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Salient Features Of Terāpanth Constitution

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Abstract

The Constitution of the Terāpanth sect is not merely a document of governance; it is a living organism, constantly adapting to the evolving dynamics of its community and the world. Over centuries, the Constitution has guided the sect through its unyielding commitment to discipline (*ek ācāra*) while embracing necessary changes to remain relevant in a rapidly shifting socio-political landscape. The interplay between tradition and transformation has made the Constitution a dynamic force, capable of addressing the aspirations and challenges of both ascetics and laities. This article delves into salient features of Terāpanth constitution that exemplify this dynamism, shedding light on how the Constitution continues to shape and be shaped by the multifaceted realities of Terāpanth.

Keywords

Autocracy, Totalitarian Government, Authoritarian Government, Despotism Participatory Autocracy, Benevolent Sovereignty, Equality, Centralization, Liberty, Favouritism, Biased Governance, Check, Balances, Structural Sector, Plinkage Sector, Power Dynamics of Ācārya.

1.1. Introduction:

‘One leader one Conduct’ is fundamental to Terāpanth’s autocracy. But Terāpanth won this right only after long struggles. It took more than 15 years to just draft such 1st constitutional letter (Likhat). Even upon signing

this 1st draft by 11 consentees¹ split, 1 died leaving just 5 (Navratan 2003: 335-336; Rampuriya 1981: 523-525) - The draft 'Yuvraj pad arpan ro' Act 1715, were intended, in part; to guarantee that Bhārmal would be the future Ācārya of Terāpanth. The functioning and governance would be under Bhārmal's leadership, yet they split. The grounds in which the 5 split didn't end with them, they tried to influence few more from the sect and they succeeded, though they pledged not to do so (Navratan 1981:34-36, likhat 1837). Bhikṣu took extended wanderings to make his philosophy and governance model approachable and agreeable to every possible aspirant, to include them in his sect; 6 monks from Ācārya Jaymal, 2 from Śyāmdās, 1 from poti-yāpanth; are few examples (Rampuriya 1981:126, BhikṣuJas Rasāyana Dhāl 6, Gāthā 1 to 9, 13th Drṣṭānath). In Udaipur, *hātā*, Nāthdwārā, he was forced out of the location which was lent to him for stay (Rampuriya: 1981: 128-129) - Further, it took 61 years to open new geographical locations². Beside this struggle was the begging aims anecdote, which was offered to Sādhvī Ajbu, but was taken back founding she hailed from Terāpanth sect (Rampuriya 1981:126) - worst yet was the poisoning of begging alms (Rampuriya 1981:127) and physical attacks on Bhikṣu (Rampuriya 1981:132) Extending this anecdote was they given a haunted shelter with evil spirits, with an intension to root out their mere-existence. However; Bhikṣu and team survived death (Rampuriya: 1981:102, Buddhmal 1964:75-77) This united approach to risk all they had even their lives, to gain core principles, was key building block to gain acceptance within wide Jain community. Bhikṣu walked the backroads of Rajasthan, held open discussions with the group of ascetic encouraged to strengthen their philosophy understanding. Meanwhile he started to compose Jain literature based on how interpretation in vernacular languages. (Navratan 2003: 323. Buddhmal). Mr. Gumanand Muni Venirām by hearted the entire Bhikṣu's composition (Rampuriya 1981:698). On the other end Muni Hem became instrumental in documenting Bhikṣu's and Terāpanth history; few prepared sermon content. (kanakprabhā 2021:31, Tulsī 1964:72). With this study he showed them not only to get educated but also what how, when why to do, interpret canons and test the individual conduct. These became exclusionary measure lending support and encouragement throughout Terāpanth community. Despite all these efforts he could hardly eradicate Tālokars. Interestingly, in spite of such dire circumstances, he still yearned for an autocratic system and made: one constitution with autocratic principles. From 1760 to 1775 to 1803, founders of Terāpanth had been keenly working on their written constitution. They in urge of adapting to situations and make it a worthy survival each concerning incident became a law. This article would show, how each rule of Terāpanth constitution defines the salient features of it. How each influences important aspects of Terāpanth governance. The kind of constitutional rules Terāpanth have are, to a substantial degree, shaped by out beliefs about the nature of the individual ascetic, society and Ācārya that make up its political culture. With these, this article suggests why study of salient features are important for study of Terāpanth.

