Mokṣa in Jainism
—with special reference to Haribhadra Sūri—

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0. Introduction

In ancient India, how people could eliminate the suffering of samsāra and obtain liberation (mokṣa) was a serious issue. This was also the case for the Jains. They developed an original theory of karma since the time of Mahāvīra. Umāsvāti (ca. 5-6c) systematized a theory of liberation in his work, the TAAS. Within that text he describes the Jaina view of the world and karma. In the 10th chapter he explains in particular the Jaina theory of liberation. Haribhadra Sūri (ca. 8c), a Jaina Śvetāmbara monk and scholar, also discusses a theory of liberation in the 5th chapter of the Anekāntavādaprāveśa.1) However, instead of developing Umāsvāti’s theory of liberation, he criticizes the Buddhist view of momentariness (kṣanikatva), in particular that of Dharmakīrti (ca. 600-660 AD). The present article examines the AVP, especially concerning the way in which Haribhadra Sūri refutes the kṣanikatva theory. In addition, it compares Haribhadra Sūri with his predecessor, the Digambara scholar Samantabhadra (ca. 600 AD), who takes the same view, i.e. the anekāntavāda. Thus this paper will shed new light on an aspect of the Jaina theory of liberation in the post-Āgamic “logico-epistemological” tradition that has not as yet been studied in detail.

1. The Liberation Theory of Umāsvāti

First, I would like to confirm the theoretical role of liberation in the TAAS. Umāsvāti enumerates 7 tattvas: jīva, aṇīva, āsrava, bandha, samvara, nirjarā and mokṣa.2) This world, according to the TAAS, consists of jīvas and aṇīvas. A jīva is equivalent to an ātman in Brahmānism. All the things other than jīvas are called...
ajīvas, among which karma affects most the samsāra. Jīvas are originally pure, but they have lost their original characteristic tendency of "going up" (urdhvam gacchati). Furthermore, they are constrained (baddha) to the world of samsāra by this karma which have entered them. However, if people prevent new karmas from entering by controlling (samvara) their bodies, words and minds and liberate themselves from all the past karmas through penance, then the jīva will rise and arrive at the ultimate point of the world. The TAAS is accepted as an important text both in the Śvetāmbara and the Digambara traditions. Because the purpose of this work is to describe the Jaina view of the world, their system of ontology and so on, no detailed argument of the anekāntavāda in opposition to other schools will be presented. Haribhadra’s AVP, in which he converses with other schools, does not of course contradict the fundamental view shown in the TAAS.

2. Buddhist Claim

Haribhadra deals with liberation in the fifth chapter of the AVP after he finished explaining from the viewpoint of anekāntavāda that a single entity has two aspects, such as sat and asat (1st chapter), nitya and anitya (2nd chapter), sāmānya and viśesa (3rd chapter), and abhilāpya and anabhilāpya (4th chapter). Instead of inheriting and developing straightforwardly the Jaina theory of liberation established by Umapati, he criticizes the Buddhist view, in particular that of Dharmakirti, concerning kṣanikatva and thereby establishes the legitimacy of the Jaina theory. The Buddhists regard entities as being devoid of self (anātman), transient (anitya), impure (aśuci) and characterized by suffering (duḥkha). If people meditate upon these natures, their attachment to various objects such as an ātman, a woman, a house or a jewel disappears. When meditation arrives at its ultimate point, desires are rid of. When eliminated, suffering disappears and liberation is obtained. In this way, the Buddhists say, people are liberated only through meditating upon the side of an object that is devoid of self, transient, impure and characterized by suffering, and not by meditating upon the two sides. Following the anekāntavāda view of the Jainas, however, an entity may be devoid of self, transient, impure and characterized by suffering, but nevertheless may be in possession of self, eternal, pure and characterized by plea-
sure. The Buddhists point out one theoretical defect of the *anekāntavāda*, in that people cannot completely abandon objects of desire even if they have accomplished penance, because people still see both aspects of an entity. Thus according to the Buddhists liberation is impossible for the Jainas (AVP p.8, 1.18-p.9, 1.8).

