

Buddhist and Jain Councils

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Introduction: It is well known that Goutam Buddha and Lord Mahaveera preached their thoughts for public up-gradation throughout their life. Both never take a pen in hand for their teachings as Guru Nanak a founder of Sikhism done at Guru Grantha Sahib. The ancient literature of Jainism and Buddhism got written shape after their masters ‘Nibban’ (Nirvan).

Buddhist Councils: The Buddha’s ‘parinibban’ was a critical moment for the Dhamma and its followers. How the Buddha’s teachings could be preserved for future, was a problem for his prominent disciples. Some disciples like Subhadda, felt that, with the death of Buddha they could interpret the Dhamma according to their own wishes. This attitude was strongly opposed by the other disciples who were more loyal to teachings of Buddha as they understood. To settle the oral conflict first council. i.e. ‘sangitee’ was called at Rajagaha near the Sataparni Cave under the presidency of Mahākassapa commencing from second month of the Vessava season i.e. in the fourth month after the Buddha’s death. The first script of Vinaypiaka is written at Alu Vihara in Matale District of Sri Lanka. So on the second, third, fourth councils were held as and when required by ‘Sangh’. Its’ reliability probably is checked by foreign experts with available literature in Tibet, China, Burma, Thailand, etc. It will have to explain elaborately for comparative study of both religions in Sri Lanka and India.

Jain Councils: According to Jain cannons Indrabhuti Goutama Ganadhar who is main interpreter of Lord Mahavira’s “Vani” has obtained ‘Kevalgyan’ within twelve hours of death of his master. So the knowledge obtained through Mahavir and understood by him is spreaded orally by Ganadhar have a same power. He delivered that knowledge to his disciples and afterword further generation to generation smoothly. After 12 years of famine, the group of 12,000 ascetics who went to South India under the leadership of Bhadrabahu, sticks to original rules of behavior. Another group under the leadership of Sthulbhadra who had gone to Nepal and some remained in local area got conflict of thoughts. So the first council was held under the chairmanship of Sthulbhadra at Patliputra in 387 B.C.E. i.e. about 140 years after the Nibban of Mahavir, to mitigate or avoid the division of disciples. Such councils were held as an when re quired. But the history has taken cognizance of three main councils. The last third

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council under the chairmanship of Devardhagani Kshamashraman at Vallabhi in 453 A.D.E. i.e. about 1563 years after the death of Mahavir. The study of these councils and effects of councils on both religions will propagate mutual understanding to obtain global peace.

Keywords: 1) Buddhism, 2) Jainism, 3) Religious councils, 4) Reliability, 5) Historicity of councils, 6) Effects of councils, 7) Similarity of councils.