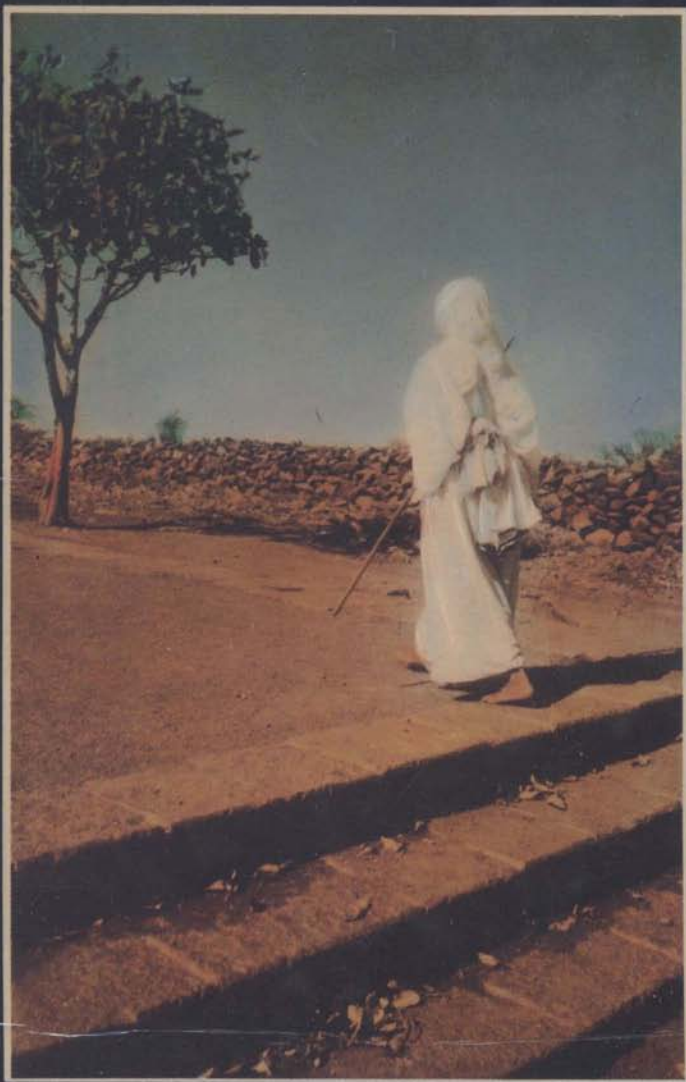


THE UNKNOWN PILGRIMS

The Voice of the Sādhvīs :
The History, Spirituality and Life
of the Jaina Women Ascetics



N. Shāntā

With a Presentation by Raimon Panikkar
Translated from the French by Mary Rogers

This book permits us to penetrate within one of the most ancient ascetic spirituality, that followed by some 6000 Jaina women ascetics.

Written with their collaboration, it presents to the reader their life of radical renunciation of which one of the hallmarks is incessant pilgrimage, a regular shifting from one place to the next in a sustained striving towards self-purification, a striving of which the final goal is *Nirvāṇa*.

Here then we have before us the whole Jaina tradition, presented through scriptures, ancient texts, biographies, epigraphy and iconography. Here too we may observe its outworkings in contemporary daily life and its contribution to inter-cultural and inter-monastic encounter.

Furthermore, it is not without interest that this study finds its own proper place in an age which is rediscovering feminine values. At a time when so many people are taking a deep interest in Asian spiritualities we find here an original and strictly defined spiritual path and also a spiritual teaching whose strength and subtlety merit our attention and invites us to embark on an authentic spiritual journey.

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To the undying memory of
Mahāsati Śrī Ujjvalakumārī
who introduced me to the
practice of *svādhyāya*,
the meditative study of the Scripture.
To Āryika Śrī Jñānamatī Mātāji,
who by her presence and instruction
guided me in unremitting *svādhyāya*.
To all the Śramaṇis who provided
the inspiration for each line of
this study.

Bonds of Friendship. Thanks to Mary and John.

For nearly twenty years a close collaboration has existed between myself and Mary and her ecumenical group. We worked together in their Ashram (Jyotiniketan, near Bareilly), at Varanasi, then by post, while they were living in Jerusalem. In the autumn of 1983, when the original manuscript of the present study had just been accepted by the publisher O. E. I. L. of Paris, Mary, then living in Hong Kong, consented, to my great joy, to undertake a translation into English. In June 1984, during a brief stay that I was able to in Hong Kong, we organised a plan of work. Thereafter, the pages of the translation arrived regularly in Kodaikkanal for me to forward, after I had gone through her lists of notes, to John Grimes, a friend and research-scholar in Indian Philosophy in Madras. John, out of extreme kindness, typed the whole manuscript of the translation. He even continued the task after his return in California, where I met him once again before returning in June of this year to Hong Kong, where together Mary and I have gone through the whole translation, done with such great care and love. I would like, on this very first page, to express my deep gratitude to Mary and to John.

The translation is unabridged. We have added merely a few bibliographical notes.

N. Shāntā
Kodaikkanal, Śaṁvatsari,
the beginning of the Jaina year.
31st August 1986.

During these ten years this English version went through several ordeals. It is due to the keen interest and utter dedication to works of research in the field of Religion of Dr. Anand Amaladass SJ, Director of Satya Nilayam Research Institute, Madras, that finally the present version is going to be published. To him and to his team I express my profound gratitude.

N. Shāntā
Kodaikkanal,
Dipāvali, 10 November 1996.

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PRESENTATION

A Treatise of Spirituality

R. Panikkar

The Subject of this study is too important for me to content myself with a few vagues prolegomena. I feel personally involved in N. Shāntā's research and, having been invited to write an introduction, I propose to present to the reader both the author and her work. Thus I intend to:

1. introduce the book
2. indicate its approach
3. describe its character
4. sum up its content and
5. emphasize its importance

1. The author and background of this study

It appears to me undeniable that one of the most urgent and important tasks of today is to prepare ourselves for that mutation within humanity that is already under way, not only in the sphere of politics but also in that of religion and, in the final analysis, in that of the very nature of the human being. We are witnessing what is at the least the end of a culture and probably, I venture to suggest, the end of a period of human existence which has its beginning some six thousand years ago and which may be called the period of history (anything earlier being called pre-history). It is in this period that history plays the most important role in human awareness. However that may be, the foundations of the future are always latent in the past, and without a thorough knowledge of a tradition it is impossible either to pass it on and develop it further or to alter it. Any radical revolution requires a rediscovery of the roots of that which one desire to transform.

In our day human existence calls for far-reaching change in two widely differing areas: on the one hand, a revolution is required in the position of women and feminine consciousness in general and, on the

other, there is needed a transformation in spirituality or religion as lived out in daily life. This book endeavours to show the close relationship which links the two in a case which is, no doubt, particular, but which has paradigmatic value, namely, that of feminine spirituality in one of the most ancient monastic traditions of the world.

I do not propose at this moment to emphasize further the relationship between these two aspects of human life and what I have just inferred concerning the emergence of a transhistorical epoch of human existence. While prehistoric human life is characterised by the importance of the Great Goddess and by fertility cults and while the period of 'history' is noted for its repression of the feminine within the great cultures of the world, the transhistoric mode of existence ushers in a new awareness both of the feminine and of human religiousness. I say this in order to stress the importance of this study and to assign it straightaway to its proper place within the general framework of the awakening of human consciousness in its more specifically feminine dimension.

This study is closely related to the new awakening of feminine consciousness that is taking place today under the most diverse forms. Of the fact that woman has hitherto played a subordinate role in most human societies, while very often shouldering their most weighty burdens, monasticism provides one extreme example.

The author of this work is convinced, as are so many others of our contemporaries, that our age demands a new life-style, a new form of holiness, in short, a fresh spirituality. But this is not brought into being by laws, nor even by the human will, however well-intentioned it may be. In order that contemporary spiritualities, may succeed in bringing present-day humanity to its full flowering, to its perfection and plenitude, they must blossom spontaneously or appear as ripe fruits through a fecundation between the past and the present as well as between different human experiences. We can merely hasten this process by clearing the ground, ridding it of weeds, manuring it, sweeping away the dust of history and routine, dispelling ignorance and misunderstandings and preparing our own selves by an authentic life lived in depth.

Monasticism does not constitute the whole of human spirituality, but through its radicalism and oftentimes its extremism it spotlights its most dominant characteristics. The choice of Jaina monasticism is also in itself significant, because it is probably the most ancient monastic tradition to have survived up to this present and is also in all likelihood the purest, by reason of its radical thoroughness and uncompromising strictness. The present study was prompted by an interest, not in Jainism as a historical movement of the past nor as an important and original doctrinal system in the realm of theory, but as a model (to imitate or to reject), as a challenge to certain features of modernity and a living witness to that dimension which is essential to all human life, the monastic or what may be termed the vertical dimension. The author originally positioned this study within the broader framework of universal monastic spirituality, but after devoting some ten years to this task she decided to leave to the care of others the continuation and completion of such an endeavour towards formulating a spirituality for our time. Here she has erected one column of the edifice.

2. The Spirit of the study

Having given a general indication of the aim of the work, I come now to the particular approach of this study. It is not the product of purely academic research or an exclusively doctrinal presentation. Nor, furthermore, is it an essay in apologetics on behalf of some thesis or other. In spite of the author's great sympathy for her subject and the personal relationships that she has established with numerous members of this tradition during her years of pilgrimage all over the Indian sub-continent, she has lost neither her critical faculty, a certain akribeia, as I would call it, nor a comprehensive vision of the complexity of contemporary human life.

Moreover, I have known few researchers in any field more enthusiastic and more devoted to their research. N. Shāntā, in the train of the Sādhvis, the Jaina women ascetics, has become herself a Bhāva-Sādhvi in a spontaneous and unpremeditated fashion, in a way that retains an element of criticism and is by no means naive. The Jaina community that has accepted her as a sister has understood this very well. This is all the more surprising and significant when we consider that she has not been formally "converted" and that the Jaina community, because of its small number (about 0.48% of the total

Indian population) is obliged to close ranks somewhat in order to preserve its own identity. It should be added that the author was prepared for her task by almost thirty years of living in India among Indians, sharing not only their way of life but also their destiny, assimilating their languages, their outlook, their very nature - without, however, losing her own, that of the South-East of France.

During long periods N. Shāntā has not only sojourned with the Sādhvis and kept close contact with them and with the Jaina community in general, but she has also, in the solitude of her own home, regularly recited the *sūtras* of the ascetics' daily rite until they have penetrated into the depths of her own spirit, or, one should perhaps say, of her own heart, if that word were not absent from the Jaina Scriptures. She has also persevered in the practice of *svādhyāya*, the meditative reading of Scripture. It was only after assimilating their doctrine and praxis that she shared with the Sādhvis her own experience and ideas in the course of lively exchanges in depth, very different from the completed questionnaires and taped interviews so fashionable nowadays. Her method does not seek to give information concerning objects of research but to come to know human subjects with whom she may share her own convictions and from a totally disinterested friendship.

This study has not been undertaken with a view to fulfilling certain academic conditions. It was not written to obtain a doctorate or with any other ulterior intention, and, having myself a long academic experience, I can testify to the difference made by that fact. There is frequent mention nowadays, especially in the field of cultural anthropology, of "participatory method" and even "integration" as methods of obtaining precise and accurate information. Although this constitutes an enormous advance in the realm of studies of this type, one cannot deny the artificiality in many cases of these approaches, for in reality the researchers stand to derive from their work some external profit (in their academic career or some other area of life). One cannot assume an innocence that one does not possess. There is nothing of this kind, however, in the present study. It was undertaken in pursuit of the discovery of truth, with no ulterior motives other than those I have attempted to express above.

The author has adopted quite spontaneously the true attitude of a disciple in accordance with the purest Indian tradition. She went to listen, ask questions, learn, understand and assume into her own life, without in any sense repudiating her own past or disowning the deeper causes of her interest in her subject. I endeavoured to persuade her to add here and there critical reflections in order to preserve a methodological balance. The understanding of a religious phenomenon involves a conviction concerning its truth, but it by no means excludes perception of the limitations of the phenomena under observation. An authentic phenomenology of religion must penetrate as far as the *pistema* (belief), and not halt at the exclusively 'objective' and rational *noema* (concept). One only grasps the convictions of others by sharing them.

3. Existential character

The above remarks have already indicated the character of this work. It is not an exposition of Jaina doctrine as such, though I know very few works so complete and so profound on the subject of its spirituality in practice. I would like to stress its two fold character: (a) contemplative and (b) active.

a) This study does not claim to treat fully the entire world-outlook of the Jainas, but is guided rather by one underlying intention, namely, that of giving an introduction to human spirituality by way of Jaina spirituality. It does not present the Jaina way of life as the model for all human life or for monastic existence, but introduces us to the grand themes of the human quest for perfection from the Jaina perspective. I see this book as being an initiation to spiritual life and as such I advise people to read it. It is, certainly, a mine of information and cannot avoid descriptions, divisions and subdivisions so dear to scholastics of every age and in particular to the Jainas. We must not forget that in initiating us into the spiritual world of the *Sādhvis* this study must pass on to us all the knowledge that they possess. I believe that the Jaina ascetics themselves can learn much from this lucid account which is based on the major texts of the tradition and imparts the quintessence of the doctrine without falling into a proliferation of dull secondary classifications that are sometimes found in works of this sort.

The author has endeavoured to introduce us into the Jaina spiritual world through history, iconography, geography, description of the

tradition and, more especially, of an experience lived out day by day. We are offered here a harmonious compendium which, taking a vast mass of documents on the spiritual life of a thousands-of-years old religious tradition, assigns each to its proper place and renders them intelligible to the reader.

In a word, this book is a valuable source of information and the indices help us to find our way around. The imparting of information, however, is neither the chief aim of this study nor, in my opinion, its principal worth. Its object is rather to initiate into spiritual life - and I say initiate advisedly, because one knows that in spiritual life one advances by starting afresh each day. The fact that the world-view here portrayed may appear strange to quite a few readers - or even somewhat exotic - serves only to enhance its interest in an age when many spiritual traditions appear exhausted or powerless to attract those who are inured to the oftentimes routine points of view of their own traditions. Jaina spirituality at its deepest presents itself in a highly particular light. I might add that quite often in its traditional garb it too seems unacceptable, but is there anybody who is not interested in self-mastery, equanimity, harmony with the whole of reality, truthfulness and deep peace, whether in spite of adverse circumstances or even as a challenge to such circumstances?

To be sure, this study is not a manual of perfection; it does not aspire to teach us lessons nor to take the place of a genuine spiritual master, but in an age when such masters are so few and far between and when the influence of indoctrination through the mass media is so powerful, a detailed account of Jaina spirituality may well become a source of inspiration or a stimulant in circles which hitherto have not known this tradition. It is at this point that the task of the reader commences, for such an undertaking is outside the scope and intention of the study itself. My part, I feel, is to indicate the importance of this task.

I would like to lay further stress on this point. The modern technological age is characterised, from the sociological point of view by the *myth of labour*. Every person must have a job. Labour has become a necessity and in several countries a right and a duty, at least theoretically. Now this job, whether it be physical or intellectual, is regarded as an activity which takes place in the external world. Here,

however, we find ourselves face to face with a tradition which also stresses the obligation not to labour (as the word is used in the modern technological society), but to work, to be a *śramaṇa* or *śramaṇī*. It tells us that this unceasing, meticulous, subtle and non-violent work is an inner, personal struggle for one's own Liberation. Jaina spirituality will immediately add that there is no question here of an egoistic activity; on the contrary, the prime task is to suppress all forms of egoism. It is a question rather of constructing the real world, building the city of the *ātman*, of carving our part in *nirvāṇa-pura*, the city of *nirvāṇa*, with even more mindfulness, zeal and technical skill than that which was employed in building the marvellous temples of Śātruṅjaya or Holy Mount Ābū - or, for that matter, the astounding machines of modern technology. I am not saying that it is not necessary to translate the content of the ancient *Sūtras* into contemporary language and re-read them in a fresh creative way; I am simply stressing that work towards the perfecting of the human microcosm is at least as urgent and important - as well as complex and delicate - as any human work brought to bear upon the outer macrocosm. Herein lies what I would call the contemplative dimension of this study.

b) Since from the beginning I have been in close association with the author's researches, I find I cannot forbear the thought that this book might also make a positive contribution at the heart of the Jaina community. In particular, it could well help the community of Sādhvis to develop a keener awareness of, I will not say their femininity, but of their dependence upon men. This book does not preach any particular reform, but it clarifies and informs. It is what I would call an eye-opener. It performs this function not only as regards certain delicate areas of concern such as those I have just mentioned, but also as regards other less thorny questions which are to be found right within the purest of traditions. One example will clarify my point. I think that not only is a careful reading of the description of Jaina ritual in Part IV enlightening for the History of Religions and for a knowledge of Jainism, but that the Sādhvis themselves could well discover in it a depth of meaning that may hitherto have escaped them and that such reading may also serve towards maintaining the purity of this ritual by removing from it the dust of routine and superficiality. It is not unimportant to realise that we can all play our part in the unfolding of universe!

However, there is yet more to be said. The practical nature of this study is demonstrated by the positive and quietly revolutionary results that a careful reading may produce. In this I see two successive stages (and here I speak in my own name and not in that of the author).

N. Shāntā says that she would like to transmit to us the voice of the Sādhvis of the past and, more especially, that of several thousands of present-day Jaina women ascetics; she is, in fact, their spokeswoman, even expressing at times what they themselves would not dare to say for fear of being unfaithful to their tradition and disobedient to their vows and of thereby incurring the disapprobation of the Jaina community. There is need for someone who, from the inside and outside simultaneously, can indicate and also put into words, in a manner that is both clear and delicate, certain intrinsic inconsistencies which exist in a teaching that is fundamentally idealist but impossible completely to adhere to in practice; who can show, furthermore, that certain customs are obsolete in our day and age and also take note of certain abuses of authority and certain pressures that Jaina society exerts upon its ascetics in the name of tradition. I do not think that women's liberation implies that their aspirations should become precisely the same as those of men or that there should be equality without discernment; but the prohibition against the Sādhvis reading numerous texts of Scripture, the subjection of them to the authority of the Munis similarly to the way in which Christian nuns are to monks, solely on the grounds of sex, or the imposition upon women of the hardest possible demands of asceticism while at the same time denying to them the possibility of final Liberation - these are examples of discrimination that are difficult to justify, whatever may be their doctrinal explanations.

We all know that no one can be judge in his own cause. We know, too, how difficult it is to be faithful to a tradition and, simultaneously, to transform it. It is also clear that it is no easy thing to defend, even with the best of intentions, the cause of others and that sometimes, without meaning to do so, we do them harm. The dynamic processes of change, whether social or any other, are of unparalleled complexity, but nevertheless it is necessary to start somewhere.

There is yet another and more delicate step: that of the transformation of religious consciousness. It seems very clear to me

that certain doctrines and practices belonging to traditional religions are today anachronistic and outdated, not only for those who view them from the outside, but also for the members of the communities concerned. A frontal attack serves only to close the ranks of the faithful. The same applies to a betrayal from within. If there is to be any positive movement it must surely arise from a new awareness which will itself apply a gentle pressure and permit some evolution, revolution and even mutation. This new awareness does not usually happen because of a will towards reform or change, but because of a profound desire for fuller understanding and personal deepening. It is then a question of becoming more and more conscious of the prevailing situation in order to understand it better and go deeper. Thus, for example, it is research into the meaning of energy or God that causes outdated ideas of the nature of energy or of God to be discarded. A critical approach to a given subject both modifies and transforms it. In a word, I would maintain that religion - in its most general sense - is absolutely necessary for Man, but that it is not necessarily good for him: means can be turned into obstacles. This present study will cause the reader, whether Jaina or otherwise, to reflect upon this ambiguity within religion.

4. Contents

N. Shāntā, after immersing herself in the Indian 'world' of our day, became involved in the Vedic world by closely collaborating in the production of what is probably the most complete anthology available of Hindu Scriptures (my book *The Vedic Experience*). Thereafter, during these last years, she has set herself to penetrate into the world of that ancient tradition of India which is less well-known than Buddhism, but which, developing at the same time as Buddhism, neither spread beyond the borders of India nor was expelled from its country of origin or reabsorbed, as was the case with Buddhism. In a very concrete and feminine way the author offers us a synthesis of the Jaina tradition. I have no intention of repeating what she is going to tell us from the perspective of the Sādhvis, but in order to round off her study I would like to present the Jaina phenomenon in a more universal setting and in a way that may be more masculine.

An elementary typology of the basic attitudes of human experience in the face of the ultimate mystery (life, existence, reality, God or whatever name is preferred) offers us at least two paths: a) The path of

integration, b) The path of simplification. Let me simply outline a synopsis of this theme.

Human consciousness, apart from what it may be in itself, is without doubt the inseparable and indispensable companion of Man's pilgrimage, at least on earth. It is in and through our consciousness that we formulate our thoughts and words and even what we are, our being, although being is somehow, greater than consciousness. To attain supreme or absolute consciousness has been the goal (or dream) of the great religious traditions of humanity. Consciousness is I-consciousness. The I is the subject of consciousness. There may be consciousness of objects, even consciousness of self, but consciousness as such is, by definition, the subject, the subject pure and simple, whatever that subject may be. Now, this consciousness can reach its zenith in two different ways:

a) By the integration of whatever presents itself, under one form or another, into consciousness. According to this approach the body and matter in general enter into consciousness. Thus salvation (this word being understood as the symbol of Man's goal) demands the transformation of matter and the assumption of time. History must be taken into the reckoning, the world transformed, all its elements redeemed. Sin, hell and damnation occur precisely when the corresponding part of this universe refuses or fails to achieve the transformation it is called upon to undergo. Traditions of this first type, that could perhaps be called tantric or sacramental, are not necessarily monistic, though that does not imply that they are necessarily dualistic. Nor are they of necessity in thrall to logic or the *logos*, for there is always at least one element, the body, matter, which will only be transformed at the end of the personal or cosmic destiny. Up until that moment an undetermined element, an 'a-logical' factor persists. The supreme value here is goodness; and when the word 'truth' is uttered, one thinks immediately of liberty - and justice.

b) The attainment of supreme consciousness can also be envisaged as a totally pure consciousness that has eliminated all that sullies its absolute purity, that is, matter, the body. Salvation (in the broadest sense of the word) is then deliverance from this material prison, a breaking out from all historical and temporal limitations. Traditions of this second type, that could perhaps be called idealistic or gnostic,

are not necessarily dualistic, though this does not mean that they have to be monistic. These systems are logical. Coherence is the final criterion. According to the different schools, matter and, along with matter, history are not to be repudiated or scorned, but they certainly do not have the final word. The supreme value here is truth; and when the word 'goodness' is uttered, one thinks immediately of sincerity - and coherence. Jainism is, perhaps, the most radical interpretation of this world-vision.

Here already we touch upon the ultimate reason underlying Jaina so-called atheism. A jaina is not an atheist in the western sense of the world. I wrote on a previous occasion that "atheism is another word for coherence". Jainism, in fact, constitutes absolute coherence - at least in theory. In a system where God exists, that God not only allows space for liberty and hence for evil, but also for the 'a-logical': That which Man cannot explain he projects upon an ineffable, incomprehensible, inaccessible, unpredictable God. God is for Man the locus of the inexplicable. A system without God cannot permit itself this luxury, for an over-riding necessity impels it to be logical.

Jaina *siddhānta*, i.e. the strictly orthodox teaching, has devised a deep and coherent system of thought that has probably never been equalled. This also explains the philosophical perspectivism proper to Jainism, which is called *syādvāda*. *Syādvāda* desires to safeguard the largest possible number of opinions and, to do this, makes allowance for various viewpoints according to context (*naya*). Consequently a plurality of perspectives (*anekāntavāda*) is connatural to Jainism.

For the Jainas renunciation is not the way to perfection, as it is for the majority of traditions, but rather itself constitutes perfection. (The *Abgeschiedenheit* of Meister Eckhart springs to mind). We have here, therefore, both in theory and in practice, a form of renunciation that is totally coherent and radical, without any sort of compromise. Buddhism tells us that *nirvāṇa* does not exist and nor does the *ātman*, the whole of reality being situated, so to speak, on this side of the mystery (which we falsify by either speaking or thinking of it). However, life does possess a certain value. Vedānta assures us that the *pāramārthika* or transcendental reality is the one and only category of the real, the *vyavahārika* or phenomenal sphere being merely illusion; but this appearance is nevertheless an appearance of the real.

Christian monasticism avers that to arrive at the All one must abandon everything and take the path of nothingness; the creature has none the less its own proper consistence that must be assumed, redeemed and transformed. Jainism sees all this as lacking coherence and makes no compromise: The stripping must be total. The perfect Man renounces not only the ego, the body, the world and the gods but also nourishment, words and thoughts. As a final step in this process of purification the *kevalin* abandons everything. Therein is perfect coherence. Renunciation is salvation and the way is simplification - which must take its course, of course, step by step and in accordance with a natural process of stripping. *Sādhvis* and *Munis* are not wandering pilgrims for the fun of it or to go somewhere. They are so because their very being is, as it were, on the march and because they can therefore possess nothing. The *jīva* is like water on the lotus leaf; it does not adhere and will fall if it has no support. This is purification through abandonment. One lets everything fall in the same way as a ripe fruit falls from the tree without anyone causing it to do so. There are no collateral effects either. I cannot cause the fruit of my neighbour to fall. That would in any case be a poor service, for the fruit that would fall would be green, indeed, it would not be a real fruit at all (for to be a proper fruit it must be ripe). Here, however, no hint of egoistic individualism is to be imputed. It is simply the law of the universe. Perfection is an individual matter. I must eliminate all *karman* and thus all material residue, but in doing so, in freeing my *jīva* from all defilement, I am contributing to the purification of the universe. This work of realisation is a cosmic work: in other words, it is my contribution to the functioning of the world. Conversely, the least trace of egoism would be a major obstacle to the purification or stripping of the *jīva*. This explains the almost unique dialectic of the spirituality of the *Sādhvis*, one that veers between solitude and community. On the one hand, they are never alone, indeed they live a close-knit community life; but on the other hand, they do not believe in collateral effects as far as salvation is concerned. There is no place for grace, each one follows her own path towards Liberation, the attainment of *nirvāṇa* is an exclusively individual concern. It is recognised, however, that it is possible to help others acquire saving knowledge (*jñāna*) through personal example and instruction in the doctrine (*pravacana*).

5. The importance of this study for our times

The reader may perhaps find the themes here treated interesting but somewhat bizarre and in any case of secondary importance to an age such as ours, which is preoccupied with a thousand other concerns such as secularism, technology, the arms race, the threat of nuclear war, hunger, injustice and exploitation. Yet neither the author of this book, who often worked twelve hours a day throughout a period of several years, nor, certainly myself would have devoted our time to such undertakings if we had thought that the whole enterprise was simply an antiquarian's task of merely speculative interest and intended only for an elite readership.

I ask myself the well-known question in christian monasticism: *Quid hoc ad aeternitatem?* Of what service is it for eternity? And I ask, in the opposite sense: Of what service is it for secularity? That is to say, of what service is it for human life, that life that we observe around us and more especially that we ourselves live day to day?

I do not wish to reply in a polemical spirit that it is of no service because one has passed out of the realm of any sort of service or servitude, because one is sovereign and free and not slavish, because the question is a captious one and could cause us to fall into despair and let ourselves be dominated and exploited by those who, not asking themselves this type of question, manipulate individuals and the masses in order to serve their own ends. I wish to reply in a different way, in the non-violent and conciliatory spirit of the Jainas.

For this we need to adopt a world-view that may give us a broader perspective and a calm and considered reply. In regard to this we should stress the importance of the Jaina doctrine in the realm of comparative studies. If the West has built its world-vision mainly on the concept of the Aristotelian substance modified to a greater or lesser extent, so that it considers things as substances and God as the Supreme Substance, and if on the other hand much of the Buddhist East has built up a world-vision based on the non-substantiality of things which in turn leads to the negation of any concept of a primal substance, the Jaina intuition offers us another basic choice, an entirely different experience of reality. Of this, moreover, the consequences are not only theoretical! We might, in one great leap, arrive at the thought that Jaina teaching offers an alternative to the

modern world in its dilemma between an acceptance of a technology which destroys both itself and, with it, the world and a refusal of technology which will also lead to the collapse of human structures.

It is remarkable that the Jaina intuition, which follows a path half-way between the concept *ātmavāda* or the substantiality of the *ātman*, which is common to all the systems of Hindu thought, and the concept *anātmavāda* or the non-substantiality of the *ātman*, which is common to all Buddhist systems, has had so slight an influence on the philosophical movements of India. While Hindu philosophies tell us that the *ātman*, or substance, is the real and that modalities are not so (*dravya-naya*) and while Buddhist philosophies affirm that modalities are real and that substance is illusory (*pariāya-naya*), Jaina thought recognises that each of these perspectives, the substantialist (*dravyārthika-naya*) and the modalist, when carried to its logical conclusion, denies the truth of the other. In reality, says Jainism, there is no substance without modalities and no modalities apart from substance. It is this which gives rise to the Jaina 'perspectivism' (*anekāntāmaka*) with its contextualism (*syādvāda*) to which we have already alluded and that we mention again here in order to emphasize its importance *vis-a-vis* the dialectical extremes of our contemporary world. However I do not wish to expatiate further on this point in this presentation of a study which bears above all on the ascetic life.

I must also forgo here commentary on the importance of Jainism for depth psychology and for a comprehension of the dynamism that operates in spiritual life, such as a study on the passions of the soul, for example, would provide.

Within the Jaina community, that is to say within the *saṅgha* itself, this present study could trigger a movement of re-interpretation and adaptation of both doctrine and practices, without any unfaithfulness to the spirit of the tradition. It could also help to awaken a sort of Jaina ecumenism, by contributing to better knowledge and appreciation of the values stressed by the different traditions and the advantages of action taken in common. The influence of a small several thousand years old minority which today occupies an important social position in India is incalculable, though for full effect the unifying myth of Jainism must be strengthened. It is known that there are as many as eighty-four different schools of thought among

the Jains, but this diversity does not betoken a breakdown into petty quarrels. The world already knows the strength of 'non-violence' through the interpretation and putting into practice of it by Mahātmā Gandhi. Gandhi may have failed *for the moment* as regards collective action, both in his own country and elsewhere. On the external world scene violence is universal. It has become more obvious and more dangerous on account of the means of its perpetration placed by technology within anybody's reach. However, at the level of individual personal awareness the value of non-violence begins to be recognised and the necessity of it to be felt more and more. The first attempts to build a more human world-order have, it is to be admitted, failed, but the increasing danger of a tyranny of violence in all spheres of human life and in the majority of countries enhances also the role and importance of the prophets of non-violence. A community of more than three million persons who have been trained to non-violence over a span of nearly three thousand years could be instrumental in bringing to birth a new degree of consciousness towards which contemporary Man is groping with a hope that borders on despair. No religious group can take the place of a prophet, but it may well act as a sounding-board.

I would like to add some further considerations which, though expressed here in general terms, could represent a rather important shift in our vision of reality and therefore in our way of approaching it. After this apparent detour I shall return to the question propounded above, namely, *quid hoc ad hominem?* Of what service is it for Man?

The problem is serious the modern world seems to have reached a total impasse. It is this powerlessness to change a situation which is destructive of Man and culture that is often at the root of the despair and cynicism of present-day non-conformist movements of all types. There are, to be sure, gleams of hope when something is happening in small circles (a village, a small industry, a family workshop...) but one is engulfed in an anonymous global system so soon as one touches upon the large spheres of the economy, industry, politics, etc. (the armaments industry, multinationals, world-wide advertisement...). There seems to be no way out of this situation. The mind turns to the theological controversies of the first centuries of the modern age in Europe concerning predestination or freedom and grace or to the even more straightforward problem of an anthropomorphic and all-powerful

God who none the less permits the suffering of innocents and indiscriminate evil: if he allows such a situation, then either he is not a good Father or else he is not All-powerful. A solution can only be found by demonstrating that the problem is ill posed: a "Father" such as this does not exist, grace is not magic and liberty is something other than what one supposes. To obtain a clearer idea, one must lay bare the true factors in the problem. These in the case of the present world situation are the anthropological and cosmological premises which form an integral part of the western world's world-view and which, through science and technology, have imposed themselves on a large part of this whole planet. The metaphysical and moral premises of modernity are "in crisis", but the anthropological and cosmological views that were formed during a long period of gestation in the west are still the accepted myths.

Now in the Jaina community these views are quite different. Underlying them is an anthropology that explains the rationale and coherence of their system. I recognize that this same anthropology is to be found also in other traditions, but I like to think that among the Jainas it is preserved with a certain purity, even, one might say, with a certain naivety; that makes it easier to contrast the difference and indicate its consequences.

Jaina anthropology is inseparable from the cosmology which sustains it. Man is not viewed as an isolated individual or as the king of creation entrusted with a mission to dominate it, and still less to save it. Nor, on the other hand, is Man a more or less undifferentiated part of the whole. What gives the Jaina world-view a validity for today is precisely its *sui generis* individualism, which is foreign to other Indic concepts of reality. Jaina Man is an individual, the reality of each Man is the personal *jiva* or *ātman*, the Self or soul. There are no two identical souls. The Jaina world is a world of plurality. Each living being is unique and there is an abhorrence of inhuman collectivism. At the risk of repeating a dangerous slogan, one might say that Jainism is a humanism. Man constitutes the supreme and definitive reality -but not in this present life. Human beings should disencumber themselves of the material wrappings of all sorts, gross and subtle, by which they are gripped. The individual exists, however, within the total cosmological framework of Jainism, the complexity of which is like that of the astronomy of contemporary science. We

believe in the latter because we are told that it is verifiable by experiment (which is not quite correct), but we have reservations about the former because it is too complicated and because it does not furnish experimental proofs. In both cases we hardly question ourselves about the bases on which these respective systems are built.