¹ Terapanth history regarding the 1st draft 1775 agrees to have 11 members consent but show only 9 signatures, it is assumed that the rest. 2, (1) Bhārmal for whom it was drafted didn't need his Consent and the other Muni Tokar didn't know how to sign. (Buddhmal 2013: 245). Thus we find only 9 signatures in the draft.

² From 1760 to 1803 (i.e) Bhikṣu's period and from 1803 to 1821 (i.e) Bhārmal's period, both explored the same geography, it was Raicānd the 3rd Ācārya who footed his exploration to Saurashtra, Gujarat and Kaccha (Buddhmal 1964:307).

Focus here is not on transitory ideas about particular issues that are in the headlines today but on what might be called foundation features, features that shape how Terāpanth ascetics, classify, think about and resolve particular issues that arise within Terāpanth community.

1.2 The Autocratic Idea:

Many of the ideas about autocracy originated with the ancient Greeks. The Greek roots of the word autocracy are autos, meaning "the self" (i.e.) "the one individual" and kratein meaning 'to rule' 'power'. Autocracy, then, is "rule by one individual". This is similar to Political scientist Juan Linz's definition of autocracy "a system where power is concentrated in the hands of a single ruler or group who hold the final decision making authority"³. Most western philosophers and rulers before the 16th century were not friendly to the idea of rule by the many. Most believed that governing was a difficult art, requiring the greatest sophistication, intelligence, character and training – certainly not the province of ordinary people. Autocracy has been the primary form of government for most of human history⁴. One of the earliest forms of government was the chiefdom that developed in tribal societies, which dates back to the Neolithic⁵. Chiefdoms are regional collections of villages ruled over by tribal chief⁶. They are an emergent form of governance, originating from societies that previously lacked a centralised authority⁷. From Jain perspective, the roots trace way back to Rīśabha. From Neolithic /Rīśabha to Terāpanth, autocracy has taken various types:

1.2.1. Totalitarian Government:

They are those who do not allow political or cultural pluralism. Instead, citizens are expected to devote themselves to a single ideological vision and demonstrate their support through political engagement. These governments are revolutionary, seeking radically to reform society, and they often engage in terror against groups that do not comply with state's vision⁸.

1.2.2. Authoritarian Government:

They maintain control of a nation purely through repression and controlled opposition rather than mandated adherence to state ideology⁹. These include most traditional monarchies, military dictatorships, theocracies and dominant party states.¹⁰

³ Linz, Jaun J. "The perils of presidentialism". Journal of Democracy (1990):51-69.

⁴ (Tullock 1987: 8).

⁵ (Earle 1997: 15).

⁶ (Beliaev and Korotayev 2001:373).

⁷ (Earle 1997: 14).

⁸ (Siaroff 2013: 232-233).

⁹ (ibid 239-240).

¹⁰ (ibid 240, 242, 243, 245).

1.2.3. Despotism:

An absolute autocracy may be referred as despotism in which the autocrat rules purely through personal control without any meaningful institutions¹¹. In these regimes, there is no guiding ideology or legal system, and the state serves only to bring about the leader's own personal enrichment¹². Other descriptors, such as tyranny and absolutism, may also be associated with variations of autocracy¹³.

Though all types were successful in their own ways every governance faced challenges of succession. When Terāpanth came into existence, the then prevailing autocracy was of another nature. It was a period where any male ascetic who wanted to lead as Ācārya, would become one; regardless of quantity/quality of followers. The rules, norms, selection of successors, the objectives etc were flexibly prescribed (Buddhmal 1964: 20-24, Mahāprajña2004:6-8, Ācār kī caupāi)¹⁴. Thus, one sect had various Ācāryas with decentralised autocratic leadership, which had adaptable structure of Governance. For example, sthānakvāsī had 22 leaders, from each leadership the chain of leaders expanded. Thus, autocracy prevailed, but the centralized and unified model which Terāpanth framed was way beyond imagination. Experiencing tough times in sthānakvāsī tradition, Bhikṣu wanted to maintain one leadership, but with collective support of all followers that would assist the leader/autocrat in carrying their will for community wellbeing. He appreciated open discussions with leader's decision counting to final decision. The Terāpanth's idea that only one Ācārya would rule for the entire Jain Terāpanth sect, represented an important departure from the prevailing

¹¹ (Finer 1997: 70).