3.1 Haribhadra's Critique of *Kṣaṇikatva*

Replying to the Buddhist criticism mentioned above, Haribhadra asserts that it is not the Jainas but the Buddhists who have a mistaken view because people cannot be liberated by following the Buddhist view. He criticizes the weakest point in Buddhist doctrine, namely the *kṣaṇikatva* theory, which is the basis of Buddhist doctrine and the root idea of Dharmakīrti. Haribhadra points out that causation would be impossible if entities were momentary. If a cause and an effect were completely different from each other, there would be no relationship between a cognizer and a cognized object (*grāhyagrāhakabhāva*), recollection (*smarana*), recognition (*pratyabhijñāna*), and cessation of interest (*kutūhalaviramaṇa*). Moreover, people could not be liberated by the repeated practice of meditation. Therefore the Buddhists, insofar as they follow the *kṣaṇikatva* theory, cannot obtain liberation.

Haribhadra proves the above-mentioned criticism from the viewpoint of *anekāntavāda*. When he examines an assertion such as “X is A”, he provides options, as he often does, concerning whether “X is A in a certain respect (*kathamcit*)” or “X is A absolutely (*sarvathā*)”. That is, there are two possibilities: an entity either becomes extinct *in a certain respect* in a moment or an entity becomes *absolutely* extinct in a moment. (1) If it becomes extinct *in a certain respect* in a moment, it is also permanent *in a certain respect*. Thus this option leads to the same position of the Jainas, namely *anekāntavāda*, for it is the Jainas who accept two aspects of an entity: permanent substance (*dravya*) and unstable transformation (*paryāya*). (2) If an entity becomes *absolutely* extinct in a moment, we cannot explain the relationship between a cognizer and a cognized object, recollection, recognition and cessation of interest, since these phenomena are based on causation. If an entity becomes *absolutely* extinct in a moment, the time *⟨t₁⟩* when a cause is produced and the time *⟨t₂⟩* when its effect is brought about are different and they have no relationship. In this way, if
we accept this second option, we have to abandon the theory of causation.

In short, both positions lead to undesirable consequences. Therefore the Buddhist statement that an entity becomes extinct in a moment cannot be established (AVP p.51, 11.14-24).

3.2 A Refutation of Dharmakīrti’s Theory

Buddhists assume that the moment in which an object comes into existence and the moment in which a cognition of that object arises are different, but this rule contradicts the theory of kṣaṇikatva. According to Dharmakīrti, only one moment exists, and it becomes extinct after having given its form to a cognition. At a second moment, a cognition provided with a form arises. In other words, “being grasped by a cognition” (grāhyata) is nothing but “being a cause capable of giving a form to a cognition” (hetutvam ... jñānakārārpanakṣamam). Yet Haribhadra says that it is impossible to cognize an object in this way. Because forming an object of a cognition requires a different moment, we cannot cognize an object by direct perception. In fact, two moments are necessary in order to grasp both an object and a cognition. But if a cognition becomes extinct in one moment, no cognition exists which can grasp two separate moments (AVP p.52, 11.14-16).

3.3 In Relation to the Theory of Karma

As we have seen in Umāsvāti’s TAAS, the Jainas hold that in order to obtain liberation one ought to make jīva pure by extinguishing through penance the previous karma which entered it and at the same time by stopping new karma. From the viewpoint of kṣaṇikatva, however, we cannot receive an effect made through one’s own penance and therefore we cannot obtain liberation. Haribhadra points out that the principle of retribution is denied in the Buddhist view. Even if one did a good act, the effect of the act would become extinct at that moment (kṛtanāsa). And even if one could receive the effect of an act, it would not be the effect of one’s own act (akṛtābhyaśgama). That is, the root principle of the theory of karma that the effects of one’s own actions are visited upon the actor who performed them is denied. If we
acknowledge the *kṣaṇikatva* of the Buddhists, we cannot obtain liberation. In contrast, the Jainas holds that a permanent *jīva* can change its state by extinguishing karma.4)

### 3.4 Superior Characteristics of *Anekāntavāda*

After Haribhadra criticized the *kṣaṇikatva* of the Buddhists, he shows why *anekāntavāda* is superior. It is not true that an *ātman*, a woman, a house etc. are exclusively devoid of self (*anātman*), exclusively transient (*anitya*), exclusively impure (*aśubha*) and exclusively suffering (*duhkha*). Each existent is also *self* (*ātman*), eternal (*nitya*), pure (*śubha*), and characterized by pleasure (*sukha*) from the viewpoint of *anekāntavāda*. (1) Things have both aspects of being self (*ātman*) and being devoid of self (*anātman*). (2) They are both eternal (*nitya*) and transient (*anitya*) because they consist of a permanent substance (*dravya*) and unstable transformation (*paryāya*). (3) They are both pure (*śubha*) and impure (*aśubha*) because, for example, dirty things are cleansed by water. (4) They are both characterized by suffering (*duhkha*) and pleasure (*sukha*) because the pain of *samsāra* changes into the pleasure of *mokṣa* (*AVP* p.62, 11.7-12). On this basis, the *anekāntavāda* of Jainism is superior to the *kṣaṇikatva* of Buddhism and only when we stand in *anekāntavāda*, we can reach *mokṣa*.