Here is not the place for me to go further into disputes concerning the Jaina cosmic vision. What is of interest and importance for us is the possibility of an alternate 'way', still alive today, which undergirds a genuine spirituality. Undoubtedly Jaina cosmography has to be superseded, for it no longer carries conviction to the modern mind. The really important thing is the discovery of a landmark which may serve to relativise the anthropocentricity of our modern age and its identification of Man with historic existence. Heaven and paradise may no longer be the *ūrdhva-loka* (the upper world comprising several paradises where divine beings dwell) or the bosom of Abraham, but humans, if deprived of a cosmology in which to situate events and thoughts are asphyxiated or, in modern parlance, self-destroyed.

However the elaboration of such a theme does not belong to a Presentation. Any attempt to explain how we can be mutually enriched by the treasures of others' traditions and how a mutual fecundation can happen is already quite another story . . .

I would like to end with an invitation to read and ponder this study. My part has been to stimulate such a desire.

Kārtika Pūrṇimā (end of *cāturmāsya*), November 11th, 1981
anniversary of the end of the First World War, Kodaikkanal.

Author's Preface

Anantā kṛtajñatā: infinite gratitude

During several years, on the track of the Sādhvis, I had to combine a life of study with a life on pilgrimage. My Masters were the *Āgamas* and the works of the Sages, and gradually and as need required and as I little by little absorbed the ideas of the teaching, the rules of life and accounts of their tradition and history, I went to consult the Sādhvis and Āryikās upon these questions, as well as certain Munis and scholars. Before setting out to meet the Sādhvis I had to discover their whereabouts, which was only possible thanks to the kindness of lay members of the community, who helped me in this search. This done, I had to apply to the secretary of the local committee to ascertain the duration of their stay in such or such a place, and then find for myself a place to lodge. All these proceedings put me in touch with numerous Jainas. During my stays close to the Sādhvis hospitality was given to me either by a neighbouring family or by the committee in charge of a dharmashala of the town or pilgrim-place, or sometimes by friends of my own who happened to live within easy range. I used to set off from Varanasi, where I lived up to 1979, for several months, armed with my notes and some of my books; I left the plains of the North where the summer is scorching to repair to regions where I knew the Sādhvis would come to spend the monsoon months and where I was sure to find a good library. During these periods certain communities, some composed of friends already known to me and others of persons hitherto unknown, had the kindness to welcome me. Thus in the course of my wanderings, as well as meeting a large number of Sādhvis and also some Munis, I was given lodgement not only by Jaina families or dharmashalas, but also by members of Christian religious groups that I would not otherwise have had an opportunity to meet. My encounters with the Sādhvis gave me a chance to learn a lot from them, to experience a Jaina ecumenism while I lived among Jainas of different groupings and a still wider ecumenism when I was the guest of communities attached to different churches.

It was only possible for me to continue this task of assimilation, of deepening and unremitting concentration that a study like this, rooted

as it is in the day to day life of its subjects, demands thanks to the sympathy, knowledge, support and welcome of many people. No word could possibly express fully my infinite gratitude. I cannot be content to record simply a list of names but prefer, rather, to try to stay as near as I can to the situation of these past years by recalling, if not all the names known to me, at least a great proportion of them and by stating the particular part they played in the accomplishing of this study (and sometimes, of course, one or other performed several functions therein).

Given the variety of places and the span of years involved, the simplest thing is to follow a geographical order.¹ I must add that up till 1975, being fully involved in another project, I was able to give only a very limited amount of time to the present study. However, as my interest in the subject was already fully awakened and the subject so vast, I tried to work a little on it each day and to take eagerly every chance that came my way to make new contacts.

Instruction, Kindliness and general concern on the part of scholars

At Varanasi: Professor M. Metha, during the course of many years, when he was director of the P.V. Institute, ungrudgingly answered my many questions and gave me wise counsel; at the end of '79 he most kindly helped me to revise my first draft at the University of Pune where he is at present a Professor. I would like to express to him my warmest thanks.

I would also like to thank:

- Dr Gokulchandra Jain, of untiring helpfulness, who was always ready to give me information on one subject or another, to lend me books, give me addresses, introduce me to somebody - and that in the happy family atmosphere of his home where Shrimati Jain also played her part.

¹ In order to simplify, proper names are given here without diacritical marks, except in the case of Sādhvis. The names of towns and states follow the usual spellings. The study itself, however, follows other principles of orthography: cf. technical note.

- Pandit A.Bhattacharya, my guide in the study of Sanskrit.

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At Kodaikkanal: Dr.A.Pitchai, who taught me the rudiments of Tamil and helped me to understand certain passages of the *Cilappatikaram*, in 1979-1980.

Hospitality of Jaina families and dharmashalas and of friends and communities in almost the whole of India

I thank most warmly each and everyone of those who gave me hospitality.

In the North: at the dharmashala of Hastinapur.

In Rajasthan: at Shridungargarh, Jodhpur, Jaipur, Landnun.

In Gujarat: at Ahmedabad, Bhavnagar.

In Maharastra: at Bombay, particularly at Ghatkopar where the Khetani family offered me a warm hospitality in 1971 at the time of my meeting with the Sādhvis of the Shramani Vidyapith, and again in 1976 on the occasion of a *dikṣā* being performed in the neighbourhood.

At Pune, Ahmednagar, Yeola.

In Karnataka: at Shravanabelgola where the late Shri M.H. Shah supplied me with all the historical details of the place, at Bangalore, in Kodagu.

The effective help of numerous Jainas

It is impossible to mention here by name all those who put me in touch with Sādhvis, gave me informations or found me books. Among them, however, certain ones made a direct contribution to this study and I would like to express my grateful thanks:

- At Calcutta: Shri S.Rampuriya, Shri B.Nahta.

- At Delhi: Shri D.Singh Jain, Dr.Vimal Prakash Jain when he was secretary of the Bharatiya Jnanpith.

- At Jaipur: Dr. N. Bhanavat.

- At Bombay: Shri R.N. Doshi.

- At Madras: Shrimati Bheda, Shri S. Pannalal Jain, Shrimati S. Metha.

A valuable collaboration during the final stage

I owe a debt of great gratitude to:

- Sister Sara of the Monastery of Pradines, who read through the first manuscript and re-typed part of Part I.

- Nishihatai, of Pune, who in spite of numerous other tasks, re-typed a large portion of the manuscript.

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- Mātāji Pratibhānanda, of Kodagu, who with care kindly read through the whole of the final manuscript.

N.Shāntā
Kodaikkanal
Mahāvira Jayanti
April 6th, 1982

Addition to the French edition

Inspiration came to me to undertake this study from the thought of R. Panikkar on the subject of the Encounter of Religions. This inspiration which guided me both during long years of close collaboration in the production of his works and throughout my research for this present study, is clearly expressed in one of his own writings:²

Myths, symbols, intuitions, presentiments, basic thought-patterns, spontaneous convictions, important factors all of them which need to be taken into account in one's attempt to evaluate fairly a religion in its entirety... In order to come close to a religious phenomenon which was unknown to one until then, a certain faith is necessary. From the methodological point of view it is necessary to recognise that each and every religious assessment (which is in any case a matter of faith) cannot possibly be "understood" without a corresponding faith. Nowadays the science of religions assumes that it is impossible from the outside to understand the whole complexity of a belief hitherto unknown. The ruling principles of the natural sciences are recognised as being inapplicable to spiritual sciences. The subjectivity of the seeker is bound to intrude in this way, namely, that their aim and object, in order to be properly understood, demands a certain sympathy, a certain affinity. This is all the more true if there is a question of penetrating within a religion which is not that of the seeker. It is only a deep assimilation into the heart, an identification with the religious phenomenon in question, that will succeed in doing so.

Anniversary of the Independence of India
August 15th, 1995, Kodaikkanal.

² Panikkar, 1970, pp. 119-120.

TECHNICAL NOTE

1 Transcription and pronunciation

(The following notes are elementary and aim at familiarising the reader with the terms employed in this study.)

i) Sanskrit

The internationally accepted system of transcription is used here.

ii) Prākṛit

Is only used in original quotations of texts in the notes. It has the same transcription and pronunciation as the Sanskrit with these differences:

a) the following vowels and consonants do not exist in Prākṛit:

ī, ai, au, ś, ṣ, ḥ

however: ai = a + i, pronounced a-i (i.e. two syllables and not like the diphthong ai of Sanskrit)

au = a + u, pronounced a-u (i.e. two syllables and not like the diphthong au in Sanskrit)

b) all the nasals are represented by ṁ.

iii) Hindi

Is only used in certain proper names and a few quotations. It has the same transcription and pronunciation as the Sanskrit with these differences:

a) There are two retroflexes ḍ and ḍh which are pronounced like a retroflex r, the ḍh being aspirated.

b) The 'a' mute at the end of a word is not pronounced in Hindi. We adhere here to the principle according to which the transcription of a word follows the orthography and not the pronunciation, for it is deemed essential that a transcribed word should be able to be correctly re-written in the original script, whatever the current pronunciation.

Furthermore, a large number of proper names in Hindi are derived or inherited from the Sanskrit in which the final 'a' is pronounced, for example, one writes: Hastinapura (in both Sanskrit and Hindi) and one pronounces (in Hindi) Hastinapur (cf. § 6 below).

iv) Tamil

Is only used in Part I 3 G. Here are some notes regarding the transcription and pronunciation of the vowels and consonants found in that section.

To the vowels of Sanskrit (excepting the *ṛ* which does not exist in Tamil) two more must be added:

ē ô

The following consonants are peculiar to Tamil:

l, ɭ, ɖ, ɽ.

2 Use of Sanskrit terms

i) The texts of Scripture are all in Prākṛit, while the major texts on doctrine and those transmitting ancient tradition are in either Prākṛit or Sanskrit. It is normal practice in lectures, teaching-sessions, and books on doctrine (except in the case of highly specialised study) always to use Sanskrit terms, even if the original is in Prākṛit. We follow this method which is the most practical for rendering the given subjects intelligible, but the original of each quotation, whether in Prākṛit or Sanskrit, is always given in the notes; and if a Prākṛit word in a certain text requires explanation, the equivalent Sanskrit of this same word is to be found in brackets in the note.

ii) Sanskrit words are printed in italics except:

a) Those denoting the ascetics and the faithful (of the Jaina community); these are only in italics when the term is introduced for the first time or when demanded by the context; otherwise they are in Roman characters (with diacritical signs).¹

¹ The same applies to all other terms, Sanskrit or otherwise, which are not in italics.

These words are:

ācārya, āryikā, guru, guruṇi, kṣullikā, muni, sādhvī,
śrāvaka, śrāvikā

b) Names of communities and groups:

Digambaras, Kharataragacchas, Mūrtipūjakas, Sthānakavāsīs,
Śvetāmbaras, Tapāgacchas, Terāpanthis, Yāpaniyas

It is to be observed that the names of groups adhering to the tradition of the Bhaṭṭarakas are not italicised.

c) All titles applied to the ascetics.²

d) The Names of institutions

3. Texts quoted

i) Where there is a word-for-word translation it is given in indent form. Words in square brackets are understood and have been added to render the text more comprehensible. The content of texts translated more freely, paraphrased or condensed is not given in indent form.

ii) To facilitate the study of the doctrine *saṃdhis* have been suppressed in the Sanskrit texts.

4. The names "Sādhvī" and "Āryikā"

The words sādhvī, āryikā and other terms used to describe the women ascetics are also used as titles.³

i) The titles of ascetics mentioned in ancient documents and in inscriptions are quoted as found in the texts.

² Cf. § 4 iii,iv.

³ Cf. P57ff.

ii) In the case of contemporary sādhis and āryikās we follow the usage of each community the first time that a sādhi is mentioned, for example:

Sādhi Hemaprabhā Śrī	of the Mūrtipūjakas
Sādhi Śrī Rājimati	of the Terāpanthis
Mahāsati Śrī Tarulatā	of the Sthānakavāsīs
Āryikā Śrī Jñānamati	of the Digambaras. ⁴

Thereafter we give simply the title followed by the name: Sādhi Hemaprabhā etc. and, according to custom, Jñānamati Mātāji or Mātāji.

iii) In the inscriptions of Kaṇṭhaka.⁵ the terms used to describe women ascetics are:

avve, ganti, gantiya, kanti, kantiyār

As in the case of sādhi and āryikā these words are not printed in italics (cf. § 2). These also are titles preceded by the personal name.

iv) In the texts and inscriptions of Tamiḷ Nāḍu ⁶ the terms are:

aṭṭaḷ, kurati aṭṭaḷ, kurattiyār

These too are titles and are preceded by the proper name of the person or of the place to which she belongs.

5. References in the notes to translations and contemporary work in Hindi

i) Authors: Ācārya, Muni, Sādhi, Āryikā

At the first mention we give the title, e.g. Sādhi Saṅghamitrā; thereafter in all other reference we give only the name: Saṅghamitrā, etc.

⁴ The titles are Sādhi, Mahāsati or Āryikā in accordance with each community's custom and the Śrī is placed either before or after the personal name.

⁵ Cf. P 212 ff.

⁶ Cf. P 226 ff.

ii) Other authors

The transcription of their names follows the devanāgarī script. Nevertheless, when we refer to a work in English written by an author with a Hindi name we have followed the transcription given by the editor.

6. Names of towns, districts and States

i) Names belonging to ancient history (from the VIth century B.C. to the beginning of the Christian era) are transcribed in accordance with their original script, each being located in its own region with the name of the present-day State indicated (cf. map).

ii) Names belonging to the beginning of the Christian era and up to our own times are transcribed according to the script in which they are written in the document studied and are located in the correct present-day States (cf. map). As most of these names have been anglicised, both transcriptions (i.e. the one which follows the original script and that which follows English pronunciation) are given at the end of the study, for example:

Elāpura	Ellora
Jayapura	Jaipur
Madhya Pradeśa	Madhya Pradesh, etc.

It should be noted that in this English translation the passage quoted from French authors have been translated by the translator. The references given, however, are in each case to the original French.

7. Abbreviations

ADh	<i>Anagāradharmāmṛta</i>
Atlas	Schwartzberg, (edited by) <i>A Historical Atlas of South Asia</i>
Anus	<i>Anuyogadvāra-sūtra</i>
As	<i>Ācārāṅga-sūtra</i>
AvaS	<i>Āvaśyaka-sūtra</i>
BhattSamp	Joharapurkar, <i>Bhaṭṭāraka sampradāya</i>
Brks	<i>Bṛhatkalpa-sūtra</i>
DasasS	<i>Daśāśrutaskandha-sūtra</i>
DhyanSat	<i>Dhyānaśataka</i>
DS	<i>Daśavaikālika-sūtra</i>
DravSam	<i>Dravyasaṅgraha</i>
EC	<i>Epigraphia Carmatica</i>
EI	<i>Epigraphia Indica</i>
Jesalmer Coll.NC	Muni Puṇyavijaya, <i>Jesalmer Collection New Catalogue</i>
JSBI	Jain & Mehta, <i>Jaina sāhitya kā bṛhad itihāsa</i> , Vol II
JSBSam	Sethiyā, <i>Jaina siddhānta bolasaṅgraha</i>
JSK	Jinendra, <i>Jainendra siddhānta kośa</i>
JSilalekhSam	Joharapurkar, <i>Jain Silalekhasaṅgraha</i>

KarmG *Karmagrantha*

KS *Kalpa-sūtra*

MA *Mulācāra*

NandīS *Nandī-sūtra*

NS *Niśītha-sūtra*

P Indicates the page number of a cross- reference, e.g. P 125
= see p. 125 for cross-reference

PPN Mehta & Candra, *Prākṛit Proper Names*

PSa *Pravacanasāra*

SamSa *Samayasāra*

SBE *The Sacred Books of the East*

SkrS *Sūtrakṛtāṅga-sūtra*

SramanS Muni Amaraçandra, *Śramaṇa-sūtra* ⁷

SthS *Sthānāṅga-sūtra*

Tattvanu *Tattvānuśāsana (Dhyānaśāstra)*

TrisalPC *Triṣaṣṭiśalākāpuruṣacaritra*

TS *Tattvārtha-sūtra & Sarvārthasiddhi* ⁸

⁷ Part II: *Sūtra* and commentaries.

⁸ All the references to the TS include both the TS itself and the commentary upon it, the *Sarvārthasiddhi*.

TS Sukhlal Sukhlal, *Commentary on Tattvārtha-sūtra*

US *Uttarādhyayana-sūtra*

VS *Vyavahāra-sūtra*

YB *Yogabindu*

YSas *Yogaśāstra*

8. List of Illustrations

1. Stūlabhadra and his seven sisters sādhis, *Kalpa-sūtra*
2. Bāhubali with Brāmi and Sundari, *Kalpa-sūtra*
3. Samanarmalai, Mahāvira
4. Śravaṇa Belgola, Indragiri, the rock of the siddhas
5. Samanarmalai, the line of carvings and epigraphs in the rock
6. Sādhis, painting of a vijñaptipatra, by Śālivāhana
7. Jesalamera, Temples
8. Namaskāra-mantra
9. Ābū Road, caraṇapāḍukā of Sādhvī Sunandā Śrī in the samādhi-mandira
10. Dilli, image of Sādhvī Vicakṣaṇa Śrī
11. Śatruñjaya Sādhis descending the Holy Mountain
12. Āryikā Śrī Jñānamati Mātāji (Digambara)
13. Mahāsati Śrī Tarulatā (Sthānakavāsi)

14. Pātras, Mūrtipūjaka sādhis
15. Sādhi Nirmalā Śrī (Mūrtipūjaka, Tapāgaccha)
16. Rajoharaṇa and pātra, Sthānakavāsi sādhis
17. Aṣṭamaṅgalas, embroidery
18. Mathurā, āyāgaṇa
19. Jina in kāyotsarga
20. Śatruṅjaya, a) sādhi ascending the Holy Mountain, with rajoharaṇa under her arm and daṇḍa in hand (Front cover).
b) Śatruṅjaya sādhi descending the Holy Mountain (Back cover)
Photo O. Bäumer.

All photographs were taken by the author except where indicated to the contrary in the explanatory notes.

NAMASKĀRA - MANTRA

Namaskāra to the arhats
Namaskāra to the siddhas
Namaskāra to the ācāryas
Namaskāra to the upādhyāyas
*Namaskāra to all the sādhus of the universe*¹

The *Namaskāra-mantra*, the pre-eminent of all Jaina *mantras*, is certainly of very ancient origin. It is to be found in several texts of Scripture: at the beginning of the *Śaṅkhaṇḍāgama*, as also of the *Āvaśyaka-sūtra*, *Bhagavati-sūtra* and *Kalpa-sūtra*. Mention is made of it in the *Daśavaikālika-sūtra*.² One inscription of the IInd century B.C., of the region of Kalinga (Orisā) is a salutation addressed to the *arhats* and *siddhas*.³

This *Namaskāra* or salutation expressing veneration, respect, devotion and humility is addressed to each of the five categories of *parameṣṭhins*. The word *parameṣṭhin* occurs already in the *Atharva Veda*; it means: supreme Lord, Sovereign, and denotes both a cosmic principle, a personified God and, in a broad sense, a higher spiritual authority. Jainism does not recognise one sole God, the Creator, Ordainer and Father of all creatures. In this religious tradition, the *parameṣṭhins* are human beings who have attained to plenitude of being (self-realisation) or are on the path towards this realisation.⁴

¹ *ṇamo arahantāṇaṃ, ṇamo siddhāṇaṃ, ṇamo āyariyāṇaṃ,*
ṇamo uvajjhāyāṇaṃ, ṇamo loe savvasāhūṇaṃ. AvaS 1.

² Cf. DS V, I, 93.

³ Cf. P 131 n. 81. *Namaskāra* means 'salutation' i.e. to salute or invoke respectfully by uttering the exclamation '*namas*' which means homage, adoration (from the root *nam-*, to bow).

⁴ Cf. Malvania, 1975, pp. 1-5; also Part II for the lengthy process which leads to this realisation.

An *arhat* is a great ascetic worthy of veneration, a *jina* or conqueror⁵ and a *kevalin*, i.e. omniscient one.⁶ Among the *arhats* of both past and present, certain ones have been entrusted with the special mission of teaching the *dharma*, the path of Liberation, to all living beings: these are the *tirthaṅkaras*.⁷ In this *mantra* veneration is accorded first to the *arhats*, on account of the immense gratitude which is their due.⁸

A *siddha* is an *arhat* who, freed from the last shreds of *karman* which were holding him in his fleshly body, now lives for all time in the beatitude of *nirvāṇa*. He has realised to the full the infinite potentiality of his unalloyed *ātman* and rejoices therein.⁹ Every living being is a potential *siddha*.

An *ācārya* is an ascetic, the spiritual Master in charge of a community of munis, *sādhvis*, *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās*.¹⁰

An *upādhyāya* is an ascetic well-grounded in the teaching who instructs the other ascetics.

A *sādhū* is an ascetic with no special function. The word is masculine but in reality the *sādhvis*, women ascetics who have

⁵ He has won a victory over *rāga*, vehement desire, and over *dveṣa*, hatred, aversion.

⁶ From *kevala*: alone, isolated. and also: whole, full, complete; cf. P 396 ff.

⁷ According to Jaina doctrine there exist, in a part of the universe other than that in which we live, *arhats* and *tirthaṅkaras* in permanent residence; cf. P 76, 676.

⁸ Cf. *caturviṃśatistava*, P 69 ff; 317 ff.

⁹ Cf. P 400 ff.

¹⁰ The *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* are lay men and women who have not committed themselves to radical asceticism. Certain *ācāryas* do not have *sādhvis* under their obedience.

received the same consecration, taken the same vows, follow the same rules and deserve the same veneration as men ascetics, should be included in this category.¹¹

In ages like our own that lack *tirthaṅkaras*, these three sorts of *parameṣṭhin* (*ācāryas*, *upādhyāyas*, *sādhus*) are required, each according to his rank, to teach the doctrine so that beings may learn the *dharma*.

Several commentators are of the opinion that the "all" and "of the universe" at the end of the *mantra* refer to each one of the *parameṣṭhins*, whether of the past, the present or the future, for after the conclusion of our era, in that part of the universe which we occupy, new *tirthaṅkaras* will appear.

The *Āvaśyaka-sūtra* calls the *Namaskāra-mantra* the *pañca-namaskāra-maṅgala-sūtra*, the *sūtra* of the five *Namaskāras* of Happiness,¹² while tradition calls it a *mantra*. A *mantra* is one or more syllables or one or more words which, when repeated, possess an immense power far beyond their import on the mental plane. Through

¹¹ This applies to the Śvetāmbaras; as we shall see, the Digambaras do not give the same status to women. However, tradition, even among the Śvetāmbaras, never classes *sādhvis* as *parameṣṭhins* as it does *sādhus* and in practice the superior status of the *munis* is clearly evidenced by the fact that not only do they not address the *vandana* or ritual salutation to *sādhvis*, but they even do not greet them with a bow. In this regard the attitude of the *munis* is that which is prevalent in a world where man predominates, not that which is influenced by spiritual motives. The *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* of traditionalist communities perform the ritual *vandana* for *munis* only, but in the reformed communities they perform this same *vandana* for *munis* and *sādhvis* alike. Recently Ācārya Tulasi requested the *munis* of his community (of Terāpanthis) to salute the *sādhvis* with a bow and joined palms, when these latter give them the *vandana*. Some modern commentators include among the *sādhus* all those who follow some spiritual discipline, whatever their sect or state of life, what is of importance being a sincere commitment to a path of self-purification and perseverance in this path, not the dress they adopt; cf. e.g. SramanS, pp. 3; 11.

¹² Cf. P 160 ff. for *maṅgala*, *aṣṭamaṅgala*.

the utterance of the Names of the five categories of *parameṣṭhins*, this *Namaskāra-mantra*, recited with faith and reverence, is so powerful that it obliterates sins and for this reason is considered the greatest *mantra* of all.¹³ The *siddhas*, perfected, liberated beings, have no link with mankind, nor do they accord them any favours. The same applies to the other *parameṣṭhins*. The power of the *mantra* depends on the faith of the one who pronounces it. It is his or her desire to imitate the *parameṣṭhins* which has such a profoundly salutary effect.

The *Namaskāra-mantra* is always associated with *kāyotsarga*, the temporary abandonment of all bodily activity, during which time the silent recitation of it undergirds *dhyāna*, mental concentration, that is, the highest degree of that interior asceticism which contributes to the purifying of the *ātman* from karmic matter.¹⁴ The efficacy of the *mantra* depends, at one and the same time, on the fervour with which the all-holy Names are uttered and on the intensity of the effort towards concentration applied to the utterance.¹⁵ On occasions other than during *kāyotsarga* the ascetics and the faithful repeat the *mantra* very frequently. They may find a *mālā* (rosary) helpful, pronouncing slowly each syllable or alternatively reciting one by one the hundred and eight qualities of the *parameṣṭhins*.¹⁶

¹³ In the opening verse of the KS, in the *Āvaśyaka-niryukti*. The same verse is very often recited immediately after the *Namaskāra-mantra*:

eso pañca namokkāro savva-pāvappaṇāsaṇo
maṇigālāṇaṃ ca savvesiṃ paḍhamāṃ havai maṇigālāṃ.

Cf. also Adh IX, 25-26.

¹⁴ Cf. DravSam 47-57; YSas VIII, 32-42.

¹⁵ Among the many studies on this subject, cf. N. Jain, 1964; Sādhvi Rājimati, 1977.

¹⁶ For this reason the rosary contains 108 beads; cf. P 478 ff.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Hitherto, in most of the works treating of Jainism, the word 'monasticism' has been used, as if it were self-explanatory and required no preliminary comments, to denote the status proper to a certain section of the Jaina community, while the words 'monk' or 'religious', the latter being used for both men and women, are likewise applied to these same persons. These words of Greek and Latin origin have since the first centuries of our era been adopted by Christianity. They indicate an ideal, a type of life that has certain characteristics common to both the Jaina and Christian, as well as to certain other, traditions. However, not only do these terms fail to embody the whole of the Jaina ideal, but the truth is that this last-named differs in its final goal from the Christian ideal, while certain means that are employed towards the realisation of that goal are opposed to those which shape the lives of Christian nuns of the monastic orders.¹

Each religious tradition has its own specific words to denote those of its members who are consecrated to a spiritual quest according to certain given rules. In the course of this study we will use the terms proper to the Jaina tradition; yet, while the Jaina *dharma* must be

¹ An essentially itinerant life (cf. P 440 ff.; P 529 ff.); the quest for food (cf. P 496 ff.); the practice of *saṃlekhanā*, total fast before the Great Departure (cf. P 566 ff.); it is to be noted that the expression 'Great Departure' is used throughout this study for bodily death. In a Jaina context it means the abandonment of its present body by the *ātman*, which will proceed to be united to successive bodies in the course of future lives until the moment of its final Liberation, i.e. the total abandonment of bodily form and full Realisation; *jñāna-dāna*, imparting the gift or communication of knowledge in the form of regular public or semi-public lectures on the doctrine, delivered not only to men and women adherents, but also to any other interested persons (cf. P 548 ff).

approached on its own ground, introduced in its own specificity and with the use of its own terminology, it is not an isolated phenomenon; it has a place, a role to fulfill among the other traditions, a unique meaning to convey. It is by reason of this special function that we are going to try to discover what western word is the most appropriate to use to designate those members, men and women, of the Jaina tradition who have chosen to devote their lives to an exclusively spiritual search based on a well-defined teaching.

1. Ascesis, Asceticism

These two words, both of which are to be found in any spiritual vocabulary, are used interchangeably.

Etymology and different meanings of the word

"The etymology of the Greek word *askēō*, *ask'sis*, *asc't's*, is unclear. Homer uses it to express the idea of an artistic work (IL. 10, 438; 23, 743; Od. 23, 198) or of a technical work (IL. 3, 388; 4, 110); Herodotus employs it in the same way: to fashion an ornament, adorn (3,1; 2, 130)."² Later the word was used in different settings. In a physical sense: sustained physical effort, such as that of athletes or soldiers. In a moral sense: the exercise of intelligence and will-power in the acquisition of virtues and in freeing oneself from the grip of evil passions. In a religious sense: the methodical pursuit of perfection leading to the contemplation of God. It is above all in Philo, of the Jewish tradition at the beginning of this era, that the word has this connotation and it was adopted, with certain slight adaptations, by several Fathers of the Church, in particular by Origen and Clement of Alexandria.³

² Olphe-Gaillard, 1936, col. 939. *Ask'tria* denotes a 'nun'; cf. Chantraine, 1968, p. 124.

³ Cf. Olphe-Gaillard, 1936, col. 939-941.

In the ancient Greco-Roman philosophies

Among the Pythagoreans (VIth century B.C.) we find an awakening to spiritual values within man, to the divine dwelling within him, which leads him to struggle against all that prevents purity of heart. Thence arises a constant and systematic attempt to thwart evil tendencies, endure suffering and thus escape successive rebirths. Among the means deemed proper for this ascesis are philosophy, which on account of the effort of reflection involved is already a type of purification, struggle against the passions, continence, abstinence and the examination of conscience. This effort was to be resumed by the Neopythagoreans (Ist century of our era).⁴

The Stoics (from the IIIrd century B.C. till the first centuries of our era), particularly Epictetus, emphasized strongly spiritual ascesis which consists in combating false ideas through reflection, meditative reading and examination of conscience. They incline towards absolute interiority and endeavour to attach no importance to anything external: health, sickness, suffering. The renunciation of riches that they advocate has as its primary aim inner detachment.⁵

For the Platonists (Vth century B.C.) and, more particularly, the Neoplatonists around Plotinus (IIIrd century of our era), a sustained effort of purification is required to disengage or dissociate a man from his body, free him from all inner preoccupations caused by the body, in order that he may realise "being" in its simplicity and his union with God, the One. A lively consciousness of the body/soul dualism leads here to contempt for the body and to the complete vegetarianism adopted by certain philosophers, it lays special stress on recollection, meditation and philosophical reflection for spiritual purposes.⁶

⁴ Ibid., col. 950-953.

⁵ Ibid., col. 953-957.

⁶ Ibid., col. 957-960; cf. also *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, articles on: *Apatheia* and *Katharsis*.

The Therapeutrides of Egypt

Philo of Alexandria in his treatise *De Vita Contemplativa* describes with great approbation the way of life and spiritual exercises of a hellenised Jewish community of ascetics, men and women, of the end of the 1st century B.C. or the beginning of our era. Their centre was located near Lake Marcotis, near Alexandria. What is of great interest for us in this is the existence of a group of women ascetics, separated from their men counterparts by a cloister-wall several metres high, and following exactly the same rules. These Therapeutrides were virgins coming from highly-placed sections of society who had renounced their possessions. They led a very simple and austere community life, but without excessive rigorism. Their frugal diet consisted of water, bread, salt and hyssop. Each aspect of their life, their surroundings, dwellings, clothes, daily time-table, conspired towards detachment from the world, recollection, solitude interiority, so that they might devote themselves to study and meditation, to philosophical speculation and to the search for wisdom which ultimately leads to God.⁷ They frequently observed a total fast and attached great importance to a certain Jewish celebration that took place every seven weeks. This holy vigil opened with a homily or allegorical discourse on Scripture delivered by the President of the community, followed by hymns sung in turn by each member and repeated by all together. Then, after a meal of bread, salt and water, the liturgy proceeded with sacred songs and dances, performed by two choruses, male and female, the height of the cloister-wall not being such as to prevent each group from hearing the other.⁸

⁷ The author does not tell us how the community gained its livelihood; there is no mention of any sort of remunerated work, agricultural or any other. Does this lead us to suppose that the members received assistance from benefactors? That they begged their daily bread?

⁸ Cf. Philo of Alexandria (trans. Dumas & Miguel, 1963). This unique and highly interesting document whose background is at one and the same time Jewish, Greek and Egyptian, has been studied and discussed, not without controversy, by the experts; certain authors have queried the very existence of this community, while others have thought they could detect an Indian and probably Buddhist influence at work in it; cf. Moffat, 1967, pp. 318-319. Documents on the Essene community as well as those connected with the community of Qumram witness to the existence of Jewish communities, at

This brief description shows that asceticism, which was the heritage passed on by Greek philosophy, consists in a personal, sustained effort of will, an effort of self-mastery in order to control the body whose inclinations block progress on the spiritual path. It is a discipline that has as its goal the liberation of the spirit from the burden of the flesh, in order that it may reach a higher, indeed a divine, Reality. The different systems call this supreme Reality by differing names: it is Absolute Being or the Absolute Spiritual Principle or the Monad or God. The means which lead to this End, while maintaining slightly different emphases appropriate to the various traditions, are remarkably the same; they aim at a purification of the body in conjuncture with a purification of the spirit, and this is brought about both by renunciation of bodily pleasures and by intellectual and spiritual activities, such as study, reflection and meditation.

Thorough study of the Jaina teaching and of the way of life of the *sādhvis* will reveal to us characteristics common also to the philosophical systems of ancient Greece. This affinity gives us full justification for applying the word 'ascetics' to the *sādhvis* and for calling their spiritual practices an asceticism. For the moment, however, let us continue our line of exploration.