¹² (Siaroff 2013: 237-238).

¹³ (Gerschewski 2023:30).

¹⁴ 1. Residing in purpose built dwelling or designated places in their chosen lifestyle.

2. They engage in the acquisition of books, utensils and sustainable shelters.

3. Driven by an insatiable quest for delicious food, they often wander in pursuit of culinary delights.

4. They express admiration for those who offer material comforts while openly criticising others, who didn't.

5. They become visible in the town to Jīman. They begged alms in social dining.

6. They forced an oath from disciples; urging them to come back to them if they decide to renounce get initiated only under their guidance rather than seeking guidance and getting initiated.

7. Eager to expand their discipleship, they occasionally take young boys to other villages for initiation.

8. Tempting individuals with sumptuous food and appealing clothing and force them to take initiation.

9. They procure funds from lay followers to lay to buy disciples.

10. Initiating individuals without imparting true knowledge remained a common practice.

11. Fueling conflicts among disciples, breaking others' commitments and appropriating them as their own.

12. Engaging incessantly in criticising others.

13. Dispatching updates to householders and encouraging them to engage in written communication.

14. Their aspiration for opulent attire exceeds necessity. They engaged in having clothes beyond the canonical limit.

15. Leaving ascetics belongings in householder's homes, with no record of their activities for months.

16. They indulge in financial strategies to uplift the economic standing of their familial kin.

17. Fearing exposure, they subdue the transgressions of faulty individuals, keeping arcane their apprehensions.

18. committee decisions and core Jain principles and adherence to same suffered complete absence of vigilance.

19. They restricted those individuals to meet the true ascetics, by imposing subtle pressures. Non-adherence to rules, they created conflict within their families.

20. Contemporary ascetics are resembling untamed elephants, lacking restraint and direction.

situation. At the heart of Terāpanth autocratic theory is a faith in the capacity of Ācārya to govern the entire system. The foundation of Terāpanth constitution is faith in the capacities of Ācārya, faith is his intelligence and in the power of pooled and cooperative experience. It is not just belief that these things are complete but that if given a show he will grow and be able to generate progressively. The knowledge and wisdom needed to guide collective community. Also crucial to the concept of Terāpanth's autocracy is the idea to appoint the successor that only the existing Ācārya can appoint the successor and none else. This appointment would stand completely on their own will, without any mandatory discussion do meting with any. Thus, giving the entire power to one Ācārya. According to Terāpanth autocratic principle, power in any other hands will eventually lead to tyranny; a community where leaders abuse their power.

1.3 Salient features of Terāpanth: Participatory Autocracy:

In a religious community like Terāpanth, then, Autocracy means rule by a single Ācārya, appointed by the predecessor Ācārya, still, this definition is not sufficiently precise to use as a standard by which to evaluate the Terāpanth governance system. To help interpret the constitution these salient features mentioned below would guide better:

1.3.1 Benevolent Sovereignty:

According to the Oxford English dictionary, sovereign means supreme ruler, who is all powerful and dominant. The ultimate authority resides in the hands of one leader (Ācārya). The Ācāryas, as influential leaders within Terāpanth, play a crucial role in shaping the community's constitution. This involves not only preserving the tradition of asceticism but also ensuring communal well-being, presenting an intriguing balance of power dynamics. The constitution also features hegemonic nature of Ācārya. This term emphasises the Ācāryas dominance over the community's spiritual and ideological spheres. It suggests that the Ācāryas spiritual influence pervades the community and shapes their beliefs and values. This dominance can be achieved through various means, such as charismatic leadership, control over religious texts and rituals or the perceived holiness of the Ācāryas. Question arises how can one recognize Benevolent sovereignty in Terāpanth, when they see it? The following observable conditions are especially important.

