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**CONCEPT OF APARIGRAHYA IN JAINISM: A PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS  
(IN THE CONTEXT OF WORLD PEACE)**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

In the era of anxiety, hatred and the race of supremacy, Jainism injects peace by love to Universe (to Human beings and other creatures); evolve World Peace i.e., more commonly refers to a permanent end to global and regional wars with future conflicts resolved through nonviolent means. Here, it is an approach through the Concept of Aparigrahya<sup>1</sup> of Jain philosophy to bring non-possession in the World.

“Samyak darshan gyan charitrani moksha margah”

This is the fundamental principle of Jainism. It means: “true perception, true/right knowledge and true/right conduct” is the path to attain liberation (moksha) of the samsara (the universal law of births and deaths). Moksha is attained by getting liberated from all karma. Those who have attained moksha are called Siddha (liberated souls) and those who are attached to the world through their karma are called samsarin (mundane souls). Every mundane soul has to follow the path as described by the Jinās (Tirthankaras) to attain moksha. Jainism differs from other religions in its concept of God. According to its belief, there is no overarching supreme divine creator, owner, preserver or destroyer. Every living soul is potentially divine and the Siddhas, who have completely eliminated their karmic bonding, thereby ending their cycle of birth and death, have attained God-consciousness. All Jain Shravaks, Shravikas, Sadhus and Sadhvis must follow a Jain code of conduct. The Jain code of conduct is made up of the following five great vows (Maha-vratas), and all of their logical conclusions: Ahimsa, Satya, Asteya, Brahmacharya and Aparigrahya. Ahimsa is a Sanskrit term meaning non-violence. Ahimsa is a rule of conduct that bars the killing or injuring of living beings. Jainism has assigned the first position to the vow of Ahimsa among the five main vows prescribed for continuous observance by its followers. It is, therefore, necessary to see and understand the various aspects and implications of the Jain vow of Ahimsa. Ahimsa means avoidance of Himsa (violence). It has been treated as



the first of the five Mahavrata (great vows), prescribed by Jain religion and this Ahimsa Mahavrata has been defined in 'Ratnakaranda-sravakachara' as following: Abstaining from the commission of five sins, himsa and the rest in their three forms, krita, karita and anumodana, with the mind, speech and the body constitutes the Mahavrata of great ascetics. It means that the Ahimsa Mahavrata involves the avoidance of Himsa i.e., injury to sentient beings in every possible manner. The Himsa can be committed by three kinds of Yoga, i.e., modes or means viz., of mind, speech and body. In other words, injurious activity can be committed mentally (by mind, or in thoughts), orally (by speech), and physically (by body, or by action). In addition to these three Yoga's, Himsa can be committed by three kinds of Karana (action), as Krita (by doing it oneself), Karita (by getting it done through others), and Anumata or anumodana (by giving consent to others doing it). Further, by the combination of these Yoga's and Karanas it is clear that Himsa can be committed in 9 ways, i.e., by the application of 3 Karanas to each of the 3 Yoga's. Thus, the Ahimsa can be observed in full in the following 9 ways:

1. Mentally not to do injury oneself.
2. Mentally not to get injury done by others.
3. Mentally not to approve injury done by others.
4. Orally not to do injury oneself.
5. Orally not to get injury done by others.
6. Orally not to approve injury done by others.
7. Physically not to do injury oneself.
8. Physically not to get injury done by others.
9. Physically not to approve injury done by others.

Obviously, in the Ahimsa Mahavrata, the Ahimsa is observed in a complete or full manner, i.e. in the above nine ways. Since this Ahimsa Mahavrata is extremely difficult to practice, it is prescribed for the observance by the persons in the ascetic order. Satya is a Sanskrit term meaning truth or correct. But in Jainism it has a more subtle meaning. Jainism defines Satya as harmless truth or we can say those words that are true or correct and importantly, do not harm or hurt any living being, so utmost



care must be taken in speaking. The implication of this vow is extended to prohibition of following:

1. Spreading rumors and false doctrines.
2. Betraying confidences.
3. Gossip and backbiting.
4. Falsifying documents.
5. Breach of trust.
6. Denial of the existence of the things, which do exist.
7. Assertion of the existence of non-existent things.
8. Giving false information about the position, time and nature of things.