2. Christian asceticism

The subject being of such vast proportions, we must pass over here the teaching of Scripture in its regard.⁹ During the first centuries after Christ, men, women, girls, wives and even children of all classes of

the beginning of our era, which were devoted to the pursuit of spiritual things in the setting of an ascetic life. We make no further mention of these here, for the Essenes were men celibates and admitted no women. At Qumram there were no women celibates, but it is probable that there were certain women present who came in the wake of their husbands

⁹ On the scriptural references to the beginnings of Christian asceticism, cf. Viller and Olphe-Gaillard, 1936, col. 961-963.

society did not shrink from laying down their lives as martyrs in blood-stained sacrifice, for love of Him and in imitation of Him.¹⁰ Once the period of persecution was past, consecration to God in the state of virginity made its appearance among women as a form of martyrdom, a martyrdom of desire through the total offering of the person. Virginity is here the sign both of mythical union with Christ and also of immortality, for through this consecration of their persons virgins no longer belong to this world, they are in a state that transcends time and anticipates the beatific vision. Moreover, in the same way as widows who had already formed their own associations, they too were at the service of God and of the Church. There came into being women avowedly virgin both in East and West. They lived, as a rule, in their own families, though some were recluses. The Fathers of the Church attached great importance to the state of virginity and were constantly concerned to guide and protect virgins.¹¹

Later on, beginning in the IVth century, we find a strong ascetical movement, occurring first in Egypt and Syria and spreading from there throughout both East and West. This movement soon established itself and patterned its structures according to differing tendencies within its spirituality and mode of life.

What is a monk? A nun?

The Greek word *monos*, which means alone, solitary, has given rise to a whole range of words such as *monachos* (monk), *monastria* (nun).¹² The idea of solitude attached to this word does not mean that a monk or nun lives of necessity an eremitical life, though that is certainly the case for certain ones, but that they are separate from the

¹⁰ Cf. e.g. "La passion des saintes Felicité et Perpétue" and "Martyre de Marthe" in Quéré-Jaulmes, 1968, pp. 194-210; 213-218.

¹¹ Among the most important treatises on the subject of virginity we may mention the one attributed to St Athanasius (Aubineau, 1955, pp. 140-173; Bardy, 1936, col. 1047-1052); also the well-known work of St Gregory of Nyssa (Aubineau, 1966).

¹² Other words for nuns are: *monaxousa*, *monachoussa*, *monach*; cf. Cabrol, 1967, p.781.

world. Generally they lead a community life in a solitary place. In the monastery which is their permanent dwelling, they consecrate themselves wholly to spiritual endeavour. Their tasks, whether of agriculture, intellectual work or handicrafts, take second place, though they are useful in assuring the livelihood of the community or in making some contribution to studies in theology and spirituality within the Church. The word *ask'tria*, moreover, which is also used to denote a nun, clearly indicates the ascetic character of her vocation.

Two words frequently employed in Latin are: *nonnus*, for a monk, and *nonna* for a nun. Originally these were respectful terms applied to an aged person, to someone, man or woman, older than oneself.¹³

It is highly interesting and instructive to study some of the definitions that the first monks gave of themselves.

A monk is called a monk, because by night and by day his dealings are with God, and also he possesses nothing on earth.¹⁴

What then is a monk and in what way does he live up to his name? This is what we must discover. We will clarify this, therefore, as Christ gives us the ability. In the first place, therefore, he is called thus because he does not take to himself a wife and because, both externally and internally, he renounces the world; that is to say, in the external sphere he renounces material things and the affairs of the world, while in the internal sphere he renounces all thoughts connected thereto, permitting no entry to worldly preoccupations. Secondly, he is a monk (*monazōn*) that he may call upon God in unceasing prayer to purify his spirit of the multiplicity of thoughts that beset it, in such a way that, stripped of all else, his naked spirit may attend

¹³ In Greece the Superior of a women's monastery is called "Gerodissa", the older one. In the English language "monk" is used nowadays for the French "moine", and "nun", the equivalent of *nonna*, for the French "moniale"; and to distinguish a member of a contemplative congregation one refers to the former as a "cloistered nun".

¹⁴ Apophtegme de St Macaire, Hausherr, 1971, p. 17.

solely to the true God, never becoming prey to suggestions of evil, but always maintaining its needful purity and transparency as it stretches out towards God.¹⁵

The monk is one who is separated from all and united to all.¹⁶

. . . he (the monk) seeks the best means to disengage himself from all forms of matter, in order to proceed in an immaterial state to the Immaterial.¹⁷

It is not possible to succeed in living as a monk and simultaneously to visit towns where the soul is glutted with many and varied sights received from outside.¹⁸

The most difficult and also the most honourable of all ascetic endeavours is, according to St Nilus, the practice of *xeniteia* i.e. a stranger's life, to which is condemned or to which condemns himself the individual who goes off alone of his sort, his race, his language, to live in a country which is not his own, even if it were in the midst of fellow-ascetics who have contemplation as their supreme goal. . . the first and foremost of these combats is *xeniteia* which consists in setting forth alone, stripping oneself, like an athlete, of one's country, one's race and one's goods.¹⁹

¹⁵ Macaire, Homélie 56, *ibid.*, p.17.

¹⁶ Evagre, *De Oratione* 124, *ibid.*, p. 28.

¹⁷ Evagre, *De Oratione* 113, *ibid.*, p.31.

¹⁸ Evagre, Lettre 41, *ibid.*, p.37.

¹⁹ Hausherr, *ibid.*, p.49.

To be a perfect anchorite is, in addition to mortification of thine own will, to disavow all special affection for thy relatives and friends.²⁰

After entering the cocnubium implant in thy heart as it were a certainty that thy parents and friends are dead.²¹

From all these passages which, belonging as they do to the beginning of the age of Christian monasticism, are of great value to us, emerges this point: monks withdraw from the world in order to seek God and out of love for Him. Their sole good is union with God through prayer and their means to this end are total detachment and an unflagging effort to purify body, heart and spirit. The same applies most assuredly to nuns who have always followed - and follow today - precisely the same ideal as monks. Since the IVth century, in different parts of both East and West, there have been numerous nuns whose way of life has approximated closely to that of the monks of their neighbourhood. Documents referring to these early nuns are few and scanty and lacking in details and it is impossible for us to dwell on them here, but we may simply take a brief look at the pioneers in Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor, Africa, Palestine and Europe.

The Pioneers

Mary, sister of St Pachomius

From childhood onwards she remained a virgin and arrived looking for her brother, the spiritual Father of the monks of Tabennesi in Egypt. He did not receive her, but sent her a message by the monk at the gate, advising her, if she truly desired to embrace a monastic life, to stay close by in a dwelling that the monks would construct for her. She accepted this advice and soon a number of companions joined her. Mary became the spiritual Mother of these virgins, who together with her faced bravely the hardships of the ascetic life. When their

²⁰ Isaac Ninivita, *De Perfectione Religiosa*, chapter 127, *ibid.*, p.72.

²¹ *Ibid.*, chapter 130.

numbers increased still more, Pachomius assigned them a spiritual Father, Apa Peter, and through him sent them the book of rules that he had drawn up for the monks in order that they might also follow them.²² This took place in the first half of the IVth century.

Amma Syncletica

While Mary and her companions in their monastery were leading the cenobitic or community life, following the same rules as the monks, there existed also monks and virgins who, withdrawing to the desert or some other solitary place, were devoting themselves to an eremitic life of great austerity. Though there were many more men than women embracing this manner of life, yet those latter were not less fervent than the former; certain ones of their number evidenced an exceptional strength of character, attained a high degree of holiness and were in great demand for their wisdom. They were addressed as Amma, Mother. One of the most ancient Lives that we possess, that of Amma Syncletica, dates from about the middle of the Vth century. Its authorship is not known but the book, a veritable jewel, reflects the spirituality of the cultured milieus of the Egypt and Asia Minor of that time.

Syncletica belonged to a noble Christian family of Macedonia domiciled in Alexandria. Her biographical details are concisely given. The word "syncletos" means "[heavenly] assembly". A woman of great beauty, she refused numerous suitors, for "the divine Spouse alone had favour".²³ After the death of her parents she renounced the world and with her blind sister lived in the tomb of one of her forbears, outside the town. She cut her hair and distributed her goods to the poor. Her spiritual progress was very speedy; she was endowed with great fervour and wise discernment. The weapons of her spiritual

²² Cf. *Les vies coptes de Pachome* (trans. Lefort, 1943) pp.97-98.

²³ *Vie de sainte Synclétique* (trans. Bernard, 1972) p. 5; The following passage draws upon this Life. The existence of this saint has sometimes been queried. However, "in spite of the doubt concerning the existence of St Syncletica, the teachings attributed to her give the impression of being the fruit of experience, whether the personal experience of the saint and of her biographer or the common experience of the monastic circles of Egypt synthesised in a truly remarkable manner." (*Vie*, p. vii).

combat were fasting and prayer, while her helmet was an "alloy" of faith, hope and charity, faith being the predominating element. Her actions were characterised by discretion and perfection alone, she attracted other virgins who came and took counsel from her. Syncletica was reserved in speech, but was urged by her visitors not to conceal her treasure and thus, moved with compassion, she conversed with them on various subjects:

- On perfect charity and the demands thereof.
- On the struggle against impure thoughts.
- On the value of voluntary poverty.
- On the nature of true riches, especially humility.
- On sadness, both good (contrition) and bad (melancholy).
- On the assaults of the devil.
- On the necessity of constant vigilance.
- On the struggle against pride and despair.
- On anger and bitterness.
- On the gravity of slander.
- On love of enemies and sinners.
- On marriage and virginity.
- On the perfection required of virgins and monks.
- On the necessity of stability in the monastic life.
- On the diversity of callings.
- On the trial of sickness.
- On a proper moderation in the practice of asceticism.²⁴

As the writer of the introduction to this *Life* points out, there are found in the concept of asceticism outlined by Syncletica traces of the influence of Evagrius of Pontus, as also of his disciple Cassian.²⁵

²⁴ It is not possible to give here the contents of each homily: cf *Vie*, pp. 19-94.

²⁵ Cf. *Ibid.*, Introduction, pp. x-xiv. We may note that Evagrius has attracted the attention of scholars interested in inter-monastic encounter: "... a fourth century Greek who seems to have drunk deep from the non-hellenic springs of spirituality. . . his decisive and lasting influence in shaping the entire spiritual tradition of both the Latin West and Eastern Christianity, despite the Church's ruthless effort to erase his writings and his name from Christian memory. His introspective analysis of the human consciousness in its deepest layers. . . and also the techniques of acquiring mental purity did

The last part of the Life of Amma Syncletica speaks of her illness and sufferings, of her last admonitions in which she stresses the necessity of constant vigilance not to neglect small faults. Finally we hear of her terrible physical sufferings during the last three months of her earthly existence when she evidenced extraordinary strength of soul, for "it was a divine power that upheld her entire body,"²⁶ and it was radiantly that she breathed her last.

Daughters of the Covenant

In the Syria and Mesopotamia of the first centuries, Christianity took root in a cultural and social environment that was subject to Greek influence. It developed in its own particular way, where there appears to have been much stress laid on the idea of a new covenant with God. Baptism was the sealing of this covenant and the new Christians were called sons and daughters of the Covenant. At the same time - and this is a characteristic peculiar to early Syrian Christianity - these converts, along with their new faith, embraced the ascetic life.²⁷ The daughters of the Covenant were virgins who were at the service of their local church and its worship, some of them living together, others in their own families. Their existence, of which we have documentary evidence dating back to the beginning of the IVth century, may well date back to an earlier age. Subsequently, probably in the VIth century, although the name daughters of the Covenant continued, it was no longer a question of unmarried women attached to a local church but of nuns living a community life in a monastery. Their life, simple and austere, was devoted by turns to prayer, reading, manual work and rest. Work in the fields was

not come from Biblical sources. Anyone acquainted with Buddhist *vipassanā-bhāvanā* (insight meditation) and the Abhidhamma (Buddhist metaphysics) would find himself at home - as I did - in reading his instructions on prayer. In fact, in H.V. Von Balthasar's estimation, Evagrius is more Buddhist than Christian and his basic spiritual experience would be Mahayana idealism." Picris, 1980, pp. 60-61.

²⁶ Cf. *Vie*, pp. 95-104.

²⁷ Cf. Vööbus, 1958, vol I, pp. 69-83 *re* virginity linked with the baptismal state; cf. also Jargy, 1951, pp. 304-320.

according to the seasons, their food was plain and their fasts frequent. In the course of the clothing ceremony the candidate's head was shaved in the shape of a cross. Their spiritual Mother or Superior was an ordained deaconess who directed the nuns in her charge and exercised certain functions in the church.²⁸ These monasteries disappeared by the end of the XIV century, probably with the almost total eclipse of Christianity in those regions.

Macrina, sister of St Basil and St Gregory of Nyssa

The eldest of ten children, she was promised in marriage at the age of twelve, but shortly afterwards the young man was carried off by some sickness and she decided to remain a virgin. She assisted her widowed mother in the upbringing of her brothers and sisters, among them the two well-known monk-bishops, Basil and Gregory of Nyssa. Later on Macrina and her mother, after giving away their goods to the poor, withdrew to Amencsis on the banks of the Iris in the province of Pontus.²⁹ In this retired spot, along with their women-servants, they led a zealous monastic life similar in all respects to that of the monks established on the other side of the river, following as they also did the rule of St Basil.³⁰ Macrina was a spiritual Mother beyond compare, exercising this function not only for her companions, but also for her brothers, the monks. St Gregory of Nyssa who came to visit her during the last days of her earthly life, in 380, has left a description of her, in the form of a panegyric, of great depth and simplicity. He does not hide his own admiration and veneration for the outstanding virtues and strength of character of her whom he calls "the great Macrina" and "my spiritual mentor".³¹

²⁸ Cf. Fiey, 1965. pp. 281-306 for a description of the life of the monastery.

²⁹ This region corresponds with present-day Turkey. It is bordered by the Black Sea, of which the Eastern shore was formerly Armenia. The Iris is nowadays called the Kizil Irmak.

³⁰ This rule still prevails in Eastern monasticism.

³¹ Cf. Gregory of Nyssa: "La vie de Macrine" (Québec-Jaulmes, 1968, j p. 239-274.)

The nuns of Hippo

In North Africa it has been established that there were certain virgins to whom Tertullian, at the beginning of the IIIrd century, and Cyprian, a little later, addressed their exhortations on the subject of simplicity and modesty in dress, and on the necessity of wearing a veil.³²

In the IVth and Vth centuries mention is made of several monasteries, including that of Hippo, where the widowed sister of St Augustine retired and became the Superior. After her death there seem to have been dispute among the nuns and it was probably for them that Augustine wrote, in the year 423, his rule in a letter containing sixteen points. This rule, which reflects a whole spirituality, is characterised by paternal benevolence, wisdom, sound common sense, practicality, moderation and respect for personhood. The great saint lays stress on the spirit of charity, peaceableness and magnanimity which must inform the common life; on humility, filial obedience to the Mother of the community, modesty and prayer in common. He urges the nuns to adhere faithfully to his counsels and to persevere in thankfulness in order to avoid being overcome by evil.³³

Melanie the Elder, Paula and Eustochium, Melanie the Younger

These ladies of the Roman nobility, attracted by the holy places, came during the latter half of the IVth century or the beginning of the Vth to settle in Palestine where they founded monasteries. From the end of the IIIrd century hermits such as Hilarion and Chariton had been living in the Palestinian desert and among the local Greek population consecrated virgins were not unknown.

Melanie the Elder, who came of a high-ranking Roman family and was widowed while still in her youth, sold all her possessions and

³² Cf. Tertullian: "*De cultu feminarum*" (Quasten, vol. II, 1964, pp. 294-296); "*De virginibus velandis*" (ibid., p. 306); Cyprian: "*De habitu virginum*" (ibid., pp. 347-348); cf. some interesting reflections on this subject of T. Merton, 1971, pp. 334-342.

³³ Cf. Letter 211 (*Oeuvres complètes de St Augustin*, Guérin ed., 1865) vol.III, pp. 23-28; Boyer, 1936, col. 1126-1130.

carefully saved the gold she received to be used for the needs of the church and of the community she was planning for the future. She then sojourned awhile with the ascetics of Egypt and arrived in Jerusalem about the year 374. Three years later she organised the building of a monastery on the Mount of Olives and there she gathered some fifty virgins. In this monastery, along with her companions, she spent long years in prayer and penance, offering generous hospitality to pilgrim-visitors. Close to the women's monastery there was a men's monastery under the leadership of Rufinus who had accompanied Melanie from Rome.³⁴

Ten years after the arrival of Melanie in Jerusalem another Roman widow Paula and her daughter Eustochium settled in Bethlehem. These two founded a monastery whose members were divided into three categories according to their social rank. The best instructed studied Greek and even Hebrew in order to be able to sing the psalms in the original language.³⁵ Paula and her daughter acted also as secretaries to St Jerome, who kept up a regular correspondence with Rome and other parts of the world.³⁶

Melanie the Younger, grandchild of Melanie the Elder desired from her earliest years to consecrate her life to God, but her parents, who were extremely wealthy, gave her in marriage at the age of fourteen to one of her cousins, Pinian. After the death of both their children, the couple decided, on the initiative of Melanie, to live in a state of continual chastity and to renounce their possessions. After a long stay in Africa and a visit to the monks of Egypt, they reached Jerusalem in 417 and took up residence on the Mount of Olives. Melanie lived first as a hermit, then proceeded to found a monastery whose members were for the most part former slaves or penitent sinners. She continued to practise rigorous fasts and penances in her

³⁴ Cf. Bagatti, 1971, p. 79; Palladius: *The Lausiaca History*, trans. Meyer, 1965, pp. 123-125; 134.

³⁵ Cf. Bagatti, pp. 79-82; Palladius, p. 118

³⁶ 36. Cf. *Selected Letters of St Jerome*, App. I (trans. Wright, 1954.)

cell, being strict also in matters concerning the cloistered life, enjoining her nuns to shun speech with men. Though herself well-instructed and given to assiduous study of the Scriptures, she took little trouble to raise the intellectual level of her companions, all her teaching being directed towards the practice of a fervent religious life by means of zeal for the liturgy, mutual love, obedience, patience and perseverance in the performance of fasts and other mortifications and in the struggle against the devil. Her husband, for his part, led a similar life of renunciation and after his death Melanie founded a men's monastery close to his tomb.³⁷ At the age of fifty-six she took leave of the mortal body she had subjected to such rigorous mortifications, leaving to all those who had known her the testimony of a very holy life.

The spiritual heritage of St Benedict

After this brief tour of the Mediterranean countries' monastic life from the beginning of the IVth century, we come to the West where, around 480, St Benedict was born in the province of Nursia. He studied in Rome and then withdrew into solitude. After three years of great austerity in the cave of Subiaco he was joined by several disciples. St Benedict attempted with them a type of community life according to the rule of St Pachomius. After a while they moved to Mt Cassino and there St Benedict at the beginning of the VIth century founded his monastery, which followed a life-style and spiritual way which, while incorporating the essential elements of the earlier tradition, imparted to them a fresh and original inspiration.³⁸ Because of his personal holiness, wisdom, administrative abilities and his discreet exercise of authority, St Benedict has been considered the Father of western monasticism. Tradition recounts that his sister Scholastica and other virgins followed his rule. In Gaul, from the beginning of the VIIIth century, monasteries of Benedictine nuns came into being. Not much is known about them except that they lived a secluded life of prayer and recollection. Later on we get to

³⁷ It was the chaplain of this monastery, Gerontius, who later wrote: *La vie de Mélanie* (trans. Gorce, 1962) upon which this paragraph draws for its facts; cf. also Palladius, pp 141-144.

³⁸ Cf. Schmitz, 1936, col. 1371-1372.

know a little better the life of such nuns through the accounts of the lives of holy Abbesses, such as Elisabeth of Schonau and Hildegard of Bingen in the XIIth century and others in the following centuries.³⁹ It is to this Benedictine family that a large number of the monastic orders' nuns of our day belong.⁴⁰ In the course of the centuries the Benedictine oak has produced new branches and foliage, but the sap remains the same, and the rule prescribed for the monks is followed in its entirety by the nuns.

- The Abbot (or Abbess) is the Father (or Mother) of the monastery and remains so under normal circumstances for life.
- The monks or nuns live in community, bonded together by a deep fraternal love.
- Stress is laid on obedience, silence, recollection, humility.
- The spirit of their religious life is expressed through the Divine Office prayed in common and through personal prayer.
- Work is an essential element to ensure a proper balance in the life of a human being.⁴¹ We may add further: stability, the members of a monastery are to remain in that particular monastery all their lives. Enclosure, specially in the case of nuns, was at a later date strictly enforced, though it was not so originally.

When we come to the spiritual teaching which inspired this rule, we find that it lays great stress on the presence of God, on the all-powerful workings of His grace and on that of the Spirit of Love.

³⁹ Cf. Mähler, 1936, col. 1435-1438.

⁴⁰ Our special concern here is with the origins of women's monasticism and hence the singling out of the Benedictines; this by no means denies the existence, a few centuries later, of other nuns, such as the Poor Clares and the cloistered Dominicans.

⁴¹ Cf. Schmitz, 1936, col. 1373-1388

Everything combines to teach the members of the community to attain to perfect union with God through a radical stripping of the self.⁴²

Enclosure in East and West

The word enclosure refers to a certain area reserved for nuns beyond the boundaries of which their excursions are limited or forbidden, an area where outsiders have no right to enter. The purpose is not only to ensure perfect chastity but also to facilitate the state of recollectedness.

In the East up till the Council of Trullo, in 692, nuns did not have a very strict enclosure. This Council prescribed that they should not go out without the permission of the Superior nor unaccompanied by an older sister. It forbade their spending a night away from the monastery or giving lodging to a man at night. The principle of separation from the outer world was thus safeguarded, but without excessive rigidity.

In the West St Caesarius of Arles, in his *Regula ad virgines* (513) imposed a very strict enclosure upon the nuns of the monastery directed by his sister Caesaria the Elder.⁴³ Between the VIIIth and XIth centuries the rules concerning enclosure became more stringent still; the Abbess could not go out except by permission of the Bishop and the nuns were forbidden to leave the monastery. Finally, perpetual enclosure became a general law decreed by the Periculosa constitution of 1298 under Pope Boniface VIII, a law later confirmed by the Council of Trent and several years later (1566) by St Pius V.⁴⁴

It is of great importance to stress the implications of this law which, for a number of centuries, has considerably affected the life of nuns. As a contemporary monk observes, a nun, strictly speaking, does not enjoy the same status as a monk and the most obvious feature

⁴² Cf. de Puniet, 1936, col. 1388-1409; Bouyer, 1960, pp. 606-617.

⁴³ Cf. Barby, 1953, col. 420-423.

⁴⁴ Cf. Jombart and Viller, 1953, col. 987-994.

of this difference is, precisely, in regard to enclosure.⁴⁵ Monks, certainly, do observe a form of enclosure, but it is not absolute.⁴⁶

To conclude this short account of Christian asceticism and monasticism, the history of which tells of so many martyrs, virgins, women hermits and nuns who pursued a very lofty ideal, namely, union with God through renunciation, prayer and meditation, here are some lines of a spiritual author and scholar who so identified himself with the hermits, monks and nuns of the first centuries that one could easily suppose, on hearing him speak, that he had known them personally. He is speaking here of equality between the sexes:

... It is essential to emphasise this point, because in more recent days there has been a reversion to ideas less true to the Gospel under pretext of psychology and physiology. The ancients without doubt were, after Gallian and Hippocrates, not in ignorance of these two sciences and the Fathers knew that they had ranged against them not the anthropology of the scholars but widespread masculine prejudice backed up more or less tacitly by the philosophers. This fact, however, did not prevent the better informed among them from affirming with Origen that the true difference between human beings is a matter not of sex, but of soul.⁴⁷

And again:

⁴⁵ Cf. Leclercq, 1971.

⁴⁶ We are dealing here with a matter of Roman legislation stemming from canon law and not from rules or constitutions suited to a monastic order. The rule of St Benedict does not speak of total enclosure. Nowadays there is a movement in favour of relaxation of the cloister. The principle of enclosure must be retained, but there is no valid reason for imposing on nuns a stricter legislation than that prescribed for monks. In this question it is the wisdom evidenced by an Abbess that must be guiding factor, and not a law imposed from without.

⁴⁷ Hausherr, 1945, pp. 252-253.

Furthermore, . . . the Apophthegms of the "Mothers" were included in the collections of Apophthegms of the Fathers, and not at the tail-end as an appendix that one might suspect had been added at a later date, but in alphabetical order. If these women Elders are fewer in number (as in our litanies of the saints), the fact is that the question of numbers has here little importance; what counts is the fact of their inclusion which is of doctrinal significance, and is founded on a principle; their small number is merely of historical and sociological significance.⁴⁸

3. Jaina women ascetics

Had our only consideration been chronological order, we should have introduced the Jaina ascetics after the Greek philosophies of the centuries just preceding our era. However, our endeavour at this point is to discover what term in a western language, of those used to describe the spiritual phenomenon that is called monasticism, fits best the function and goal of those members of the Jaina community who are consecrated to a wholly spiritual quest. Of these the word 'ascetic' is certainly the most apt; Greek in origin, it has been adopted by Christianity. The other religious traditions express themselves in their own language and every other word borrowed from a western language is a translation, of more accuracy or less, of the original. Therefore, it was necessary first to give a brief account of asceticism as it is found in the Greek philosophies, and then of the origin of Christian asceticism and monasticism. In this next section we shall take note briefly of the different terms applied to Jaina women ascetics; as for Jaina asceticism in general, that is the over-all subject of this study and particularly of Part II.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 271; cf. also "Une hymne nestorienne sur les saintes femmes", Frey, 1966; the author in his foreward to this hymn makes this very pertinent remark: "The present study, which intends to present a list - basically a simple enumeration - of holy women figuring in Syriac literature and liturgy, would like to modify a certain low estimation of womanhood presented in oriental monastic writings, where she is regarded above all as enemy number one of the monk."

The Nirgranthis, Bhikṣuṇis, Sādhvis, Āryās, Āryikās, Anagāris, Śramaṇis, Yatinis, Satis, Mahāsatis

All these words are used to denote Jaina women ascetics; certain ones of them indicate the ideal that they have set for themselves, others one aspect of this ideal and, finally, some are titles of respect accorded by society. Of these words, the ones that appear in scriptural texts referring to ascetics are generally used in the masculine gender. The early sages, after the days of the *arhats*, in describing the way of asceticism, address themselves to men ascetics, it being taken for granted that women ascetics are also concerned. They are not mentioned, except when it is a question of specific rules. As regards the many writings of the Jaina tradition, they do make separate but scanty mention of women ascetics.

Nirgranthi: without *granthi* or *grantha* (knot, attachment) A *nirgranthi* is one who seeks to free herself from all mental and bodily fetters, from all impurity both inner and outer and from all possessiveness:

The one who uses no violence on livings beings, who abstains from all forms of sin⁴⁹ is called a great *agrantha*.⁵⁰

Jaina asceticism consists essentially in a sustained effort towards self-mastery which involves an attitude of non-aggressiveness towards beings, of detachment in respect to them and of constant vigilance in avoiding all blameworthy action - and this with the sole aim of purifying the *ātman*, which, free from all defilement, will thus attain plenitude of being.⁵¹ The ascetic is beset by the same trials as are all living beings, but, having set forth on the path of renunciation, he

⁴⁹ Actions productive of bad *karmas*.

⁵⁰ *niḥāya daṇḍaṃ pañehim, pāvaṃ kammaṃ akuvvamāṇe, esa maham āgāṃthe viyāhic*. AS 1, 7,3,1; *a-grantha*: *nirgrantha*.

⁵¹ We shall study all the aspects of this form of ascetic practice; but we need from the start to have a clear idea of it.

must strive to overcome these difficulties and no longer be affected by them; by so doing he becomes a *nirgrantha*:

The *nirgrantha* faces with equanimity cold and heat, pain and pleasure; the hardness [of the ascetic life] does not affect him.⁵²

Certain rules of conduct are peculiar to *nirgranthis*,⁵³ while others are common to both *nirgranthas* and *nirgranthis*.⁵⁴

Bhikṣuṇī: an ascetic who asks for *bhikṣā*, for alms in the form of lodging, daily food, clothing and other strictly necessary items. This word indicates that she possesses nothing of her own, that she lives from alms. One passage of the most ancient Scripture, the *Ācārāṅga* I - which describes the manner in which the ascetic should eat, taking no delight in savouring the food - already addresses itself to "a *bhikṣu* or *bhikṣuṇī*."⁵⁵ Later texts also are addressed to both, certain of them referring to almsgiving;⁵⁶ others describe the important factors in self-mastery and the renunciation of sin.⁵⁷ The word *bhikṣu* occurs frequently in the Scripture where it denotes "ascetic" in a general way and, more especially, the ascetic who has reached perfection.⁵⁸

⁵² *sīosīnaccāi se niggarāthe arai-rai-sahe pharusiyam ṇo vedeti*. AS I, 3,1,2.

⁵³ Cf. BrkS I, 4-5; 8-9; 14-15; 17; 23-24; 33-35; etc.

⁵⁴ ... *niggarāthāṇa vā niggarāthiṇa vā* ... the *nirgranthas* or the *nirgranthis*; cf. e.g. BrkS I, 2; 10-11; 19-22; 26-27; etc. Dasas VIII, 8-9; 40; 44-45; 48-52; 70-74. Most of these rules are mentioned in Part III

⁵⁵ Cf. AS I, 7,6,2: ... *se bhikkhū vā bhikkhūṇi vā* ...

⁵⁶ The whole of AS II.

⁵⁷ Cf. DS IV, 18-23.

⁵⁸ Cf. DS X; US XV.

Sādhvi, the feminine of *sādhv*, from the root *sādh-*, to accomplish, means: straight, leading to the goal, excellent, good, virtuous, and thence: a virtuous person, a renunciate, an ascetic. The word is used for a virtuous, chaste woman, a holy woman and, in particular, a woman ascetic. It occurs, though rarely, in the Scripture.⁵⁹ It has been frequently used in the tradition and is by far the most commonly used expression in our day.

Āryā, the feminine of *ārya* (from *arya*: lord, man, which carries also the meaning: good, devoted, excellent, perhaps from the root *ṛ-*, go towards, reach): an honourable, noble person, an Aryan. An *Āryā* is a woman of good family, worthy of respect, of good repute, an ascetic. In the *Kalpa-sūtra* the first woman-disciple of Mahāvira is called *Āryā Candanā*:⁶⁰ this title is found in the inscriptions of Mathurā.⁶¹ Nowadays it is the Digambara *sādhvis* for the most part who have retained it in the form of *Āryikā*.

Anagāri denotes an ascetic who is without *agāra* (a house), who has no lodging-place, no shelter. This word evokes the notion of an itinerant existence and the detachment it demands:

Detached from every possession, the *anagāra* will be required to show patience all his life long. . .⁶²

Under whatever roof the ascetics take refuge, they must first of all ask permission of the owner to make a brief stop there. The word in the masculine denotes in the Scripture one who lives in a state of total deprivation.⁶³

⁵⁹ Cf. AvaS 26 where repentance is expressed for lack of respect for *sādhvis*: . . . *sāhuṇṇam āsāyaṇāe* . . . For *sādhv*, cf. e.g. DŚ VII, 48-49; US XIX, 7,

⁶⁰ Ajja Candanā, KS 134.

⁶¹ Cf. P154 ff.

⁶² *ettha virate anagāre, diharāyam titikkhae*. . . AS I, 5,2,5.

⁶³ Cf. e.g. AS I, 1,2,2; 2,2,1; 2,5,6; US I, 1; II, 28; XI, 1; XX, 32-34; 58.

Śramaṇi, from the root *śram-*, to endeavour, exhaust oneself, weary oneself, is used for the ascetic who is committed to an unremitting work of apiritual endeavour; this hard labour consists in detaching herself from all forms of possession, of renouncing everything, even her own body.⁶⁴ Here in lies her whole task and there is absolutely no other activity in her life than spiritual activity. The word occurs in the Scripture in the masculine gender.⁶⁵

Yatini has identically the same meaning as *śramaṇi*; it comes from the root *yat-*, to make an effort, strive towards, to be vigilant. The masculine form of the word is found occasionally in Scripture,⁶⁶ but in the later texts it has supplanted *śramaṇa*.

Sati is derived from the root *sat-*, existing, being and hence: real, authentic. It is applied to a person of authentic and proven character. Present day tradition uses this word to denote a woman ascetic.⁶⁷ Members of a Jaina community, wishing to express their veneration for the virtues demanded by the life of the *sādhvis*, give them the title *Mahāsati* i.e. pre-eminent *Sati*.

Muni is another word frequently used for an ascetic both in the most ancient texts of Scripture⁶⁸ and until our own day. Though this word is not used in the feminine in any text, its meaning applies to the women ascetics as much as to the men. A *muni*, from the root *man-*,

⁶⁴ At regular intervals during the day; cf. *kāyotsarga* P327 ff; P708ff.

⁶⁵ Cf. e.g. DS IV 23, 26-28; US II, 16; 27; 33; IV, 11; XII, 9; and XVII, 3-19 which deals with the bad *śramaṇa*.

⁶⁶ Cf. US XXIV, 12; 14; 21; XXV, 39.

⁶⁷ Cf. P256, the Names of the 16 *Satis*.

⁶⁸ Cf. e.g. AS I, 1, 1, 7; 1,2,4,4; 2,6,3-4; 3,1,2; 5,3,5; DS VII, 40-41; VIII, 7-8; US I, 36; II, 6; 15; 38; XVIII, 48 etc.

to think, is one who lives in a state of constant reflection, who is a *jñānin*, a sage or seer, one who goes beyond the appearances, in order to encounter *being* within every being; the one who knows how to distinguish *being* from the material element;

The one who fully grasps the causes of *karman* on earth is assuredly the *muni* who has renounced⁶⁹ *karman*.⁷⁰

The one who knows and understands the world⁷¹ is called a *muni*, a knower of the *dharma*,⁷² an upright person.⁷³

These few quotations from the *Ācārāṅga-sūtra* I indicate clearly the aim of Jaina asceticism and are all the more important for being part of the ancient teaching. One could summarize by saying that sustained ascetic endeavour leads to the Liberation of the *ātman* from all matter. Realisation of the *ātman* is the chief reason for asceticism and to this chief reason is linked a secondary one that is termed *vairāgya*, indifference towards the things of this world, a kind of distaste, precisely because this world is steeped in matter.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Lit. he who knows *karman*, that is, the one who knows the causes and effects of *karman*, is also the one who has renounced all forms of action that produce bad *karmas*.

