally also merit (*puṇya*) and demerit (*pāpa*) as two kinds of *karman*. The first two categories, being both of moral and ontological nature, formed also the skeleton for the metaphysical model of the five extensive entities (*astikāya*) as well as for the model of the five (or six) substances (*dravya*).

Accordingly, for the first few centuries of the existence of Jainism, cognition (*jñāna*) was considered primarily a means of knowing moral truths and soteriological goals; it was of little epistemological importance. Much of this early moral leaning remained also in the classical period. Cognition in the form of (morally) right cognition (*samyagjñāna*), alongside right belief (*samyagdarśana*) and right conduct (*samyakcāritra*), forms the path to liberation (*mokṣamārga*). Rightness (rather than mere correctness) of cognition in this case does certainly not mean a faithful reproduction of the state of affairs but first and foremost its correspondence to moral principles and its usefulness in religious practice.

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[1] Padmarajiah, 1963, 121–181; Balcerowicz, 2001, 379–380.

Its opposite, false cognition (*mithyājñāna, ajñāna*), characterizes a person classified as wrong believer (*mithyādṛṣṭi*), who acts out of moral ignorance and false belief (*mithyādarśana*), or simply falsehood (*mithyātva*), that is the wrong understanding of religious principles; it is not merely an inaccurate representation of facts.

It is therefore not a deception, cognitive error, impaired sense organs, logical incoherence, and so forth that would render a cognition false, but the cognizer's moral corruption, and this was believed to be due to the negative influence of one's own past deeds, or *karman*. As Umāsvāti explains in his *Tattvārthādhigamabhāṣya* (Commentary on the Comprehension of Reality), an exposition of Umāsvāmin's *Tattvārthasūtra* (Treatise on Reality),[2] what turns basic cognitive faculties of a wrong believer – such as sensuous (*matijñāna*), testimonial (*śrutajñāna*), and clairvoyant cognition (*avadhijñāna*) – into erroneous cognition (*ajñāna*) is false belief.[3] This falsehood makes one's cognition, according to Umāsvāmin, "like in the case of a madman, because one cannot distinguish between the real (*sat*) and the unreal (*asat*), inasmuch as one's comprehension is fortuitous," hence incoherent. This inborn and beginningless falsehood sets a cognitive veil on one's faculties, which is also of material nature: it consists of subtle karmic matter, which results from one's former deeds.

The actual agent as well as the cognitive and moral subject is the soul (*ātman*), or the living being (*jīva*), which is by nature pure. One undertakes threefold activity, with mind, speech, and body, and the activity is called *yoga*, or "connection," because through one's threefold actions, subtle material particles (*karman*) are assimilated by, or connected to, and obfuscate the soul and its innately perfect cognitive faculties. Of note is that *karman* carries a twofold meaning in Jainism: (1) one's ethically bound actions, and every action has an ethical dimension, as well as (2) subtle matter, which attaches to the soul and envelops it, which in turn determines the soul's future fate.

The process in which the soul acts and thereby assimilates the subtle karmic matter is known as the influx of karmic matter (*āsrava*), and its result is karmic bondage (*bandha*), mentioned as soteriological categories. Therefore, the soul acts under the influence of four *karman*-triggered passions (*kaṣāya*), namely anger (*krodha*), arrogance (*māna*), deceit (*māyā*), and desire (*lobha*), and while in the cycle of rebirth (*saṃsāra*), it endures in five different karmic states (*bhāva*): *karman*'s subsidence (*aupaśamikabhāva*), destruction (*kṣāyikabhāva*), partial subsidence mixed with partial destruction (*kṣāyopaśāmikabhāva*), manifestation (*audayikabhāva*), and natural transformation (*pāriṇāmikabhāva*).

Due to *karman*'s complex influence on one's epistemic faculties, karmic subtle material particles are classified as threefold: the veil of cognition (*jñānāvaraṇakarman*), the veil of perceptual experience (*darśanāvaraṇakarman*), and the *karman* causing confusion (*mohanīyakarman*).

Fortunately, the impact of *karman* and the karmic veils can be terminated by means of right belief (*samyagdarśana*) and right conduct (*samyakcāritra*), that is through rectitude (*samyaktva*), which translates into moral control limiting and ultimately preventing further influx of karmic matter, and into the eradication of karmic matter. A complete destruction of *karman* and a release from its veiling influence is a condition known as liberation (*mokṣa*), in which the soul realizes all its cognitive potential and becomes perfect (*siddha*). Such perfection is considered the ultimate goal of Jainism. In this way, Jain epistemology is strongly soteriologically oriented.

Jain epistemological tradition pursued two closely interrelated routes: that of an inquiry into the nature of cognitive faculties, typology of cognitive criteria, analysis of knowledge, its nature and sources, on the one hand, and, on the other, the theory of the multiplexity of reality (*anekāntavāda*), the connecting link between the two being the idea of cognitive criteria (*pramāṇa*).

Senses (*Indriya*) and Sense Organs

As all classical philosophers in India, Jains also distinguish five senses (*indriya*): touch (*sparśana*), taste (*rasana*), smell (*ghrāṇa*), sight (*cakṣus*), and hearing (*śrotra*), which grasp their respective domains (*viṣaya*), namely tactile (*sparśa*), gustatory (*rasa*), olfactory (*gandha*), visual (*varṇa*), and auditory (*śabda*) sensations. However, they also distinguish a sixth, quasi-sense organ (Pkt. *noindriya*; Skt. *anindriya*), the mind, which grasps all that is of verbal nature (*śruta*), namely concepts and thoughts, as

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[2]   see Balcerowicz, 2017a, 191.

[3]   *TBh.* 1.30; pp. 30–31.

well as mental processes (*manovṛtti*) and the flow of consciousness (*oghajñāna*). This implies that all thought and all contents of consciousness are verbal. Sense organs are a distinguishing mark of an incarnated soul (*jīva*) inhabiting a material body, which necessarily inhibits its inborn extrasensory cognitive faculties. That is why the soul is dependent on senses in order to cognize. Each of the five senses is twofold: the material sense organ (*dravyendriya*) and the factual inner sense (*bhāvendriya*). An uninhibited joint work of both is required for any perception to occur. A physical damage of the material sense organ does not destroy the sense capacity within. An unimpaired material sense organ does not produce perception when the inner sense is damaged or disconnected, for instance due to inattention. The former, made of various types of ordinary, coarse matter, consists of two elements. The first is sensory receptors (*nirvṛtti*), for example the cornea and pupil, the process of the production of which is impacted by two subvarieties of karmic matter, namely organ-forming *karman* (*aṅgakarman*) and lesser organ-forming *karman* (*upāṅgakarman*), and of the body-forming *karman* (*śarīranāmakarman*). The second is accessories (*upakaraṇa*), which support the receptors (e.g. eyelids and eyelashes). Similarly, the inner sense has two elements: the predisposition (*labdhi*), or the potential to grasp, and the cognitive faculty (*upayoga*), that is the actual utilization of the predisposition. Predisposition is a condicio sine qua non for all the three other components of a sense organ to materialize and function.

Cognitive Faculties (*Upayoga*) and Valid Cognition (*Pramā*)

Jain epistemology can be described through some basic models of cognitions and cognitive faculties, which developed over a period of a few centuries. The historically earliest part of Jain epistemology is the classification of cognition (*jñāna*) into a range of varieties in a hierarchical sequence that culminates in perfect cognition, or omniscience. At least 14 various models can be distinguished,[4] the earliest of which is the one classifying all cognitions into five types:

1. sensuous cognition (*abhinibodha,mati*);
2. testimonial cognition (*śruta*);
3. clairvoyance (*avadhi*);
4. telepathy (*manaḥparyāya*); and

5. omniscience (*kevala*), which is a perfect and absolute form of cognition.

This classification was present already at a relatively early canonical stage, perhaps around the 1st century BCE, and was preserved throughout Jain history.

The first variety of cognition in this model is sensuous cognition (*abhinibodha*), also known as "apprehension" or "mental process" (*mati*), which was understood as a most basic kind of cognition common to all living beings. Initially, it comprised any sense-based cognition that could not be classified under the remaining four kinds and referred to any cognition based on direct experience. Gradually, and probably under the influence of Nyāya, its understanding was refined to broadly refer to a cognition derived from sense organs and the mind, or a quasi-sense organ, and their contact with an external object.