1. One sign of Benevolent Sovereignty is a close correspondence between what Terāpanth ascetics do and what the Ācārya want them to do. It is hard to imagine a situation in which the Ācārya rule but ascetics do contrary to the Ācārya's wishes. This much seems obvious. However, does the autocratic ideal require that ascetics always do exactly what the Ācārya want, right away, responding to every whim and passing fancy of the Ācārya? The Terāpanth profile still remains to the general public as Terāpanth is one of a kind of Jain religious group wherein whatever the Ācārya says, it happens. But

historical events and confessions¹⁵ from Ācārya are a testimony that since its inception Ācārya's have had to ensure their leadership goals do not create a major conflict and thus have always provided its every ascetic some insightful consideration. This is one of the salient feature of Terāpanth constitution where the Ācārya depict Benevolent Sovereignty (i.e.) despite their supreme power, suggests a potential acknowledgement of the need for open communication and responsiveness to the community's needs. This constitutional feature have answered that autocracy in Terāpanth sect would be best served when Ascetics and Ācārya respond to what might be called the 'deliberate will' of Ācārya: What the Ācārya wants after they have deliberated about an issue with others. I autocracy is as a system in which ascetics conform to what the Ācārya want through shared responsiveness and communication- making sure Benevolent Sovereignty prevails.

2. Fashioning an authentic sovereign will requires the Ācārya have access to accurate information, insightful interpretations and vigorous debate. These are the responsibilities of official ascetics, senior ascetics, opinion leaders, and mass media. If false or biased information is provided, if lax or improper ascetic behaviour or conduct are not challenged or detailed or if misleading interpretations are offered or none at all, the Ācārya cannot form opinions in accordance with their values and interests and benevolent sovereignty cannot be said to exist.
3. How can the opinions and preferences of individual ascetic be combined into a single binding decision given by Ācārya? Since unanimity is unlikely -so the insistence that new policies should require unanimous agreement for them to be adopted would simply mean reaching a decision requires a decision rule. The decision rule in Terāpanth is Ācārya's rule - his decision stands final. In practical terms, what this means is that the Ācārya's decision, formed in the best circumstances after careful deliberation, is discovered by unified identity in exchange of diverse voices contributing to harmonious coexistence.

Ācārya's rule has additional virtues, For one thing, it is the only way to make decisions that is consistent with equality. This is because it is a form of decision making that recognises the intrinsic worth and equality of ascetics. This rule suggests that they act with good intentions and care for the community's well being. It highlights the and paternalistic aspect, where Ācārya acts as a father figure who guides and protects the community even if it requires limitations in their autonomy. For another thing, Ācārya's rule focuses on his power and responsibility to preserve the ascetic tradition while also safeguarding the community's welfare. It emphasises the balance between authority and guardianship. He has power to make decisions but also acts as a protector of the community's interests. Also, Ācārya's rule is more likely to reach correct decisions because

¹⁵ Ācārya kalugaṇī's blessing, I was appointed as his successor. Until then, I assumed - Terapanth Ācāryas are caksavarti's. They can command anything and govern the sect as per their wish. There is no questioning to Ācārya's command. However, in 2-3years I realised it to be a fallacy. I realised, the effort and challenges of Terapanth Ācāryas is more in comparison to any other Ācāryas. Yet in spite of this struggle to remain balanced is a big penance. Only such Ācārya can rightly govern, the sect.

it relies on "pooled Judgements"- judgements that into account a broader range of information opinions, beliefs, values, religious texts and rituals, perceived holiness of the Ācārya and expertise than any other way of making decisions. Finally, because Ācārya's the holder of 36 qualities and representative of Tīrthankara, Ācārya's rule finds its weight. His rules are more likely to be accepted by the ascetics than decisions made by anyone else.

1.3.2. Equality:

The second fundamental feature of Terāpanth's autocracy is equality, the idea that each person carries the same consideration as the neighbouring person. In a world, grappling with persistent inequalities across social, economic and political spheres, Ācārya Bhikṣu's emphasis on equality in Terāpanth philosophy resonates deeply. His sūtra, "*Asamvibhāhī na hu tassa mokkho*" (*Dasavaikālika sūtra* 9:2.22) - "Liberation eludes the one devoid of equality" serves as a powerful reminder of the ethical and spiritual significance of building a just and equitable society. While the socialist ideal of absolute equality has faced challenges and critiques, Ācārya Bhikṣu's approach transcends specific political systems. He advocated for equality within the monastic community as a prerequisite for spiritual progress, implementing a rigorous framework that ensured equal treatment and opportunities for all members. This commitment to equality extended beyond mere pronouncements, as demonstrated by his strict enforcement of discipline, actions against those who violated this principle. The question of whether Terāpanth's principles can translate beyond monastic walls delves into the realm of diffusion theory. As Everett Rogers outlines in his seminal work "Diffusion of Innovations (Rogers 2003:5)" the diffusion of innovations is the process by which an idea or practice is adopted over time by individuals or organisations within a social system: cultural and historical factors significantly influence this process, shaping adoption and adaptation. Rogers further emphasises that "the more compatible an innovation is with the existing values, norms and needs of a group, it is to be adopted (ibid:176). Examining these dynamics through the lens of globalization studies (Robertson 1992:7) can shed light on the potential for wider social impact by considering the interconnectedness and cultural exchange characteristic of Terāpanth's world. Additional cultural studies (Storey 2009:14) can offer insights into how specific cultural values and norms might influence the reception and interpretation of Terāpanth's ideas in different contexts.