⁷⁰ *jassetc puḍhavi-kamma-samāraṁbhā pariṇṇātā bhavaṁti, se hu muṇi pariṇṇāta-kamme.* AS I, 1,2,7.

⁷¹ I.e. the three worlds, the lower, middle and higher.

⁷² He is a *dharmavid*, one who knows the nature of the *dharma*: the teaching on *dravya*, substance in general or the teaching on the *ātman*; cf. Muni Nathamala Āyāro, p. 123; P279ff; P284ff.

⁷³ *paṇṇāṇehiṁ pariyāṇai loyaṁ, muṇiti vacce dhammaviutti aṁjū.* AS I, 3,1,2.

⁷⁴ Before embracing the life of an ascetic, one may well be unclear in mind as to its goal; this requires a deep understanding which is gained in the course of many years of renunciation. However, the ascetic who is prompted by

At this point a question crops up: is it essential, for Liberation, to join a group of ascetics? Officially to pledge oneself to this path through *dikṣā*, consecration? The reply is a little ambivalent. According to the ancient texts it would appear that only the perfect ascetic can attain *mokṣa*, Liberation.⁷⁵ Later it is admitted that what matters is the effort towards total purification that can be practised in any state of life. The example always cited is that of Queen Marudevi, mother of the first *tirthaṅkara*, who was purified wholly from her *karmas* and liberated when she went to meet her son mounted on an elephant.⁷⁶ The fact is that community - life, lived in obedience to the *ācārya* and the *guruṇi*, offers ideal conditions for a life of serious ascetic practice; hence the general belief that this state and this alone can lead to *mokṣa*.

We must add that, for the members of the Digambara community, physical nudity, an all-important condition for *mokṣa*, which is also the outward sign of an interior nudity, is required of men ascetics. As regards the woman ascetic, on account, chiefly, of her weaker physical constitution which militates against her ability to undertake either sustained mental concentration or physical nudity, these same Digambaras have declared that she cannot be liberated as long as her *ātman* resides in a feminine body. She may, however, embrace asceticism and the *āryikās* follow exactly the same rule of life as the *munis*.⁷⁷ Having made reference to this idea which is peculiar to one community, I must add that the present study is concerned as much

sincere intentions does possess a general idea about *vairāgya* and a true insight into the nature of the *ātman*.

⁷⁵ Cf. AS I; SkrS I; Dixit, 1978, p. 66.

⁷⁶ Cf. P98; US XXXVI, 50 where it is said that a human being, whatever his *liṅga* (the sign that he belongs to such or such a sex or state of life, including the *grha-liṅga*, i.e. the married person's state) can attain Liberation and the state of being of the *siddha*, the perfected one.

⁷⁷ Cf. P138 ff, where mention is made, in the period of history in which it took place, of the schism between the Digambaras and Śvetāmbaras.

with the extremely small number of Digambara āryikās as with the Śvetāmbara sādhis who constitute the majority of women ascetics.⁷⁸

The faithful, both men and women, who remain in the world are bound, but to a lesser degree, to the same obligations as the ascetics with whom they maintain a close relationship. They are called śrāvakas and śrāvikās, those who "listen to the teaching of the sages". Together the munis, sādhis or āryikās, śrāvakas and śrāvikās form an ascetic community called a *saṃgha*.⁷⁹ The word *saṃgha* is used to denote either the whole body of Jain members or the regional or local communities, or it may refer to a community of sādhis or āryikās⁸⁰ or to one of munis.

These reflection concerning asceticism in the Christian and Jain traditions lead us to see how in spite of certain similarities the *bhikṣuṇīs*, *anagāris* and *śrāmaṇīs* do differ considerably from Christian nuns of the monastic orders. A *bhikṣuṇī* lives by receiving alms, an *anagāri* has no fixed abode, a *śrāmaṇi* has only one task to perform, namely, that of becoming *nirgranthī*, freed from every *grantha*, from every karmic bond, in order that she may realise her own *ātman* in plenitude. The sādhis and āryikās are ascetics of a particular type, their life is always a community-life⁸¹ and is essentially a pilgrim existence structured in a definite manner as required by the goal to be attained. They have inherited a form of asceticism which was already being practised in an epoch before our own era.

Nuns, on the other hand, live permanently in a monastery; certain ones maintain a strict enclosure. They earn their living by some work

⁷⁸ The Śvetāmbaras make no difference between munis and sādhis. We may note that the āryikās are sometimes called sādhis and *vice versa*.

⁷⁹ Cf. P157 ff; P426 ff, for *caturvidhasaṃgha*.

⁸⁰ Cf. P: 428 ff; & P636 ff, for *śramāṇisaṃgha* and *āryikāsaṃgha*.

⁸¹ It is only men ascetics who may, after fulfilling certain conditions, lead a solitary life; they are called *jinakalpīns*, those who imitate in every particular the *jīnas*, the *arhats*.

or other and even though the renouncing of sin and the effort to purify their thoughts, words and bodily activities occupy an important position in their life, this renouncing and this purification are not ends in themselves, for the goal towards which they are striving is union with God, a union which is achieved in Love in their capacity as daughters of God and brides of Christ.⁸²

The voice of the Sādhvis, unknown pilgrims

At the beginning of her biography of her guruṇi, Mahāsati Śrī Saralā expresses both a sorrow and a hope; a sorrow in taking note of the fact that over nearly two thousand years, whereas the Jaina sages have written many valuable works, sādhis have scarcely received any mention in them and almost nothing is known in their regard. The Mahāsati very properly refuses to believe that there have not been during the course of the centuries some remarkable sādhis, as capable of renunciation as their muni counterparts. The hope of the Mahāsati is, she declares, that in our day and age some researchers may interest themselves in this subject.⁸³ The present study is an attempt to respond to this challenge and, although the Mahāsati was thinking primarily of a historical survey, this present study includes all the aspects of their life; indeed it accords a very considerable place to the sādhis of our own day who collaborated in it in a direct way.

The voice of the Sādhvis

Naturally we need to listen to what fervent sādhis, trained in their own tradition, say and write, or would like to say and write, if they were able. In order to be able to communicate widely they would have to:

- enjoy greater freedom within their own communities,
- have some possibilities of open communication with those outside their own tradition,

⁸² They also aim at becoming *nirgranthis*, but with a different objective.

⁸³ Cf. Mahāsati Saralā, 1970, Part II, pp. 8-9. It is a pity that the extensive thesis of Deo, 1956, on the history of Jaina monasticism has remained a University publication and that of Bordinia, 1975, on certain learned sādhis and śrāvīkās has not been published. Up to date the sādhis do not know them.

- know not only other languages than their own but also the cultural context of these same languages.

This not being the case, I am taking the risk of *transmitting* all these voices which blend into a single common voice. This transmission can only take place through a symbiosis expressed in language belonging to both cultures. One cannot help but do violence both to the Sanskrit, in order to render it easier for the reader, and also to the English, which must needs assimilate new words and ideas, indeed a very different thought-world. As we proceed each Sanskrit word expressive of an idea is explained; subsequently, the same Sanskrit word is used, rather than a translation of it, which would inevitably vary in adequacy and belong to a different scale of values.

Pilgrims

A *sādhvi* is, by definition, *anagāri*, without a dwelling, and her life is a perpetual pilgrimage. Why? It is justified by the teaching, taken literally and lived out strictly. A study of this teaching, which is worked out in detail, is consistent throughout and is explained in numerous texts of Scripture and in the commentaries, is indispensable for an intelligent knowledge of the *sādhvis'* life; hence in Part II the quintessence of the doctrine is given.

Unknown

Lack of knowledge in their regard is both existential and historical:

- up till now, almost without exception, very little importance has been attached to the type of existence lived by the *sādhvis*
- and although history has not been totally silent in their regard, the little that has been passed on to us over the centuries remains
- unknown to the *sādhvis* themselves, who for the most part know only the ancient tradition and history of their own community,
- unknown also to the Jain community at large which on the one hand pays little attention to research upon the subject and on the other hand is scattered all over the country in small groups;
- unknown to the rest of the world, wherefore:

- Part I: a brief account of what tradition and history tell us about the sādhis,
- Part III: their life, several biographies,
- Part IV: the daily rite.⁸⁴

What is the purpose of this study? For whom is it written?

The aim of this study is to close a gap in:

- the history of Jaina asceticism,
- the history of universal feminine monasticism,
- and in that of spirituality.
- It is concerned with spirituality and is not a study of the psychology of behaviour or of sociology. These aspects are, certainly, ingredients in the human compound and we take note of them accordingly to the extent to which they are directly associated with the spiritual quest.
- It finds its place in the contemporary inter-cultural, inter-monastic encounter: There is not only a question of transmitting the essential of a tradition, but also of arousing interest, establishing cordial relations, bringing about mutual comprehension and enrichment.
- It is addressed in the first place to women contemplatives, who desire to gain knowledge of other ascetic traditions and also to all

⁸⁴ Each Part is independent, though closely linked with the others. Repetitions are inevitable as the same ideas recur in the history of Jainism, the teaching, the life-style and the rituals, but a particular idea assumes differing aspects according to whether it is studied intrinsically in the doctrine, in the mirabilia of legend, the narrative of history or its practical outworking in daily life.

those who, being interested in the religious traditions of Asia, are prepared to:

- risk the stripping off of their own ideas, thought-categories, even beliefs, in order to open themselves to . . ., go to meet. . . with new eyes,
- and to persevere in an effort to assimilate a teaching which is consistent, radical, austere and deep, in order to discover its *amṛta*, its ambrosia.



PART I

A BRIEF SURVEY OF A LONG TRADITION

Caturvīṃśatistava: Praise to the twenty-four tirthaṅkaras

*I will praise the luminaries of the universe,¹
the conquerors, the founders of the dharmatirtha,² the arhats,
the four and twenty omniscient ones.
I salute with reverence Ṛṣabha, Ajita,
Sambhava, Abhinandana and Sumati, Padmaprabha,
Supārśva and the jina Candraprabha.
I salute with reverence Suvidhi (Puṣpadaṇṭa),
Śītala, Śreyarṣa and Vāsupūjya,
Vimala and the jina Ananta, Dharma and Śānti.
I salute with reverence Kunthu, Ara,
Malli, Munisuvrata and Nami, Ariṣṭanemi,
Pārśva and Vardhamāna. These having praised,
exempt [as they are] from [karmic] dust and tamish,
freed from old age and death, the twenty-four tirthaṅkaras,
pre-eminent, victorious, may they show me their favour!
May these exalted siddhas, thus praised and revered
and honoured throughout the universe, accord me*

¹ The universe, or three worlds: the lower, middle and higher; cf. TS III-IV.

² *Dharma-tirtha*: the ford or passage to the further shore, the way which leads to Deliverance; the *saṃgha*: Jain community.

perfect well-being,³ the benefit of true vision,⁴
 concentration supreme! May the siddhas, more pure
 than the lunar stars, more resplendent than the solar,⁵
 as deep as the vast ocean, accord me Liberation!⁶

³ Perfect well-being: *ārugga* (*ārogya*), a state of freedom from both bodily and spiritual ills, which is always connected with the destruction of karmic matter.

⁴ True vision: *bohi* (*bodhi*), awakening, illumination; according to the doctrine, the perfection of this awakened state constitutes omniscience, which is attained through acquisition of the Three Jewels, of which *samyak-darśana*, true vision, is the first; cf. P 270 ff.

⁵ This refers to the numerous lunar and solar stars of the middle world which are *devas* (gods); cf. Sths 90; TS IV, 12-13.

⁶ *logassujjoyakare dhammatitthayare jīṇe*
arahante kittaisaṃ cauvisaṃ pi kevali. (3)
Usabhaṃ Ajiyaṃ ca vaṃde Saṃbhavaṃ Abhiṇandanaṃ ca Sumairi ca
Paumappahaṃ Supāsaṃ jīṇaṃ ca Caṇḍappahaṃ vaṃde. (4)
Suvihiri ca Pupphadāmitaṃ Siyala Sejjariṇa Vasuppujjaṃ ca
Vimalaṃ Aṇaṃtaṃ ca jīṇaṃ Dhammaṃ Saṃtiṃ ca vaṃdāmi. (5)
Kuṇṭhū Arāṇaṃ ca Malliṃ vaṃde Muṇisuvvayaṃ Nami jīṇaṃ ca
vaṃdāmi Riṭṭhanemiṃ Pāsāṇaṃ taha Vaddhamānaṃ ca. (6)
evaṃ me abhithuā vihayaṇa-malā pahīṇajara-maraṇā
cauvisaṃ pi jīṇavaraṃ titthayaṇaṃ me paṇiṇaṃ. (7)
kittiya vaṃdiya mahiyā jee logassa uttamā siddhā
āruggabohilābhaṃ samāhivaramuttamaṃ dīṇu. (8)
caṇḍesu nimmalayaṇa āccesu ahiyaṃ payāsayaṇa
sāgaravaragambhīra siddhā siddhiṃ mama diṇaṃ. (9) AvaS 3-9.

Verses 7-9 are at one and the same time a paean of praise and a prayer. There is no question but that the *tirthaṅkaras*, now being *siddhas*, are enjoying the eternal beatitude of *nirvāṇa* and have not longer any dealings whatever with human beings. These prayers must be understood in the context of the pure devotion of the Jinas; in a poetic transport and inspired by a deep longing to imitate these *jinas*, heroes of the spiritual battle, the devotee leans for support, as it were, on their outstanding qualities and, carried away by this same longing, not unnaturally begs them to vouchsafe

Each of the *tirthaṅkaras* possesses a *lāñchana* (distinctive sign), which is usually depicted on the pedestal of his statue. The ancient texts make no mention of these *lāñchanas* and they do not appear in the sculptures of Mathurā, which date from the beginning of the Christian era.⁷ *Lāñchanas* belong for the most part to the animal or vegetable worlds or may consist in certain auspicious signs which are often traditionally connected with the *tirthaṅkaras* they designate. These *lāñchanas* are as follows:

i) Rṣabha (Ādinātha): the bull; ii) Ajita: the elephant, iii) Sambhava: the horse, iv) Abhinandana: the monkey, v) Sumati: the heron, vi) Padmaprabha: the lotus, vii) Supārśva: the *svastika*,⁸ viii) Candraprabha: the moon, ix) Suvidhi (Puṣpadānta): the dolphin (or the crocodile), x) Śītala: the *śrivatsa*, xi) Śreyāṃsa: the rhinoceros, xii) Vāsupūjya: the buffalo, xiii) Vimala: the bear, xiv) Ananta: the falcon, xv) Dharmā: the thunderbolt, xvi) Śānti: the deer, xvii) Kunthu: the ram, xviii) Ara: the *nandīyāvarta*, xix) Malli: the pitcher, xx) Munisuvrata: the tortoise, xxi) Nami: the blue lotus, xxii) Nemi: the conch, xxiii) Pārśva: the serpent, xxiv) Vardhamāna (Mahāvira): the lion.⁹

Among the Digambaras, certain *lāñchanas* are assigned to other *tirthaṅkaras* and certain ones are different, namely:

power to follow them, while knowing that they will not intervene directly. However, the fervour that they arouse by reason of what they have been and achieved, is in fact already a direct intervention on their part. They awaken those who revere and follow them; cf. P 73 ff; 478ff.

⁷ "...Tirthaṅkaras were recognised with the help of inscriptions on pedestals giving their names." U.P. Shah, 1955, p. 11. For the images of each *tirthaṅkara* with his particular sign, cf. Bhattacharaya, 1974, plates IV-XXIX.

⁸ N.B. Instead of the *svastika* the *lāñchana* of Supārśva is often the serpent, which is differentiated from the sign of Pārśva by being depicted with 1,5 or 9 hooded serpent-heads, while that of Pārśva may have 3,7, or 11.

⁹ Cf. *Pravacanasāroddhāra*, 16.

v) Sumati: the partridge, vii) Supārśva: the *nandyāvarta*, x) Śītala: the *svastika*, xiv) Ananta: the porcupine, xviii) Ara: the fish.¹⁰ Certain *lāñchanas* are taken from the *aṣṭamaṅgalas*: the eight auspicious signs the ones in question are: the *svastika*, the *śrīvatsa*, the *nandyāvarta*, and the pitcher.¹¹

The other special emblems of the *tirthaṅkaras* are: the *kevala-vṛkṣa*, the particular tree beneath which each attained omniscience; a three-tiered parasol shaped like a small cupola to shade their heads; each *tirthaṅkara* having a different colour. They are given yellow bodies and serene expression and are depicted naked - except for the Śvetāmbaras who wear a thin loin-cloth - either standing in the *kāyotsarga* posture or seated in the *dhyānamudrā* posture.¹² Finally, each has in attendance a *yakṣa* on his right and a *yakṣi* on his left,¹³ and often one or several *cāmaradhara*s, or figures, carrying a *cāmara* or yak's tail, which is used as a fly-whisk and is also a symbol of royalty.¹⁴ These *yakṣas*, *yakṣis*, and *cāmaradhara*s do not figure in the ancient sculptures such as those at Mathurā, where devotees with palms joined are often positioned at the feet of the *arhats*.

Tradition tells how the gods built a *samavasaraṇa* (assembly-hall), where gods and humans alike assembled to listen to the first sermon of

¹⁰ Cf. JSK II, p. 378; for the *lāñchanas* cf. Bhattacharya, 1974, pp. 34-64; U.P. Shah, 1981, pp. 1-6.

¹¹ Cf. P 160 ff. where these signs are explained.

¹² Cf. P 328 ff.

¹³ Cf. P 204; 211.

¹⁴ For characteristics of the figures of the *tirthaṅkaras*, cf. Bhattacharya, *ibid.*, pp. 18-20.

a *tirthaṅkara* who had just attained to perfect knowledge.¹⁵ We may note, further, that as a sign of respect and reverence the title *nātha*: Lord, Master is appended to the name of a *tirthaṅkara*, except in the case of Mahāvira, the last one.

The *Namaskāra-mantra* and the *Caturvīṃśatistava* express the quintessence not only of Jaina belief, but also of its ideal and of its worship. To recite the *mantra* and repeat the hymn of praise means that one believes firmly that the *tirthaṅkaras* have taught the way of Liberation, that one has a duty to follow and imitate them and that, by reason of their extraordinary virtues, they are worthy of an unflagging and deep devotion.¹⁶ During the course of centuries they have inspired an ardent devotion which is manifest in the life of the ascetics and other faithful followers and also in architecture, sculpture, iconography and a wealth of literature. Before attempting to present, according to the various regions, the principal elements that go to make up the immense riches of this tradition, it is necessary first to specify certain features that form as it were its supporting pillars.

1. Some essential notions

These notions gravitate, as it were, around the central notion of *tirthaṅkara*; not all of them are clearly expressed in the most ancient *Āgamas*. Certain ones are developed or modified later on.

Tirthaṅkaras

A *tirthaṅkara* is always a *jina*, a conqueror,¹⁷ an *arhat*, that is, worthy of veneration, a *kevalin* or omniscient one. But every *jina*, *arhat*, *kevalin* is not a *tirthaṅkara*, these last-named having a special mission which distinguishes them from the other *arhats*. In regard to their degree of perfection there is no difference, for all, i.e., *jinas*,

¹⁵ Cf. U.P. Shah, 1955, ch. 5; for the development of the iconography, cf. *ibid.*, ch. 6.

¹⁶ The *mantra* and the hymn belong to the daily obligatory rite; cf. P 710 ff.

¹⁷ From which is derived Jaina or follower of the *jinas*.

arhats and *tirthaṅkaras* are *kevalins*. The *tirthaṅkaras* are distinguished from the others solely by a special *karman*: the *tirthaṅkara-nāma-karman*,¹⁸ which allows them to fulfil their unique role as spiritual guides for the living.

The word *tirthaṅkara* does not occur in the early *Āgamas*.¹⁹ In them mention is made of the *Arhats* or *ascetics* worthy of veneration, but the idea of omniscience does not seem to be implied.²⁰ The various general descriptive terms applied to Mahāvira were used also for ascetics or other respected persons: *Bhikṣu*, *Muni*, *Brāhmaṇa*, *Bhagavān*, *Vira*, *Mahāvira*, *Śramaṇa*; no mention is made of the word *tirthaṅkara*. In the *Ācārāṅga-sūtra II*, a later text, Mahāvira is usually called *Śramaṇa Bhagavān Mahāvira* and there for the first time he is described as *tirthaṅkara*.²¹

A *tirthaṅkara* is one who accomplishes a *tirtha*, a ford; this ford or crossing is the *dharma*, the path which helps human beings to cross the ocean of *saṃsāra*, or successive lives, in order to reach the other bank of the stream, that is to say, Liberation. The *tirthaṅkara* is the guide par excellence.²² The crossing is difficult and it often requires several human lives to achieve it, but time in this context is not limited, the message of the *tirthaṅkaras* is transmitted from age to age, and what is of vital importance is that human beings should be instructed and liberated at that particular moment when they are ripe for it. Hence arises the following concept:

¹⁸ His *nāma-karman*, inherited from a previous life, determines a person's physical constitution; cf. TS VIII, 11; cf. also P 288; 308.

¹⁹ AS I; SkrS I.

²⁰ Cf. Dixit, 1978, p.12.

²¹ Cf. AS II, 15,9; 18; Malvania, 1972.

²² The word *tirtha* can also mean the *saṃgha* or community composed of 4 categories: viz. *munis*, *sādhvis*, *śrāvakas*, *śrāvikās*.

Utsarpiṇi-avasarpiṇi

This refers to the two phases, the ascending and descending, of the cycle of *kalpas* (cosmic ages) which are repeated ceaselessly and uninterruptedly in those continents of the universe which are known as *karma-bhūmis*, areas of work, of action.²³ Each phase consists of six equal periods which follow each other in a circular movement. Below is given the sequence of periods comprising each of these two phases. These periods correspond with different human states.

1. *Utsarpiṇi*, ascending phase with the following periods:

Duḥṣamā-duḥṣamā: a period of great misfortune, ignorance, suffering; lack of vitality and of physical and moral strength.

Duḥṣamā: a period of misfortune and suffering, but to a lesser degree than in the preceding period.

Duḥṣamā-suṣamā: a period of misfortune, but one tempered with good fortune; ignorance is being dispelled, suffering grows less.

Suṣamā-duḥṣamā: a period of good fortune (happiness); happiness increases, suffering decreases.

Suṣamā: a period of good fortune; ignorance and suffering have disappeared.

Suṣamā-suṣamā: a period of immense well-being, of extraordinary physical energy which is matched by corresponding intellectual capacity and accompanied by a very great longevity.²⁴

²³ It is only the men of these continents for whom Liberation is possible because they can practise asceticism and purify themselves from all *karman*. In the continents called *bhoga-bhūmis*, the land of enjoyment, Liberation is not possible, because it requires ascetic endeavour.

²⁴ The reference here is to well-being of body and spirit, and not to perfect joy which is the fruit of detachment.

2. *Avasarpiṇi*, descending phase in which the cycle takes its course by passing through the same periods in inverse order: *suṣamā-suṣamā*, *suṣamā*, *suṣamā-duḥṣamā*, *duḥṣamā-suṣamā*, *duḥṣamā*, *duḥṣamā-duḥṣamā*.²⁵

In succession and eternally there appear at fixed periods within each cycle twenty-four *tirthaṅkaras*: the first *tirthaṅkara* appears during the third period of the descending cycle: *suṣamā-duḥṣamā*, while the other twenty-three appear during the fourth period: *duḥṣamā-suṣamā*.²⁶

In our particular "continent" which is called Bharata-kṣetra, we are in the fifth period, *duḥṣamā*, an age in which, on account of the prevailing state of ignorance and physical weakness, one cannot achieve Liberation in one single life. However, other "continents" of *karma-bhūmi*, the Videha-kṣetras, are not subject to either ascending or descending phases; their permanent condition is that of the third period: *suṣamā-duḥṣamā*; in these places there are always *tirthaṅkaras* and human beings can always attain Liberation.²⁷

A very large number of centuries pass between one period and the next and between one *tirthaṅkara* and another, but each period makes its reappearance regularly at a fixed moment. These detailed and complicated ideas have stemmed from the belief in *tirthaṅkaras*, with

²⁵ Cf. AS II 15; StbS 137; 143; 559; TS III, 27; cf. also JSK II, pp. 88-91; PPN, pp. 133-134; 139.

²⁶ Rṣabhanātha or Ādinātha, the first *tirthaṅkara*, followed by the others and then by Mahāvira, the last of our phase; cf. KS 2; 199; PPN, pp. 337-340.

²⁷ Cf. StbS 89; 183; TS III, 31; cf. also JSK III, p. 551; PPN, pp. 572-574. For Jaina cosmography, cf. TS III; cf. also Āryikā Jñānamati, 1974c; JSK III, pp. 443-509; Schubring, 1962, ch. V; cf. also P 676.

particular reference to Mahāvira; no trace of them is found in the ancient *Āgamas*.²⁸

Dharma

The general meaning of this word is: that which is based on an established order and which does not deviate therefrom; law, equity, justice, order, duty, integrity, virtue. In this same perspective it also means: the path to follow, the way which leads towards Liberation because it involves every dimension of the human being. This "way" is based in the first place upon a body of teaching and also on a collection of rituals, practices that have accumulated in the course of centuries. The *jīnas*, or *arhats*, have taught and firmly established the *dharma-tīrtha*.

The essence of this *dharma* is extremely simple; this way is one of total purification of the *ātman* from all that is alien to its nature which consists of pure awareness of being.²⁹ This purification, directed by enlightened knowledge and an awakening to spiritual realities, takes place through *ahimsā*, non-aggressiveness towards all beings, *saṁyama*, mastery of the self, and *tapas*, the practice of austerity,³⁰ of which the highest form is *dhyāna*, mental concentration.³¹

²⁸ Cf. Dixit, 1978, pp. 11-12. The succession of these periods upon which the possibility or non-possibility of Liberation depends is rather arbitrary and includes an element of pre-destination according to the period to which living beings belong. These ideas have without doubt been appended to the early doctrine in order to make up a coherent system. However, even within this closed cycle, it is possible for a human being of any epoch through his own will-power to embark on a journey towards Liberation.

²⁹ Cf. Part II for the quintessential notions of the doctrine.

³⁰ Cf. DS I, 1; it needs to be clearly emphasised that it is the inner attitude that counts.

³¹ Cf. P 373 ff.

Exhortations to persevere on the path are not lacking in the Scriptures:

- One must remain faithful to the *dharma* so long as one's faculties are intact and one has not succumbed to old age or sickness.
- By no means should one do like the driver of a chariot who abandons the highway for a stony path and breaks his wheel; that is, one must not turn aside from the *dharma*.
- The days pass and do not return. Only those human beings who follow the *dharma* lead a fruitful life.
- Even the powerful monarch, in his last moments, is only saved thanks to his fidelity to the *dharma*, for the passage to another life must be undertaken with the support of the *dharma*.
- In the midst of the swirling currents of old age and death that engulf beings, the *dharma* is an island, firm land, the supreme refuge for all living creatures.³²

Ācārya Kundakunda says that *nirvāṇa*, the final goal, is attained through the *dharma* and that the *dharma* is identical with the *ātman*, when, having been freed from agitation and all perplexity, it has reached perfect equanimity; for then the purified *ātman* is one with the *dharma*.³³ Further on he continues:

The śramaṇa the great *ātman* with vision free from all error, who [is] expert in [knowledge of] the Scriptures, free from all attachment, vigilant, [is the visible] expression of the *dharma*.³⁴

In other words, he is the manifestation of the *dharma*, is of the same nature as the *dharma*, he actualises the *dharma*, he is *dharma*.

³² These varied points are to be found in: DS VIII, 36; US V, 14-15; XIV, 24-25; 40; XIX, 20-21; XXIII, 68; cf. the beautiful verses of YSas IV, 92-102 where the *dharma* is extolled as the saviour of humanity.

³³ Cf. PSa I, 6-8.

³⁴ *jo ñihadamohadiññhi āgamakusalo virāgacariyamhi
abbhuttiḥho mahappā dhammo tti visesido samaṇo.* PSa I, 92.

Paṇḍita Āśādhara has entitled his very detailed guide for ascetics, which is a compendium and synthesis of the teaching of the ācāryas of the past, *Anagāradharmāmṛta*: *amṛta*, elixir of the *dharma* for the *anagāras*, home-less ones; and his guide for the śrāvakas and śrāvikās, *Sagāradharmāmṛta*: elixir of the *dharma* for the *sagāras*, those who dwell in a house.³⁵

Bhakti

The word comes from the root *bhaj* which means: divide, distribute, enjoy and also participate, and thence: adore, honour, venerate. *Bhakti* implies the existence of a being worthy of adoration and veneration, and includes a certain element of participation in the divinity and sanctity of this being. Jaina *bhakti* has its own special features in that its praise, devotion and wonder - whatever their outward expressions - are directed to the spiritual achievement of beings eminently worthy of veneration, that is, of the valiant and victorious ones, the *tīrthaṅkaras* and other *parameṣṭhins*, with the ultimate aim of imitating them following them and thus becoming fully purified, liberated. The aspect of sharing found here does not include direct, ontological participation in the beatitude of the one venerated within a relationship of reciprocal love; rather, this participation consists in an unwavering belief in the authenticity of life of these heroes and in concentration on their virtues and perfection along with a desire to endeavour to imitate them, in such a way that one is already in a certain way sharing in their sanctity, for this concentration and sustained effort of imitation themselves contain an immense purificatory power, which is not due to any direct intervention on the part of the *tīrthaṅkaras*, but to the very powerful inspiration aroused by their example which uplifts, as it were, and transforms the one who venerates.

This profound devotion is addressed to the *parameṣṭhins* of both past and present,³⁶ that is to say, to the multitude of liberated beings

³⁵ This Digambara author of the middle of the XIIIth century was, quite exceptionally, not a muni. Re the Jaina *dharma*, cf. ADh I, 87-91 and, for a more general account, cf. Kane, 1968, Vol. I Part I, pp. 1-6.

³⁶ One is reminded of the Videha-kṣetras.

who have attained *nirvāṇa*, to the ascetics of the past and, more concretely, to contemporary ascetics. It is not only the *parameṣṭhins* who are venerated, but also the *dharma*. The three *sūtras* called the *māṅgalikas* (auspicious) which belong to the rite of the *āvaśyakas* (duties), are addressed to the *dharma* taught by the *kevalins* as being Happiness, Excellence, the supreme Refuge, in the same way as on other occasions invocation is made to the *arhats*, *siddhas* and ascetics.³⁷

The Digambara āryikās include in their rite several *bhakti* hymns, recitations of praise to the *parameṣṭhins* and also to other objects of veneration such as *śrūta*, Scripture,³⁸ and *caitya*, the temple.

All this might be merely in the realm of the purely abstract, if this devotion were not undergirded by concrete action and openly manifested.

Human beings in their earthly struggles need to be stimulated and encouraged by the example of heroic lives whose deeds speak to them and help them to traverse *saṁsāra*, time and the complexities of their own lives. They need the sublime, the marvellous, the supernatural, along with pictures and stories. The *tirthaṅkaras* are the ones who struggled until they won final victory, the ones who are examples to follow and who provide inspiration, guidance and support. Each Name pronounced in the *Caturviṃśatistava* conjures up its own symbols and legends. Certain *tirthaṅkaras* have provided inspiration for many literary works, each of which witnesses to the ardent devotion of its author, a devotion which has kindled and kept alive the devotion of the faithful both of his own day and of subsequent generations.³⁹

³⁷ Cf. P 703-704.

³⁸ Cf. P 667. The *śrūta* consists of the teaching of Mahāvira and the early sages, transmitted orally and preserved in the texts of Scripture.

³⁹ The largely legendary biographies of the 24 *tirthaṅkaras* and their contemporaries are called *Purāṇas* by the Digambaras and *Caritras* by the

The construction of numerous temples, the erection of innumerable statues and a rich and refined iconography, which is inspired by the inner struggle of all these heroes and which is both lively and of vivid hue, are all expressions of fervour and admiration on the part of the faithful.⁴⁰ These expressions which have upheld and maintained the *dharma* form simply a stage on the path leading to interiorisation, the stage of signs necessary for *pūjā*, i.e. for the worship directed to the *tirthankaras*. External idol-worship is only performed by *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* and is sober, dignified and characterised by recollectedness.

Temple worship takes place in the early hours of the morning. Among the Digambaras of the South *pūjā* is as a general rule offered at a fixed moment by an officiating priest, in the presence of *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās*. Among the Digambaras of the North the *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* themselves perform the *pūjā*. Among the Śvetāmbaras, although there is also a priest who offers *pūjā* at a fixed moment in the name of the *saṃgha* and as its representative, the *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* perform the worship of their choice separately. At sunset the very simple ritual is celebrated by the priest only and varies according to locality and different communities. There is no offering of flowers or fruit as is the custom in the morning *pūjā*, but sticks of sandalwood incense may be burned. The ritual on this occasion consists in *ārati*, the circling from left to right of the light (or lights) of one or several oil-lamps around the principal image. The ascetics, however, have gone beyond this stage and their worship is entirely interior, though it is by no means less fervent and is expressed in a very pure, ardent and often poetic type of *bhakti*.⁴¹

Śvetāmbaras. The best-known of these works are: the *Mahāpurāṇa* of Jinacna, the final portion of which is written by his disciple Guṇabhadra (IXth c.) and the *Triṣaṣṭīśālākāpuruṣacaritra* of Hemacandra (XIIth c.)

⁴⁰ Sādhvi Hemaprabhā has given a good introduction to this idea and has also described in detail the various features of the worship; cf. Hemaprabhā, 1976, *devatattva*, pp. 21-40.