Probably around the 3rd/4th century CE, it approximated an idea of sensory perception broadly understood, but never limited or reduced to pure sensation: it also comprised mental insight, that is inner apprehension of mental images, memories, and so on as well as processes of simple reasoning, sensation of doubt, acts of deliberation and cogitation, recognition, and so forth. In the 4th century CE, it came to comprise four consecutive stages, all taking place almost within a short moment. (1) Sensation (*avagraha*), or the first contact of a sense organ and the object, is defined as unclear, unspecified reception of a sensory data through one particular sense organ, which is merely stimulated or "woken up," activated by the data. In the phase of (nonconceptual) sensation of momentary manifestation (*vyañjanāvagraha*), the cognizer may not even be aware which particular sense organ has been activated, as in the case of a person who has been asleep and suddenly awoken by a sensory stimulus. This nonconceptual phase is found in four senses: tactile, auditory, gustatory, and olfactory. The visual sense and the mental organ (the mind, a quasi-sense that grasps concepts) can proceed only at the conceptual stage known as the sensation of the object (*arthāvagraha*) as do all the remaining senses as well. This conceptual phase leads to the next stage of (2) cogitation (*īhā*), which is speculation with regard to the character of the sensory data that enters the sensory apparatus and an internal process of its analysis. At this stage, the process of the actual classification and determination of a particular sense data begins. A set of particular features recognized

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4 Balcerowicz, 2016a.

through it is being tentatively ascribed to one of possible referents and can be formulated as a question of the form, "Is *x A* or *B* (or *C* etc.)?", for instance "Is this white flickering object in the distance a crane or a flag?" As distinguished from the preceding phases, sometimes classified as not having any definite contents (*anākāra*), this and subsequent stages are known as having definite contents (*sākāra*). This stage is followed by (3) perceptual judgment (*avāya, apāya*), that is a process that removes doubt with respect to the character of the sensory data and determines the source of the sensation. The previous hesitation with regard to the nature and character of the sensory data is resolved: "It is a crane (it is moving)." (4) Retention (*dhāraṇā*) is the culmination of the whole cognitive process, and it preserves the judgment, or conclusion, of the cognitive process, in memory, and therefore it becomes the source for future memory.

In the process of sensuous cognition, one can distinguish two phases, nonconceptual, an initial instant restricted to all senses except vision and the mind, and conceptual, which seems to be an influence of the distinction into pure, nonconceptual (*nirvikalpaka*) and conceptual (*savikalpaka*), cognitions, introduced by the schools of Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, and Buddhism. In conceptual cognitions, the "bare percepts" are associated with mental concepts and universal ideas (*sāmānya*), linked to language and classified under various categories. This model turned out to be inconsistent when the theory of cognitive criteria (*pramāṇa*) was adopted by the Jains and when they began to develop the theory of inference (*anumāna*), which was classified as a different type of cognition from sensuous cognition (from now on closely resembling perception) but with which it partially overlapped (especially the stages of cogitation, perceptual judgment, and retention seem to form a kind of inner reasoning similar to inference).

The second variety is testimonial cognition (*śruta*), which literally means "the heard" or "the revealed," and is a cognition of what is heard and comprehended. With its basis in language, it covers all cognition that is not gained from direct experience of the cognizing subject but from verbal communication with another person. It corresponds to what is known as verbal cognition (*śabda, śābda*) recognized by certain Brahmanical schools. Originally, it was mainly understood to comprise all cognition acquired from scriptures or orally transmitted scriptural tradition, that is teachings, or

the "revelation," imparted by a religious authority (*āpta*), primarily the Tīrthaṅkaras. A nonphilosophical, religious background of this kind of cognition was so deep that its two main divisions were called *aṅgapraviṣṭa* (included in primary canonical texts) and *aṅgabahya* (included in secondary canonical texts).

The third variety of cognition is clairvoyance, or telesthesia (*avadhi*), considered the lowest of all the remaining suprasensory cognitions. With it, one grasps directly – that is without senses and the mind – only macroscopic objects, possessed of physical form (*rūpin*), which are at a distance or are behind a physical barrier. Only certain living beings could have this faculty: it was innate in divine beings (*deva*) and denizens of hells (*nāraka*), whereas some animals and ascetics could acquire it through special practices. It was an expression of a widespread belief popular in India (and not only) that some individuals (humans, ghosts, etc.) can perceive objects that ordinary humans cannot.

The fourth variety – telepathy, or mind reading (*manaḥparyāya, manaḥparyaya*; lit. penetration of the mind) – is still more subtle: with it one can directly grasp other persons' thoughts or the contents of other minds. To be acquired, it required moral excellence and advancement on the spiritual path to perfection. Again, it was an offshoot of a popular pan-Indian belief that it was possible to read other people's minds. This belief rests on a conviction that thoughts and minds are not abstract, noncorporeal entities but are of somatic nature: they are subtle, physical, and occupying particular space.

The apex of the hierarchy of cognitions is its fifth variety, omniscience (*kevala*) – perfect and absolute knowledge, which is never lost and which is acquired only by the perfected beings (*siddha*) as a culmination of their spiritual practice. One first becomes "the omniscient being with residual activities" (*sayogikevalin*), with limited influence of *karman*, still during embodiment, a condition technically known as the 13th "stage of virtue" (*guṇasthāna*). Thereafter, one achieves the condition of "the omniscient being with no residual activities" (*ayogikevalin*), that is the final, 14th *guṇasthāna*, for a short moment at the very end of *saṃsāra* (Glasenapp, 1942, 90–92), whereupon one departs to the world of the perfected beings (*siddhaloka*) as a liberated, perfected being (*siddha*) in a true sense. Omniscience has no limit: the omniscient person (*kevalin*) simultaneously knows literally everything, distant and sublime, material and mental, in all aspects and in

all times. For the Jains, omniscience is not a potential to know everything on which one focuses his or her attention (like in the case of the Buddha).[5] To be omniscient means to be liberated, because the cause for restricted cognitive faculties and for transmigration (*saṃsāra*) is the same: beginningless *karman* in the form of subtle matter that literally envelops and obfuscates an innately pure soul. To become perfect, omniscient, and liberated is one and the same thing: with the removal of karmic matter, the soul regains its natural condition of purity, both ethical and epistemic, and never returns to the mundane condition. It is not a result of a true transformation of consciousness or deep meditation. This condition of perfection has been the (theoretical) ultimate goal and ideal for all the Jains.

The description of the earliest model of cognitions already incorporates its historically later variants. The model, gradually extended over centuries, clearly lacks consistency. Its actual origins are to be sought in religious and doctrinal beliefs rather than in philosophical inquiry. The model groups all the cognitions hierarchically, from the sensuous cognition, the lowest of all and present in any living creature in some form, via a range of more elitist and sophisticated kinds, to the supreme, perfect cognition of the Jinas and other perfect beings (*siddha*). This idea of a "cognitive ladder" is later used by the Jains as an argument from progression to prove the existence of omniscience and omniscient beings, and its structure closely resembles Aristotle's two arguments for god's existence, "from the prime mover" and "from the first cause," also known as a cosmological argument.[6] The idea of an omniscient being is pivotal in Jainism: it is the foundation of the Jain moral path, Jain religiosity and religious practice, metaphysical claims, epistemology, and philosophy in general; it is also vital for explaining the uniquely Jain understanding of *karman*. It is no wonder that Jain philosophers formulated around 20 arguments for the existence of such a person.[7]

Another model developed slightly later by the Jains classifies cognitions under two distinct categories: direct cognition (*pratyakṣa*) and indirect cognition (*parokṣa*).[8] This model and terminology may have an early Brahmanic background,[9] however the way it is construed is uniquely Jain. All cognition acquired by the soul directly, in other words

not mediated by any physical organ, is called direct, whereas any cognition in which sense organs or the mind play any role is called indirect. The criterion of immediacy was the soul (*jīva*) itself: it was considered the actual "perceiving organ" (*akṣa*; lit. the eye), being the ultimate agent of all actions, whereas the mind, speech, and body were merely its instruments. Such understanding stood in stark contrast to all Indian philosophical traditions, which all understood the term *pratyakṣa* (direct cognition) as sensory perception. Around the 2nd century CE, this and the previous models merged.

It was probably around the 2nd–3rd centuries CE that another important concept was introduced, namely that of cognitive faculties (*upayoga*; lit. use), considered one of the defining characteristics of the soul, which meant the soul's capability to use its innate potential. Two such cognitive faculties are distinguished: cognition (*jñāna*), defined as distinct and manifest (*vyakta*), that is having definite contents (*sākāra*) and grasping its object along with its modes (*saparyāya*), and perceptual experience (*darśana*), understood as indistinct or manifest (*vyakta*), not having any definite contents (*anākāra*), through which one merely becomes aware of the presence of an object along with its general existence (*sāmānyarūpatā*).[10] However, in this aspect of indeterminateness, it approximates sensation of momentary manifestation (*vyañjanāvagraha*), the very nonconceptual phase of sensuous cognition (*abhinibodha*, *mati*). The former idea in the model, *jñāna* (cognition), is rather straightforward, whereas the latter, *darśana*, is philosophically problematic. Both terms were adopted into this epistemological model from an earlier, clearly soteriological scheme that describes a path to liberation (*mokṣamārga*) as consisting of four (later three) elements, the first two being the same as in the epistemological model, albeit with a certain semantic shift, (1) cognition (*jñāna*), (2) belief (*darśana*), or conation, that is religious worldview or the proper moral attitude in life and moral worldview, (3) conduct (*cāritra*), and (4) ascetic practice (*tapas*).[11] Both cognitive faculties are originally enumerated among the soul's four faculties, besides happiness (*sukha*) and suffering (*duḥkha*).[12] What was initially the pair of cognition (*jñāna*) and belief (*darśana*) was also enumerated alongside conduct (*cāritra*), ascetic practice (*tapas*),

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[5]   see Jaini, 1974.