One's speech should be pleasant, beneficial, true and un hurtful to others. It should aim at moderation rather than exaggeration, esteem rather than denigration, at distinction rather than vulgarity of expression, and should be thoughtful and expressive of sacred truths. All untruths necessarily involve violence. One should protect the vow of truthfulness by avoiding thoughtless speech, anger, greed, putting others in fear. The idea is to overcome greed, fear, anger, jealousy, ego, frivolity (lightheartedness), etc., which are considered breeding grounds of falsehood. Only a person who has controlled these emotions and desires has the moral strength to speak the truth at all times. However, in keeping with the principle of non-violence in speech, if a truth is likely to cause pain, sadness, anger or the death of any living creature, then a Jain is advised to remain silent. Achaurya is a Sanskrit word meaning "avoidance of stealing" or "non-stealing". A Jain must not take anything that does not belong to him without the prior permission of its owner. This includes even a blade of grass from another's garden. The implication of this vow is extended to prohibition of following:

1. Taking another's property without his consent, or by unjust or immoral methods.
2. Taking away a thing that may be lying unattended or unclaimed.
3. When taking alms, taking more than what is less needed.
4. Accepting things stolen by others.
5. Asking/encouraging or approving others for any of the above mentioned prohibitions.



One should observe this vow very strictly, and should not touch even a worthless thing which does not belong to him. Jain monks and nuns who survive by begging for food from laypersons are advised not to acquire more than a few mouthfuls of food per family. Total abstinence from sensual pleasure is called Brahmcharya (celibacy). Sensual pleasure is an infatuating force which sets aside all virtues and reason at the time of indulgence. This vow of controlling sensuality is very difficult to observe in its subtle form. One may refrain from physical indulgence but may still think of the pleasures of sensualism, which is prohibited in Jainism. Monks are required to observe this vow strictly and completely. They should not enjoy sensual pleasures, ask others to do the same, nor approve of it. For laypersons, brahmacharya means either confining sex to marriage or complete celibacy and they are required to be chaste in their deeds and thoughts. There are several rules laid down for observing this vow for householders.

Aparigrahya is the concept of non-possessiveness<sup>2</sup>. The term usually means to limit possessions to what is necessary or important, which changes with the time period, though sadhus would not have any possessions. This is based on the belief that desire for material wealth can lead a person to commit sin by giving rise to negative emotions like greed, anger and jealousy. Desires are ever-growing and they form a never-ending cycle. A person who wishes to achieve liberation from the cycle of life and death must acquire control over his senses and avoid attachment to material things, places or persons. Monks and nuns are required to give up attachment to the following:

1. Material things such as wealth, property, house, books, clothes, etc.
2. Relationships such as father, mother, spouse, children, friends, enemies, other monks, disciples, etc.
3. Feelings such as pleasure and pain, feelings towards touch, taste, smell, sight, and hearing. They have the equanimity towards music and noise, good and bad smells soft and hard objects for touch, beautiful and dirty sights, etc.

They do not eat food for taste but for survival with the intention to destroy his karma with the help of this body. Non-possession and non-attachment are to be observed in speech, mind, and deed. One should not possess, ask others to do so, or approve of such activities.



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## WORLD PEACE IN PRESENT; MORE POSSESSION

World peace is an ideal of freedom, peace and happiness among and within all nations and/or peoples. World peace is a Utopian idea of planetary non-violence by which nations willingly cooperate, either voluntarily or by virtue of a system of governance that prevents warfare. Although, the term is sometimes used to refer to a cessation of all hostility among all individuals, world peace more commonly refers to a permanent end to global and regional wars with future conflicts resolved through nonviolent means. While world peace is theoretically possible, some believe that human nature inherently prevents it. This belief stems from the idea that humans are naturally violent, or that rational agents will choose to commit violent acts in certain circumstances. Others however believe that war is not an innate part of human nature, and that this myth in fact prevents people from reaching for world peace. If world peace is defined as the absence of hostility, violence and conflict, not just between countries and regions, but between individuals, world peace would imply a worldwide end to violence and to institutions that rely on threats of violence to sustain their existence. It follows that there could be no law enforcement, because force is a form of violence. Without law enforcement, there could be no laws, except those everyone voluntarily agrees to follow. Finally, there could be no governments of the type that rely on threats of violence to collect taxes, maintain their borders, or govern their citizens.