○ A Terāpanth episode of Equality:

In the annals of Terāpanth history lies a fascinating episode, a clash between individual need and the established order. It unfolds on a scorching day; where water, a precious resource, is scarce even for the ascetic community. Each monk adheres to a strict rationing system, carefully measuring their allotted share. But then arrives a newcomer, parched and thirsty. He ignores the system, quenching his immediate need directly from the source. A fellow muni intervenes, reminding him of the system's importance and the need for fairness. The newcomer's simple reply, "I am thirsty," is a poignant reminder of the shared human

experience, the common thread of need that transcends rules and structures. Yet, his defiance of the system, however understandable, carries consequences. When the incident reaches the Ācārya, the leader of the community, a different perspective emerges. He acknowledges the thirst but emphasises the importance of the system itself. The system, he argues, ensures fairness and order, preventing chaos and depletion of resources. By flouting it, the monk undermines its very foundation putting the needs of the community at risk. This dissonance, between individual needs and communal well-being, leads to the monks distancing from saṅgha.

Terāpanth's commitment to resource sharing runs deep. The story of dividing a single piece of bread into four, ensuring everyone gets a fair share, exemplifies this principle. Today it has evolved beyond mere division to a broader philosophy of communal living, where acceptance hinges on upholding these shared values. From water distribution to clothing allocation, even the physical spaces for sleeping and resting reflect this commitment. No monk would dream of enjoying the comfort of an open door for ventilation while others swelter inside, especially during the heat. This episode, then, served as a microcosm of a larger tension: navigating the delicate balance between individual needs and the collective good. It sparks questions about the role of systems, the importance of fairness, and the potential for compassion within established structures. While the Ācārya upholds the system for its long term benefits, the story also resonates with the newcomer's immediate need and the universality of human experience. Ultimately, it is a reminder that even within communities built on shared values, complex situations require nuanced understanding and thoughtful consideration. Further, this concept goes beyond mere equality. It is to instil a sense of equality, ensuring the absence of feelings of inequality. Whether the Ācārya occupies a prominent seat, a leading disciple sits on a distinguished chair, or fellow ascetics take lower positions, this arrangement doesn't signify inequality. It stands as a hallmark of an honourable society. In a righteous community, honour is accorded to the honoured, where respect is given based on individual roles and responsibilities. The speaker of Lok Sabha holds a position of esteem and distinguished supreme seating arrangement. If the speaker is seated in his seat, within the parliamentary setting, even the prime minister is expected to bow before the speaker as he approaches his seat - an act of parliamentary decorum. Thus, it is not about equality or inequality. Within Terāpanth, if a novice ascetic undertakes austerities, the Ācārya too has to follow, ensuring a shared commitment to spiritual practices. Be it vihāra or constitutional rules, the Ācārya demonstrates a harmonious unity. In this light, this constitution becomes more than a set of rules, it is a transformative force. It fosters a sense of equality that transcends external distinctions and cultivates, a deeper sense of shared purpose and mutual respect.

1.3.3. Centralization:

Closely associated with the idea of Benevolent sovereignty and equality is the belief of centralised government. Question may arise even in other sects Ācārya stands supreme. Then how do I recognise