[6]   Balcerowicz, 2016b.

[7]   Balcerowicz, 2016b.

[8]   Shastri, 1990, 227–422.

[9]   Balcerowicz, 2016a, 1001–1002.

[10]   Shastri, 1990, 423–461.

[11]   *US.* 28.2; trans. Jacobi, 1895, 152; *TS.* 1.1.

[12]   *US.* 28.10; trans. Jacobi, 1895, 153.

innate energy (*vīrya*), and cognitive faculties (*upay-oga*) as the characteristics of the soul.[13] When the pair became the foundation of a new epistemo-logical model of two distinct cognitive faculties, the terms came to mean cognition (*jñāna*) and perceptual experience (*darśana*), no longer belief (*darśana*). Besides the standard perception, either sensory or extrasensory, the Jains also recognize the existence of apperception, or inner perception of mental states.

Around 350–400 CE, the earlier model of five cog-nitions and the scheme of two cognitive faculties merged into a new extended model, which became the main point of reference in Jain epistemology and remained so for centuries, despite its further developments. The new model[14] distinguishes five varieties of correct cognition (*jñāna*), three kinds of erroneous cognition (*ajñāna*) in the form of the opposites of the first three correct cognitions, and four kinds of perceptual experience (*darśana*), as in diagram 1.

A conspicuous feature of this and similar models is that cognition (*jñāna*) and perceptual experience (*darśana*), being two distinct cognitive faculties, culminate in their perfect, absolute versions of per-fect cognition (*kevalajñāna*), or omniscience, and perfect perceptual experience (*kevaladarśana*), or omniperception. This presented Jain thinkers with a range of problems when trying to explain how these two perfect, absolute cognitive faculties at the stage of the omniscient being (*kevalin*) could be distinguished.[15]

Erroneous cognition (*mithyājñāna*) or nescience (*ajñāna*) is defined as the grasp of something in a distorted form, or apprehension of *P* sometimes as non-*P* and sometimes as *P*,[16] for example "of iron rust in place of gold, but also iron rust as iron rust."[17] It is incoherence and randomness that render such cognition unreliable and false, whereas a consistent and exceptionless distortion of the world could eas-ily be employed as a dependable means of know-ing in a valid way: an image of an object projected
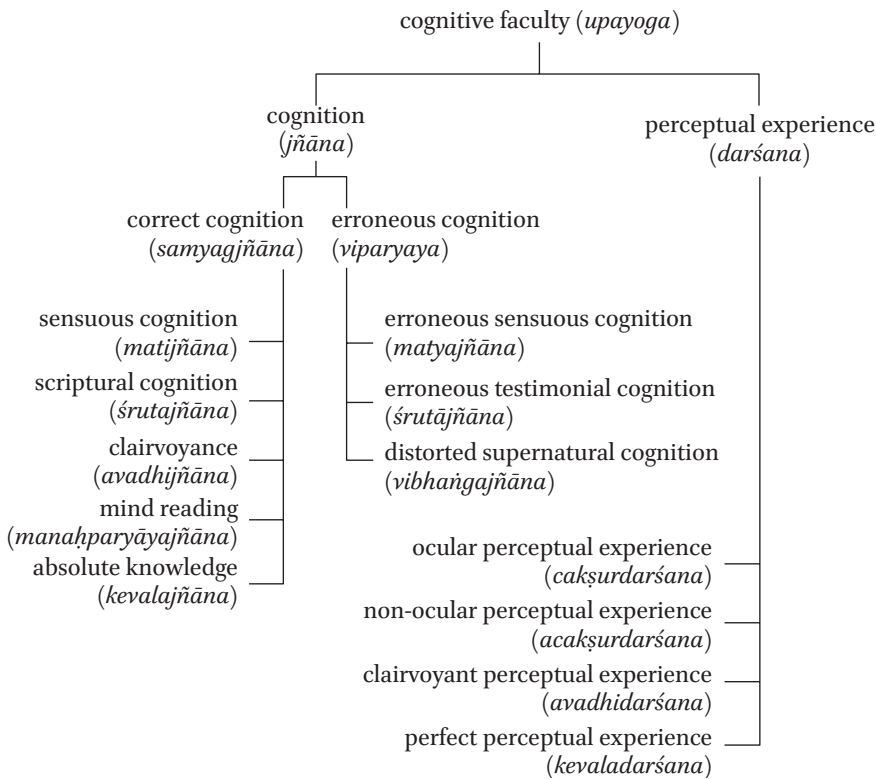

cognitive faculty (*upayoga*)

cognition (*jñāna*) — perceptual experience (*darśana*)

correct cognition (*samyagjñāna*) — erroneous cognition (*viparyaya*)

sensuous cognition (*matijñāna*)
scriptural cognition (*śrutajñāna*)
clairvoyance (*avadhijñāna*)
mind reading (*manaḥparyāyajñāna*)
absolute knowledge (*kevalajñāna*)

erroneous sensuous cognition (*matyajñāna*)
erroneous testimonial cognition (*śrutājñāna*)
distorted supernatural cognition (*vibhaṅgajñāna*)

ocular perceptual experience (*cakṣurdarśana*)
non-ocular perceptual experience (*acakṣurdarśana*)
clairvoyant perceptual experience (*avadhidarśana*)
perfect perceptual experience (*kevaladarśana*)

Diagram 1

[13] *US.* 28.11; trans. Jacobi, 1895, 153.
[14] model XI in Balcerowicz, 2016a.
[15] Tatia, 1951, 69–80.
[16] *TS.* Ś.1.33/D.1.32.
[17] *TBh.* 1.33; pp. 31–32; *RVār.* 1.32; p. 92.

through the lens on the retina is reproduced in an inverted way, upside down, but such a consistent distortion is then reverted and corrected. Here we can notice a certain pragmatic tilt in the Jain correspondence theory of truth. A cognition is false not simply because it reproduces *P* as non-*P*, but because it does so randomly, inconsistently, and unexpectedly, and therefore provides no firm basis for any action based on such a cognitive act. Nescience[18] is explained by the Jains as a result of two kinds of karmic matter that distort the inner epistemic capacity of the soul (*jīva*): cognition-veiling *karman* (*jñānāvaraṇīyakarman*) is responsible for the distorted image of an object, whereas deluding *karman* (*mohanīyakarman*) superimposes a foreign element onto the image and leads to an inaccurate synthesis of real elements into a fictitious aggregate. The impact of these kinds of *karman* on cognitive states is further conditioned by the four basic passions (*kaṣāya*), namely anger (*krodha*), arrogance (*māna*), deceitfulness (*māyā*), and greed (*lobha*).[19] Doubt is also explained as a result of *karman*.

Cognitive Criteria (*Pramāṇa*)

Parallel to the scheme of cognitive faculties of the soul, which had its soteriological background, another important stream of thought came to dominate Jain epistemology after the 5th century CE. This is the theory of cognitive criteria (*pramāṇa*), perhaps the most central concept in all classical Indian philosophy. After the 2nd/3rd century CE, Jainism adopted the idea of a "cognitive tool" or "the cause of valid cognition" (*hetu*), soon thereafter called "cognitive criterion" (*pramāṇa*), or cognitively valid procedure (often translated as "means of knowledge"), from the traditions of *ānvīkṣikī* and Nyāya. Eventually it was partially integrated with earlier models of five cognitions. Two main cognitive criteria were distinguished, namely direct cognition (*pratyakṣa*) and indirect cognition (*parokṣa*); the former comprised clairvoyance (*avadhi*), telepathy (*manaḥparyāya*), and omniscience (*kevala*), whereas the latter comprised sensuous (*mati*) and testimonial (*śruta*) cognition. To introduce the theory of cognitive criteria into Jain philosophy was a historically vital step that integrated Jain thought into Indian philosophy and marked the beginning of the golden ages of Jain

philosophy and epistemology, during which Jain thinkers began to participate in the pan-Indian philosophical debate. However, the early Jain model of two cognitive criteria was both incoherent and confusing to other Indian philosophers, for whom also sensory perception was direct (*pratyakṣa*), because Jains alone held the view that sensory perception was indirect.