Many theories as to how world peace could be achieved have been proposed. World peace is achievable when there is no longer conflict, greed, and possession over resources. For example, oil is one such resource and conflict over the supply of oil is well known. Therefore, developing technology that utilizes reusable fuel sources may be one way to achieve world peace. But, with the help of non-possession (Aparigraha), we the residents of this globe from top to bottom liberate out of this problem. World peace is sometimes claimed to be the inevitable result of a certain political ideology. Leon Trotsky, a Marxist theorist, assumed that the world revolution would lead to a communist world peace. Proponents of the controversial Democratic peace theory claim that strong empirical evidence exists that Democracies never or rarely wage war against each other (The only exceptions being the Cod Wars or the Icelandic Cod Wars, the Turbot War and Operation Fork) Jack Levy (1988) made an oft-quoted assertion that the theory is “as close as anything we have to an empirical



law in international relations.” An increasing number of nations have become democratic since the Industrial Revolution. A world peace may thus become possible if this trend continues and if the democratic peace theory is correct. There are, however, several possible exceptions to this theory. In her “capitalism peace theory,” Ayn Rand holds that the major wars of history were started by the more controlled economies of the time against the freer ones and that capitalism gave mankind the longest period of peace in history; a period during which there were no wars, involving the entire civilized world; from the end of the Napoleonic wars in 1815 to the outbreak of World War I in 1914. It must be remembered that the political systems of the nineteenth century were not pure capitalism (*Laissez-faire*), but mixed economies. The element of capitalism, however, was dominant; it was as close to a century of capitalism as mankind has come. But the element of Statism kept growing throughout the nineteenth century, and by the time it blasted the world in 1914, the governments involved were dominated by statist policies. However, this theory ignores the brutal colonial wars waged by the western nations against countries outside Europe; as well as the German and Italian Wars of Unification, the Franco-Prussian war, and other conflicts in Europe.

Mutual assured destruction (sometimes known as MAD) is a doctrine of military strategy in which a full-scale use of nuclear weapons by two opposing sides would effectively result in the destruction of both the attacker and the defender. Proponents of the policy of MAD during the Cold War attributed this to the increase in the lethality of war to the point where it no longer offers the possibility of a net gain for either side, thereby making wars pointless. Globalization some see a trend in national politics by which city-states and nation-states have unified, and suggest that the international arena will eventually follow suit. Many countries such as China, Italy, the United States, Germany and Britain have unified into single nation-states, with others like the European Union following suit, suggesting that further globalization will bring about a unified world order. Self-organized peace, World peace has been depicted as a consequence of local, self-determined behaviors that inhibit the institutionalization of power and ensuing violence. The solution is not so much based on an agreed agenda, or an investment in higher authority whether divine or political, but rather a self-organized network of mutually supportive mechanisms, resulting in a viable politico-economic social fabric. The principle technique for inducing convergence is thought experiment, namely Background, enabling anyone to participate no matter what cultural background,