### 4. Similarities and Differences between Samantabhadra and Haribhadra

I want to try to investigate the role of Haribhadra’s theory of liberation by comparing it with works of Samantabhadra who lived before him. The *Āptamīmāṃsā* and the *Yuktyanuṣāsana* are Samantabhadra’s most important works. In these works, he takes the position of *anekāntavāda* concerning the theory of liberation and criticizes the *kṣaṇikatva* of the Buddhists. It may be said that both Samantabhadra and Haribhadra have the following points in common. (1) Since a cause does not continue to exist until a result arises, from the position of *kṣaṇikatva*, a cause and a result are absolutely different, and liberation from *samsāra* brought through good deeds is not possible. (2) If a cause and a result are completely different, we cannot receive
an effect of our own deeds, rather we receive an effect of others' deeds. (3) Only from the viewpoint of anekāntavāda, can jīva continue to exist in samsāra or obtain liberation through an effort. On the other hand, difference can be seen between Samantabhadra and Haribhadra as well. One difference concerns the cause an entity becomes extinct. Samantabhadra's opponent in the Yuktyanuśāsana v.14 says that an entity becomes extinct without a cause and extinction is the nature of things.5) That is, he proves that an entity is transient by means of the “inference on the ground of extinction (*vināśitvānumāna)”. It is well known that there are two types of proof for kṣaṇikatva, that is the “inference on the ground of extinction (*vināśitvānumāna)” and the “inference on the ground of existence (*sattvānumāna)”. The former was maintained by Vasubandhu, while the latter was newly introduced by Dharmakīrti. Although Haribhadra did not refer directly to Dharmakīrti’s *sattvānumāna, it is clear from his citations that Dharmakīrti was his main opponent. Thus in comparing the positions of Samantabhadra and Haribhadra, we can say there was no difference in their statements criticizing kṣaṇikatva but the opponents they criticized were quite different.

5. Conclusion

In our description of the AVP by Haribhadra, we noted the Jaina theory of liberation in the post-Āgamic period. Though he did not append the theory of liberation of Umasvāti, he argued we cannot obtain liberation from the viewpoint of kṣaṇikatva of the Buddhists (ekāntavādin). Alternately anekāntavāda is the only way to liberation. The views of liberation in Samantabhadra and Haribhadra have many points in common, but upon examination it becomes clear that the essential difference was due to the opponent each assumed.

[Primary Sources]

AJP : Anekāntajayapatākā by Haribhadra Śūrī with his own commentary and Municandra Śūrī's Supercommentary, ed. by Kapadia, GOS No.88 / No. 105, 1940 / 1947.
Mokṣa in Jainism—with special reference to Haribhadra Sūri— (Y. Harada)


*Secondary Sources*


*I would like to thank Mr. Anthony Black for correcting my English.*

1) AVP can be said an abridged version of *Anekāntajayapatākā* by the same author.
2) TAAS 1.4 : *jīvājivāsravabandhasamvaranirārāmokṣās tattvam*.
3) PV 3-247 = AVP p.52, 1.1 : *[bhinnakālam katham grāhyam iti ced] grāhyatām viduh / hetutvam eva yuktijñā jnānākārārpaṇaṁ samam //*
4) AVP p.53, 1.10-p.54, 1.2. The statement that if we acknowledge the *kṣaṇikatva* of the Buddhists, the theory of karma is denied and liberation cannot be attained is also seen in the chapter dealing with Jaina theory in the SDS (p.48, 11.2-8) written in the 14th century. We can safely say that this sort of critique was used by Jaina scholars.
5) YA 14 : *kritapraṇāsākṛtakarmabhogau syātām asamcehitakarma ca syāt / āksamike ’rtīhe pralayasvabhāve mārgo na yukto bādhakaś ca na syāt //*

(Key Words) Haribhadra Sūri, Dharmakīrti, anekāntavāda, kṣaṇikatva

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