The idea of cognitive criteria (*pramāṇa*), or cognitively valid procedures, concerns the question of the foundations of knowledge: these are the valid means of knowing, which warrant that the result of the process is a valid true cognition. Traditionally, cognitive criterion as a process was differentiated from its result, valid cognition (*pramiti, pramā*). However, Jain philosophers, slightly similar to their Buddhist counterparts, often used these two ideas interchangeably and maintained that, on the one hand, the same valid cognition (*jñāna*) can be considered a result of a cognitive criterion, but, on the other, it is the cognitive criterion per se, because it is a part of a cognitive process and leads to further conclusions.[20]

Probably the first one who brought Jain terminology of cognitive criteria in line with general Indian understanding of the concept, and who devised a new, much more consistent model was Siddhasena Mahāmati (710/720–770/780 CE), possibly inspired by his contemporary, Pātrasvāmin (alias Pātrakesarin/Pātrakesarisvāmin?; c. 660–720 CE). Siddhasena Mahāmati was also the first Jaina philosopher who formulated a descriptive definition of cognitive criterion, which "is the cognition revealing itself and something else different from it (sc. object), and is free from subversion,"[21] that is it is not sublated or invalidated by a later act of cognition. He also introduced a completely new understanding of the twofold division of cognitive criteria, albeit preserving their original names: perception (*pratyakṣa*) and indirect cognition (*parokṣa*), which correspond to the way in which their respective objects are determined,[22] as in diagram 2.

This new approach was much more consistent and reconciled earlier models. From then onward, it became accepted in Jainism that perception could be both sensory, or conventional, and suprasensory, or absolute, perfect omniscient perception (*kevalapratyakṣa*). Indirect cognition comprises all the remaining kinds of valid cognitions and cognitive

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[18] Shastri, 1990, 462–482.

[19] Tatia, 1951, 220–260.

[20] *NyAṬ.*₁ 4; p. 50=*NyAṬ.*₂ 4; p. 33.

[21] *NyA.*₁ 1; p. 333; trans. Balcerowicz, 2008, 9.
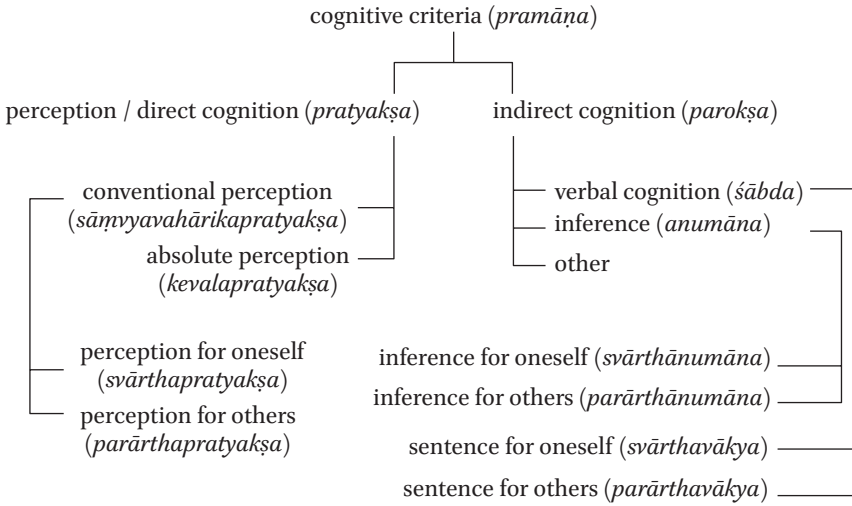
[22] model XIV in Balcerowicz, 2016a.

cognitive criteria (*pramāṇa*)

perception / direct cognition (*pratyakṣa*) indirect cognition (*parokṣa*)

conventional perception
(*sāṃvyavahārikapratyakṣa*)

absolute perception
(*kevalapratyakṣa*)

verbal cognition (*śābda*)

inference (*anumāna*)

other

perception for oneself
(*svārthapratyakṣa*)

perception for others
(*parārthapratyakṣa*)

inference for oneself (*svārthānumāna*)

inference for others (*parārthānumāna*)

sentence for oneself (*svārthavākya*)

sentence for others (*parārthavākya*)

Diagram 2

procedures: verbal cognition (*śābda*), based on language; inference (*anumāna*), as the basis for Jain logic; and a range of other kinds of cognition, such as reasoning by analogy (*upamāna*), scriptures (*āgama*), and presumption (*arthāpatti*). Siddhasena Mahāmati's novel idea, inspired by the Buddhist logician Dharmakīrti (550–610 CE), is that all valid cognitions that ordinary humans can acquire can be either "for oneself" (*svārthapramāna*), that is they serve the epistemic goals of the cognitive subject alone, or "for others" (*parārthapramāna*), that is they are elements of communication of one's cognitions to other people.

Multiplexity of Reality (*Anekānta*) and Methods of Its Description

Jain philosophers maintain that an adequate comprehension of reality can be accomplished through cognitive criteria (*pramāṇa*) and conditionally valid predications (*naya*),[23] which subsequent Jain tradition interprets as two kinds of philosophical inquiry into the multiplexity of reality (*anekāntavāda*). And this directly links the idea of cognitive faculties and cognitive criteria to the doctrine of the multiplexity of reality (*anekāntavāda*) in its epistemological-semantic aspect. Jain philosophers have developed a complex methodology to describe the complexity of the world, and this is what the

epistemological-semantic aspect of the theory of the multiplexity of reality is about. The theory comprises three such analytical methods: the method of the four standpoints (*nikṣepavāda*, *nyāsavāda*), the method of viewpoints (*nayavāda*), or the sevenfold method of conditionally valid predications, and the method of the sevenfold modal description (*syādvāda*, *saptabhaṅgī*). These are considered complementary. Sometimes, all the three methods are reckoned among the so-called methods of analysis (*anuyogadvāra*), which are an even broader concept.

The well-known term *saptabhaṅgī* (lit. seven-figured approach) has been treated as a synonym of *syādvāda* (lit. modal description) by the researchers for at least the last hundred years. However, toward the late classical period, Jain philosophers, such as Prabhācandra, Hemacandra, Māilladhavala (or Māilladhavaladeva; Digambara; c. 1200), and Malliṣeṇa, spoke of two kinds of such seven-figured approach: sevenfold description through cognitive criteria (*pramāṇasaptabhaṅgī*), that is *syādvāda* (modal description) proper, and sevenfold description through viewpoints (*nayasaptabhaṅgī*), that is *nayavāda* (the theory of viewpoints).

The epistemological-semantic background for the theory of the multiplexity of reality is set by the maxim that "every sentence functions with a restriction," in other words no singular term of sentence can adequately refer to its *denotatum* but represents

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[23] *TS.* 1.6.

merely a particular cross section of it, focusing on its particular feature. Accordingly, every term or proposition is necessarily ambiguous and emphasizes just one facet out of many, and to understand it, one has to precisely know its exact context and sphere of application, one of innumerable possible ones. Similarly, no single object can be comprehensively described in a single sentence or term.

Multiplexity of Reality and Standpoints (*Nikṣepa, Nyāsa*)

The four standpoints (*nikṣepa, nyāsa*) are the oldest of the three methods of relating the complex reality to our language and descriptions of it, and their beginnings most probably go back to Pārśva himself; the earliest reference is found in the *Ṛṣibhāṣitāni*, in a section attributed to him.[24] They are frequently used in early Jain canonical literature too.[25] In contradistinction to the remaining two components of the theory of the multiplexity of reality, which deal with propositions (sentences), this method is concerned with the meanings of terms (words).

The standpoints are rooted in a belief that the meaning of a term depends on the understanding that it brings about in the mind and according to which we establish a relation between the term and its *designatum*: a concept (selected out of a range of possible concepts) behind the term leads us to a particular thing. This approach slightly resembles a medieval (e.g. John Buridan's) understanding of the notion of *suppositio*, going back to the Aristotelian *Hermeneutics*, according to which an individual term (*dictio*), possessing two semantic layers, represents an object-related concept linked by an utterance within a particular sentential context, as distinguished from *significatio*, which directly relates a concept to a real thing (*res*) via a standard convention. In Jain theory, the meaning of a term t is not a simple *denotatum* x but rather a relation between t and a particular *denotatum* x_1 selected out of a possible semantic range of concepts $\{x_1...x_n\}$ linked to objects that can be denoted by the term t depending on a particular interpretation of it. Both terms (*nikṣepa, nyāsa*), translated here as "standpoints," mean "casting, throw, placement, allocation" within a context determined by the speaker's intention. In other words, the term is "projected" onto a particular existent object according to the intention (translated into a concept) and context. The point of departure here is the term and its usage.

Four such basic standpoints are traditionally distinguished (but sometimes more are also mentioned):

1. name (*nāman*);
2. material representation (*sthāpanā*);
3. substance (*dravya*); and
4. actual condition (*bhāva*).