religious doctrine, and political affiliation or age demographic. Similar collaborative mechanisms are emerging from the Internet around open-source projects, including Wikipedia, and the evolution of social media. Many religions and religious leaders have expressed a desire for an end to violence and/or world peace. “All beings and creatures are His; He belongs to all”<sup>3</sup>. Gurus furthermore preached to “Sing the Praise of the One, the Immaculate Lord; He is contained within all”<sup>4</sup>. “The special feature of the Sikh of the Guru is that he goes beyond the framework of caste-classification and moves in humility. Then his labor becomes acceptable at the door of God”<sup>5</sup>. With specific regard to the pursuit of world peace, Bahullah of the Faith of Bahai prescribed a world-embracing collective security arrangement as necessary for the establishment of a lasting peace. The Universal House of Justice wrote about the process in *The Promise of World Peace*.<sup>6</sup> Many Buddhists believe that world peace can only be achieved if we first establish peace within our minds. Siddhartha Gautama, the founder of Buddhism, said, “Peace comes from within. Do not seek it without.” The idea is that anger and other negative states of mind are the cause of wars and fighting. Buddhists believe people can live in peace and harmony only if we abandon negative emotions such as anger in our minds and cultivate positive emotions such as love and compassion. The basic Christian ideal promotes peace through goodwill and by sharing the faith with others, as well as forgiving those who do try to break the peace. Below are selections from two gospels: “But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father or God which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.”<sup>7</sup> A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have loved one to another?<sup>8</sup> Traditionally, Hinduism has adopted a saying called *Vasuda eva kutumbakam*, which translates to “The world is one family.” The essence of this saying is the observation that only base minds see dichotomies and divisions. The more we seek wisdom, the more we become inclusive and free our internal spirit from worldly illusions or *Maya*. World peace is hence thought by Hindus to be achieved only through internal means; by liberating oneself from artificial boundaries that separate us but it is good in acquiring peace. According to Islam, faith in only one God and having common parents Adam and Eve is the greatest reason for humans to live together with peace and brotherhood. Islamic



view of global peace is mentioned in the Quran where the whole of humanity is recognized as one family. Added Oct 5, 2009 by IECRC - Islamic Educational & Cultural Research Center's research on religious involvement in world peace and the concept of the World Peace Order is expanded in great detail in its latest publication "World Peace Order - Towards an International State" and it is a good thing. Thus, apart from all religion theory of Jainism torch some more light by applying all practical aspect of life in human psyche through it peace theory, which is Ahimsa, ahimsa help everyone to be humanitarian which is only possible if today we think of non-possession (Aprigrahya); These strict rules of conduct only apply to ascetics who are bent on attaining perfection. The standard proposed for the ordinary householders is fairly workable. Thus it is said by Hemacandra, that ordinary householders should earn money honestly, should follow the customs of good people, should marry a good girl from a good family, should follow the customs of the country and so forth.<sup>9</sup>

### **WORLD PEACE: PHILOSOPHICALLY**

This world is in a state of crisis. Economics is the thread from which the fabric of society is woven; bringing the colors and forming its body in finely interwoven patterns; economics is what gives expression to the social life, what either nurtures or clothes, or starves and leaves exposed a naked body. If we think this fabric is not 'big enough' each individual will try to get the most of it to protect himself and his family. "The path of separation uses our differences to support the belief that some are better than, more worthy than, more entitled than, others. The outcome of such thinking is dominance; the vehicle is force; and the result is destruction. This view diminishes life, and condemns us to recurring cycles of violence, oppression, and struggle. The path of unity uses our differences to support the belief that we are an interdependent whole, one family of life in this precious planet, able to thrive and survive only when we work together for the needs and dignity of all. The outcome of such thinking is a partnership; the vehicle is respect; and the result is peace. This view sustains life in all its rich diversity, and offers us endless cycles of creativity, freedom, and hope".<sup>10</sup> Aparigrahya (non-possessiveness, non-covetousness, non-greed), it involves curbing the tendency to accumulate and be greedy. According to mainstream economic theory, economy seeks to satisfy human beings, "unlimited wants and needs". The perennial philosophy teaches that the theory of 'unlimited wants and needs' is a distortion of a spiritual truth.<sup>11</sup> The soul's desire is towards the infinite; aspiring to be one with the





Supreme; ignorance or illusion tricks the mind into thinking material objects can satisfy this need. Since the need is not material but spiritual, material objects can never satisfy -hence an unlimited grasping ensues. Material needs are finite, universal, and can be satisfied. As Maslow claims, they also must be met before any higher needs can be addressed, and thus the primary function of economics should be to first fill these needs for as many people as possible. However, unlike Maslow's theory, in this paradigm spirituality does not come at the top of the needs pyramid, but rather permeates the whole. Emotional, mental, and spiritual needs are to be addressed simultaneously with the material.