Terāpanth centralised approach is unique from others and how this became a salient feature of Terāpanth constitution? It was Ācārya Bhikṣu's rationale for centralising the 7 posts in one Jain scriptures enlist 7 posts for sects administration. Thus, the major sects within Jainism have interpreted and implemented, that these 7 posts would be administered by 7 different person. While Bhikṣu's decision to centralise the 7 posts into one, within Terāpanth constitution became a cornerstone for Terāpanth identity and also a distinct feature of its constitution, while practical concerns of each sect was to ensure the "behavioural purity" of ascetics through stricter initiation criteria, (Nathmal 1968:) suggests, a deeper analysis reveals a complex interplay between philosophy, power and the Jain ideal. However, it remains a topic of debate. Because nowhere in canons is it mentioned that the seven posts should be held by 7 different persons. On the contrary, nowhere it mentions to abide to one leader. To this, Terāpanth interpret, in *Brhatkalpa Bhāṣya*, it mentions there is no need for 7 different persons for different posts; one can play the role of more than one¹⁶. Further, Terāpanth claims to get inspired by Mahāvīra's administrative model, wherein, he held the supreme decision making authority amidst the sect. Those 7 posts were just for lessening complexity, and not to allocate positions. It was to set an organised unified structure. Thus, painting how the Terāpanth's centralised feature aligns seamlessly with Jain principles. (Nathmal 1968: 118, 127, 143) underscores this aspect, highlighting the importance of these reforms is in not just addressing administrative challenges but also as a prerequisite for self-purity. It is also crucial to evaluate the potential downsides of such centralisation within Terāpanth:

(1) Did this emphasis on internal morality and collaboration come at the cost of individual autonomy or adaptability? The power dynamics within the community has shifted significantly, when, Terāpanthī's itself has introduced various official positions within the sect.

1.3.4. Liberty:

From this feature comes the other feature of measured and structured liberty available to ascetics. While Ācārya holds the basic freedom essential to the formation and expression of converting a bill into an Act. It is important to note that these essential features include all ascetics' freedom of speech of conscience in assembly and discussions. Without these liberties, the other fundamental features of autocracy could not

¹⁶ The seven posts were (1) Ācārya, (2) Upādhyāya, (3) Gaṇī, (4) Gaṇā, (5) sthavira, (6) pravartaka, (7) pravartini – Āyārietī vā, uvajjāeti vā, pattiti vā, theretivā, gaṇīti vā, gaṇadhareti vā, gaṇāvacchedetī vā (Thāṇam 3/3, 362)

(1) Ācārya: The status of the Ācārya is the highest among them who are responsible to administrate the activities of 1000's of Sādhus.

(2) Upādhyāya: The duties of an Upādhyāya are to propagate education in the gaṇa and to organise uninterrupted teaching.

(3) Gaṇī: A Gaṇī is a head of a group of ascetics. In practice, the team becomes more or less identical to that of Ācārya.

(4) Gaṇāvacchedaka: He is "someone who works with a group of ascetics wanders from village to village, to spiritually uplift the sect and who makes sure that ascetics recognise their limitations.

(5) Sthavira: He is an elder (60 years+) or a highly learned or experienced monk.

(6) Pravartaka: He inspires and supervises the ascetics in practicing their vows.

(7) Pravartini: She is responsible for maintaining discipline among the nuns: (Nathmal 1968: 125, Deo 1956: 78, Deo 1960: 25).

exist. Benevolent Sovereignty cannot be guaranteed if ascetics are prevented from participating in communal well-being. Benevolent Sovereignty cannot prevail if the voice of Ācārya is silenced, if party hopping (*Dalbandi*) exists (if groupism exists), if Ācārya's decision is being interfered time and again if ascetics try to demoralize the faith of others by speaking ill and false against Ācārya or other ascetics to create split within the sect. Equality is violated, if some ascetics can speak out but others cannot. Thus, considering these issues, constitution while issues supreme liberty to Ācārya, it offers measured and structured liberty to ascetics.

1.4. Objections to Terāpanth's Participatory Autocracy:

○ **Autocracy Leads to Bad Decisions:**

Participatory Autocracy is not a perfect autocracy. There is no guarantee that it will always lead to good decisions. An Ācārya, like a Despot, can be unwise, he can be cruel and uncaring, he can be carried away by fads and fashions, and he can be misled by unscrupulous or incompetent followers. Terāpanth Ācāryas have and are time and again proving (1) all the claims are fallacy. (2) no other form of decision-making can be shown to lead consistently to better and wiser decisions: The historical records of journey of Terāpanth Ācāryas have always been more than encouraging. I would probably do best to stick to Terāpanth's autocracy despite its faults in light of its many other virtues.

