

Interest in Sa'di's work may well have increased in the English-speaking world after he concluded that conciliatory video message by quoting the same two couplets from the *Gulistān* which are engraved at the entrance of the United Nations:

The members of the human race are limbs one to another, for at creation they were of one essence. When one limb is pained by fate, the others cannot rest.

(tr. Thackston, p. 22)

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SOUTH ASIA

PADMANABH S. JAINI:

Jain Sectarian Debates. Eighty-Four Points of Contention (Cauryāmsī Bol) between Śvetāmbaras and Digambaras (Text and Translation).

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No doubt it is a feature of their engagement as a tiny religious community with a complex modern world that many Jains today, both in India and in the diaspora, wish to present themselves as representatives of a rancourless attitude towards alternative religious perspectives and advocates of a tolerant irenicism. However, this undoubtedly admirable stance, sometimes misleadingly styled “intellectual ahiṃsā”, should not disguise the fact that Jains are no less prey to turbulent emotions than anybody else and that throughout history they have enthusiastically engaged in lively polemical debate not just with non-Jains but also among themselves. The centuries of sparring between the Śvetāmbaras and Digambaras over major issues like the appropriateness of nudity for renunciants or the possibility of liberation from rebirth for women have been well documented by scholarship. However, the richness of Jainism's textual tradition, which embodies not just doctrine but also a complex mythology imaginatively located in a highly elaborate cosmography, gave Jain intellectuals much further scope for reflection, and by the early modern period an extremely broad range of points of contention had emerged within the various sectarian strands of the Śvetāmbara and Digambara communities, perhaps confirming the truism that the smaller and more self-preoccupied a religious or political group, the more concerned it becomes with possible areas of internal divergence.

The *Cauryāmsī Bol* is a Digambara polemical work which identifies and discusses eighty-four *bol*, or controversial issues, in respect to which the lack of authority of the Śvetāmbara scriptures and exegetical literature can be demonstrated. It has been edited and translated by P. S. Jaini on the basis of a unique manuscript without any colophon from the Balātkāragāṇa temple in the town of Karanja in Maharashtra. The work is composed in the Dhūmḍhārī language of Rajasthan and on this basis Jaini conjectures that the manuscript could have been brought to

Karanja by a bhāṭṭāraka of the Surat branch of the Balātkāragāṇa lineage, testifying to the intellectual traffic between various Digambara centres in western India. The uniqueness of this manuscript no doubt indicates a commonality with other controversialist Jain texts which have not been regularly copied in modern times. Internal evidence suggests that the author of the *Cauriyāmsī Bol* may have been a member of the Khaṇḍelvāl caste who was writing around the beginning of the nineteenth century (he is aware of the nascent Bhīkhaṃ Panth, later the Śvetāmbara Terāpanth, which originated in 1760) and he is clearly indebted to the argumentative exempla and techniques of the prominent Digambara lay intellectuals Hemrāj Pāṇḍe and ṭodarmal. Most likely the prose Cauriyāmsī Bol is an expansion of Hemrāj's metrical *Caurāsī Bol* of 1653 which Jaini has recently edited in the Muni Jambūvijaya felicitation volume. Its author is, however, unusual in that, unlike most early modern Digambara controversialists, he refers directly to a wide range of Śvetāmbara works.

The *Cauriyāmsī Bol* commences with an account of how the lax Ardhapālaka sect supposedly emerged from the "pure" Digambaras, the representatives of true Jainism, and in turn gave rise to the heretical Śvetāmbaras. It then briskly disposes of the Śvetāmbara claim to possess the authentic Jain scriptures, while being somewhat guarded about the precise historical status of the early Digambara texts which represent textual authority in that sect (p. 54). The bulk of the work is taken up with a discussion of the eighty-four points of differentiation, most of which relate to Jain mythology, and a refutation of the Śvetāmbara position on each one. Some of these controversies are well known, such as the contention that the kevalin, or omniscient human being, does not experience hunger and general bodily needs and vexations, a position challenged by the Śvetāmbaras. Others are more obscure and perhaps of largely local significance, such as the accusation, risible in Śvetāmbara circles aware of it, that Bāhubali, for Digambaras the first individual of this time cycle to gain deliverance, was regarded by their sectarian counterparts as a Yavana who created the barbarians (*mleccha*), clearly a slur relating to a supposed Śvetāmbara connection with the Muslims (our author also several times disparagingly compares the Śvetāmbaras to Vaiṣṇava Hindus). After the various points of dispute have been dealt with, the *Cauriyāmsī Bol* concludes with a broad attack on the followers of Loṅkā who rejected the validity of image worship in Jain devotional practice.

One should not be deceived by the rich vein of humour, both intended and unintended, often to be found in this work, for important issues of Jain sectarian identity were at stake, the authority of texts and the Śvetāmbara and Digambara renunciant lineages being closely entwined. In his introduction Jaini offers an informed survey of the testimonia relating to the ancient disputations between Śvetāmbara and Digambaras before giving a cogent account of the role of a small coterie of spiritually minded Digambara laymen centred in Agra during the seventeenth century in forging an anti-Śvetāmbara rhetoric upon which the author of the *Cauriyāmsī Bol* was able to draw. Jaini surefootedly translates and comments upon the points at issue in the text and so opens a window on a fascinating world of religious contentiousness. Scholars of Jainism and early modern Indian religions in general will be grateful to him for resurrecting a long-forgotten text and making accessible a remarkable resource for understanding the issues which piqued so many Jains for such a long time and are by no means dormant today. It is to be hoped that this important publication, which appears as a number of the *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, will be brought out in an Indian edition and thus find a still wider audience.

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