For instance, the term "king" (*rāja* = *rex*) can function on four basic semantic planes, and a particular thing x is "a king" in one of the four semantic dimensions: (1) in terms of its name, any thing we decide to call "king" is a king, for example a dog called Rex is the king; (2) in terms of material representation, any thing that is an imitation of a king is the king, for example a caricature of a particular person, who is a monarch, is the king; (3) in terms of substance, any thing that was, is, or will substantially be a monarch is a king, for example the ashes of a monarch are the king; (4) in terms of actual condition, any thing that is actually performing the activities ascribed to a monarch (such as holding the office not accessible to any other, ruling, plundering, or oppressing the subjects) is the king, but not someone who is now asleep and so on. Despite terms being thus ambiguous, language regularly operates on these semantic planes, and speakers allocate a particular semantic layer to a particular term in a given context. Such an interplay of various semantic layers can today be observed for instance in the case of René Magritte's famous painting *Ceci n'est pas une pipe* ("This is not a pipe").

Multiplexity of Reality and Viewpoints (*Naya*)

The theory of viewpoints (*nayavāda*) classically consists of seven conditionally valid predications, but more such predications can be conceived of, each reflecting a particular aspect of reality. The theory was developed by both Jains and Ājīvikas at an early historical stage.[26] This method provides semantic tools to disambiguate a particular sentence by allocating it to a context in which it is true. The point of departure here is the sentence (utterance), its actual usage and interpretation. Every sentence can

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[24] *ṚBh.* 31.(7); Jain, 1988, 58–60; Balcerowicz, 2016c, 179–182.
[25] Alsdorf, 1973; Bhatt, 1978; Jain, 2006.

[26] Balcerowicz, 2016c, 203–204, 220–221.

possibly be true in its particular context and only in such a context, not outside of it. When its semantic emphasis, the particular cross section of reality, is taken as an exhaustive description of the whole reality, the sentence is false.[27]

Usually, the viewpoints, or interpretative factors, are classified into two major groups: substantial (*dravyāstikanaya*) or substance expressive (*dravyārthikanaya*), and attributive (*paryāyāstikanaya*) or mode expressive (*paryāyārthikanaya*). The former emphasizes the substantial, essential aspect of a phenomenon, the self-identity and permanence of things. The latter highlights the opposite, namely transience and incessant transformation of things, their impermanence and momentary character. The sentence "everything flows" is true only within the bounds of the mode-expressive viewpoint, inasmuch as nothing is changeless in all its aspects. However, when understood as an exhaustive description of all phenomena in all their aspects, it is patently false because one can arguably discern certain layers of reality that are enduring and constant, for nothing is either absolutely impermanent or absolutely permanent in all its aspects. Furthermore, both sentences – "everything flows" and "nothing flows" – can be true, with all laws of classical logic preserved intact. Each of them is a truncated, incomplete statement, and their exact points of reference are not expressly stated. What they *can* mean, once completed and disambiguated, may for instance be "everything flows with respect to modes" and "nothing flows with respect to substance" (changeless self-identity). When both predications, substantial and attributive, are taken jointly, they express a comprehensive depiction of a particular thing with all its ontological layers of substance (*dravya*), qualities (*guṇa*), and modes (*paryāya*).

Usually, since Siddhasena Divākara, all viewpoints are classified under these two main headings as follows:

a. substance expressive (*dravyārthika*): (1) comprehensive (*naigama*); (2) collective (*saṃgraha*); and (3) empirical (*vyavahāra*);

b. mode expressive (*paryāyārthika*): (4) direct (*ṛjusūtra*); (5) verbal (*śabda*); (6) etymological (*samabhirūḍha*); and (7) factual (*evaṃbhūta*, *itthaṃbhāva*).

The original terms are variously rendered into English, either highlighting their etymology ([1] common viewpoint, [2] general viewpoint, [3] practical viewpoint, [4] straight-thread viewpoint, [5] verbal viewpoint, [6] subtle viewpoint, and [7] thus-happened viewpoint)[28] or their suggested meaning ([1] universal-particular viewpoint, [2] summarizing viewpoint, [3] viewpoint of worldly transactions, [4] viewpoint of ultimate particulars, [5] viewpoint of synonymy, [6] viewpoint of semantic analysis, and [7] such-like viewpoint).[29]

A conspicuous feature of such a model is that each subsequent viewpoint is often represented as having a narrower, more restricted and more specific, reference, and it narrows the scope of the preceding one, a feature that is noticed by Jain philosophers themselves (e.g. Pūjyapāda Devanandin). A viewpoint widest in scope is the comprehensive viewpoint (*naigama*), which is a commonplace and unreflected everyday approach that does not distinguish between the class and its members or the universal, on the one hand, and particulars instantiating it, on the other. For instance, the sentence "the mongoose digs up the forest litter" is deliberately imprecise: it does not specify whether, say, the whole genus of *Herpestes* is meant or a particular species or specimen. Some later interpretations (e.g. Devasūri Vādin, Malliṣeṇa) take this view to embrace all that exists – as the highest universal (*mahāsāmānya*) of pure existence (*sattā*) – in an undifferentiated manner. The collective (*saṃgraha*) viewpoint denotes classes (*jāti*) and universals (*sāmānya*). Precisely the same sentence will therefore take "the mongoose" in the sense of a class of carnivorans of a mongoose genus. The empirical viewpoint (*vyavahāra*) selects a particular specimen out of the genus. We can therefore have a pair of sentences – "the mongoose digs up the forest litter" and "the mongoose does not dig up the forest litter" – which, when not analyzed, appear to be contradictory, but when disambiguated via the method of viewpoints, entail no contradiction at all: the former describes a general behavior of the genus, whereas the latter refers to a particular mongoose that simply happens not to follow the general behavioral pattern of its fellow mongooses. According to the next, direct viewpoint (*ṛjusūtra*), the same sentence is true if and only if it refers to the same animal but actively involved *now*

[27] Balcerowicz, 2001; 2003.

[28] e.g. Matilal, 1981.

[29] e.g. Gorisse, Clerbout & Rahman, 2010.

(or at some other particular point of time that one intends to highlight) in the situation or behavior that the sentence describes: "the mongoose digs$_{NOW}$ up the forest litter." Since neither Sanskrit nor Prakrits (the languages in which the theory of viewpoints was conceptualized) know the distinction between simple and continuous tenses, the statement would be expressed in English rather as, "the mongoose *is digging* up the forest litter." The subsequent three viewpoints introduce a completely new range of semantics, based on synonymy and other linguistic features of an expression. The first one of these, the verbal viewpoint (*śabda*), treats all synonyms as fully interchangeable, for example, "the mongoose is digging up the forest litter" and "the ichneumon is rummaging in the duff" – if the former is true, then the latter is necessarily true. However, the etymological viewpoint (*samabhirūḍha*) distinguishes between these two, and according to it, one of them can be true, whereas the other one may not. The last one, the factual viewpoint (*evaṃbhūta*), takes a statement to be true if and only if its etymology and other semantic features correspond to the situation that is occurring right now. For instance, "the mongoose digs$_{NOW}$ (= is digging) up the forest litter" is true only when the animal is doing it silently ("mongoose," its etymology is derived via Marathi *muṅgūsa* and Portugese *mangusto* from *muṅga/*mūká*°, "mute") and within the bounds of a forest, not outside of it. One can observe that seemingly one and the same statement, for example, "the mongoose digs up the forest litter," may have different truth values, that is be true or false, depending on different contexts. In fact, such a sentence is only superficially one and the same. Depending on the viewpoint, its meaning is supplied with additional semantic content, and the sentence is no longer the same. In fact, what sounds like one and the same sentence turns out to be quite a different sentence depending on the point of reference, or the viewpoint. One can easily notice how the idea of truncated, incomplete statements is at work here. The method of viewpoints allows one to determine whether a particular sentence is true in a particular context and false in another one, in which case we deal in fact with a similar sentence but not the same, and to specify under what conditions a particular sentence can be true. It is often said that there is an infinite number of viewpoints, because there are infinite ways of putting forth a proposition (Siddhasena Divākara),[30] that is an uninterpreted and originally ambiguous sentence can be infinitely contextualized and supplied with more precise additional information, but for all practical reasons, only seven are usually mentioned as the most practical.

In this way, an interpretation of a proposition (utterance, sentence) is never straightforward. Being ambiguous, incomplete and uninterpreted, no single utterance directly carries its truth value (see diagram 3).

In fact, whether a proposition is true or not can be decided only via a particular viewpoint – or index – selected out of a whole spectrum of viewpoints that corresponds to the intention of the speaker (see diagram 4). The viewpoint, or index, contains the speaker's intention as well as selected linguistic conventions that govern the usage of words in particular contexts.