### **ANALYSIS OF APARIGRAHYA**

According to Indian philosophy, human destiny is controlled by karma (action: cause and effect). Whatever good or bad you do in life, follow you in the next life, and there is a prospect of rebirth again and again, for both the pious and wicked. This beginning-less and endless cycle of birth and death, which is called samsara, must be transcended in order to experience kaivalya or liberation. The karmas are basically pudgala (matter), namely asrava (influx of pudgala), samvara (the stoppage of influx of pudgala). The cycle begins with ignorance which leads to identification with the ego. This in turn leads to desire and its fulfillment, from which the vicious cycle of karmas and samsara ensues. The only way out of this entanglement is through the cultivation of disassociation, detachment and renunciation. This is possible through the process of discrimination which leads one to higher knowledge (kevala) and ultimately to freedom from bondage, kaivalya or liberation. Jain dharma or Jainism comes into the existence before Christian era. Triratna (samayak charitra, samayak astha, samayak jnana) and Panchmahavrata (Satya, Ahimsa, Aparigrahya, Astey, and Brahmcharya) are the foundations of Jainism. If human society follows these five qualities and Triratna it leads to world peace. For world peace we need a religion like Jain dharma through which we cut short our desire of having more and more, which dump this world into the crime and autocracy of human race itself. In context of Aparigrahya I must say today is an era of possession (parigraha), Jain's practical aspect of Aparigrahya (non-possession), explains not to possess more than you need and minimize your needs for the welfare of the society. Jain Tirthanker follows this quality of welfare in such a subtler way that they don't have possession of cloths even. But, today every individual want more than their needs, which cut the part of fellow human beings, it is stey



(stealing), poor become more poorer and richer more rich, indirectly it is himsa (violence). Asatya is foundations of himsa and stey. Therefore, we people of this world lacking world peace, Jain's practical philosophy helps us to practice Satya, Ahimsa, Astey and Brahmcharya by following Aparigrahya. Earlier, the philosophy of any dharma was practiced, which create harmony in the society, today only philosophy is what we are having in our pocket but no practice, Jain dharma is epitome to world and explain that now philosophy and dharma goes together to set world peace.

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<sup>1</sup> Certain external rules of conduct are also called caritra. These are : Iryya (to go by the path already trodden by others and illuminated by the sun's rays, so that proper precaution may be taken while walking to prevent oneself from treading on insects, etc., which may be lying on the way), bhasa (to speak well and pleasantly to all beings), isana (to beg alms in the proper monastic manner), danasamiti (to inspect carefully the seats avoiding all transgressions when taking or giving anything), utsargasamiti (to take care that bodily refuse may not be thrown in such a way as to injure any being), manogupti (to remove all false thoughts, to remain satisfied within oneself, and hold all people to be the same in mind), vaggupti (absolute silence), and kayagupti (absolute steadiness and fixity of the body). Five other kinds of caritra are counted in Dravyasamgrahavrtti 35

<sup>2</sup> Nancy Gerstein (2005). *Guiding Yoga's Light: Yoga Lessons for Yoga Teachers*. Pendragon. p. 140

<sup>3</sup> Guru Granth Sahib, 425

<sup>4</sup> Guru Granth Sahib, 706

<sup>5</sup> Bhai Gurdas Ji, 1

<sup>6</sup> The Promise of World Peace by Universal House of Justice, Source: Bahai World Centre, October 1985 p.1-3.

<sup>7</sup> Matthew 5:44 - 45

<sup>8</sup> John 13:34-35

<sup>9</sup> Dasgupta, Surendranath *A History of Indian Philosophy Volume I* Cambridge At The University Press 1957 pg.199-207

<sup>10</sup> "Small is Beautiful" E.F. Schumacher, Hartley & Marks 1999, page 12.

<sup>11</sup> Yoga Practice by S.S. Varma, The Theosophical Publishing House, pp.14-15.