⁴¹ Reformed sects have abolished external worship practices and their form of devotion resembles that of the ascetics; cf. P 200 ff.; 247 ff.

Jaina *bhakti*, which is of great refinement, needs to be clarified by knowledge of the doctrine. Even if numerous holy and learned *ācāryas* have led the way in this *bhakti* tradition, this does not mean that the faithful have received any doctrinal training - indeed, far from it. Therefore one can hardly be surprised if, carried away by their ardent devotion and overwhelmed by the hardships of daily life, certain ones have turned the *tirthaṅkaras* into a type of God that in reality they are not and have proceeded quite naturally to ask of them both spiritual and temporal favours.⁴² We must also take into account a further important factor: for several centuries many Jains have constituted very small minorities in the midst of a vast Hindu population, and in some regions Jaina worship has been influenced as regards its less important characteristics by the impact made upon it by certain forms of Hindu worship. However, on the whole - and this is due very largely to its wandering ascetics, both men and women, who have maintained close links with local communities - the *dharma* has survived and continues to do so, faithful to its initial inspiration.

This also needs to be added: it is not easy in comparison with other religious and philosophical systems, to justify certain aspects of Jaina doctrine such as the belief in the everlasting nature of the *dharma* which is revealed at regular intervals in successive ages through the *tirthaṅkaras*, nor to elucidate thereby those burning questions to which most theological and philosophical systems have sought to find an answer, namely, questions of the origin of man and the cosmos. Certain learned *ācāryas* have tried to get round this difficulty by turning *Rṣabhanātha* or *Ādinātha*, the first *tirthaṅkara* of our phase *avasarpinī*, into a sort of Creator, Controller, in the sense that, being the first to attain mastery, he was the prime initiator in every realm. He is thus accorded a very great importance, even an absolute supremacy; hence the immense veneration that surrounds him. The *ācāryas* have not hesitated to borrow titles which are proper

⁴² I have discussed this subject with Āryikā Jñānamati who said that there is often a wide divergence between doctrine and practice. This happens in all religious traditions, but the Jains have a great disadvantage in being a very scattered minority.

to Brahmanism and have called Ādinātha: *Brahma*, *Śiva*,⁴³ *Svayambhū* (the self-existent one).⁴⁴ No doubt the ācāryas succeeded rather skilfully in continuing to follow their own path, while at the same time borrowing another terminology from a tradition that was not their own, but this procedure has involved them in misunderstandings and criticisms from the side of certain Hindus with regard to this at times somewhat forced style of imitation.

One of the treasures of Jaina *bhakti*, the very popular *Bhaktāmara-stotram*, a hymn of ecstatic praise to Ādinātha, requires both a certain knowledge of Jaina doctrine and also familiarity with its worship to grasp that it is in fact addressed to a *tirthaṅkara*.⁴⁵

2. General survey

The above ideas that we are often going to encounter in the course of this study introduce us straightaway into the spiritual background of the Jaina tradition of which the sādhis are members, the tradition whose trail we are going to try to trace and follow through the course of the centuries and in every region. Before making certain preliminary remarks to the general survey which follows, it is necessary to define what we mean by religious tradition and by history.

Religious tradition

As a generalisation, we may say that tradition implies an oral transmission of the spiritual message of a God or saint or exceptional being, a message conveyed in the first place to trustworthy disciples

⁴³ Cf. "The identity of Ṛṣabha and Śiva", Sādhvi Mañjulā, 1968, pp. 133-137.

⁴⁴ Cf. e.g. the *Ādipurāṇa* of Jinasena, the *Bṛhatsvayambhū-stotra* of Samantabhadra; PSa I, 16 and the comm. on it. Here the reference is to the omniscient one who, by the inherent power of his own *ātman* and without any external aid, possesses perfect knowledge.

⁴⁵ For all the features of Jaina *bhakti*, cf. JSK III, pp. 208-211.

who have listened to him and constitute the guardians of the message. These disciples, sooner or later and in response to the needs of the day, systematise the message into a teaching and transmit it to other guardians who continue the task of giving it formal expression. In a process parallel to this systematisation of the teaching, spontaneous outbursts of devotion are organised into a pattern of worship and, as the transmission proceeds, legendary stories abound. These legends often contain an element of the real, in the sense of some biographical fact that did actually happen, but that has been embellished, modified and transformed by pious imaginations. All these factors merge to form a body of beliefs for the faithful, and thus little by little crystallize into a number of elements following certain patterns, beginning from the moment when a start was made in committing to writing the doctrine, historical accounts, legends and regulations for worship, and in erecting temples. At this point there comes about a halt in time and a certain fixation. The transmission of the tradition continues, certainly, but, except for works of commentators of genius, there is little enrichment and the inspiration of the first days practically always ebbs away. In this third stage the tradition is faithfully conserved and studied as part of the ancestral heritage. Its contents and observances mould its adherents' religious sentiments from childhood onwards, giving them an identity, namely, membership of a spiritual family which, whatever doctrinal differences or dissensions there may be among its members and however weighty the load of accumulated practices, still endeavours to remain faithful to the original message. As we approach the Jaina tradition we must always keep in mind this *paramparā*, this uninterrupted line of transmission that constitutes an extremely rich and complex whole.

Regarded from the much more restricted perspective of historical criticism, tradition is taken to mean that part of the religious complex under consideration which belongs to the far distant past and, having been transmitted solely by word of mouth, lacks documentation and is thus impervious to criticism. This is not to say that all tradition belongs to the sphere of the legendary, but that all of it is open to conjecture. In the course of the centuries at certain particular epochs which vary in different regions, this said tradition has interrupted, as it were, into history, that is to say, through certain of its features it can

be pinned down and located, even though only very approximately, in time.

History

History, understood here as being that of the *dharmā* in its social context, relies upon a knowledge of the facts related to the *dharmā*, to its coming into being and development, its influence and its vitality or decline. This knowledge is based on certain authentic, though often widely dispersed, documents, which are also sometimes highly condensed and take into consideration only one or two aspects of a happening, because all the rest have vanished or remain fragmentary. The documents act as firm pointers which are of assistance, if not in reconstructing the facts, at least in revealing the inter-connecting links between the various documents, and in allowing us to perceive the continuity of the *dharmā*.

With regard to the subject which is of special interest to us, we must from the start specify both our way of approach to it and the type of documents we have used and quoted. Our approach consists in an endeavour always to call forth in its totality the religious, cultural and social context of the local *dharmā* at a given epoch, namely, that in which the *sādhvis* were living. Even the smallest clue such as a solitary inscription needs to be placed in its proper context.

The documents in question are:

- firstly, the texts of Scripture, both the most ancient ones which belong to the original *dharmā*, the first vehicles of the message, and also those which followed and are far more detailed;⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Mention must be made at this point of *Early Jainism* by Dixit, 1978, an indispensable reference-book for a knowledge of early Jainism and one to which we shall make frequent reference. It is a noteworthy fact that the reformed sects have, precisely, attempted a return to the origins and that large numbers of *sādhvis* belong to these sects. Our introduction to the Śvetāmbara Āgamas and the chief Digambara texts occurs at a period of history corresponding to the beginning of our era, the period in which the schism between the two major branches of the *dharmā* took place; one of the causes of the conflict was in fact connected with Scripture.

- certain commentaries on Scripture;⁴⁷
- some classical writings of the ācāryas;
- further classical writings and other writings in local languages;
- brief intimations contained in the manuscripts;
- epigraphy;
- sculpture;
- iconography; these four last-named sources belong to various epochs and several different areas.

Outline of Part I

It is divided into three chapters:

Chapter 1: deals with an indeterminate period, knowledge of which is based on oral tradition that later on was committed to writing. It introduces Ādinātha, the first *tirthaṅkara* and his two daughters, Mallinātha, the nineteenth *tirthaṅkara*, who according to the Śvetāmbaras was a woman, and Rājimati, an ascetic who was betrothed to the twenty-second *tirthaṅkara*.

Chapter 2: uses as its sources both oral tradition and history, starting from probably the VIIIth century B.C. It introduces Pārśvanātha, the twenty-third *tirthaṅkara*, and then Mahāvira, the last *tirthaṅkara*, and along with him his disciple Candanā. Finally it introduces the principal ācāryas, the first depositaries of the message of Mahāvira.

Chapter 3: uses as its sources both oral tradition and history, from the beginning of our era up to our own days. It takes into its purview most of the regions, starting from the Northwest. We follow here a geographical order which corresponds with each section, within which the documentation is introduced according to successive historical epochs.

⁴⁷ As the comprehensive study of Deo, 1956, is for the most part based on the commentaries, we shall avoid repeating the facts he has already recounted and prefer to use for this study a variety of documents, of which certain ones are hitherto little known.

3. The voice of the sādhis

Before indicating certain features of the inner orientation, if one may put it so, of the role of the sādhis in the *saṃgha* during a very lengthy period, we must first try to see in broad terms what the attitude towards woman was of society in general during this same period. Although it is quite possible that Pārśvanātha, the twenty-third *tirthankara*, had some women disciples, this brief review will start with society at the time of Mahāvira and Buddha, that is, from the second half of the VIth to the beginning of the Vth century B.C. During that time the men ascetics of Brahmanism were fairly numerous and for the most part lived on itinerant life, but an existence of this sort seems never to have been permitted for women. The fact that Mahāvira, from the very start of his mission and without any hesitation whatever, allowed women to embrace the ascetic life is both important and unparalleled.⁴⁸

It is known that at this period young girls of high society, belonging to the same aristocracy as did the first women disciples of Mahāvira, were generally well-educated, skilled in music, dance and other forms of art. Scholars and poetesses might even be found among them. Marriage and family-life constituted the normal path, though pressure was not brought to bear upon them in this regard.

From the IIIrd century B.C. onwards not only did marriage become a strict obligation, but the custom gained ground of giving girls in marriage at a very tender age. At the beginning of our era girls were married before they reached puberty and towards the VIIth or IXth centuries the average age was between eight and nine years old.⁴⁹ Gradually women came to occupy a very secondary place in society.

⁴⁸ The Buddha yielded to the entreaties of his foster-mother, Mahāprajāpati Gautami, that he should admit women among his disciples, but not without reluctance.

⁴⁹ Concerning the education of girls, marriage, divorce, and family life after marriage, from the Vedic period onward cf. Aliekar, 1962, chs. I-III; cf. also Kane, 1974, Vol. II, Part I, pp. 574-582.

Marriage at so early an age precluded all possibility of study, while a number of both little and older girls became widows at a very young age. Until about the Xth century re-marriage was not, in principle, forbidden, but starting from that period onwards it was forbidden even for child-widows, so that the prospect for those unfortunates was a life of pain and monotony.⁵⁰ This inhuman prohibition was in force until quite recently.⁵¹

From Sanskrit literature we know that the girls and married women of high society appeared in public scarcely at all and allusion is sometimes made to the thin veil worn by them; however this veil, of which the intention was to protect their dignity and modesty, seems not to have been rigidly enforced by custom.⁵² From the beginning of the XIIIth century, as a result of the Muslim conquest, *pardā*, that is, the wearing of a veil by girls and married women alike, was strictly enforced, partly out of concern for their protection and partly through the adoption of the conquerors' customs. The *pardā* system in fact consigns women to the house in a literal way, out of sight of men except those of the family, and enforces the veil whenever they go out. This custom is still observed in certain non-Muslim milieus of the North, the East and of Rājasthāna.⁵³

⁵⁰ Cf. Altekar, *ibid.*, chs. IV-V; on the duties of widows, their shaven heads, their position in society, cf. Kane, *ibid.*, pp. 583-596.

⁵¹ According to a 1931 census, the number of young widows of less than 15 years was 3,16,926; the census of 1951 gives a slightly lower number, cf. Altekar, *ibid.*, p.159; this, we may note, despite efforts made since the middle of the XIXth century by ardent defenders of women's right, such as Ramamohana Roy, who introduced several legal measures dealing with these questions.

⁵² Cf. Kane, *ibid.*, pp. 596-598.

⁵³ Cf. Altekar, *ibid.*, ch. VI.

Even in a very brief survey of these vital questions, we must not fail to mention the highly courageous and impassioned attitude of the ardent, well-known Panditā Ramābai, herself a young brāhmaṇa widow of a highly cultured and orthodox family of Mahārāṣṭra. Panditā Ramābai, who was born in the second half of the last century and lived till 1922, not only crusaded against all forms of injustice and prejudice towards women, causing a considerable stir in her own circle and in Western circles as well, but also founded Śārādā Sadana, a centre for education and friendship for high-caste young widows. We can only quote here briefly from the writings of this remarkable woman:

Those who diligently and impartially read Sanskrit literature in the original, cannot fail to recognize the law-giver Manu as one of those hundreds who have done their best to make a woman a hateful being in the world's eye. I can say honestly and truthfully, that I have never read any sacred book in Sanskrit literature without meeting hateful sentiments about women. True, they contain here and there a kind word about women, but such words seem to me a heartless mockery after having charged them, as a class, with crime and evil deeds.

Widowhood: We now come to the worst and most dreaded period of a high-caste-woman's life. Throughout India, widowhood is regarded as the punishment for a horrible crime or crimes committed by the woman in her former existence upon earth. The period of punishment may be greater or less, according to the nature of the crime. Disobedience to the husband or murdering him in an earlier existence are the chief crimes punished in the present birth by widowhood.⁵⁴

The Jainas, except in certain places and during certain periods, have never been a dominant majority. To a slight degree everywhere and more so as they started to decline in numbers, they felt the impact of surrounding society and were obliged to conform to a number of its customs. Their attitude towards women has been influenced during the course of succeeding centuries by that of the society in which they

⁵⁴ Adhav, 1979, pp. 94-95; cf. also "Liberation of Indian Women", *ibid.*, pp. 22-30; and "On Women in India", pp. 80-102.

were set, for they were often driven by necessity, in the case, for example, of the marriage of young girls. So, when we consider this attitude as a whole, we see that it was exceptionally liberal in the time of Mahāvira and the first ācāryas, but that it later let itself be deleteriously affected by surrounding attitudes. Nevertheless, the *saṃgha* has continued throughout and up to this present to include sādhis in their ranks in the same way as munis. These sādhis for a number of centuries were the one and only feminine ascetic group in the country.⁵⁵ Thus young widows of the *saṃgha* had at least this possibility of practising asceticism, leading a worthwhile life, studying and making spiritual progress.

In this Part the voice of the sādhis of the past and of the present is one and the same. Taking into consideration the general social atmosphere of the day, we see that the role of the sādhis of the past, though unobtrusive, was not ineffectual. The documents of the varied periods and regions show us that:

- Their faith in the *dharma* and their fidelity to it encouraged the śrāvikās in the fervour of their worship.
- Through their witness and their example certain sādhis have inspired and continue to inspire profound veneration in the hearts of both śrāvakas and śrāvikās, a veneration which is outwardly expressed by the erection of statues, by inscriptions and dedications.
- They took part in the activities of the *saṃgha*, particularly in pilgrimages.

⁵⁵ The Buddhist *bhikṣuṇīs*, of which there was for several centuries a very flourishing community, went into decline from the IVth - Vth centuries A.D. In Brahmanism, women ascetics have been until recently isolated cases. One of the first to found an organised group, at the turn of the century, was Yogiṇī Svayam Prakāśa in Kēraḷa. Moreover, it is known that in the South the great Vaiṣṇavite Ācārya Rāmānuja accepted as disciples ascetics, including women of all castes (XIth c.). Subsequently, there were, albeit in restricted numbers, women ascetics among the Vaiṣṇavites of other regions, particularly in Bangāla.

- Certain ones were scholars, well-versed in the doctrine.
- Several fulfilled the role of teachers.
- Others were distinguished for the austerity of their lives.
- Subject to the ācāryas as they were - and some of the ācāryas were not sparing of their invectives against womankind in general⁵⁶ they were by no means inferior to munis in their efforts towards spiritual Realisation.

We should add, furthermore, that the Digambaras, despite their doctrinal objection to recognising womankind as being capable of attaining Liberation, evidence as much respect and veneration for their women ascetics as do the Śvetāmbaras.

The voice for contemporary sādhis is unanimous:

- We live from our most ancient tradition, we extol and honour our elders, the sādhis of the first days of the *dharma*. They are our models, knowledge about whom we impart to the śrāvikās.
- We know nothing, or nearly nothing, about those sādhis who during long centuries continued to exist and to live from the *dharma*.
- Why such a silence in their regard? Why do we know so little about them? Because women in world-history, including the women of our *dharma*, have been given second-class status; and we of the present day know only the restricted circle of our own tradition and our own group.

⁵⁶ Cf. e.g. YSas II, 84-92 (which, moreover, echoes certain passages of the *Āgamas*); these harsh words must be heard in their guard against women. This type of unjust and unjustified invective is found in all the masculine ascetic traditions.

- We would like to emerge from this obscurity, know our own history better and recover in our own day the place which Mahāvira assigned to the first sādhis.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ This remark has often been made to me in the course of friendly conversations with the sādhis. Their contribution to this Part of the study was precisely that of making me aware of their own very limited knowledge of the subject so soon as one comes to our own era. For this reason there is encouragement from their side to discover the traces of sādhis of different epochs and regions. It should also be said that even among those present-day sādhis who are following courses of higher studies, Scripture is the subject of study par excellence for ascetics, along with study of the doctrine and of philosophy. Literary or historical studies are not *a priori* forbidden, if they are undertaken for a spiritual purpose, but the itinerant life does not lead itself to serious study of history, epigraphy, archaeology and ancient manuscripts, for one would need to be in a position to move quickly from one place to another to consult relevant documents or, on the contrary, to stay in one place for long periods.

Chapter 1.

PRELUDE

The arhat Rṣabha of Kośala had eighty-four gaṇas and eighty-four gaṇadharas.¹

The arhat Rṣabha of Kośala had a community of surpassing worth [consisting] of eighty-four thousand śramaṇas with Rṣabhasena at their head.

The arhat Rṣabha of Kośala had a community of surpassing worth [consisting] of three hundred thousand āryikās with Brāhmi and Sundari at their head.²

The arhat Ariṣṭanemi had eighteen gaṇas and eighteen gaṇadharas.

The arhat Ariṣṭanemi had a community of surpassing worth [consisting] of eighteen thousand śramaṇas with Varadatta at their head.

¹ *Gaṇa*: a group of ascetics; *gaṇadhara*: lit. the support of the group, its head. Each chapter of this Part begins with some verses of the KS. This listing of numbers may at first sight appear tedious, but it is important because of the profound veneration which surrounds the KS. The more familiar one becomes with the names of the *tirthaṅkaras* and their disciples within the context of their own tradition, the more lively these passages become and one discovers their underlying interconnections.

² *Usabhassa ṇaṃ arahao kosaliyassa caurāsiti gaṇā caurāsīiṃ gaṇaharā hotthā. Usabhassa...Usabhasaṇapamokkhāo caurāsīiṃ samaṇasāhassio ukkosiyā samaṇasaṃpayā hotthā. Usabhassa... Bāmbhi-Sumdaripāmakkhāṇaṃ ajjīyānaṃ tūṇi sayasāhassio ukkosiyā ajjīyasaṃpayā hutthā.* KS 197.

The arhat Ariṣṭanemi had a community of surpassing worth [consisting] of forty-four thousand āryikās with Āryā Yakṣini at their head.³

Is it possible to discover the very beginnings of the first *śramaṇas* and *śramaṇis*? Did the Jaina ascetic movement arise all of a sudden in social and historical circumstances that would explain its radicalism, or rather did it come about slowly, borrowing from other similar movements? Is it possible to search for and fix even approximately a period in which this movement started? Is it possible to find any traces of the *tirthaṅkaras*? These are all important questions to which many investigators, especially historians and exegetes, have sought to reply, but hesitantly, without making very much headway, for the basic elements are lacking which would enable them to make a pronouncement on a distant past of which we have practically no knowledge. Certain scholars have expressed the opinion that the Jaina ascetic movement emerged from an autochthonous religion of some pre-Aryan date and that its cradle was probably the Gangetic plain of the East of the country.⁴ Quite a number of others have considered

³ *arahaṃ naṃ Ariṣṭhanemissa aṭṭhārasa gaṇā aṭṭhārasa gaṇaharā hutthā. arahaṃ... Varadattapāṃmokkhāṇa aṭṭhārasa samaṇasāhassio ukkosiyaṃ samaṇasaṃpayā hotthā, arahaṃ... ajjaJakkhinipāṃmokkhāṇa cattālisam ajjiyāsāhassio ukkosiyaṃ ajjiyasaṃpayā hotthā.* KS 166.

⁴ "I am inclined to postulate a great Magadhan religion, indigenous in its essential traits, that must have flourished on the banks of the Ganges, in eastern India, long before the advent of the Aryans into central India; and possibly at the end of the Brāhmaṇa period these two streams of Aryan and indigenous thought met each other, and the mutual interaction resulted on the one hand in the Upaniṣads in which Yajñavalkya and others are, for the first time, preaching Atmavidyā and on the other, in contrast to the Vedic ritualistic form of religion practised by the masses, in Jainism and Buddhism that came prominently to the fore as the strong representatives of the great heritage of Magadhan Religion." Upadhye, PSa, Introd. p. 90. Renou, speaking more generally, makes a similar hypothesis: "Jaina asceticism grew up out of a background of pan-Indian, or perhaps pre-Indian, asceticism, which can be traced also in Buddhism, though Buddhism early repudiated it." Renou, 1953a, p. 126. Cf. also J.P. Jain, 1951, on the subject of Jainism, the most ancient of all religions, with supporting references.

this movement to be not an original phenomenon, but an adaptation of certain forms of asceticism borrowed from Brahmanism and incorporated into a new system, or perhaps a reaction against this same Brahmanism.⁵ Archaeologists also hold slightly differing opinions; U.P. Shah, who is an authority on all questions concerning Jaina art, gives no clear verdict, but tends to think that further research might well permit a more conclusive opinion.⁶

However, the opinion of historians, exegetes and archaeologists is not the only valid one. What does tradition tell us, that tradition which the ascetics and followers of the Jaina *dharma* have handed on through the centuries? This tradition is an immensely rich one in which the improbable and the real exist side by side, in which a certain thread of continuity is visible age after age and in which there is a remarkable consistency as regards the basic doctrines and their implementation in practice. The Jaina is constantly required to opt for those values that are essential ones: self-mastery, respect for all beings, detachment from material things by a constant effort towards interiorisation - a detachment which is maintained through the practice of asceticism and through study of the teaching. Oral tradition seeks always to hark back to the dawn of time, to a far-distant undefinable period, that of the first beginnings, when men were aware of an intensity of cosmic life surrounding them, at one and the same time hidden and yet palpable. This highly sensitive awareness of life at its fullest, which

⁵ Cf. Deco, 1956, pp. 44-56, where all similar hypotheses and also other points of view are systematically reviewed.

⁶ "Pre-historic sites in India do not lend any definite clue to the existence of Jainism. A few seals from Mohen-jo-Daro showing human figures standing in a posture closely analogous to the free-standing meditative pose (*kāyotsarga-mudrā*) of the Jinas, or the seal representing a male divinity seated in meditation, the prototype of Śiva, corresponding with later Jaina, Buddhist or Brahmanical sculptures in such postures, cannot in the present state of uncertainty of the reading of the Indus Valley script be definitely used as attesting to the Pre-historic antiquity of Jaina art or ritual." U.P. Shah, 1955, p.3.

informs all the teaching, may well constitute one of the proofs of its antiquity.⁷

At a certain moment - it is of little importance whether after hundreds or thousands of centuries - a great ascetic made his appearance, an *arhat*, a *jina* who won a victory over matter, a *tirthaṅkara* who taught the way of Deliverance to those who were lost in the gloom of ignorance. At regular intervals other *tirthaṅkaras* appeared. The Prelude then, is precisely, this gift of a tradition which stretches from the first to the twenty-second *tirthaṅkara*, from Ādinātha to Neminātha.

One highly interesting and remarkable feature of the ācāryas, the spiritual masters who were responsible, to a certain extent, for creating this tradition, who passed it on and expounded it, is the important position they accorded women, their recognition of women's capacity to lead the ascetic life, to understand the full meaning of the teaching, to adhere to the life with constant fidelity, to teach others through word and example, and, what is more, to help men in general and even men ascetics to find or find again the right path. Indeed, concrete examples are not lacking; Brāhmī, Sundarī, Mallinātha, Rājimati, are each of them so rooted in the faith that they live it out in depth, communicating it to others the while. It is noteworthy that these *tirthaṅkaras* and these *sādhvis* most probably lived in different regions, in Ayodhyā in the North, Mithilā in the East, Dvārāvati and Girinagara in the West. This diversity proves that the Jaina *dharma* was flourishing in these places at a very early date and as a general rule, even if the Jainas believe that the Eastern region was privileged because it was Mahāvira's they believe also that Ādinātha, the first *tirthaṅkara*, belonged to Ayodhyā.⁸

⁷ This idea was put forward as far back as in the most ancient *Āgama*: AS I, 1, 2-7; I, 8, 1, 11-13; cf. Dixit, 1978, p.6.

⁸ The quotations and references which follow come from Śvetāmbara texts, which are very well known to present-day *sādhvis* and which foster their faith and devotion. Even though the Digambaras have assigned to women a secondary place, their tradition venerates a certain number of *āryikās*, of

A - Ādinātha and Brāhmī-Sundari

The king of Kośala or Ayodhyā, son of Nābhi and Marudevī, is known by five names: Rṣabha, bull; Prathamarājā, first king; Prathamabhikṣācara, first mendicant ascetic; Prathamajina, first *jina*; Prathamatirthaṅkara, first *tirthaṅkara*.⁹ Tradition gave him the name Ādinātha, that is, Lord or Master of the origins, the One who first established the *dharma*. Ādinātha was a kindly, knowledgeable and capable monarch. He taught his subjects the art of writing, numerous branches of knowledge, including mathematics, and sundry arts and crafts.¹⁰ Then, after renouncing his family and his kingdom, and sharing out his principedom between his one hundred sons, he became an ascetic with a following of certain kñights and princes.¹¹ After a period of lengthy fasts and prolonged mental concentration, he attained perfect knowledge and understanding.¹² Among his disciples; several evinced a high degree of knowledge, certain became omniscient and, to crown all, there were reckoned to be three hundred thousand āryikās led by his two daughters, Brāhmī and Sundari. Forty thousand of these āryikās attained the state of perfection which follows Liberation.¹³ His disciples also included a large number of *śramaṇa - upāsakas* and *śramaṇa - upāsikās*, that is to say, men and

which the principal ones are the same as those venerated by the Śvetāmbaras.

⁹ Cf. KS 194.

¹⁰ Cf. KS 195.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Cf. KS 196; perfect knowledge: *kevala-jñāna*.

¹³ Ibid., cf. KS 197: *cattālisaṃ ajjijāsahassāo siddhāo*.

women who, without renouncing the world, followed his teachings.¹⁴ At the time of his *nirvāṇa* the period *suṣamā-duḥṣamā* of the phase *avasarpini* was drawing to a close.¹⁵

Ardent devotion is expressed to Ādinātha in the *Bhaktāmara-stotram*, a renowned hymn of praise addressed to this Forerunner, this unique and incomparable Lord who effaces sins just as the Sun dissipates dark shadows.¹⁶

Marudevi, who was privileged to be the mother of Ādinātha, was the first to attain Liberation. Tradition says that she was greatly distressed when her son decided to adopt the ascetic life. The pain of separation and the thought of the austerities her beloved son was enduring caused her an incessant flow of tears. One day, when the news was spreading that Ādinātha had attained the state of perfect knowledge, Marudevi, accompanied by her grandson Bharata, set out, riding on an elephant and surrounded by all the royal pomp and splendour, to pay homage to the new *arhat*. On the way, when there came to her ears the cries of rejoicing of the gods who were also gathering around Ādinātha, her tears of grief were changed into tears of joy. The glory of her son, his spiritual power, dawned upon her and this vision so gripped her that in the space of a few moments she traversed all the stages leading to the destruction of all knowledge-

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Cf. KS 199; cf. also TrisalPC I: *Ādiśvaracaritra*.

¹⁶ Cf. *Bhaktāmara-stotram* 7; this hymn, which is recited with great fervour up to this very day was composed by Ācārya Mānatuṅga whose date is uncertain. Amṛtalāla Śāstri, 1969, in the introduction to his translation, conjectures that he lived in the VIIth c.; JSK III p. 206 places him in the XIth c. Another less popular hymn, *Ṛṣabha-Ṣaṅcāsikā*, in Prākṛit, was composed by Dhanapāla in the 2nd half of the Xth c.; cf. Winternitz, 1977, p. 553.

obscuring *karmas*. She attained perfect knowledge and, abandoning the body, reached Liberation.¹⁷

Brāhmi and Sundari, the first princesses, became also the first āryikās. Brāhmi's mother was Queen Sumāṅgalā and she had a twin brother named Bharata; Sundari's mother was Queen Sunandā and she had a twin brother named Bāhubali.¹⁸ Their father, King Rṣabha, taught various kinds of writing to Brāhmi and mathematics to Sundari.¹⁹ Later, when Rṣabha, now an ascetic, was preaching the way leading to Liberation, Brāhmi requested that she might receive *dikṣā*; Ādinātha replied that she must obtain permission from her brother Bharata, who, seeing the determination of his twin-sister, gave his consent. Her sister Sundari also felt drawn to the ascetic life, but Bharata refused her permission to receive *dikṣā*.²⁰

Then Sundari, while still residing in the palace, proceeded none the less to live in a state of renunciation, submitting her body to harsh penances. Later on, Bharata, now convinced of his sister's sincerity, permitted her to go and rejoin Brāhmi.²¹ In his turn Bāhubali, after waging war against Bharata, renounced all. Retiring to the jungle, naked and in silence, standing and exposed to all the winds of heaven, stationary in the posture of *kāyotsarga*, abandonment of the body,

¹⁷ Cf. TrisalPC I, 3, 488-534. This extraordinary event proves that it is not absolutely necessary to embrace the ascetic state to reach Liberation. This narrative belongs to the Śvetāmbara tradition and is not accepted by the Digambaras.

¹⁸ Cf. TrisalPC I, 2, 882.

¹⁹ Cf. TrisalPC I, 2, 963. As Brāhmi was the first to learn the art of writing, it is said that the first written characters bear her name. On the subject of the as yet unclear origin of *brāhmi*, cf. Filliozat, 1953, pp. 667-668; Pandey, 1957, pp. 35-49.

²⁰ Cf. TrisalPC I, 3, 644-692.

²¹ Cf. TrisalPC I, 4, 728-797.

which favours recollection and mental concentration, he stayed thus for one whole year. Ants swarmed over his feet, climbing plants entwined themselves around his legs, wild animals roamed close by, but nothing moved him. He stayed in deep meditation. However, he did not reach perfect knowledge, because he had not overcome a certain pride-filled thought: since his act of renunciation he had not yet been to prostrate himself before his father Ādinātha who had accepted as disciples his younger brothers. As these last-named had received initiation before him, Bāhubali, in accordance with the rule of seniority appertaining to *dikṣā*, should have greeted them by making a prostration before them. Now this prospect was highly distasteful to him. Ādinātha, thanks to his direct intuitive power, perceived the state of soul of Bāhubali from afar. He summoned Brāhmi and Sundari and requested them to go and enlighten their brother concerning his unyielding pride. The two emissaries had some difficulty in descrying Bāhubali, so much alike did he appear to the surrounding trees. They paid homage to this great muni and transmitted to him the message of their father: "One cannot attain perfect knowledge seated on the back of an elephant."²² They then departed. Bāhubali was at first highly astonished at these words, but all of a sudden it came to him that his pride was the elephant, that mount on which he had placed himself. Recognising his fault, he decided forthwith to go and salute his younger brothers, whereupon, at that very moment, he was purified from all his *karmas* and became omniscient.²³

B - Mallinātha

Between the first *tirthaṅkara* and the nineteenth, Mallinātha, we know the names of certain *sādhvis* who were disciples of the

²² ...*astiskandhādhirūḍhānām utpadyeta na kevalam*. TrisalPC I, 5, 788.

²³ Cf. TrisalPC I, 5, 776-798; cf. also JSBSam V, pp. 185-197; PPN, pp. 495; 804. Bāhubali is the object of great veneration, his statue is erected in several Digambara centres, the most beautiful and gigantic being at Śravaṇa Belgola in Karnaṭaka; cf. *Jain Journal* XV, April 1981, in homage to Bāhubali; cf. also P 219.

intermediate *tirthaṅkaras*, but no outstanding fact is related in their regard.

Malli, according to Śvetāmbara tradition, was a princess, the daughter of King Kumbha of Mithilā, in the kingdom of Videha.²⁴ Her story reveals her strength of character and her ingenuity. She was of outstanding beauty and the tale goes that six princes of neighbouring kingdoms requested her hand in marriage from her father. Her father, in accordance with her wishes, refused and the six suitors declared war against him. When King Kumbha told Malli that these princes had attacked Mithilā and that he could by no means repel them, she told him not to be anxious and disclosed to him her own plan to vanquish them. He must send an emissary to each of them with this message: "I give you the hand of the princess of the kingdom of Videha", requesting them also to repair at night to the palace garden. And so it came to pass. Several days later each of the princes entered Mithilā by a different door, none knowing the presence of the others, and was received and given lodgement in a room of the *mohanaghara* which opened upon the garden.²⁵ Meanwhile, Malli had had erected in the centre of the *mohanaghara* a superb golden statue of her own size and likeness. The head of this statue had an opening carved into it, sealed with a cover and decorated with lotus-flowers. The statue was hollow and through the opening Malli had stuffed it with foodstuffs. The next morning, each of the princes went into ecstasies on perceiving the statue from afar through the trellis-window of his room. Believing that it was the princess and overcome by the charm and grace of this apparition, they all gazed upon it with lustful eyes. During this time Malli was taking her bath and then, adorned with her jewels and accompanied by her maidservants, she repaired to the lotus-covered statue and removed the lotus-wreathed cover. Immediately a nauseating stench like that of a

²⁴ In the Digambara tradition, the 19th *tirthaṅkara* is a man.