In short, the theory of viewpoints can be formalized in symbolic logic as a model of the context-based interpretation $\mathfrak{I}$ of the utterances α, β, γ...that belong to a class of formulas (possible utterances): $\mathfrak{I}$ = < D, I, A >. Under interpretation $\mathfrak{I}$, D is the domain of admissible interpretations (a class of conceivable situations: phenomena or individuals in action, process, condition, state, etc.) denotable by the utterances α, β, γ); I is a class of indices i, or viewpoints, which are context indicators; A comprises i-indexed classes of actual denotata. Accordingly, A_i (a referent or denotatum of a particular utterance disambiguated via a particular viewpoint) is a particular class indexed with a given index $i \in I$ (the i-interpreted class), which subsumes actual situations under circumstances described by index i (a viewpoint). The truth value of the i-interpreted utterance α (i.e. asserted from a particular viewpoint) depends on the actual context represented by the circumstances delimited by elements of the class I (indices, or viewpoints) in the interpretation $\mathfrak{I}$. The truth value of

utterance   truth value

○   ————————————▶   ●

Diagram 3

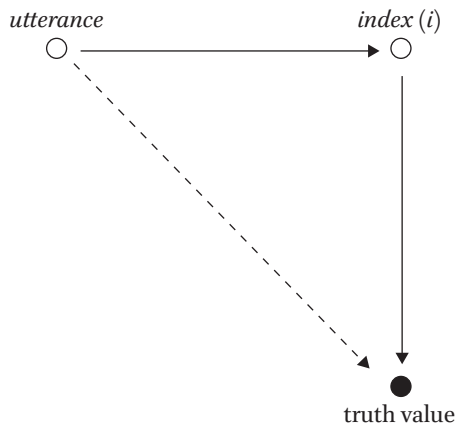[30] *STP.* 3.47.

utterance   index (i)

truth value

Diagram 4

any i-interpreted utterance α depends on the actual context represented by an index i (viewpoint) of the class I in the interpretation $\mathfrak{I}$.[31]

The theory of viewpoints is sometimes interpreted differently, for instance as a Jain version of dialogical logic, that is a theory of disputation based on a theory of meaning for logical constants based on argumentative practices.[32]

Kundakunda, as the author of the *Pañcāstikāya-saṃgraha* (Pkt. *Paṃcatthiyasaṃgaha*; Compendium of the Five Extensive Entities), is often credited with proposing two other kinds of viewpoints: the empirical (*vyavahāranaya*) and the absolute (*niścayanaya*). The former is a mundane standpoint of actual interactions and phenomena as seen by an uncultivated, commonsensical mind (e.g. "the living being lives and dies"), whereas the latter is a description from the ultimately true perspective (e.g. "the living being is eternal"). This division entails a theory of two truths: empirical (*vyavahāra*, *saṃvṛti*) and absolute, ultimate (*paramārtha*), and invokes two such levels of truth and reality known from Buddhist schools, such as Madhyamaka and Yogācāra, and from the idealist Advaita Vedānta tradition. However, there is no indication in the (ambiguous) verses ascribed to Kundakunda that viewpoints (*naya*) are implied in it, and a closer analysis of the text leads to a conclusion that it is most probably the commentator Amṛtacandrasūri (10th cent. CE) who introduced them, and perhaps even composed the verse in question himself.[33]

It is not implausible that the theory of viewpoints initially developed as a hermeneutic device to interpret the scriptures (*sūtra*), considered rich in meaning and profound by the believers, and their proper interpretation required such an interpretative method (Siddhasena Divākara). The theory was refined over centuries, and we can speak of no single uniform interpretation of it. Most importantly for the Jains, the method determines limits within which a particular opinion (expressed through sentences) is true or false.

The theory frequently provides a conceptual framework for views of other philosophical or religious systems as well. Each viewpoint may be treated as expressing a particular angle, opinion, or view, and this also applies to philosophical views. A relatively early such attempt to relate a particular philosophical system to a viewpoint is that found with Siddhasena Divākara, for whom the substantial viewpoint (*dravyāstika*) is represented by Sāṃkhya, the attributive viewpoint (*paryāyāstikanaya*) by Buddhism, and mixed substantial and attributive viewpoints by Vaiśeṣika. A comprehensive model, and probably the most elaborate to date, to identify all philosophical beliefs within a viewpoint scheme was undertaken by Mallavādin. The standard model of the seven viewpoints to map particular philosophical doctrines is the following one:

1. Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika;
2. all monistic philosophies, such as Buddhist monistic schools (*śūnyavāda*, i.e. Madhyamaka,

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[31] for more on formalization, see Balcerowicz, 2001; 2003; 2013; 2017b, 81–89.

[32] Gorisse, Clerbout & Rahman, 2010.

[33] Balcerowicz, forthcoming b.

and Yogācāra) and Advaita Vedānta, as well as Sāṃkhya;

3. the materialists (Cārvāka);
4. Buddhism in general (as a doctrine of momentariness, or impermanence); and
5–7. the grammarians.

It is assumed that a proper viewpoint, philosophically productive and conducive to one's true understanding of the world, is such that is restricted to its own particular sphere of reference and does not go beyond it: a singular perspective may never be generalized. As long as a viewpoint, or rather a sentence representing a certain cognitive attitude or intention representing a particular state of affairs, is kept within its specific context, it is true. Once it is universalized, once a singular perspective is projected on other (or on all other) contexts, it becomes false and is called a contaminated viewpoint (*apariśuddhanaya*), a defective viewpoint (*durnaya*), or a fallacy of the viewpoint (*nayābhāsa*). Just as infinite are viewpoints in number, as infinite are perspectives that non-Jain philosophers take (Siddhasena Divākara). The viewpoints can be compared to threads (Pūjyapāda Devanandin),[34] none of which, standing on its own, can make a fabric, but all woven together perfectly do. Similarly, each and every viewpoint taken separately is defective and therefore false, but all of them together, conjoined, describe the reality properly: like disunited jewels do not form any whole, once arranged together, they compose a beautiful complete necklace (Siddhasena Divākara).[35] Jainism, with its theory of viewpoints and with other components of the theory of the multiplexity of reality (*anekāntavāda*), presents itself as a singular true system capable of adequately representing the reality as it is. In this way, it, self-professedly, projects itself as a meta-philosophical system that embraces all other philosophical and religious beliefs, necessarily subordinate to it as merely expressing partial truths. This is how the theory of viewpoints (*nayavāda*), also supported by the sevenfold modal description (*syādvāda*), was interpreted since the beginnings and in the classical period: as methods to substantiate the supremacy of Jainism as a system and the preeminence of the Tīrthaṅkaras, who, with their omniscience, surpass the limited knowledge of humans and teachers of other religious and philosophical systems, such as the Buddha.

Multiplexity of Reality and the Sevenfold Modal Description (*Syādvāda*)

The third component of Jain theory of the multiplexity of reality (*anekāntavāda*), the method of the sevenfold modal description (*syādvāda*, *saptabhaṅgī*), is the most contested and debated, and it has led to a large number of interpretations, including among modern researchers. Both terms used for the theory are significant: *syādvāda* means "the theory of the sentential functor (*syāt*)," or "modal description," whereas *saptabhaṅgī* means "seven-figured approach" and is derived from *sapta*, "seven," and *bhaṅga*, that is "angle" or figure, a mode of expression, since this theory was traditionally treated as an extension of the theory of cognitive criteria (*pramāṇa*), hence properly called "the sevenfold description through cognitive criteria" (*pramāṇasaptabhaṅgī*).

Unlike the method of viewpoints, which for a statement allocates a context in which it is true, the point of departure for the sevenfold modal description is any given object of cognition (or the whole reality) and its possibly exhaustive description through as numerous perspectives as required for its complete presentation. That is why it was interpreted as "a complete account" (*sakalādeśa*) of an object, in contradistinction to an "incomplete account" (*vikalādeśa*) provided by the theory of viewpoints (*naya*), each of which presents only a facet or aspect of a thing.

In this model, any analysis of an object should follow a pattern of seven figures (*bhaṅga*) of formal language taken jointly, each expressing a partial picture of the object, however, with respect to the angle from which each statement is predicated, the statement is true, or its truth value is |1|. In other words, all of the seven figures are simultaneously true. In its classical version, which took centuries to develop, they are formulated as follows (with Sanskrit phonetic rules of assimilation ignored below):

1. "In a certain sense (*syāt*), *x* indeed (*eva*) is (*asti*) [*P*]" (*syāt asti eva*);
2. "In a certain sense, *x* indeed is not (*na*) [*Q*]" (*syāt na asti eva*);
3. "In a certain sense, *x* indeed is [*P*] and, in a certain sense, indeed is not [*Q*]" (*syāt asti eva*, *syāt na asti eva*);

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34 *SAS*. §249, 45; trans. Jain, 1992, 45.