○ **Favouritism and Biased Governance:**

Being a single leader, Autocracy can lead to favouritism and biased judgements. His decisions can be impacted by his personal likes, and dislikes values and beliefs. Ascetics can influence their choice over leader. Knowing the strategy to approach the leader they can manipulate and end up being favoured. But history of Terāpanth has showed, that Ācāryas have been over such manipulation. For example, Ācārya's stern discipline on Bhārmal, to let him practise fast on 3 consecutive days (Telā), if Ācārya Bhikṣu receives any complaint, be it true or false. Other example of the idea of Bhikṣu to expel Muni Veñīrām for not responding to his call. (Navratan 1981:72)

○ **Check and Balances:**

Basically, it is believed that Ācāryas (Autocrats) make and implement a rule and never check back on its implications, never works on its after math or never tries to work on question, what if any ascetic is in need or not. While Terāpanth's history has strongly shown evidences and proved this belief as a fallacy. Terāpanth Ācāryas make sure they have a track on each ascetic on a daily, fortnightly and yearly basis. How and what measures Terāpanth Ācāryas have taken to have checks and balances of Terāpanth ascetics. Extending to this checks and balances do they keep track on appointment of successor. And most crucial, judicial measures where they make sure that even if they are distanced, he is updated to work on judicial procedures if any.

1.5. Autocracy as an Evaluative Standard:

○ How Autocratic is Terāpanth Constitution?

After this discussion, it should be easy to see how and why the autocratic ideal can be used as a measuring rod with which to evaluate Terāpanth constitution. It is important to remember, of course, that autocracy is not the only available measuring rod. Each has a set of values or cherished goals by which they can also judge – efficiency community, national strength, law and order, equality and more. The advantage of using Autocracy as the main evaluative standard is its peculiar relevance for interpreting Terāpanth constitution, the adequacy of the political process and from do exalted position among the features and values held by most Terāpanth'sascetics. This article shows features are attainable in its perfect form. They are rather ideals to which Terāpanth can aspire and standards against which it means reality. They can help identify where Autocracy is in jeopardy and where it may be becoming more vigorous.To see better how these features are interconnected. It is helpful to organise each and every factor committee and process into categories :

1.5.1. The Structural Sector:

The structural sector includes more fundamental and enduring factors that influence society, the constitutional rules, the political culture & traditions.

1.5.2. The Plinkage Sector:

The plinkage sector encompasses the ascetics, committees, and processes that transmit the wants and demands of individual ascetics and groups to Ācārya and affect the policies that the Ācārya pursues. These include ascetic opinion, senior ascetics, interest groups, media, canons and rest.

1.5.3. The Power Dynamics of Ācārya:

The power of Ācārya in cohesion of fourfold community, who has the formal, legal responsibilities for making policies.

1.6. Conclusion : Terāpanth Constitution should be Understood Holistically.

All these features can be drawn together seeing Terāpanth sect as an ordered whole. This is the best way to answer "why things happen" questions about Terāpanth. For example, one can see that it is seldom a sufficient explanation of an event to say that "Ācārya wanted it." what the Ācārya wants and does may be very important, but it is important to ask why he wanted it and why he was able to get it. The answer will usually require a look at impact of power dynamics, why did ascetics go along? why did they follow his instructions? why didn't they interfere? It will also require a consideration of political linkage sector: was the Ācārya responding lo each ascetics opinion or to organised interest groups? why was Ācārya wanting to

implement any policy? Often a full explanation is required with consideration of structural factor. Did the power structure change?

Then, Terāpanth constitution must be understood as an integrated, ordered whole and that what goes on in decision-making can be understood only through these 3 sectors. Action by Ācārya is the product not simply of his personal desire (though these are important) but also of the influences and pressures brought to bear. It should be kept in mind that feedback occurs as well. That is to say, influences sometimes flow in opposite direction, from the ascetics to Ācārya.

1.7. Conclusion:

The idea of autocracy and effort to maintain it has played an important role in Terāpanth history. The effort has involved the challenge to define the constitution with its features which is more widely available and practised. Because autocracy holds a very special place in Terāpanth and is particularly relevant in religious disciplining, it is the standard used through out the thesis. The thesis's further chapters are organised in a way that will allow, to make sense of details of everyday events and see why things happen the way they do. The constitutional features presented in this article visualises the world of Terāpanth as a united sect with autocratic principles in a democratic world.

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