²⁵ Cf. Winternitz, 1977, p. 447, n. 3: "A *mohanaghara*: "a house intended for confusion," namely, a house in which a second house, and in the latter a third house stands, with net-work walls, so that the princes could be led into the house, without knowing of one another, and yet could all see the same figure."

dead snake spread all around. The princes, much affected by this stench, covered their faces with the fold of their garments and stayed still, faces averted. The real Malli then addressed them: "O beloved of the gods, why do you cover your faces and stay thus still, your faces averted?" They replied that they could not abide the stench... Malli went on: "Within this golden statue I have placed each day a little quantity of food, from which has resulted this mass of decomposed matter. Thus also is it with this material body whose functions issue in impurities: phlegm, mucus, bile, sperm, blood, pus, urine, faeces, bad breath. . .By nature this body decomposes..."²⁶ And for their encouragement, she added:

O beloved of the gods, do not seek human beings for your gratification! Be not creatures of passion, ruled by desire, nor let yourselves lose your heads and be overwhelmed by excessive attachment! ²⁷

The princes, convicted by the wisdom of these words, not only renounced Malli but subsequently embraced the way of asceticism. The *dikṣā* of Malli and of her disciples was then celebrated with due pomp, she herself being already so purified that she attained perfect knowledge that very same day.²⁸ She became Mallinātha and instructed all living beings in the *dharma*. She is the sole woman *tirthaṅkara*. Her image in the temples is exactly like those of the other *tirthaṅkaras*, her sole distinguishing sign being her special emblem, the jar. She does not figure among the most highly venerated

²⁶ Cf. *Jñānādharma-kathāḥ* VIII, pp. 300-303.

²⁷ *vaṁ mā ṇaṁ tubbhe devāṇuppiyā! ināṇussacesu kāmabhogesu
rajjaha gijjhaha mujjhaha ajjhovavajjaha.* .Ibid., VIII, p. 303.
The above translation is not literal, it expresses the sense of the verse.

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 311-317; cf. also TrisalPC VI, 6, 1-266; and PPN, pp. 554-555.

tirthaṅkaras, but nevertheless her story is well known and certain sanctuaries are dedicated to her.²⁹

C - Neminātha and Rājimati

The story of Rājimati is linked with that of the twenty-second *tirthaṅkara* Ariṣṭanemi or Neminātha who, according to tradition, was perhaps the cousin of Lord Kṛṣṇa.³⁰

Princess Rājimati, daughter of King Ugrasena of Mathurā, was already joyfully making preparations for her marriage to Prince Ariṣṭanemi, son of King Samudravijaya of the city of Soriyapura,³¹ when she learned that her future husband, at the sight of the large number of animals about to be slaughtered for the marriage-feast, had been so filled with compassion at the prospect of such cruelty towards so many living beings and so convinced that this sin would bring him no happiness in the other world that, laying aside his jewels and his princely garb, he chose the way of renunciation.³² The young princess was much agitated and smitten with grief.

²⁹ For example, one of the chief sanctuaries of Girinagara in Saurāṣṭra; cf. U.P. Shah, 1955, p. 27.

³⁰ Among the numerous disciples of Neminātha, the eight chief spouses of Kṛṣṇa are mentioned; cf. SthS 626. The story of Kṛṣṇa has, it seems, been taken into the Jainā tradition at a very early date, which fact causes the personages of the story to be regarded as followers of the Jainā *dharma*; cf. *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* of Jinasena at the end of the VIIIth c. (This Jinasena is not the same as the author of the *Ādipurāṇa*; cf. Winternitz, 1977, p. 499.)

³¹ In the vicinity of Āgarā; cf. PPN, pp. 869-870.

³² Cf. US XXII, 9-20. At Mt Ābū there is to be seen in the temple of Tejapala, sculptured in marble, a scene representing Ariṣṭanemi and a crowd of guests proceeding to the wedding; cf. Agrawala, 1976, fig. 81, p. 77.

Rajimati thought to herself: shame on my life!
 Since Ariṣṭanemi has forsaken me, it is better
 that I [too] adopt the ascetic life.³³

Thus, though Ariṣṭanemi had chosen that path with joy, a joy in which the throng and even the gods shared,³⁴ Rājimati must needs choose it in pain. Nevertheless she adopted this state with such conviction that her example was contagious and a great number of her relatives and household followed her lead. Tradition affirms that the *sādhyis* who became disciples of the one who had speedily attained omniscience and had now become the *tīrthaṅkara* Neminātha, numbered forty-four thousand, with Āryā Yakṣiṇī at their head.³⁵ Rājimati, a member of this group, lived the ascetic life with all the fervour and chivalrous spirit of the milieu to which by birth she belonged. The following incident will show her pre-eminent faithfulness, strength and wisdom.

One day, as Rājimati was on her way to the holy mountain of Girinagara, overtaken by a storm, she was drenched with rain and, as night was falling, she entered a cave and removed her garments in order to dry them. Now, within this very cave, was also the muni Rathanemi, brother of Neminātha. Seeing Rājimati nakedness he was in turmoil. Very soon she saw him and, trembling, sat down, covering her body with her two arms. Then the well-known dialogue thus began:

³³ *Rāimai vicimṭei dhiratthu mama jiviyam*
jā haṁ taṇaṁ paricattā seyaṁ pavvaiuṁ mama. US XXII, 29.

³⁴ Cf. US XXII, 21-27; as the text indicates, Ariṣṭanemi lived at Dvāravati, a city associated with the name of Kṛṣṇa, and his *dikṣā* took place at Mount Raivataka or Girinagara.

³⁵ Cf. KS 166.

I am Rathanemi, O beauteous one, gracious and charming!
Accept me, O thou shapely one! Thou wilt suffer no harm.³⁶

Though she perceived that Rathanemi was overpowered by his senses and had lost all self-control, Rājimatī was not shaken. She put on her garments and, faithful to her vows, this daughter of the best of princes saved the honour of her clan, her family and her virtue by addressing Rathanemi, procceding to tell him that even if he were Kubera, the god of riches, or Indra himself, she wanted none of him, that he should be ashamed and would do better to die rather than revert to that which he had for ever abandoned.³⁷ After recalling to him their noble ancestry,³⁸ she went on:

If at sight of a woman these sentiments arise in thee, thou wilt be a wavering *ātman* fixed nowhere, like *haḍḍha*, seaweed driven by the wind.³⁹

Just as the cow-herd is not master of the herd, nor the steward of [his lord's] merchandise, so neither wilt thou be master of thy condition of *śramaṇa*.⁴⁰

³⁶ *Rahanemi ahaṃ bhadde! surūve! cārupehiṇi!*
manam bhayāhi sutaṇū! na te pilā bhavissai. US XXII, 37.

³⁷ Cf. US XXII, 41-42.

³⁸ Cf. US XXII, 43.

³⁹ *jai taṃ kāhisi bhāvaṃ jā jā daccasi nārio*
vāyāiddho va haḍḍho atṭhiyappā bhavissasi. US XXII, 44.

⁴⁰ *govālo bhaṃḍapālo vā jahā taddavv' aṇisaro*
evaṃ aṇisaro taṃ pi sāmāṇassa bhavissasi. US XXII, 45;
davva: (dravya), lit. objects, things, property, and hence: the flock, merchandise.

Having heard the wise words of this [sādhvi], mistress of her person, Rathanemi returned to the *dharma* just as a [wild] elephant is retrieved by the goad.⁴¹

Controlling his mind, his speech and his body, mastering the senses, faithful to his vows, he persevered in the state of *śramaṇa* to the end of his life.⁴²

After practising severe austerities, they both joined the ranks of the omniscient ones, all their *karmas* were obliterated, [and] they attained the highest perfection [beyond all telling].⁴³

The last verse of this recitation is a eulogy to all who, like Rathanemi "the *puruṣottama*, the most excellent of men"⁴⁴ succeed in the way of self-renunciation. We must add that, without the force of character and pre-eminent qualities of Rājīmātī, Rathanemi would have perhaps not achieved perfection and it is assuredly she who deserves the title of '*puruṣottama*'.

41 *tise so vayanam soccā samjayāe subhāsiyam*
aṁkuseṇa jahā nāgo dhamme sampadivāio. US XXII, 46;
dhamme sampadivāio: he stays firm fixed, established in the *dharma*.

42 *maṇagutto vayagutto kāyagutto jīmndio*
sāmaṇnam niccalam phāse jāvajjivam daḍhavvao. US XXII, 47.

43 *uggam tavam carittānam jāyā donni vi kevali*
savvam kammam khavettānam siddhim pattā aṇuttaram. US XXII, 48.
 Note that US XXII, 42; 43; 45; 46 correspond textually to DS II, 7-10; cf.
 also TrisalPC VIII, 10, 271-286.

44 Cf. US XXII, 49.

Chapter 2.

THE GODS NAMED HIM "MAHĀVIRA", THE GREAT HERO

The arhat Pārśva, the Elect, had eight gaṇas and eight gaṇadharas.¹

The arhat Pārśva, the Elect, had a community of surpassing worth, [consisting] of sixteen thousand śramaṇas with Āryadatta at their head.

The arhat Pārśva, the Elect, had a community of surpassing worth, [consisting] of thirty-eight thousand āryikās with Puṣpacūlā at their head.²

In those days, in that same period, Śramaṇa Bhagavān Mahāvira had a community of surpassing worth, [consisting] of fourteen thousand śramaṇas with Indrabhūti as their head.³

Śramaṇa Bhagavān Mahāvira had a community of surpassing worth, [consisting] of thirty-six thousand ārvikās with Āryā Candanā at their head.⁴

¹ *Paāsassa ṇaṃ arahao purisādāṇiyassa aṭṭhā gaṇa aṭṭhā gaṇadharā hutthā. . . KS 156.*

² *Pāsassa ṇaṃ arahao purisādāṇiyassa Ajjaddiṇṇapāṃmokkhāo solasa samaṇasāhassio ukkosiyaṃ samaṇasaṃpayā hotthā. Pāsassa ṇaṃ arahao purisādāṇiyassa Pupphacūlāpāṃmokkhāo aṭṭhattisaṃ ajjiyāsāhassio ukkosiyaṃ ajjiyāsaṃpayā hotthā. KS 157.*

³ *teṇaṃ kāleṇaṃ teṇaṃ samaeṇaṃ samaṇassa bhagavao Mahāviraṇaṃ Indrabhūtipāṃmukkhāo coddasa samaṇasāhassio ukkosiyaṃ samaṇasaṃpayā hutthā. KS 133.*

⁴ *samaṇassa bhagavao Mahāviraṇaṃ ajjaCamdaṇāpāṃmukkhāo chattisaṃ*

In those days, in that [same] period, Śramaṇa Bhagavān Mahāvira had nine gaṇas and eleven gaṇadharas.⁵

The śramaṇas, nirgranthas, of the present time are all [spiritual] sons of the ascetic Ārya Sudharman. As to the other gaṇadharas, [they have left] no [spiritual] posterity; [their line is] extinct.⁶

... The Sthavira Ārya Sambhūtavijaya of the lineage of the Māṭharas had seven spiritual daughters, sisters of Sthūlabhadra, known [by the names]: Yakṣā, Yakṣadattā, Bhūtā, Bhūṭadattā, Senā, Veṇā, Reṇā.⁷

The twenty-third tirthaṅkara, Pārśvanātha, is thought to have lived in the VIIIth century B.C.; this is quite possible and his existence is generally recognised as a fact of history.⁸ There is no good reason to suppose that he did not have women disciples, but we have no definite

ajjīyāsāhassio ukkosiyā ajjīyāsāmpayā hotthā. KS 134.

⁵ *teṇaṃ kāleṇaṃ teṇaṃ samaeṇaṃ samaṇassa bhagavaṃ Mahāviraṃ nava gaṇa, ekkārasa gaṇaharā hotthā. KS 201.*

⁶ *je ime ajjattāe samaṇā niggamāṇā viharamānti, ete paṇṇaṃ savve ajjaSuhammassa anagārassa āvaccijjā, avascesā gaṇaharā niravaccā vocchinnā. KS 204; ascetic: anagāra (without a house); cf. P 420 ff.*

⁷ *therassa naṃ ajjaSambhūvijayassa māḍharasaguttassa imāo satta amtevāsīṇio ahāvaccāo abhiṇṇāyāo hotthā, taṃ jahā - Jakkhā ya Jakkhadiṇṇā, Bhūyā taha ceva Bhūyadiṇṇā ya Sepā Veṇā Reṇā, bhagiṇio Thūlabhaddassa. KS 208; sthavira denotes an elder, used here as an appellation of respect.*

⁸ Cf. Basham, 1959, p. 290; Deo, 1956, pp. 60-64; Jacobi SBE XLV, pp. xxi-xxii; Renou, 1953a, p. 114. The year 817 B.C. has been put forward by some as the year of his birth, though this is confirmed by no historical documents; cf. e.g. Atlas chronological chart.

information on this point.⁹ The role of Pārśvanātha has been somewhat eclipsed by that of Mahāvira, the last *tirthaṅkara*, whose existence and spiritual radiation are well attested and whose profound influence has never diminished throughout the centuries and remains alive in the Jaina community to this very day. It is certain that Mahāvira had women disciples among his ascetics and even if, in the Lives preserved by tradition, there is a mixture of legend and history owing to a superabundance of devotion, there is nevertheless no shadow of doubt concerning the authenticity of Ārya Candanā, his first woman-disciple, spiritual Mother of all the rest. Mahāvira was certainly in advance of his times in welcoming women disciples without discrimination and from the very beginning of his mission as a *tirthaṅkara*. Not only were remarkable *sādhvīs* to be found at the side of Candanā, but tradition mentions *śrāvikās* also as following with zeal the way of the *dharma*. Thus, at an epoch going back to the end of the VIth century B.C., one is witnessing the beginnings of a family of women ascetics following from the start the same spirituality and the same doctrine as the men ascetics. Their rule of life was probably established gradually and was fundamentally the same as that of the men, although certain ideas involving discrimination against women were, in accordance with the contemporary outlook, introduced into it by the *ācāryas* who drafted these rules without themselves possessing the perfect wisdom of Mahāvira.¹⁰

We now give a brief synopsis of a very long period of time extending from the VIIIth century B.C. to the beginning of our era, a period in which our source of knowledge is chiefly oral tradition transmitted in the course of centuries, then reiterated in the Scriptures and repeated in the commentaries of successive ages. What interests us is less the historical exactitude of these happenings than the living expression of a faith, the constant concern to be faithful to an ideal which is at one and the same time both simple and demanding. At the end of this period dissensions were beginning to presage the rupture between two groups holding differing views on certain doctrinal

⁹ Cf. Deo, 1956, p. 502.

¹⁰ A discrimination which was accentuated, as we shall see, by the Digambaras, and that on account of certain doctrinal principles that in all probability were not inherited from Mahāvira.

matters. However, one may say that up to the Christian era the whole of the tradition was common to the two groups and, most importantly, Mahāvira has always been, and indeed in a very real way continues to be, for men and women alike, the Grēat Hero. He it is who continues to inspire both the Digambara āryikās and the Śvetāmbara sādhis of our own day, even if there have been differences of interpretation in regard to his life.

A - Pārśvanātha and Puṣpacūla

Pārśvanātha, the twenty-third *tirthaṅkara* has always, it seems, been extremely popular. Numerous images of him are to be found over the length and breadth of the country and numerous temples are dedicated to him.¹¹ He is very easily recognisable, for instead of having, like the other *tirthaṅkaras*, his own distinctive sign at the base of the statue, his emblem is in the form of seven cobra-heads¹² together forming a protective hood over his head. As his special colour is blue, the images of Pārśvanātha are quite frequently black.

As prince of Vārāṇasi, son of King Aśvasena and Queen Vāmādevī, he led a family life for thirty years, already possessing deep understanding; then he renounced and distributed all his goods, and left the palace accompanied by a throng of men, gods and demons. In the park called Āśramapada he stripped himself of his finery and became an *anagāra*, one without a house, in the company of three hundred associates.¹³ After eighty-three days of rigorous austerities and of mental concentration such as leads to perfect knowledge, in a state of detachment from the body and having endured with patience and forbearance all sorts of adversities, he

¹¹ Cf., as examples, U.P. Shah, 1955, figs. 3; 38; 52; 79; 83; U.P. Shah and Dhaky, 1975, index, under Pārśvanātha.

¹² To distinguish him clearly from Supārśvanātha who is often depicted with a hood of 5 cobra-heads.

¹³ Cf. KS 149-153.

attained omniscience.¹⁴ Then, followed by numerous disciples, both men and women, he started his life as a *tirthaṅkara* which lasted nearly seventy years. At the moment of his final Liberation he was one hundred years old and the greater part of the *duḥṣamā-suṣamā* period of the phase *avasarpīṇi* had run its course.¹⁵ In the *Kalpa-sūtra* he is called the Elect.¹⁶

As for Puṣpacūlā "at the head of a community of thirty-eight thousand āryikās", in the absence of any noteworthy facts one scarcely knows anything about her other than her name. The names of other āryikās are mentioned in passing. One observes that they belonged to the North, many of them to Hastināpura (or Nāgapura) or to the East, and that they all came from rich merchant families of the middle class, with the exception of Queen Āyavā.¹⁷ These names testify both to the fertile imagination of the commentators who created the legends concerning these āryikās and also to their concern to associate women disciples with Pārśvanātha.¹⁸ There is another striking feature to be noticed: having reached the end of their life of asceticism, each of these āryikās went to the domain of the gods before being re-born in the human state; none was liberated.

¹⁴ Ibid., 154-155.

¹⁵ Ibid., 156-159.

¹⁶ *Purisādāpiya*, cf. Jacobi, SBE XXII, p.271, n.1 "who is to be chosen among men because of his preferable *karman*", which he translates as "the people's favorite", Lalvani KS by "the celebrated" and PPN, p.453 by "worthy to be worshipped and followed". There exist numerous histories of Pārśvanātha: the *Pārśvābhyudaya*, of Jina Sena (IXth c.); several *Pārśvanāthacaritras*, among them that of Bhāvadēva Sūri (XIIIth c.); cf. JSK III, p. 56; Winternitz, 1977, pp. 512-516.

¹⁷ Cf. PPN, p. 86.

¹⁸ At Vārāṇasi there is mention of Kaṇharāi and Ghaṇā; at Hastināpura of Amjū, Aparāiyā, Kamalāprabhā, Namitā, Paumā, Puṇṇā, Bahuputrikā, Bahurūpā, Bhāriyā; at Rājagṛha of Bhūtā - this to quote just a few names; cf. PPN, pp. 154; 240; 9 (3); 48 (11); 159; 311 (1); 418 (6); 466 (2); 503 (5); 504 (1); 527; 533; (1).

The important and interesting features of the teaching of Pārśvanātha are reported to us in a long dialogue, which purports to have taken place at the time of Mahāvira between Śrāmaṇa Keśikumāra, of the spiritual line of Pārśvanātha, and Bhagavān Gautama, a disciple of Mahāvira. Even if this dialogue never actually took place, its contents witness to the existence, if not of two divergent tendencies, at least perhaps of different interpretations with regard to the practical outworking of the doctrine. This dialogue, handed down by oral tradition, is supposed to belong to a period well before the separation between Digambara and Śvetāmbaras took place. Keśi and Gautama were already spiritual masters of a considerable degree of perfection. Their respective disciples had expressed certain doubts over apparent differences between the two groups.¹⁹ Gautama decided to go and meet Keśi.²⁰ The latter drew the attention of his august visitor to the fact that, although the *dharma* was directed towards one single goal, yet there existed differences in regard to the practical implications of the doctrine, the first being as follows:

The great Muni Pārśva taught the *dharma* of the four disciplines, while Vardhamāna taught that of the five precepts.²¹

¹⁹ Cf. US XXIII, 1-14.

²⁰ Cf. US XXIII, 15-22.

²¹ *cāujjāmo ya jo dhammo jo imo paṃcasikkhio
desio Vaddhamāṇeṇaṃ Pāseṇa ya mahāmuṇi.* US XXIII, 23.

The four disciplines, which together constitute self-control, are, according to the usual interpretation, the four great vows: renunciation of harmful activities, renunciation of all forms of falsehood, renunciation of any appropriation to oneself of that which is not given, and renunciation of all forms of possession (cf. StHS 266). At the times of the first *tirthaṅkara* and also of the last there was added to the four great vows a fifth which at other times was deemed to be included in the fourth vow, viz. renunciation of all forms of lust. Thus in one era reference is made to the "five precepts" and at another to the "four disciplines" (cf. Ācārya Ātmārāma US comm., pp. 1004-1030). Jainī, in agreement with P.K. Modi (*Pāṣaṇāhacariu*), Introd. pp. 46-53) expresses doubt over the meaning assigned to *cāturyāma-dharma*, the four disciplines: "...Modi has suggested that *cāturyāma* did not imply four

Why this difference? Gautama explained:

The munis of the first *tirthaṅkara* [were] simple and slow to understand, those of the last, devious and slow to understand; those between the first and the last, simple and intelligent; that is why there are two sorts of *dharma*.²²

In accordance with this point of view, the disciples of the last *tirthaṅkara* were in duty bound to perform the daily rite of *pratikramāṇa*, or repentance, even if they had committed no fault- this on account of their innate weakness - while the disciples of the intermediate *tirthaṅkaras* were only required to repent when they had committed an offense.²³

The second difference was connected with nudity:

Vardhamāna taught the *dharma* of nudity, while the great Muni Pārśva taught that of the wearing of clothes.²⁴

vows at all, but rather the modalities (mind, body, speech, and the senses) through which evil could be expressed. Thus, he concludes, both Pārśva and Mahāvira practised and taught the same, single, all-encompassing *sāmāyika* restraint, while the five vows that Mahāvira set forth are no more than a specification of the main areas of conduct to which this restraint applied." P.S. Jaini, 1979, p. 18; cf. also pp. 15-21, where this interesting interpretation is further developed.

²² *purimā ujjujaḍā u vaṃkajaḍā ya pacchimā
majjhimā ajjuḍannā u teṇa dhammo duhā kao.* US XXIII, 26.

The degree of knowledge and wisdom of the two contrasted groups ("the first ones, the last ones and those in the middle", the text puts it) depends on the period of the cycle of time to which they belonged. The obligation of taking the fifth vow would have been necessary for temperaments as feeble as those of the men in Mahāvira's day.

²³ Cf. Jñānamati, 1976, p.44.

²⁴ *acelago ya jo dhammo jo imo saṃtaruttaro
desio Vaddhamāṇeṇa Pāseṇa ya mahāmupī!* US XXIII, 29.

On this subject cf. P 139 and, for its implications as regards the Liberation of women among the Digambaras, P 640 ff.

Why this difference? Gautama explained that Pārśva and Mahāvira had been guided by the lofty wisdom that they possessed,²⁵ and that the *liṅga*, or external mark that classed them as ascetics; was on account of their position in society where they were recognised as such by means of certain signs.²⁶ He hastened to add that the two *tirthaṅkaras* were, without any doubt at all, in agreement as to the essential:

In reality, the assertion [of both the *tirthaṅkaras*] is that the true means [for attaining] *mokṣa* is: [right] knowledge, [right] belief, and [right] conduct.²⁷

Furthermore, we know that the parents of Mahāvira followed the teaching of Pārśva.²⁸

The mention in Scripture of disciples of Pārśvanātha and the spiritual association with him of the family of Mahāvira gives credence to the suggestion that in all probability Pārśvanātha was the founder of the Jaina *dharma*, which may have been in existence before him in an as yet ill-defined form. Mahāvira, thanks to his personal greatness, gave it a fresh impetus by instituting a rigorous asceticism, bequeathing to the ascetics rules of life based on the fundamental ideas of the doctrine, especially those concerning renunciation of all harmful activity and of all forms of possession.

²⁵ Cf. US XXIII, 31.

²⁶ *paccayattham ca logassa nāṇāviha vigappaṇam
jattattham gahaṇattham ca loc liṅgappaoyaṇam.* US XXIII, 32.

²⁷ *aha bhava painnā u mokkhasabbhūyasāhaṇā
nāṇam ca daṁsaṇam ceva carittam ceva nicchae.* US XXIII, 33;
cf. *ratnatraya*, P 269 ff.

²⁸ Cf. AS II, 15, 16.

B - Mahāvira and Candanā

From the time of his conception, the future prince was such a fountain-head of blessings, abundance and prosperity that his parents, King Siddhārta and Queen Trīśalā, called him *Vardhamāna*, "the ever-growing one."²⁹ In the royal palace of Kuṇḍagrāma, on the outskirts of Vaiśālī in the Kingdom of Videha, about the beginning of the second half of the VIth century B.C., there reigned an atmosphere of intense joy as everyone awaited with joyful anticipation a unique event, namely, the birth of a being who was going to be a light for his people. Queen Trīśalā had fourteen dreams which the soothsayers had interpreted as extremely propitious signs, announcing the coming of an *arhat*, a *jina*, a universal sovereign destined to bring to humankind the new inspiration of an excellent *dharma*.³⁰

At the moment of this birth, which took place on the thirteenth day of the moon-lit half of the month *caitra* (March-April), the whole world was rapt in admiration, joy and wonder, men, the gods and the whole cosmos participating in this extraordinary event. King Siddhārta set prisoners at liberty, he ordered the entire city to be decorated and musicians, troubadours, acrobats, dancers and athletes

²⁹ Cf. KS 85-86; 103. At the moment of his conception, the period *duḥṣamā-suṣamā* was drawing to a close.

³⁰ Cf. KS 33-78. The fourteen dreams (which the mothers of the other *tirthankaras* dreamt also) are explained in the KS (34-37) in a highly poetic fashion. These signs of Good Fortune are as follows: an elephant, a bull, a lion, the anointing of the goddess Śrī (Lakṣmī) by two celestial elephants, a garland, the moon, the sun, a banner, an urn, a lotus-covered lake, the sea, a celestial chariot (the vehicle of the gods), a head of precious stones, a smokeless fire. The Digambaras hold that sixteen signs appeared in dreams: an elephant, a bull, a lion, a pair of garlands, the goddess Śrī, the full moon, the sun, a pair of vases filled with lotus flowers, a pair of fish, a lake, the sea, a throne, a celestial chariot, the palace of the serpent-king, a heap of precious stones, a smokeless fire; cf. JSK IV, p 505 (*Mahāpurāṇa* XII, 155-161). These dreams, which probably made their appearance in the tradition at a very ancient date, belong to the general religious tradition of India. Very popular among the Jainas, they are represented as miniatures in iconography and in sculpture carved either in wood or stone; cf. U.P. Shah, 1955, ch. 7.

to assemble. The festivities lasted for ten days, while the purificatory rites that follow birth were being performed.³¹

Because of his exceptional qualities of courage, perseverance and endurance, as well as of self-control and serenity of spirit the gods named him Mahāvira, "the Great Hero".³² At first he led the life of a prince. He married Princess Yaśodā and they had born to them a daughter named Priyadarśanā.³³ As soon as his parents had left this world, Mahāvira made clear his desire to follow his inclination for the ascetic life; indeed, while still in his mother's womb, endowed already with penetrating intuition and foreknowledge of his future mission, he had decided, to avoid grieving his parents, to await the end of their lives before leaving the palace and renouncing all.³⁴ He was even now, however, dissuaded from departing immediately and promised to stay two more years in the palace, where he proceeded to live the life of a prince-ascetic.³⁵ In his thirtieth year his final renunciation took place, amidst a rejoicing on the part of both men and gods that was even more fervent than that at his birth.³⁶

This brief summary gives us a glimpse of the marvel-filled story of Mahāvira, set in the midst of the fabulous wealth, abundance, pageantry and refinement of the princedom of that day and age. The Kalpa-sūtra, of relatively recent date, conveys to us the extraordinary fervent devotion underlying the whole text. This outpouring of devotion springs from a boundless admiration for Mahāvira, Hero of extraordinarily spiritual power and superhuman courage, a luminous

³¹ Cf. KS 93-103.

³² Cf. KS 104.

³³ Cf. KS 107-108; according to the Digambara tradition, he remained celibate.

³⁴ Cf. KS 91.

³⁵ Cf. Nathamala *Āyāro, ṭippaṇa*, pp. 343-344.

³⁶ Cf. KS 110-113.

personality whose impact upon his contemporaries was profound and has been transmitted to subsequent generations. This lively and impassioned devotion is enshrined in this *sūtra* which is more venerated, recited and invested with lustre than any other.³⁷

There is a striking contrast between the exuberance, profusion of riches and abundance of legendary descriptions in the *Kalpa-sūtra* and the austere sober tone of the most ancient text, the *Ācārāṅga-sūtra* I, which is certainly stamped with the mark of authenticity. Here an ardent underlying devotion is no less detectable, but it is much more discreet, realistic, real. Mahāvira, as described to us, is also the great ascetic, the inspirer of a great and fervent movement, of a both original and durable character.³⁸

This, in short, is what the *Ācārāṅga* conveys to us: Mahāvira was an ascetic, recluse, solitary, a pilgrim travelling towards the goal of supreme Realisation, little known, one who under maltreatment and insults stayed calm, humble, unshaken, full of patience and endurance, his attention directed towards the essential, namely self-mastery, respect for all beings, radical dispossession of the self and mental concentration as means towards Realisation of the *ātman*.

For thirteen months he wore the same garment, then cast it away and stayed naked.³⁹ He lived in silence and concentration in spite of far from favourable surroundings, jesting and scoffing, the presence of

³⁷ To fill out this brief summary it is necessary to read the whole text; cf. the edition of *Prākṛit Bhārati*, 1977, which contains a selection of coloured reproductions of original miniatures of the XVIth c. The stories of the lives of the most celebrated *tīrthaṅkaras*: Ādinātha, Neminātha, and Pārśvanātha, are close copies of the story of Mahāvira's life.

³⁸ We may note that AS II, a later text, gives a description of the period preceding the renunciation very similar to that of the KS. The KS also describes Mahāvira the ascetic, but in a style less restrained than that of the AS I. Cf. Dixit, 1978, pp. 11-12: "no super-humanization of the biography of Mahāvira."

³⁹ Cf. AS I, 8, 1, 3.

women, places of amusement. Among the crowd were to be found musicians, storytellers, actors, wrestlers. . . he went his way, replying to no questions and greeting no one. He was beaten with a stick, but remained at peace.⁴⁰ In full awareness of the life which animates the earth, water, fire, the wind and the plants, he was careful never to damage them on his way.⁴¹ His wisdom revealed to him the working of *karman* that is the cause of the suffering of all beings; he renounced sin, particularly as regards that which concerns food, accepting pure food prepared for the family where he was seeking alms, but refusing food if prepared specially for himself. He was temperate in all things, indifferent to food and drink.⁴²

How and where did he dwell during the more than twelve years of inner journeying towards perfect knowledge? The answer is simple: he contented himself with whatever he found on the road and stayed there in a state of recollection:

Sometimes he dwelt in workshops, sometimes in meeting-halls, in wells, shops, factories or on a heap of straw.⁴³

He lodged sometimes in shelters for travellers, in a garden shed, in a village, and sometimes in a town, in a place set aside for cremations or in an abandoned house, sometimes also under a tree;⁴⁴ the Muni Śramaṇa dwelt in these places of refuge for

⁴⁰ Ibid., 4-9.

⁴¹ Ibid., 11-12; 20.

⁴² Ibid., 14-19.

⁴³ *āveṣana-sabhā-pavāsu, paṇiyasālāsu egadā vāso*
aduvā paliyaṭṭāṇesu, palālapumjesu egadā vāso. AS I, 8, 2, 2.

⁴⁴ *āgaritāre ārāmāgāre, gāme ṇagarevi egadā vāso*
susāṇe sunṇagāre vā, rukkhāmūle vi agadā vāso. AS I, 8, 2, 3.

thirteen years, master of himself, vigilant, his mind absorbed both night and day in an intense concentration.⁴⁵

In the course of his lengthy journeyings he came to the country of Lāṭha⁴⁶ where he had to suffer, not only on account of the climate, wounds caused by sharp grasses and insects of all kinds, but also on account of the hostility of the inhabitants who set their dogs upon him, refused him hospitality, struck him and treated him harshly. Notwithstanding, he, hero of the great inner struggle, remained in serenity,⁴⁷ and pursued his path, absorbed in *dhyāna*, mental concentration.⁴⁸ After long years the daily struggle issued in final victory; he became a *jina*, a victorious one.

The *Ācārāṅga-sūtra* I passes over in silence the following period, that of the *kevalin* and *tirthaṅkara*. The *Kalpa-sūtra* recounts briefly certain facts: Mahāvira attained *kevala-jñāna*, perfect knowledge, during *vaiśākha* (April-May), the second month of summer in the thirteenth year of his ascetic life.⁴⁹ His life as a *kevalin* lasted thirty years, in the course of which he taught the *dharma* to his disciples, both men and women ascetics, and to numbers of others who, while staying in the world, followed his admonitions. Mention is made of sundry places where he is reputed to have passed the rainy season each year.⁵⁰ At length, during the fifteenth night of the dark half of the month of *kārttika* (October-November), while sojourning in Pāpā,

⁴⁵ *etehim muṇi sayañehim, samañe āsī palerasa vāse*
rām divaṃ pi jayamāñe, appamattē samāñe jhātī. AS I, 8, 2, 4.

⁴⁶ A district in the western part of undivided Bāṅgāla.

⁴⁷ Cf. AS I, 8, 3.

⁴⁸ Cf. AS I, 8, 4, 14-15.

⁴⁹ Cf. KS 120; AS II, 15, 25-29.