35 *STP*. 1.21–25.

4. "In a certain sense, x indeed is inexpressible (*avaktavya*)" (*syāt avaktavyam eva*);

5. "In a certain sense, x indeed is [P] and, in a certain sense, indeed is inexpressible" (*syāt asti eva, syāt avaktavyam eva*);

6. "In a certain sense, x indeed is not [Q] and, in a certain sense, indeed is inexpressible" (*syāt na asti eva, syāt avaktavyam eva*);

7. "In a certain sense, x indeed is [P], in a certain sense, indeed is not [Q] and, in a certain sense indeed is inexpressible" (*syāt asti eva, syāt na asti eva, syāt avaktavyam eva*).

Jain philosophers emphasize that no contradiction is involved at any stage in this model, which has been a standard criticism leveled against the theory by other philosophical schools. For instance, in figure 3, first, one predicate (P) is asserted of x, whereas another one (Q) is denied, and, second, the assertion and denial are made from two different angles. Here and in all remaining figures, the law of (non)contradiction is respected, and contradiction is understood in a standard manner.

The most conspicuous element of the theory is the term *syāt*, which is a sentential functor meaning "somehow," "in a certain sense," or "from a particular perspective or angle." Grammatically, albeit formally the third-person optative of the verbal root *as* ("to be"), it is treated here as a particle understood in the sense of "being expressive of the multiplexity of reality." In the formal language of this theory, every properly structured sentence implicitly contains such a sentential function that limits its contents to a particular angle or perspective from which a property is asserted or denied. Whatever we express of a particular object through a particular proposition, it is necessarily done with respect to a certain parameter or from a certain angle.

The sentential functor introduces a particular perspective into every sentence, and traditionally four such perspectives, or parameters, were distinguished: substance (*dravya*), place (*kṣetra*), time (*kāla*), and condition (*bhāva*), and their list could easily be extended depending on the needs of the speaker. When predicating any property of an object, we naturally do it from a particular perspective and emphasize its particular feature. A traditional instance is a pot that "is made of clay" (figure 1) and "is not made of water" (figure 2) from the perspective of its substance (S), "is made in village A" and "is not made in village B" from the perspective of its place or occurrence (O), "is there in autumn" and "is not there in summer" from the perspective of its time (T), and "is black" and "is not red" from the perspective

of its condition (C), here, its color. Accordingly, no sentence is a simple predicative sentence of the form "x is P" but rather a much more complex semantic structure, such as "x is$_S$ P" (with respect to substance S) or "x is$_O$ P" (with respect to occurrence O).

Furthermore, every sentence also contains the verb "is" (*asti*; consistently the third-person singular, present indicative of the verbal root *as*, "to be") in a copulative meaning, being a connective with the third element, a predicate (not expressed in the forms). In this theory, all sentences are treated primarily as predicative, never existential: no proposition ever carries a universal purport, and the verb "to be" (*as*) does not form a standard existential clause but functions merely as a copula verb. Therefore, existence is treated as a predicate ("existent").

A third element of every sentence is a predicate (which we can symbolize as P, Q, etc.): even though it is not expressly stated in the seven figures described above, it is always implied. All sentences have therefore a predicative structure. A predicate or a predicate clause is asserted or denied of a particular object x under description.

Accordingly, some of these statements (2, 3, 6, and 7) in addition contain a negative particle *na* ("not"). It seems likely that predicates of the negative statements are never the same as those found in assertions (1, 3, and 5). For this reason, the figures do not contain any contradiction, as in figure 3, in which a predicate P is asserted of x from a certain angle, and a predicate Q is denied of the same x from another angle.

Furthermore, some of the figures (4–7) contain a much-debated predicate called "inexpressible" (*avaktavya*), which is treated as a complex description (being a conjunction of predicates). What inexpressibility here means is certainly not an unfathomable, incomprehensible, or absolutely unspeakable character of reality that remains beyond the grasp of the mind and senses as well as the language, as it is for instance implied in the famous maxim (*mahāvākya*) of the *upaniṣad*s that the underlying reality or the absolute (*brahman*) is "neither this nor that" (*neti neti*), or it cannot be reduced to anything perceivable or thinkable. On the contrary, the inexpressibility of the sevenfold modal description simply means that one and the same predicate cannot be both asserted and denied of the same object from the same angle. Alternatively, an idea of emphasis is employed, according to which every sentence can emphasize, in other words explicitly convey a particular idea or

explicitly assert/deny a particular property, while it may at the same time imply still another property or its absence in the predicated object. Accordingly, two different properties (such as *P* and not-*Q*) cannot be emphasized – or explicitly expressed – simultaneously in one breath, but only consecutively in two separate sentences or two combined sentences, as it happens in figures 1 and 2 (two separate sentences) or in figure 3 (two combined sentences). They all express a property explicitly, in other words the property is emphasized. However, both of them cannot be emphasized in one and the same simple sentence, hence one can speak of their practical and logical inexpressibility in identical semantic circumstances. Still another interpretation of inexpressibility relates it to cases in which under present circumstances, one cannot either assert or deny a property of an object, such as – to use the actual historical example – determining the sex of a fetus *now* before the future birth, or (alluding to the famous example from the classical, Aristotelian context of future contingents) determining the outcome of a sea battle tomorrow, before it even begins. If we compare figures 3 and 4, the former asserts and denies two emphasized properties of an object *consecutively*, whereas the latter either expresses the same properties not emphasized or does so *simultaneously*; hence nothing is expressed explicitly. If inexpressibility is understood as unassertibility, as some researchers interpret it, it is only in the above sense, not in the sense of universal unassertibility of certain properties of an object.

Accordingly, what appears to be a simple predicative sentence is even more complex, for instance the sentence "this pot is made of clay," or "*x* is *P*," is traditionally said to express physical structure only from the point of view of one substance S_1, "*x* is$_{S_1}$ P," but simultaneously necessarily entails a range of other statements, such as "this pot is not made of water" (substance S_2), "*x* is$_{S_2}$ not-*Q*," "this pot is in village A" (place or occurrence O_1), "*x* is$_{O_1}$ in A," "this pot is not in village B" (occurrence O_2), "*x* is$_{O_2}$ not-B." Depending on the needs of communication, the speaker may emphasize only one of such aspects. However, a proper understanding of any particular object will require a complete account, which has to include all the perspectives together, whether expressed or implied.

Finally, an element historically added by Samantabhadra is the particle "indeed" (*eva*), or "exclusively" – it confines the applicability of a property predicated of the real thing to a limited range of objects. In other words, it delimits the scope of the applicability of a particular predicate, either asserted or denied, to a particular object *only*, not to any other.

An element much less conspicuous is the emphasis, mentioned already. It always accompanies a property, asserted or denied, of an object: when a property is expressly stated, it is "under emphasis," when it is not, but merely implied or hinted at, it is "not under emphasis." Two properties can never be under emphasis in one and the same simple sentence, as this would lead to their *practical* inexpressibility, even though it is possible that both are not emphasized at the same time – and such a case is likewise classified as "inexpressible" (both are merely hinted at but not expressed).

This formal approach of Jain philosophers to the natural language can be symbolized as follows. What is a simple sentence "*x* is *P*" assumes the proper form $\forall x. \exists^{\pi\varepsilon}\sigma : Px$, or, "For every real thing *x*, there is always a particular perspective σ such that it can be interpreted as parameter π with respect to which *x* is *P* and the property *P* is emphasized under condition ε."[36]

A criticism traditionally wielded against the theory was that it leads to contradictions or absurdities. Accordingly, it was argued, one and the same person can never become liberated, that is achieve the ultimate goal of Jainism, because he or she will be both liberated and not liberated at the same time, or liberated, not liberated, and inexpressible, that is neither. Another charge was that of skepticism and relativism.[37] However, as we can see from the foregoing, such criticisms were misplaced and rest on inadequate reading of the theory. At the same time, the theory is not entirely unproblematic and does lead to various ambiguities and redundancies in its formulations.[38]

The theory has also inspired a range of modern logicians and philosophers, who offer various interpretations of it. Numerous researchers take

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[36] on formalization, see Balcerowicz, 2014; 2015, 195–231; 2017b, 89–97.

[37] a review of criticisms is available in Padmarajiah, 1963, 363–378.