⁵⁰ Cf. KS 122; PPN, pp. 580-582 for the names of all the places he may have visited.

the Great Hero, totally liberated, left this earth for eternal *nirvāṇa*, just as his chief disciple, Indrabhūti, attained perfect knowledge.⁵¹ That self-same dark night eighteen princes who were observing a fast placed lamps at their doors, symbolising through these lights that were clearly visible the invisible interior light of the one whose knowledge had enlightened them for so many years.⁵²

Since that time Mahāvira has inspired in thousands of hearts an ardent devotion, which has expressed itself in architecture, sculpture, iconography and an abundant literature in Prākṛit, Sanskrit and local languages,⁵³ a devotion which is directed towards imitation of this Hero, in his virtues, his struggles and his final victory, and towards following the path that he taught.

When Mahāvira the *kevalin* started to tour the towns and villages to teach the way of Liberation, many, attracted by his example and his teaching, left all in order to follow him. Even if the number of disciples given by the *Kalpa-sūtra* is exaggerated, we may take note of the fact that the number of *āryikās* thirty thousand, is higher than that of the *śramaṇas*, fourteen thousand.⁵⁴ It is a matter of common

⁵¹ Cf. KS 123; 126. Pāpā or Pāvāpurī is in Pāṭaliputra District. Mahāvira is said to have lived to the age of 72 and opinion is divided as to the date of his *nirvāṇa*; Jaina tradition gives 527 B.C. and this date is accepted by Agrawala, 1976, p. 9; cf. also JSK I, pp. 324-325. Basham, 1959, p. 290 and Atlas chronological chart give 466 B.C. Winternitz, 1977, pp. 614-615, after studying the different hypotheses, concludes: "I should prefer to say that the real date of Mahāvira's Nirvāṇa is still unknown."

⁵² SkṛS I, 6, 22; cf. I, 6 *in toto* for praise to Mahāvira. The anniversary of Mahāvira's *nirvāṇa* at the new moon of *kārttika* is celebrated the same day as *dipāvālī*, the Hindu Festival of Light.

⁵³ The celebration of the 2,500th anniversary of Mahāvira's *nirvāṇa* in 1974-1975 has given a fresh impetus to the Jaina community and has resulted in the undertaking of translations and critical editions of the *Āgamas* and other texts, seminars and the foundation of research institutes.

⁵⁴ Cf. KS 133-134.

knowledge that in the majority of monastic traditions the number of women exceeds that of men. On account of certain social factors in the period under discussion, we know that, at any rate in the circles of kings, princes and knights, the men took several wives. When a prince embraced the ascetic life, his wives had scarcely any alternative other than to follow him upon this path. This by no means implies that, having taken upon themselves this condition, they then became mediocre ascetics; the example of Rājimati in this respect is most striking. It would likewise be an error to suppose that women only took up the ascetic life under the pressure of events or of their family and social situation, while men alone were capable of opting freely for this way of life. Tradition, which has transmitted to us a number of lives of the sādhis of Mahāvira's day, refutes this false and hasty judgement. The touching story of Candanā, and that of several others, throw light on this point. There is, no doubt, a legendary element in these lives, but it is true none the less that the monks who composed these biographies did not fabricate the lot; they based their narratives on a real truth, namely, that womankind has throughout time been receptive to spiritual values, capable of a radical form of renunciation and of pursuing an ideal with great strength of character. A number of sādhis whom we meet in the Lives, belonged to princely families and several may well have been relatives, close or distant, of Mahāvira. This, in the context of the age, is not contrary to likelihood, even if, from the historical point of view, it is impossible always to identify these princely families.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Cf. Deo, 1956, pp. 70-72.

The Story of Candanā

In the lively, prosperous market-town of Campā in the kingdom of Aṅga (in the East) there came to birth the princess Vasumati, daughter of King Dadhivāhana and Queen Dhāriṇī. Dadhivāhana was a just and kindly ruler, having the well-being of his subjects much at heart. Dhāriṇī combined exceptional strength of character with great openness of spirit. These characteristics were inherited by Vasumati from her parents; she grew up in a cultured atmosphere and in fidelity to the *dharma* and was instructed in all the arts appropriate to her condition of life. Dhāriṇī, impelled by an intuition which was later amply vindicated and by her own observation of her daughter's disposition, directed her education, not towards marriage and the easy and sumptuous life of the palace, but towards a mission to be fulfilled among the women of her day. Vasumati readily allowed herself to be oriented in this direction, eagerly absorbing its deepest levels, and told her father without hesitation, when there came up the question of marriage, that she desired to remain a virgin and to consecrate herself to the spiritual and intellectual uplift of her feminine contemporaries, suppressed as they were by the men of her day. A short while after this, she had a dream in which she saw the beautiful city of Campā put to fire and sword, but saved by herself, Vasumati. Events confirmed her dream, for soon this first carefree stage of her palace life was abruptly terminated.

King Śātānika of Kauśāmbī, capital city of a neighbouring kingdom, decided to attack and annex Campā. Kind Dadhivāhana possessed only a small army, for he lived on good terms with the other princes and loved peace. He refused to defend himself by force, because of the violence that would entail, knowing also that in any case he would be vanquished. He chose rather to hand over his kingdom to Śātānika and then withdraw into the jungle. His ministers, however, proud *kṣatriyas* as they were, disapproved of his departure and decided to fight against Śātānika, upon which a bloody battle ensued in which Campā was pillaged and annexed by enemy forces. Dhāriṇī and Vasumati were carried off by one of Śātānika's soldiers, a charioteer, and there, in the jungle, Dhāriṇī, having fortified Vasumati in unshakeable faith in the *dharma*, chose to end her life rather than yield to the advances of her abductor. Vasumati, finding herself

alone, had decided to follow her mother's example; but the charioteer, stirred inwardly and impressed by the virtuous behaviour of Dhārīṇī, became filled with confusion and remorse, asked Vasumati for pardon, adopted her as his daughter and took her to his own home. His wife, annoyed by the presence of this charming girl, first maltreated and put her to scorn, and then ordered her husband to go and sell her for a goodly sum on the market-place as a slave. The latter refused, but Vasumati begged him to comply with his wife's demand. In the market-square at Kauśāmbī so fair and noble-looking a slave had never before been seen. A rich courtesan offered to buy her, but Vasumati, knowing well the type of life that awaited her, flatly refused, whereupon the courtesan, seeing that she was bidding fair to lose a source of revenue, wanted to drag her away by force. The charioteer, greatly distressed and unable to endure this scene, drew his sword. Vasumati begged him to replace it in its scabbard, for "the dharma will take care of the dharma". Just as the courtesan was inflaming the street-idlers in her own favour, a troop of monkeys, bursting into the crowd, attacked the courtesan. For fear of the monkeys no-one dared go to her defence, but Vasumati took pity upon her and ordered the monkeys to flee, which they instantly did. The heart of the courtesan was changed and her life transformed. Calling down blessings on Vasumati's head, she departed.

Next, a wealthy merchant, Dhanāvaha, a man of integrity and devotion, deeply impressed by the virtue of Vasumati and confident that her presence in his house would be an inestimable benefit, offered the price required. Vasumati was willing to follow him, for he was a fervent śrāvaka. In Dhanāvaha's eyes Vasumati was an adopted daughter rather than a servant, and he named her Candanā, for like *candana*, sandalwood, she diffused a good fragrance and an atmosphere of peace around her. The wife of Dhanāvaha, Mūlā, was hostile towards Candanā from the moment of her arrival, though affecting at the first a certain benevolence. Then one day, harbouring unjustified suspicions towards Candanā, she devised a plan to get rid of her. Taking advantage of her husband's several days absence, she gave her servants leave, cut Candanā's hair, clothed her in rags and tatters, put hand-cuffs on her hands and chains on her feet and shut her up in a dark cellar. Then she departed to her native village, keys in hand and hoping that Candanā would succumb to this harsh treatment. Candanā remained a prisoner for three days; she went on reciting the

namaskāra-mantra and ignored her sufferings. On the fourth day, Dhanāvaha, finding the house closed, sent someone in search of the keys. When he opened the door of the dungeon and saw Candanā's state, he sobbed aloud. She forthwith consoled him. So enfeebled was she that she asked for food. Now, the only food in the house was a dish of left-over black beans, kept for the horses. Dhanāvaha gave them to her and departed at speed to find the blacksmith in order to sever the chains. Before starting to eat, the thought came to Candanā that perchance a *śramaṇa* might arrive at that hour to beg for food and she proceeded to wait. Now in those days Śramaṇa Mahāvira had been fasting already for more than five months and he had specified an *abhigraha*,⁵⁶ namely, that he would only break his fast when a virgin princess, weeping and in chains, should offer him black boiled beans. On his way through Kauśāmbi he arrived as far as the house of Dhanāvaha. He approached Candanā, but then retraced his steps, for one condition remained unfulfilled; the princess was not in tears. Candanā was so distressed at the sight of Mahāvira departing that her eyes at once filled with tears. At that same moment Mahāvira looked back and, seeing Candanā weeping held out his hands and accepted her offering.⁵⁷

The great news spread through Kauśāmbi: Śramaṇa Mahāvira has broken his fast and the one who offered him alms is Princess Vasumati of Campā who had been sold in the market as a slave! King Śātānika and Queen Mṛgāvatī, struck with amazement, arrived at Dhanāvaha's house to find Candanā and take her to the palace, but Candanā refused. She recounted the terrible consequences of the sack of Campā, for her mother, herself and so many inhabitants. With firmness and clarity and in words imbued with the quiet dignity of her noble birth and faith in the *dharma*, she laid before the king his course of duty. She gave him the just and wise counsel the situation demanded, while, as regards all the suffering she herself had endured

⁵⁶ *Abhigraha*: the acceptance of nourishment under certain conditions, a form of *pratyākhyāna*; cf. P 714

⁵⁷ This oft depicted scene is sometimes found among the frescoes inside temples.

and the injustice of which she had been the victim, she serenely observed that it was due to her past *karmas* and expressed no rancour towards any single person. Śātānika was utterly changed. He recognised his errors, humbled himself and begged for pardon. Candanā agreed to go to the palace and stay there awhile. Śātānika implored King Dadhivāhana to leave the jungle and to govern both kingdoms. Next there was talk of finding a prince worthy of the hand of Candanā, but she, firm in her resolve and convinced of her vocation, requested Mahāvira, who was now a *kevalin*, to give her *dikṣā*. He consented and Candanā became the first *sādhvi* disciple of the great *tirthaṅkara*, and the *pravartini*, the spiritual Mother, of all the other *sādhvis*.⁵⁸

Later on Queen Mṛgāvatī, now a widow, was also obliged to struggle to preserve her chastity and avoid being carried off by King Pradyota of Ujjayini. Having entrusted Kauśāmbī to her young son, she received *dikṣā* and placed herself under the direction of Candanā. Concerning Candanā and Mṛgāvatī this marvellous story is told: Mahāvira and his groups of munis and *sādhvis* were once in Kauśāmbī. Mṛgāvatī requested permission from Candanā to go to Mahāvira to have his *darśana*. The *tirthaṅkara* drew to himself not only human beings, but also gods and goddesses, among them *sūrya*, the sun, and *candra*, the moon, whose lights thus illumined the whole assembly. Thus Mṛgāvatī paid no heed to the time and, when she regained the *upāśraya* of the *sādhvis*,⁵⁹ night had already fallen. Candanā reprimanded her, for *sādhvis* are not permitted to stir abroad after nightfall.⁶⁰ Mṛgāvatī acknowledged her fault and, whereas the

⁵⁸ Apud JSBSam V, pp. 197-246 (*Āvaśyaka-niryukti* Haribhadra 520-521); TrisalPC X, 4, 516-600; 5, 161-185; cf. also PPN, pp. 246-247.

⁵⁹ *Upāśraya*, cf. P 440 ff.

⁶⁰ The chief reason for this prohibition is that they might, on account of the dark, cause harm to living beings. In the biography of Mahāsati Pannadevi, of our own time, it is recounted how one day, having been unable to reach any village before dusk, the group of *sādhvis* spent the night in the jungle; cf. P 620 ff.

other sādhis were already asleep, she stayed seated, absorbed deeply in a penitence of such intensity and sincerity that all her *karmas* that till then were beclouding right knowledge were instantly destroyed and she at once attained the state of perfect knowledge. A short while after this she perceived, due to this knowledge, for the room was dark, a black snake approaching the hand of Candanā; she at once brushed it aside, but in so doing touched lightly Candanā's hand, whereupon she awoke. When Mrgāvatī explained to her what had happened, Candanā was astonished: how had she been able to see the snake in the darkness? Mrgāvatī replied that now, thanks to her, she had reached full and comprehensive knowledge. Candanā, in her turn, recognised her error, and, repenting with deep sincerity herself attained perfect knowledge.⁶¹

It is said that numerous sādhis, guided by Candanā, went into the villages and taught to all the way of Liberation. Their influence was so beneficial that, on hearing them, certain ones took vows and became śrāvakaṣ, while others asked to receive *dikṣā*. Out of thirty-six thousand sādhis, one thousand four hundred attained perfect knowledge and Liberation.⁶² This proves that very fervent sādhis were to be found in the entourage of Mahāvira and that, if the attainment of perfect knowledge was restricted to a small number, it was by no means the question of sex that was involved but of personal and authentic spiritual worth.

Other queens too embraced the path of asceticism and among them mention may be made of the three sisters of Mrgāvatī: Śivā, Prabhāvatī, Padmāvatī. Each of these, after differing personal histories, received *dikṣā* with the permission of her husband, while he

⁶¹ Apud JSBSam V, pp. 303-312 (*Āvaśyaka niryukti* Haribhadra 1048; *Daśavaikālika-niryukti* Haribhadra I, 76); cf. also PPN, pp. 601-602; TrisalPC X, 4, 471-515; 8, 157-234.

⁶² Apud JSBSam V, pp. 246-248.

in each case remained in the world.⁶³ Sometimes, on the other hand, the queen drew the king also into the ascetic life. Kamalāvati, the wife of King Iṣukāra of Iṣukārapura in the vicinity of Kuru (in the North) won fame through the vigorous speech she addressed to her spouse. At the court of King Iṣukāra there lived a *brāhmaṇa* of the name of Bṛgu; he was a priest and had a wife called Yaśā. They were sorrowful because they had no children. One day, two gods visited them and announced that they would have two sons who would become monks during their youth. The parents made every possible endeavour to prevent their children seeing or hearing a muni, but in vain; when the moment came, they renounced the world. Bṛgu, disconsolate, decided to follow their footsteps. Yaśā did her best to detain him, but as he would not allow his mind to be changed, she in her turn determined to follow her sons. As they had no other progeny, their possessions reverted to the king. When Queen Kamalāvati heard of this, she went to find the king and explained to him that all this wealth he was amassing was merely transitory. Of what use to him would these perishable treasures be one day, when he departed this life? Of no use whatsoever, for the *dharma* alone could save him.⁶⁴ And she continued:

Just as a bird in a cage is not happy, [so I too have no joy].
Breaking loose from the bonds of family [affection], poor and
simple, without attachment, without possessions, free of hatred,
I go to follow the *dharma* of the munis...⁶⁵

⁶³ Ibid., pp. 346-349; 365-366; 366-375; (*Āvaśyaka-niryukti* Haribhadra 1284; 1311); cf. also PPN, pp. 795; 436; 420. According to tradition, they were nieces of Queen Triśalā, mother of Mahāvira, and thus his cousins.

⁶⁴ Cf. US XIV 1-40.

⁶⁵ *nāhaṃ rame pakkhiṇi paṇjare vā saṃlāṇachinā carisāmi moṇaṃ
akirṇanā ujjukaḍa nirāmisā pariggahāraṃ bhaniyattadosā*. US XIV 41;
hatred: *āraṃbha* or *himsā*.

Those who have experienced and then rejected a life of pleasure go their way, light as the wind and joyous as the birds; they go and they come, as seems to them good. . .⁶⁶

As the elephant who, having broken his fetters, sets forth towards his home [the forest], so, O great king Iṣukāra, [let us set forth towards our abode (*nirvāṇa*); this [alone is] salutary. This I learned [from the sages]!⁶⁷

Then, with clarity and conviction, she recounted to him the steps that must be followed to reach this abode: he must renounce his kingship and all pleasures, attain a perfect knowledge of the *dharma*, practise severe asceticism and, through self-mastery, win the title of "valiant one"! Thus, having renounced all things, the king, the queen, the priest, his wife and their sons were liberated.⁶⁸

It may be added that there were also noteworthy *śrāvikās*, among them *Sulasā*, wife of a charioteer of Rājagṛha in the kingdom of Magadha. Mahāvira praises her perseverance in the path leading to perfection.⁶⁹

C - After the Master's *nirvāṇa*

At this point more particularly we enter the reals of conjecture. However, the main noteworthy facts of the period following the *nirvāṇa* of Mahāvira up to the first Council of Pāṭaliputra in the third century, which with a few variants are common to both traditions,

⁶⁶ *bhoga bhoccā vamiṭṭā ya lahubhūyavihāriṇo
āmayamāpā gaccharūti diyā kāmakamā iva.* US XIV, 44.

⁶⁷ *nāgo vva bamdhaṇaṇi chettā appaṇo vasahiṇi vae
eyam pattham mahārāyam! Usuyārai tti me suyam.* US XIV, 48.

⁶⁸ Cf. US XIV, 49-53.

⁶⁹ Cf. TrisalPC X, 6, 50-93; 9, 262-311; cf. also JSBSam V, pp. 313-320; KS 136; PPN, p.838.

were relayed to following generations with a certain consistency. They correspond fairly closely to the historical possibilities of their time according to the few documents, often belonging to later periods, which have come to light up till this present. After the Council of Pāṭaliputra a certain schism was already, it seems, in existence between the groups of monks of the North and those of the South.⁷⁰

Here, drawing from the *Kalpa-sūtra* and from tradition we give an outline of the sequence of events after the *nirvāṇa* of Mahāvira till the end of the era before Christ, events which are linked to certain striking personalities among the spiritual descendants of the first disciples.

In the first stage the *gaṇadharas* feature prominently, that is, munis at the head of a *gaṇa*, a big group of ascetics. Mahāvira seems to have grouped his disciples into nine *gaṇas* under the tutelage of eleven *gaṇadharas*, who were under the direct instruction of their Master.⁷¹ It was they, probably, who gave the embryonic *saṃgha* a certain degree of organization. The *gaṇadharas* were all *kevalins*. After the death of Mahāvira two only of their number were still alive: Ārya Indrabhūti and Ārya Sudharman.⁷² The immediate disciple of Ārya Sudharman,

⁷⁰ All works dealing with the general history of Jainism give an account of this period., cf. (to give just a few references) Chakravarti, 1974, pp. 8-14; Deo, 1956, pp. 84-99; JSK I, pp. 335 ff.; Renou, 1953b, §§ 2441-2442; Schubring, 1962, §§ 22-23. Since the definitive schism and its important consequences took place, according to practically unanimous opinion, towards the beginning of the Christian era, the related facts will be introduced in the beginning of the next chapter.

⁷¹ Cf. KS 201

⁷² Cf. KS 203. According to Digambara tradition, a *kevalin* does not preach, so that all the teaching of the *gaṇadharas* would have been communicated before they attained perfect knowledge. As for the *tirthaṅkara*, his teaching was imparted by means of a *divyadhvani*, a sort of divine sound understandable to the *gaṇadharas* alone. The Śvetāmbaras, on the other hand, believe that Mahāvira spoke the local language understandable to all the living beings who listened to him; cf. P.S. Jaini, 1979, pp. 42-43.

Ārya Jambū,⁷³ was the last *kevalin*.⁷⁴ With him, an important stage in the history of the *dharma* comes to an end, for henceforward none will attain either to perfect knowledge or to Liberation. The opening words of certain *sūtras*:

"O thou long-lived one! I have heard the Lord speak thus..."⁷⁵ has been interpreted as an address of Sudharman to Jambū when about to communicate to him the words of Mahāvira. Jambū is thought to have lived for some sixty years after the *nirvāṇa* of Mahāvira.

During the second stage the spiritual descendants were enabled to continue the path thanks to the *śruta-kevalins*, those who had already reached a high degree of purification and possessed perfect knowledge of the *śruta*, that is, of the teaching of Mahāvira that had been transmitted orally; the last of this line was Ārya Bhadrabāhu.⁷⁶ From this period onwards a certain fragmentation is observable within the organization; the words *śākhā* and *kula* are used to denote, it seems, smaller groupings, that is to say, branches and families stemming from the *gaṇas*.⁷⁷

⁷³ Cf. KS 205.

⁷⁴ Cf. *Parīṣiṣṭaparva* IV; PPN, p. 270.

⁷⁵ *suyam me āsuram! teṇam bhagavayā evamakkhāyam.* . . AS I, 1,1, 1; DS IV, 1; SthS 1; US XXIX, 1.

⁷⁶ Cf. JSK IV, pp. 54-57; I, p. 335; SamSa 9-10.

⁷⁷ Cf. KS 206; 211-212; admittedly, there is uncertainty as to the meaning of these words in this context; cf. Jacobi SBE XXII, p. 288, n. 2; Deo, 1956, (general index) has given very full lists of the *gaṇas*, *śākhās* and *kulas*. As we shall see later, a small number of *gaṇas* and *śākhās* have continued to exist up till a fairly recent date. The word *gaṇa*, which also means a group, seems to have been substituted for *gaṇa* at a very ancient period of time, although local or others groups are not designated by the word *gaṇa* till towards the IXth or Xth c., cf. Deo, *ibid.*, p. 374. In our own day *gaṇa* is

Subsequently, the transmission of the teaching was incomplete. According to the most probable tradition, in the third century B.C., at the time of a great famine, Bhadrabāhu departed towards the South with his disciples. They took up residence in the region of Śravaṇa Belgola,⁷⁸ while the other munis stayed in the East.⁷⁹ A little later on, in an attempt to retrieve what remained of the teaching that had been learned by heart and transmitted by word of mouth, Ārya Sthūlabhadra, a contemporary of Bhadrabāhu, assembled the munis in a Council at Pāṭaliputra. Although it proved possible to recover the essential elements of the original teaching and of the rules for ascetics, some important portions could not be incorporated, for there were no munis present who knew them. Thus it was necessary to wait till the Council of Valabhi, in the second half of the Vth century A.D., before a consistent, definitive text could be produced of all that had been preserved after his *nirvāṇa* of the direct teaching of Mahāvira.

Thus, starting from the IIIrd century B.C., or perhaps even earlier, the Jaina *dharma*, thanks to wandering munis, started to spread into different regions and there take root. With regard to the exodus of Bhadrabāhu and his disciples in a southerly direction, there are some indications which seem to support the tradition, for example, numerous caves containing inscriptions in *brāhmi* in the mountainous region of Kumāra and Kumāri Parvata, near the east coast, in what was once the kingdom of Kalinga (Orisa), which suggest the presence of munis coming from the East, who very probably inhabited these caves before the Christian era.⁸⁰ Towards the middle of the IIrd

the only term used within any given tradition, except in the case of the Terāpanthis who call themselves a *gaṇa*.

⁷⁸ Cf. P 216 ff.

⁷⁹ According to Śvetāmbara tradition, Bhadrabāhu retired to Nepāla for a period of intense concentration; cf. *Parīṣiṣṭaparva* IX, 55-76; PPN, pp. 515-516; Sādhvi Saṁghamitrā, 1979, pp. 68-77.

⁸⁰ Deo, 1956, p. 93 puts the date of these inscriptions back to the IIIrd or IIrd c. B.C.; cf. the photos of some of these caves and sculptures in Fisher and Jain, 1977, pp. 25-26; figs. 1-8.

century B.C. King Khāravēla of this same region had an inscription engraved testifying, it seems, to his Jaina faith or at least to the interest he had in that faith.⁸¹ It is very possible that Jainism spread as far as Kalinga from the kingdom which later comprised Bangāla.⁸²

Another region which was certainly an important Jaina centre in the pre-Christian era was Avanti, where King Samprati, grandson of Aśoka, towards the end of the IIIrd century B.C.⁸³, made Ujjayini his capital. He is said to have been very well-disposed towards Jainism and to have taken the initiative of sending some munis to the South, in the direction of the regions around Āndhra and Dramila (Tamil Nāḍu).⁸⁴ Ujjayini was for a long while a centre of Jaina activity and is often mentioned in the commentaries. It was visited by numerous ācāryas and it is even reported that there were in that city five hundred *upāśrayas* for munis and sādhis.⁸⁵

Finally, and incontestably, at an epoch just prior to the Christian era, groups of munis established themselves in the North-West in the district of Mathurā, where innumerable ruins testify to a Jaina centre flourishing at the beginning of the Christian era.⁸⁶

⁸¹ This inscription starts: "*Namo arahantānam namo savasiddhānam. . .*" cf. Guérinot, 1908, p. 69; C.J. Shah, 1932, pp. 184-185, puts the reign of Khāravēla in the IIrd c. B.C. or there abouts; Basham, 1959, p.62, in the last part of the I st c. B.C.; Atlas p.20, plate III. c.1 somewhere between 20 B.C. and 5 B.C.

⁸² Cf. Majumdar, 1968, pp. 130-138.

⁸³ Cf. Deo, 1956, pp. 91-92; 98.

⁸⁴ Cf. Atlas, p.19, plate III B. 5

⁸⁵ Cf. PPN, p. 113.

⁸⁶ Cf. P 154 ff.

The *dharma* which, at its start, was addressed, in the first place to ascetics and hermits, including those of their number who were former princes, received a fresh impulse when, in the course of the centuries, it began to enjoy the patronage of certain kings and their ministers. This patronage was partly beneficial but led also to compromise, so much so that material interests sometimes corrupted the purity of the original ideal.

In this very brief record of a long period of time, the names of *sādhvis* are rarely mentioned. Once the great movement was launched, the path to follow indicated, nothing remained but to follow it and unless there was some extraordinary personality or some particularly striking events, either good or bad, there was scarcely a reason to allude to them. They lived in anonymity, while constituting in fact an essential pillar of the *saṃgha*. Up till our own day and age it is a case of gleanings a few facts and names here and there.

The story goes how Ārya Jambū, the last *kevalin*, called Jambū Svāmin, being much impressed by the words of Ārya Sudharmā, felt an attraction to the life of an ascetic and took a vow of chastity. On the urgings of his parents who had already promised him in marriage to eight maidens, he consented to the marriage, though fully determined to receive *dikṣā* after the ceremony. One happening, the arrival of burglars the very night of the wedding, served to seal his decision. Not only he, but his eight spouses, their parents, his own parents and even the robber-chief received *dikṣā*.⁸⁷

Ārya Sambhūvijaya had among his disciples Ārya Sthūlabhadra, the one who presided at the Council of Pāṭaliputra, and among his women disciples this latter's seven sisters: Yakṣā, Yakṣadattā, Bhūta, Bhūtadattā, Senā, Veṇā, Reṇā.⁸⁸ Nothing is known about them, except that they were the daughters of the minister of state of the king of

⁸⁷ Cf. *Parīṣiṣṭaparva* II; III; among other references II, 195-745; III, 1-275, where Jambū recounts one after another 19 stories in reply to the robber-chief Prabhava's objections concerning asceticism.

⁸⁸ Cf. KS 208.

Pātaliputra and that they were all endowed with prodigious memories. Their brother, by contrast, is widely known, not only as an outstanding spiritual master, but also on account of his relationship with Kośā, the courtesan. In his youth he lived with her for twelve years, then all of a sudden, after the death of his father, he changed his life and became an ascetic. One year, when his brother monks were asking their guru to allow them, as a test of endurance and self-mastery, to go and spend the rainy season one near a lion's den, another near a serpent's hole, a third on a noria (Persian wheel used for irrigation), Sthūlabhadra asked permission to sojourn in the house of Kośā. The permission was granted. At first, she tried to seduce him but, in the face of his resolute refusal, she herself was converted. On his return to the guru, Sthūlabhadra was praised for his extraordinary strength of character, for, as the story tells us, out of the four munis, it was he who won the greatest victory!⁸⁹ This story, which could equally well belong to any other monastic tradition, is characteristic of the ascetics' way of thought and of their attitude to women in general; however, in this instance, they do not believe her to be basically evil, for Kośā became a śrāvikā and even a sādhi.

After this, we have to wait until the beginning of the 1st century B.C. before finding any story of a sādhi whose influence had any great effect on the Jain community; this fact was not new in itself, for not a few sādhis were, in the course of the centuries, the victims of masculine lust, but this sādhi was of princely family and sister of the great Ācārya Kālaka. Sarasvatī, while still a very young sādhi, was praised as "having deep knowledge and purifying all, [thanks to her virtues]".⁹⁰ The king of Ujjayinī, Gardabilla, entranced by her beauty, carried her off and held her in his palace. Ācārya Kālaka, the brother

⁸⁹ Cf. *Parīṣiṣṭaparva* VIII, 1-193; PPN, pp. 350-351; Saṃghamitrā, 1979, pp. 41-46. The story of Sthūlabhadra and Kośā has been vividly retained in popular memory; a few years ago, in the Śvetāmbara Jain community of Calcutta, a play was put on, with several performances, entitled "Sthūlabhadra"; cf. *Jain Journal* X, April 1975, pp. 128-129.

⁹⁰ *sutā Sarasvatī nāmnā brahmabhūḥ viśvapāvanā... Prabhāvākacarita* IV, 8.

of Sarasvati, did not ignore this outrage but demanded that the king should set his sister free. The king refused. Whereupon, Kālaka, muni though he was, did not hesitate to attack the king with the assistance of neighbouring princes. They won the day and Sarasvati, at liberty once more, returned to the other sādhis.⁹¹ This story exemplifies a certain chivalry of spirit, which led a muni, in order to protest against this attack on modesty and to preserve the virtue and honour of a sādhi, unhesitatingly to take up arms.

⁹¹ Cf. *Niśītha-cūṛṇi* III, pp. 59-60; *Prabhāvakacarita* IV, 30-32; 35-36; 41; 43; 59; 87; 97; PPN, p. 170; Saṁghamitrā, 1979, pp. 116-124.

Chapter 3.

THE FOLLOWERS OF "THE EVER-GROWING ONE": GROWTH, DECLINE AND CONTINUITY

*Sthavira Ārya Vajra of the line of the Gautamas had three spiritual sons: Sthavira Ārya Vajrasena, Sthavira Ārya Padma and Sthavira Ārya Ratha.*¹

*... I salute with reverence Devardhi Kṣamāśramaṇa of the line of the Kāśapas, depositary of the precious jewel of understanding of the Sūtras and treasury of the virtues of patience, self-mastery and kindness.*²

After the Council of Pāṭaliputra, the disciples of Sthūlabhadra continued the line of *sthaviras* (elders), establishing new *śākhās* (branches).³ The last one to have a knowledge of the ten *Pūrvas* was Ārya Vajra, also known, so tradition tells us, as Vajra Svāmin. He lived in the first century A.D. and must have been an outstanding ācārya, if one judges by the number of references to him in the commentaries of the *Āvaśyaka*, where allusion is often made to his supernatural powers. He is also well-known for having travelled long distances and reached the South.

Ārya Vajra was born at Tumbavaṇa, in the region of Avanti after his father, Dhanagiri, had already become an ascetic. An extraordinary

¹ *therassa paṇi aṇṇa Vairassa goyamasagottassa ime tiṇṇi
therā aṇṇevasi ahāvaccā abhiṇṇāyā hoṭhā, taṇṇjahā there
aṇṇa Vairaseṇi, there aṇṇa Paume, there aṇṇa Rahe.* KS 221.

² *suttattharayaṇabharic, Khamadamamaddvaguṇehim saṃpanne
Devaḍḍhikhamāsamaṇe, kāsavagotte paṇivayāmi.* KS 223 (9)

³ Cf. KS 209-220.

story is told of his infancy. He was just six months old when Dhanagiri, passing by, presented himself at the door of his erstwhile home in order to beg for food. Sunandā, the child's mother, deposited the baby by way of an offering in the *pātra* (bowl) of Dhanagiri. The *ācārya* received the little mite with joy and, intuitively foreseeing the gifts of the future muni, named him Vajra, which means thunderbolt or diamond, and entrusted him to some *sādhvi* who in their turn put him in the care of a *śrāvikā* who was living at the *upāśraya*. When he was about three years old, Sunandā wanted to take him back, but the munis refused. She appealed to the king, who decreed that Vajra should be put in the presence of his father and his mother and should himself decide which of the two he wished to accompany. Sunandā offered him some dainty titbits, while Dhanagiri showed him the *rajoharaṇa*, the small woollen brush of the munis. Vajra, already possessing an innate knowledge concerning his own future, seized the *rajoharaṇa*. He opted for the ascetic life. Sunandā, finding herself alone, asked to receive *dikṣā*. While living in the company of the *sādhvi*, Vajra heard them reciting passages of Scripture and absorbed them very speedily. At the age of eight he received *dikṣā* and joined a group of munis.⁴

The long history of the Jaina *dharma* from the beginning of our era up to our own days has been characterised by periods of growth and periods of decline, which do not always occur alternately for the whole process depends upon differing regions, local rulers, social factors and also upon individual persons, in particular the *ācāryas*—growth and decline in faith, in fidelity to the teachings of the *tirthaṅkaras* and *sthaviras*, in the degree of fervour applied to study of the doctrine, in the performance of worship and also in the number of adherents. The *dharma* spread in almost every region.⁵ Its message was transmitted by word of mouth, by the testimony of faithful lives and by the writings. It flourished exceedingly in certain places and in certain ages, but also knew dark periods and was even threatened with extinction. Nevertheless, it survived. The fact that it did so, even if

⁴ Cf. *Parīśiṣṭaparva* XII; XIII; PPN, pp. 660-661; *Samgamitṛā*, 1979, pp. 137-153.