[38] Balcerowicz, 2015, 221–224.

it to represent a case of many-valued logic,[39] paraconsistent logic, probabilistic or probability logic,[40] modal logic,[41] fuzzy logic, assertion logic,[42] deviant logic,[43] logic of conditionals,[44] non-bivalence logic,[45] disjunctive and conjunctive dialectics,[46] and a question–answer semantics,[47] implying that Jain understanding of contradiction is nonstandard, not classical, and so forth.[48] We may call this approach constructivist, which attempts to meaningfully analyze the Jain theory by making use of modern tools of logic and epistemology, which were not explicitly known to ancient or medieval Indian thinkers, and explores what is currently believed to be hidden, unexpressed logical structures and logical and philosophical implications of the ancient theory, which may have indeed been formulated in a logically or semantically imprecise manner because a more precise machinery of modern logic and semantics was not known at that time. The serious risk is that in this way modern theories are read into and imposed on the ancient theory, seriously distorting it. Such attempts at formalization, which should rather be treated as modern logical and semantic models *inspired* by the theory of the multiplexity of reality, may be very stimulating and philosophically valuable in themselves; however, caution should be applied with regard to what they tell us about the ancient philosophical theory per se in its actual historical context.

Such constructivist interpretations may be distinguished from the reductionist approach characterizable by parsimony in applying tools of modern logic and semantics, keeping them to the necessary minimum. What can be called reductionist research restricts itself to an analysis of what the ancient or medieval authors express themselves explicitly, without postulating anything that goes beyond it or without devising semantical or logical models that are to meet modern standards, which could not have been met in the case of ancient theories expressed in ambiguous natural languages and in times that knew no symbols or formal tools. The outcome of such reductionist interpretations may not be as stimulating as in the case of a constructivist

approach though, but they are more faithful to the original concept.

A History of the Multiplexity of Reality and Ājīvikism

It seems that the theory of the multiplexity of reality (*anekāntavāda*) was jointly developed by Jains and Ājīvikas, two closely linked religious traditions. Whereas the beginnings of the theory of the four standpoints (*nikṣepavāda*) can be traced back to Pārśva himself, there is no historical evidence at all, apart from hagiographies created centuries later, that Vardhamāna Mahāvīra ever showed any interest in standpoints, viewpoints, or any other aspect of epistemology and of what later came to be known as multiplexity of reality.

It is quite difficult to trace the roots of the theory of viewpoints (*nayavāda*) and determine when exactly it emerged. Early philosophers of the 3rd–5th centuries CE subsumed under the name of Kundakunda (a name that actually covers a collective authorship of some works composed in the period between the 3rd and the 7th/8th cents. CE) already knew the theory in some form. It was elaborated by Umāsvāmin and Umāsvāti, and Siddhasena Divākara applied it profusely; Mallavādin provided what may perhaps be its most comprehensive version. Some impulse for the theory came from philosopher-grammarian Bhartṛhari, the author of the work *Vākyapadīya* (On Sentences and Words) around 450 CE. What can be called Jain perspectivism, that is an analysis of an object from different angles, is also traceable to Ājīvikism, which also developed its own set of standpoints (*naya*), and its existence perhaps in an even more complex form than that of the Jains is attested in Jain texts of 7th–8th centuries CE. Most probably the theory of viewpoints gradually emerged in some form out of the exchange between the two rival religious groups.

The sevenfold modal description (*syādvāda*) took centuries to reach a mature form in the early 7th century CE. There is also some evidence that

[39] Burch, 1964; Mukerji, 1977; Bharucha & Kamat, 1984; Matilal, 1991; Ganeri, 2001; Ganeri, 2002; Priest, 2008; Schang, 2010.
[40] Mukerji, 1977.
[41] Barlingay, 1965; Priest, 2008.
[42] Ganeri, 2001, 137–144; 2002.
[43] Bharucha & Kamat, 1984.
[44] Matilal, 1981; 1985, 301–319.
[45] Matilal, 1991.
[46] Mukerji, 1977.
[47] Schang, 2010.
[48] for a review of such interpretations, see Balcerowicz, 2015, 184–191.

some elements of the sevenfold modal description (*syādvāda*), especially an analysis of an object through the first three figures, were adapted by the Jains from the Ājīvikas. These three figures formed the nucleus of the theory and were developed by one of the Ājīvika leaders, Gośāla Maṅkhaliputra (Pkt. Gosāla Maṅkhaliputta; Pal. Makkhali Gosāla; d. c. 409 BCE). The sentential functor *syāt* ("from a particular perspective or angle") was most likely introduced into Jainism in the 4th century CE. One of the first Jain authors to apply it explicitly was Kundakunda around the 4th/5th century CE, and the earliest canonical text to use it is the *Vyākhyāprajñapti Sūtra* (Pkt. *Viyāhapannatti*; Lecture of Explanations) in fragments dating back to a period between the first half of the 4th century CE and circa 450–480.

The first Jain author to use the term *anekānta*, or "multiplexity of reality," explicitly was, it seems, Pūjyapāda Devanandin[49] in the 6th century CE. There is, however, some tangible evidence[50] that already a century earlier, the Ājīvikas employed the same term in a similar meaning, and the expression is already attested in the *Niyatidvātriṃśikā* (The 32-Stanza Composition on Determinism), a work composed in the 5th century CE and erroneously ascribed to Siddhasena Divākara, which provides an account of the Ājīvikas' doctrine.[51]

Multiplexity of Reality, Relativism, and Nonviolence (*Ahiṃsā*)

Terms sometimes used to describe Jain theory of the multiplexity of reality (*anekāntavāda*) in general, and the method of the sevenfold modal description (*syādvāda*) in particular, are perspectivism and relativism. These may make sense only when no idea of indeterminability or uncertainty is thereby connoted. The Jain theory does not mean that facts cannot be established, objects cannot be definitely known, sentences as such are indefinite in their meanings, propositions are principally indeterminable with regard to their truth values, and actual facts can never be ascertained. On the contrary, Jain thinkers acknowledge that it is true that an

object can be described in different ways, but these descriptions provide complementary information on the object, and no incertitude is ever involved: every object can be fully known in its completeness. It is also true that a sentence without any context is ambiguous simply because it is incomplete: it lacks its actual point of reference, which is required for any proposition to make sense. Once the theories of conditionally valid predications and modal description are employed, the sentence is complete in its meaning and necessarily assumes a definite truth value (i.e. is either true or false). Consequently, no relativism of our knowledge is implied in the theory.

The scheme of meta-philosophy, which classifies all other worldviews and philosophical systems as applying to a restricted context, embedded in the theory of viewpoints (*naya*), has been reinterpreted over the last century. Since the early 20th century, the Jain theory of the multiplexity of reality has been interpreted as an expression of universal tolerance and intellectual openness. Violence (*hiṃsā*) can easily be related to intolerance interpreted as an intellectual assault against other views. Since Jainism professes nonviolence, or noninjury (*ahiṃsā*), the ethical dimension of the system was combined with its logic and semantics to the effect that a number of contemporary academic representatives of Jainism[52] and other non-Jain researchers[53] have concluded that Jainism elevated the principle of nonviolence to the intellectual level and that *anekānta* ("multiplexity of reality") is an expression of intellectual *ahiṃsā* and its hallmark is tolerance. Just as the principle of noninjury embodies the respect for the life of other living beings, so is multiplexity of reality epitomized through the appreciation of other views and worldviews, being a philosophy of synthesis and reconciliation. Every philosophy and point of view reflects some true facet of reality, albeit limited, and therefore has to be appreciated. Some researches[54] claim that nonviolence was at the root of the theory of the multiplexity of reality.

Such claims find no support in historical sources.[55] There is no single Jain text of antiquity that would relate the idea of nonviolence with the theory of the multiplexity of reality in any way. In addition, we can clearly see from historical texts that the theory

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[49] Soni, 2002, 34.

[50] Balcerowicz, 2016c, 221–223; forthcoming a.

[51] Qvarnström, 2015.

[52] among the first Dhruva, 1933, lxxiii–lxxiv; Kapadia, 1940–1947; Tatia, 1951, 21–22.

[53] e.g. Burch, 1964, 71–72; Matilal, 1981, 4, 23, 61; 1985, 313–314; Chapple, 1993, 88.

[54] e.g. Matilal, 1981; 1985; 1991.

[55] Cort, 2000.

of the multiplexity of reality served Jain debaters to hierarchically rank and classify other philosophical systems and views as merely true with respect to their restricted particular cross-section of the whole reality, hence ultimately only partially true, Jainism being the single creed to faithfully and comprehensively represent the whole of reality and truth, having a monopoly.

With the renaissance of Jainism toward the late 19th century, we can observe a gradual process of both strengthening and constructing Jain identity against Hinduism, with which Jainism had blended to large extent. The process of distinct identity building also involves what one could call the myth of tolerance as an explanatory tool to account for the theory of the multiplexity of reality and to ground it in the pragmatically most important ethical principle of Jainism, nonviolence. The conjunction of *anekānta*, *ahiṃsā*, and intellectual tolerance are currently instrumental in the self-portrayal of modern Jain community and have become a kind of modern credo of Jainism. It is therefore no longer relevant whether such conjunction ever existed in the past: nowadays, it has become an important trait of Jainism, and it influences the way in which the Jains tend to perceive themselves and redefine their own religious tradition.

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