⁵ Cf. Deo., 1956, pp. 40-41, for a complete list of epigraphs according to the various regions.

the *saṃgha* has become a dispersed minority, is proof of the existence of an undergirding vitality, a vitality which is above all spiritual, rooted in a solid faith and maintained by the men and women ascetics as well as by fervent śrāvakas and śrāvikās.

The following long chapter, which is a short recapitulation of twenty centuries, is an attempt with the help of the available documents to trace this long and unbroken trail. The end of the first century A.D. was scarred by a major schism which contributed to a decline. We must take cognizance of the consequences of this division for the two groups concerned, consequences that were both profound and lasting and hitherto irremediable, before taking a tour of the different regions in order to find traces, not numerous perhaps but at least well-attested, of the presence of sādhis and āryikās within the *saṃgha*. Consideration of the division and its consequences are necessary as a starting-point, for it affects the doctrine and thence the faith, the Scriptures, the worship and rules of life of the ascetics.

The schism and its consequences

Even in the time of Mahāvira⁶ certain divergences and dissensions had manifested themselves, but they were not of grave importance.⁷ The origin of those which tore apart the *saṃgha* is not clearly known, but their repercussions are all too apparent. The explanations put forward by the two sides are plausible in certain respects, though one cannot be certain of their veracity.⁸ The date of the division is likewise uncertain, though both sects agree in placing it towards the end of the 1st century.⁹ There does not appear to have been a brusque

⁶ Cf. TrisalPC X, 8, 28-107.

⁷ Cf. Deo *ibid.*, pp. 78-80.

⁸ Cf. e.g. Schubring, 1962, § 26.

⁹ Jacobi SBE XXII, pp. xxxv-xxxvi, thought that it was earlier and suggested the 2nd or 3rd c. after the *nirvāṇa* of Mahāvira, i.e. the period of the Council of Pāṭaliputra.

and definitive rupture at a given moment and in a given place, some spectacular happening leading to an immediate cleavage in the heat of the quarrel; rather, it seems that after the departure of Bhadrabāhu, when years of famine had dispersed and decimated the number of munis, thus bringing about a general weakening and a diminished knowledge of the *śruti*, there came to the fore gradually divergences of opinion concerning both asceticism and the authenticity of the oral tradition.

According to certain texts, the muni Śivabhūti was the one to prescribe nudity for the ascetic state when he founded the sect of the *Botikas*. He was alive at about the end of the 1st century and was a disciple of Śramaṇa Kaṇha, a famous muni whose image is to be found among the sculpture of Mathurā.¹⁰ It is recounted that Uttarā, the sister of Śivabhūti, a sādhi, decided to follow the example of her brother and remove her clothing, but when she went out to ask for alms a courtesan covered her nakedness, fearing that people would be shocked and come to despise women. Uttarā complained to her brother, but this latter dissuaded her from adopting nudity.¹¹

The two major issues that divided the *saṃgha* so profoundly are, firstly, nudity: is it indispensable for the attainment of *mokṣa*? and secondly: the authenticity of the *Āgamas*, such as were already in existence in oral form at the time of the Council of Pāṭaliputra. This question of nudity was such a burning one that those who, for doctrinal reasons, adopted it radically and completely, called themselves *digambaras*: clothed in space, in the sky, while those who opted for the wearing of clothing, affirming that this practice is not an obstacle to final Liberation, called themselves *śvetāmbaras*: the white-clothed ones.¹² Up till our own day this division continues, each tradition having developed separately.

¹⁰ Cf. U.P. Shah, 1975, p. xv.

¹¹ Cf. *Viśeṣāvaśyaka-bhāṣya* 3032-3093; cf. also JSBSam II, pp. 399-411; PPN, pp. 119; 794.

¹² It is to be noted that certain passages of the Śvetāmbara *Āgamas* are addressed to the naked ascetic; cf. e.g. ASI, 7,7,1; US II, 34.

Arising out of this fundamental difference and a direct consequence thereof came a second difference articulated by the two sects, namely, that which concerned *śrīmukti*, final Liberation for womankind. The Digambaras maintain that, constitutionally, woman has less bodily resistance and is thus prevented from attaining a high degree of *dhyāna* (mental concentration), from fully mastering the passions and from undertaking a total self-stripping. *Dhyāna*, *saṁyama* (self-control), and *aparigraha* (non-possession), are indispensable for Liberation. Nudity is not suitable for women; she must needs clothe herself, therefore, naturally, she cannot reach *mokṣa* in the body of a woman. By all means let her lead the ascetic life, acquire merit and be reborn in the body of a man. This very important question is based on rather subtle doctrinal ideas, which are not always clearly defined, and on their implications.¹³ The Śvetāmbaras reject this view and, in their thinking, woman has exactly the same capacity for being liberated as man.¹⁴

Another point of doctrine upon which the two spiritual families differ is that concerning *kevali-bhukti*, that is to say: does the *kevalin*, the one who possesses omniscience, still take nourishment? The Digambaras reply in the negative, the śvetāmbaras in the affirmative.

As for the authenticity of the extant *Āgamas*, this is a very complex question bearing upon a period of history of which up to date we are

¹³ It takes a thorough knowledge of the Teaching to understand fully these ideas; they will be mentioned in Part II whenever they modify in some way, a particular doctrine; furthermore, they will be introduced in Part III in connection with the principal texts which support this belief. Cf. III 7 A c. P 640 ff

¹⁴ Various terms have been used, in the course of the centuries, to designate the Jain women ascetics, but in this study, after introducing the documents of Mathurā, we use the word "sādhvi" to denote generally the Śvetāmbara women ascetics, who are far more numerous, and the word "āryikā" to denote the minute number of Digambārā women ascetics. We must bear in mind, however, that the term "sādhvi" is used occasionally by the Digambaras and "āryā" by the Śvetāmbaras.

in partial ignorance.¹⁵ The word *Āgama* denotes the Scriptures which incorporate the teaching of Mahāvīrā, which was first transmitted orally in its entirety by the *gaṇadharas*, his immediate disciples, and subsequently in the course of several centuries by the *kevalins* and *śruta-kevalins*. The *Āgamas* are also called *Siddhānta* or perfect doctrine, or *Sūtras*.¹⁶ Up till around the time of the Council of Pāṭaliputra in the IIIrd century B.C., the *śruta* was, for all the members of the *saṃgha*, the depository of the received teaching in which one had complete faith and which one must follow to the letter. After this Council, divergences began to evidence themselves resulting in a rejection by the Digambaras of the authenticity and therefore also the authority of a major part of the *Āgamas*. This rejection, however - and this fact is of the utmost importance - did not usher in new doctrine. Apart from the basic question of nudity and the allied question of *strimukti*, and except for a few small and subtle points, the whole of the rest of the doctrine is completely the same.¹⁷ However, as the degree of acceptance of the *Āgamas* and their classification differ, the *Āgamas* of the two traditions must be introduced separately and in their own context.

¹⁵ Study of the texts from the purely linguistic point of view permits an approximate evaluation of their antiquity, though many of them contain additions of another epoch and do not give the impression of being the work of a single author. Furthermore, up till now, few critical editions have been published.

¹⁶ *Sūtra*: a thread, usually meaning an aphorism, or a text which is a collection entirely composed of aphorisms forming a consistent whole, in which the various ideas are interconnected. The Jaina *Sūtras* are, for the most part, composed of instructions in which rules and sometimes stories and dialogues are intermingled. The style is not, properly speaking, that of aphorisms, at least not of aphorisms arranged in logical sequence, but there is certainly a connecting thread which links together and sustains the different aspects of the doctrine.

¹⁷ This gives valid reason for the introduction to the doctrine in Part II to draw inspiration from both traditions.

Śvetāmbara Āgamas

After the Council of Pāṭaliputra, in the IVth century A.D., another Council took place at Mathurā, presided over by Ārya Skandīla. This was an attempt to gather together and collate such Āgamas as were known at that time.¹⁸ Finally, towards the middle of the Vth century, this time in Gujārāta where the *dharma* had already taken firm hold, Devardhi Kṣamāśramaṇa convoked one last Council at Valabhī. Under his direction, the munis worked at a definitive edition and classification of the Āgamas based on both oral tradition and the existing manuscripts. These are the Āgamas that we possess today. In them are contained texts, or portions thereof, arranged in a coherent manner, some of them being of great antiquity and dating back to the IVth or the beginning of the IIIrd century B.C., as well as more recent ones, inherited in part from an ancient tradition and modified in the course of the centuries.¹⁹ The Āgamas are in Ardhamāgadhī, a form of Prākṛit spoken in the North-East and one observes that the passages in verse are in a more antiquated dialect than those in prose.²⁰

The Āgamas have been the object of detailed studies with regard to their content; moreover, the classifications that are made of them present several variations as regards the order followed.²¹ This is how they are listed:

¹⁸ Cf. Deo., 1956, p.20

¹⁹ Cf. Jacobi, SBE XXII, pp. xliii-xliv; XLV, p. xl. Malvania, 1975, p. 2 puts back the date of the AS I, the most ancient of the Āgamas, to the IIIrd or IIrd c. B.C.

²⁰ Cf. Winternitz, 1977, pp. 430-431.

²¹ Cf. on the Svetāmbara and Digambara Scriptures: Deo, 1956, pp. 15-38; P.S. Jaini, 1979, pp. 47-87; Renou, 1953b, §§ 2388-2409; Schubring, 1962, ch. III; Winternitz, 1977, pp. 428-474.

- The *Pūrvas*, or ancient, early texts: fourteen original texts which had fallen into oblivion since the time of the Council of Pāṭaliputra, IIIrd century B.C.²²
- The *Aṅgas*, or portions, parts: twelve texts, out of which eleven have been preserved; the twelfth, the *Dr̥ṣṭivāda*, is not extant as such, but portions of it are incorporated into other texts.²³
- The *Aṅgabāhyas*, or texts not included in the *Aṅgas*, are divided into:
 - i) *Upāṅgas*, secondary texts: twelve in number.
 - ii) *Mūla-sūtras*, the basic *sūtras*: four texts.²⁴
 - iii) *Cheda-sūtras*, of which the title comes from *cheda*, a type of expiation: six texts.
 - iv) *Cūlikā-sūtras*, appendices: two texts.
 - v) *Prakīṃka-sūtras*, various: ten texts.²⁵

²² According to Śvetāmbara tradition Bhadrabāhu taught 10 *Pūrvas* to Sthūlabhadra, while 4 others he transmitted to him without explanation and on condition that he should not reveal them to others; cf. PPN, pp. 350-351. For an interesting study on the *Pūrvas*, cf. Ohira, 1980b, pp. 41-55.

²³ E.g. in the *Prajñāpanā-sūtra* of the Śvetāmbaras and the *Ṣaṭkhaṇḍāgama* of the Digambaras; cf. Malvania, 1969. The *Pūrvas* and *Aṅgas* were probably compiled by Ārya Sudharman, the *gaṇadhara* who was head of the ascetics after the *nirvāṇa* of Mahāvira. Tradition attributes the compilation of certain texts of the *Aṅgabāhyas* to munis of different periods; cf. Winternitz, 1977, p. 433; and the list which follows, P 145-148.

²⁴ Why are these texts called *mūlas* (derived from root, base, foundation)? Several hypotheses have been put forward; cf. JSBI, p. 143. *Mūla* means also a form of expiation, but these texts do not treat of this subject. Certain classifications give 5 texts.

²⁵ In this and the following Table we follow the classification given in JSBI I-II where each of the *Āgamas* is introduced. The Sthānakavāsīs and the Terāpanthis, who belong to two reformed sects, do not accept the authority of certain *Āgamas*; cf. P 200 ff.

- The *Kalpa-sūtra* is not as such included in the list of the *Āgamas*.²⁶ However, because it contains the life of Mahāvira and of other *tirthaṅkaras*, it is one of the most revered, read, commentated and illustrated *sūtras* of all for the *Śvetāmbaras*. We must take note here of the special structure of the *Kalpa-sūtra*. It is composed of three unconnected parts:

Jina-caritra, a detailed account of the life of Mahāvira, followed by brief descriptions of the lives of Pārśva, Ariṣṭanemi and Rṣabha, each modelled on that of Mahāvira.

Sthaviravali, a list of the Elders, from Indrabhūti to Devardhi Kṣamāśramaṇa.²⁷

Sāmācāri, rules to be observed by the ascetics during the monsoon.

This last part is also Chapter VIII of the *Daśāśrutaskandha* of the *Cheda-sūtras* and is without doubt the most ancient part of the *Kalpa-sūtra*. It seems quite probable that the two other parts were added at the time of the last Council.²⁸

In every age frequent and lengthy commentaries on the *Āgamas* have been written by learned ācāryas. Until about the VIIIth century these commentaries were composed in verse in a Prākṛit dialect called *Māhārāṣṭri*, the most ancient being called *niryuktis* and their successors *bhāṣyas*. Next come the *cūṃṣis*, in which a transition is observable, for they are written in a prose in which there is a mixture of Prākṛit and Sanskrit. Finally, the *ṭikās* and *vṛttis* are in Sanskrit. These commentaries such as the *bhāṣyas* and *cūṃṣis* often stray far from the text, but are nevertheless very interesting documents, from the literary and socio-religious points of view of the epoch when they

²⁶ In its present form, only the last part is included, as a section inserted in the *Daśāśrutaskandha*.

²⁷ Part of this list is also found in certain inscriptions at Mathurā.

²⁸ Cf. Winternitz, 1977, pp. 462-464.

were written. Among the best-known of the ācārya commentators, we may mention: Bhadrabāhu (Vth century),²⁹ Haribhadra (VIIIth century), Śīlāṅka (IXth century), Abhayadeva, Śānti and Devendra (XIth century), Hemacandra (XIIth century), Malayagiri (XIIIth century).

The present study is based on the Āgamas used by contemporary sādhi and deals with the doctrine, rules of life and daily rite.³⁰

Āngas (12)

1. Ācārāṅga (Āyārāṅga): Rules for ascetics. The ascetic, Mahāvira.
2. Sūtrakṛtāṅga (Sūyagaḍaṅga): Essential elements of the doctrine. Refutation of sundry heresies
3. Sthānāṅga (Thānāṅga): Subject matter of the doctrine classified under numbers 1-10
4. Samavāyāṅga (Samavāyaṅga): Continuation of the preceding
5. Vyākhyāprajñapti or Bhagavati (Viyāhapannatti or Bhagavai) Philosophy, epistemology, cosmology; Mahāvira, his disciples & contemporaries
6. Jñātādharma-kathāḥ (Nāyādhammakahāo)
7. Upāsakadaśāḥ (Uvāsagadasāo)
8. Antakṛddāśāḥ (Arntagaḍadasāo)
9. Anuttaraupapātikadaśāḥ (Anuttārovavāiyadasāo): 6-9: Edifying stories

²⁹ Author of several *niryuktis*, not to be confused with the *śruta-kevalin* of the same name; cf. Saṅghamitrā, 1979, pp. 220-223.

³⁰ Cf. P 265 ff; 409 ff; 699 ff;

10. *Prasnavyākaraṇa* (*Paṇhāvāgaraṇāim*) āsraṇa, sarivara³¹
11. *Vipākaśruta* (*Vivāgasuyam*): The fruits of bad and of good actions.
12. *Drṣṭivāda* (*Diṭṭhivāya*): lost

***Upāṅgas* (12)**

1. *Aupapātika* (*Uvavāiya*): Description of the city of Campā. Dialogue Mahāvira-Gautama: Liberation
2. *Rājaprasniya* (*Rāyapascṇaijja*): Life of King Pradeśin
3. *Jivābhigama* (*Jivābhigama*): On animate and inanimate beings
4. *Prajñāpanā* (*Pannavaṇā*): Philosophical subjects
5. *Sūryaprajñāpti* (*Sūriyapannatti*): Treatise on astronomy; cosmology;
6. *Jambūdvīpaprajñāpti* (*Jambuddivapannatti*): Treatise on cosmography
7. *Candīaprajñāpti* (*candrapannatti*)³²
8. *Nirayāvalikā* (*Nirayāvalio*)
9. *Kalpāvatamsikāḥ* (*Kappāvaḍamsiāo*): 8-9: Life of king Śreṇika and of his posterity
10. *Puṣpikāḥ* (*Pupphiāo*)
11. *Puṣpacūlikāḥ* (*Pupphacūliāo*): 10-11: Stories of gods & goddesses

³¹ Cf. P 301 ff.; 358.;

³² The present day text of the *Candraprajñāpti* is identical to that of the *Sūryaprajñāpti*.

12. *Vṛṣṇidaśāḥ* (*Vaṇhidasāo*): History of princes, Vṛṣṇi dynasty

***Mūla - sūtras* (4)**

1. *Uttarādhyayana* (*Uttarajjhayana*): Rules for ascetics, doctrine, stories
2. *Āvaśyaka* (*Āvassaya*): *Sūtras* of the rite and legends
3. *Daśavaikālika* (*Dasaveyāliya*): Rules of life for ascetics³³
4. *Piṇḍaniryukti* (*Piṇḍanijjutti*): Food to be accepted by ascetics

***Cheda-sūtras* (6)**

1. *Ācāradaśāḥ* or *Daśāśrutaskandha* (*Āyāradasāo* or *Dasāsuyakkhandha*)
2. *Bṛhatkalpa* (*Kappa*)
3. *Vyavahāra* (*Vavahāra*)
4. *Niśiṭha* (*Nisiha*)
5. *Mahāniśiṭha* (*Mahāniśiha*)
6. *Jitakapla* (*Jiyakappa*): 1-6: Rules for ascetics and treatise on atonement³⁴

***Cūlikā-sūtras* (2)**

1. *Nandi* (*Narṇḍi*): List of the Masters of ancient days. The 5 sorts of knowledge

³³ Certain classifications also include: *Oghaniryukti* (*Ohaniijjutti*), which is a treatise on ascetic discipline.

³⁴ For the *Cheda-sūtras*, cf. P 508 ff.

2. *Anuyogadvāra (Aṇuogaddāra)*: Jaina encyclopaedia

Prakīṛṇakas (10)

1. *Catuḥśaraṇa (Causaraṇa)*: The 4 refuges: *arhats, siddhas, sadhus, dharma*
2. *Āturapratyākhyāna (Āurapaccakkhāṇa)*: Different types of death
3. *Mahāpratyākhyāna (Mahāpaccakkhāṇa)*: Renunciation, expiations
4. *Bhaktaparijñā (Bhattapariñṇā)*: On death
5. *Tandulavaicārika (Taṃdulaveyāliya)*: Treatise on embryology
6. *Samstāraka (Samthāra)*: On the straw pallet at the end of life
7. *Gacchācāra (Gacchāyāra)*: On the conduct of ascetics in the *gacchas*
8. *Gaṇividyā (Gaṇivijjā)*: Astrology
9. *Devendrastava (Devimdatthaya)*: On the gods
10. *Maraṇasamādhi (Maraṇasamāhi)*: Preparation for total purification, great final fast³⁵

³⁵ Certain classifications give: *Candravedhyaka (Caṃdāvijjhaya)*: on virtuous conduct at the moment of death, and *Virastava (Viratthava)*: addresses of praise to Mahāvira, instead of: *Gacchācāra* and *Maraṇasamādhi*; cf. JSBI, p.345.

Digambara Āgamas

The attitude of the Digambaras towards the Āgamas differs from that of the Śvetāmbaras in this respect: the former are more conservative than the latter as regards the authenticity of the transmission of the message of Mahāvira. They do not admit that after a certain decline through which the doctrine lost some of its profundity, the Āgamas can be considered to be inspired by a direct apprehension such as appertains to omniscience. Among the Digambaras, the texts are held to embody infallible doctrine in so far as they conform to an internal order which itself corresponds to the degree of knowledge which inspired them; they are also ranked according to historical order. The texts of the Āgamas which in their eyes have absolute authority are those ones which, according to tradition, are the direct legacy of the twelfth *Āṅga* or *Dr̥ṣṭivāda*, that is to say, the *Śaṭkhaṇḍāgama* and the *Kaṣāyaprabhṛta*.

Nevertheless the works of eminent ācāryas of the first centuries - who had certainly inherited the teaching inspired by the penetrating wisdom of their predecessors - have been accepted as secondary, but no less important, authorities. In fact, it is these treatises accompanied by the lively witness of their authors which have enlightened, guided and inspired the members of the Digambara *saṃgha*; indeed, the *Śaṭkhaṇḍāgama* and the *Kaṣāyaprabhṛta*, both of which concentrate on the development of the doctrine of *karman*, were only edited, along with the commentaries upon them, recently. Thus the works of the ācāryas, most of whom belonged originally to the South, are reckoned among the Āgamas and are invested with the authority of Scripture, but to a lesser degree than are the contents of texts inherited from the *kevalins*. The treatises of the ācāryas are called: *Anuyogas*, or accounts of the lives of the *tirthaṅkaras*, and writings on cosmology, rules of conduct and doctrine.

Among the Digambaras the Āgamas are classified either as major Āgamas, written in a Prākṛit called Śauraseni:³⁶ namely, the *Śaṭkhaṇḍāgama* and the *Kaṣāyaprabhṛta*, along with important

³⁶ From Śūrasena, in the district of Mathurā; it is in fact difficult to identify these Jaina Prākṛit dialects with the dialects of the areas from which they take their names. Cf. Pischel, 1981, §§ 21-22; Woolner, 1928. ch. X.

commentaries on them such as the *Dhavalā* and the *Jayadhavalā*; and secondary *Āgamas* or *Anuyogas*, written in Śaurasēṇī and Sanskrit. These latter are classified in four groups: *Prathamānuyoga*, *Karaṇānuyoga*, *Caranānuyoga*, *Dravānuyoga*.³⁷

It is certain that, in their approach to the disciplines of asceticism and the commitment proper to ascetics, the Digambara texts, except in connection with the important divergences already mentioned, are identical in spirit to the Śvetāmbara texts. All these texts, which have solid foundation in Jaina doctrine, point the way to Realisation and teach a path that is the same in both traditions.³⁸

As well as the major doctrinal questions concerned with nudity, the ultimate Liberation of woman, the authenticity of the *Āgamas* and the question of food in regard to the omniscient ones, there are also others concerning Mahāvira³⁹ and the subject of worship. While the images of the *tirthaṅkaras* among the Digambaras symbolise a radical asceticism, their subjects being depicted naked and with lowered eyes, the Śvetāmbaras often adorn their status with diamonds. The expression of the ideal is here marred by a certain tendency to ostentation and a lack of restraint.

Since the first centuries, the two *sampradāyas* (traditions and, by an extension of usage, sects) have formed two quite distinct *saṃghas*, both of which, however, are distinctly and essentially Jaina.⁴⁰ They

³⁷ The following list is based on the very full and detailed Tables of JSK I, pp. 335-339; 348-355; and for *Ṣaṭkhaṇḍāgama*, *Dhavalā*, *Kaṣāyaprabhīta*, *Jayadhavalā*, cf. JSK IV, p. 81; II, pp. 490; 41; 323.

³⁸ Cf. Upadhye, PSa, Introd. pp. 91-93. As well as in regards to the requirement of nudity, the life of the Digambara ascetics contains certain other minor differences from that of the Śvetāmbara ascetics; cf. P 660 ff.

³⁹ Cf. P 116.

⁴⁰ The word sect denotes a group within a specified religion whose members adhere to the same doctrine. In the course of the centuries and due to the swirling eddies of history, it has acquired an oftentimes pejorative meaning: narrowness of spirit, fanaticism. In order to avoid this connotation we prefer

have developed separately, whether in different regions or in the same. Each *saṃgha* is organised in local groups and branches directed by *ācāryas*. The Digambaras have undergone an important reform movement, while the Śvetāmbaras have had three successive reformations giving birth to secondary *sampradāyas*. A general survey will take us on an extensive tour from the North to the far South, travelling through the West and Central regions. A geographical tour is the simplest and, within each region we follow as closely as possible the course of history.

Inscriptions of differing epochs scattered throughout the country, as well as references discovered in ancient manuscripts and more recent chronicles of one *sampradāya* or another, do nothing more than indicate the existence of *sādhvi* and *āryikās*. These important but terse documents are not always intelligible either linguistically, being often in corrupt Sanskrit with an admixture of Prākṛit, or in their contents on account of their extreme brevity. Nevertheless, they do testify to the respect with which the *sādhvi* and *āryikās* were regarded and are also signs of their having a particular role within the *saṃgha* and of their high capability. None of these documents, however, are comprehensible unless they are placed in the actual context to which they belong timewise. It is when we make this effort to grasp their context that these written documents of doctrine, devotion and hagiography, as well of those of the architecture, sculpture and epigraphy of a given period, become very precious and furnish a solid basis of information. The Jaina *saṃgha* has lived by means of faith, knowledge and worship and this last named performed in the temples, has been expressive of an immense devotion to the *tirthaṅkaras* and has been manifested in a tangible way through the erection of innumerable images.

The names of the *sādhvis* and *āryikās* are an important part of the legacy of the past, each name recalling a presence and being a sign of faith in the Jaina *dharma* and of fidelity to the ascetic life. Each of the *sādhvis* whose name remains engraved in stone or inscribed on parchment was in her own day the object of veneration. Moreover, these names pre-suppose many other names neither engraved nor

to use in this study, according to context, either the original *sampradāya* or the word "tradition" or "community" in the sense of spiritual family.

inscribed, but no less authentic and important, for each one of those whose names are known to us belonged to a group and was dependent upon this group, following within it her own spiritual pilgrimage, but united to many others.

Major Āgamas (in Prākṛit)

1. *Śaṭkhaṇḍāgama* by Puṣpadanta (c. 2nd half IInd c.) 1st Part; Bhūtavali (c. 2nd half IInd c.) 5 Parts, commentary by Kundakunda, Samantabhadra, Virasena: (*Dhavalā*, IXth c.) :

2. *Kaṣāyaprabhṛta* (*Kaṣāyapāhuḍa*) by Guṇadhara (c. 2nd half IInd c.) composed 150 verses other ācāryas continued, commentary (*Jayadhavalā* IXth c.) by Jinasena.

Secondary Āgamas: *Anuyoga* (in Prākṛit, Sanskrit)⁴¹

1. *Prathamānuyoga* - stories, legends

Padmapurāṇa by Raviṣeṇa (end VII c.)

Ādipurāṇa by Jinasena (IXth c.)

Uttarapurāṇa by Guṇabhadra (IX c.)

2. *Karaṇānuyoga*: Cosmology

Trilokasāra by Nemicandra (end X - XI c.)

Jambūdvīpaprajñāpti by Amitagati (2nd)(end X - XI c.)⁴²

3. *Caraṇānuyoga*: Rules of conduct for ascetics, śrāvakas, śrāvikās.

Mūlācāra by Vaṇṭakera (c. II c.)

Ratnākaraṇḍaśrāvākācāra by Samantabhadra (II - V c.?)

⁴¹ These works are numerous, especially those belonging to the *Dravānuyoga*. We give here only a selection of the most important.

⁴² According to the *gurvāvali* (the list of the line of the gurus) of the Māthurasamīgha, he was a disciple of Mādhavasena, himself a disciple of Amitagati the first (Xth c.), the author of *Yogasāra*; cf. JSK I, p. 136. Another text on the same subject was probably composed by Ācārya Saktikumāra (XIth c.); cf. JSK II, p.309.

Anagāradharmāmṛta by Paṇḍita Āśādhara⁴³ (XII c.)

Sāgāradharmāmṛta by Paṇḍita Āśādhara (XII c.)

4. *Dravyānuyoga*: Treatises on doctrine

Tattvārtha-sūtra (common to Digambaras & Śvetāmbaras)⁴⁴ by
Umāsvāti (II - IV c.?) commentary by Pūjyapāda (Devanandi) (VI c.):
Sarvārthasiddhi.

Samayasāra - by Kundakunda (II - IV c.?)

Pravacanasāra (*Pavayaṇasāra*) by Kundakunda

Niyāmasāra by Kundakunda

Aṣṭaprabhṛta (*Aṭṭapāhuḍa*)⁴⁵ by Kundakunda

Āptamīmāṃsā by Samantabhadra; commentary by Akalaṅka:
Aṣṭaśati (VIII c.)

Gommaṭasāra by Nemicandra.

⁴³ A śrāvaka, author of other treatises also.

⁴⁴ They are not in agreement as to the identity of the author; cf. P 223.

⁴⁵ As regards their character, the works of Kundakunda could equally well be classed with the *Caranānuyoga*, but such teaching, being an exposition of the doctrine, belongs in the first instance to the *Dravyānuyoga*; cf. Upadhye, PSa, Introd., pp. 23-93.

A - At the birthplace of Lord Kṛṣṇa: Mathurā

What name is there more venerated or more frequently pronounced than that of Kṛṣṇa, the Lord to be adored? Kṛṣṇa, whose story from his infancy onwards is so popular as to be universally known from North to South, Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of all, since even the Jainas have adopted him.⁴⁶ A very popular tradition names Mathurā as the place of his birth.⁴⁷ A well-known town, Mathurā was in antiquity the capital of the region of Śūrasena and was also known by the name of Uttaramathurā, Mathurā of the North, to distinguish it from Dakṣinamathurā, Mathurā of the South, which is present-day Madurai.⁴⁸ This same town, which in our day would be insignificant if it were not associated with the name of Lord Kṛṣṇa, has regained since the end of the last century a certain renown, for between the years 1871 and 1890, in the course of successive excavations, a large number of images and inscriptions belonging to the ruins of two temples and of a stūpa were dug up;⁴⁹ these proved to be discoveries of considerable importance, especially for the history of Jainism and Buddhism, of both of which Mathurā was a flourishing centre from, in all probability, the IIIrd of IIInd century B.C.⁵⁰ and particularly so

⁴⁶ Cf. P 103.

⁴⁷ Cf. *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*, Book X.

⁴⁸ Cf. PPN, pp. 589-590; 852.

⁴⁹ Cf. Smith, 1969, *Introd.*

⁵⁰ "Our analysis has further shown that the history of Jaina finds at Mathurā dates from at least the second century B.C. and does not merely begin with the Kuṣāṇa age." U.P. Shah, 1955, p. 84. It is possible that the presence of Jainism in this region goes back to a still earlier epoch. There is to be found there the ruins of a stūpa, a circular monument usually constructed with bricks, which, among the Jainas and Buddhists, is the repository of relics or is built to the memory of venerated persons; and in this stūpa one can see an inscription of the IIInd c. saying that it is 'devanirmita', that is, built by the gods (Bühler, EI, vol. II, inscr. xx); this is a way of saying that its origin is already at the time of the inscription so distant that it is unknown. U.P. Shah

during the first centuries of our era. Despite numerous studies and much research on this point, it has proved impossible so far to assign a precise date to this collection of archaeological and epigraphical finds.⁵¹

The epoch which is of special interest to us is called the Kuṣāṇa period, at the beginning of which three successive emperors, Kaṇiṣka, Huviṣka and Vāsudeva provided fresh and positive impulse in the domain of art. This period corresponds to the first three centuries of our era.⁵² Even if the abundance of sculptures testifies to a predominance of Jainism or Buddhism in the region, the Mathurā school is not specifically of one single religious tradition and Brahmanism is also represented. This epoch must have been one of great vitality and Woman, if one judges by the sculptures and

(ibid., p.64), having studied the question attentively, thinks that this *stūpa* was perhaps constructed in honour of Pārśvanātha and he concludes: "The Devanirmita Stūpa of Mathurā is thus one of the earliest known *stūpas* in India and should be assigned to the eighth century B.C., especially because the title given to it is in accord with the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa tradition."

⁵¹ "One of the great problems of Jaina art, still not satisfactorily solved, is the dating of the Mathurā sculptures, with which our serious study of the Jaina art and iconography begins," said U.P. Shah (1975, p. xiii) in his opening address to the delegates of the *All India Seminar on Jaina Art and Architecture* (Nov. 1973). Even if a fairly large number of inscriptions and images have dates inscribed on them, it is not yet precisely determined to what epoch these dates correspond.

⁵² "Mathura emerged as the new centre of art. Here, under the rule of Kushana emperors -Kanishka, Huvishka and Vasudeva - aesthetic endeavour started in full swing and became responsible for an art movement the like of which has rarely been seen elsewhere...Kushana art reflects a remarkable synthesis in the religious, cultural and aesthetic spheres. We find herein the motifs and patterns of art in a synthesis of the Iranian, Greek and Indian cultures." Agrawala, 1976, pp. 15-16; and figs. pp.45; 51; 53; cf. Fisher & Jain, 1977, figs. 9-20; U.P. Shah, 1975, paper No 6, figs. 1-4; 6-12; 15-16; 19; 21.

inscriptions, occupied therein a central place.⁵³ The ruins of Mathurā permit us to re-capture fairly well the features of the life of the Jaina *saṃgha* of that epoch. Everything conspires to the belief that it was well-organised, solidly established in the area, flourishing and active in each of its members - and that, we must note, at the beginning of our era, which leads us to suppose that it had been already in existence for a long time in these places. In the inscriptions the names of different *gaṇas*, *śākhās*, *kulas*, and *sambhogas* are to be found.⁵⁴ It is of great interest to observe that several of the names of these groups are also to be found in the *Kalpa-sūtra*.⁵⁵ This confirms that the texts of the *Āgamas* as we have them were in all probability edited at a later epoch than that of the archaeological evidence.⁵⁶ This latter is, therefore, up to date the most authentic ancient source that we possess. The fact that towards the beginning of the IVth century a Council was held there indicates that in that period of time Mathurā was still a Jaina centre.

⁵³ "Woman was at the centre of the picture and there are few creations in the whole range of Indian art which can vie in elegance, delicacy and charm with the lovely feminine figures created by the Mathura artists." Agrawala, *ibid.*, p. 16.

⁵⁴ *Sambhoga*, another term to denote a group of ascetics. The usual explanation of this word in accordance with etymology is: a group taking meals in common, 'joint taking of meals' (Dixit, 1978, p.47), whose members are bound together by a common rule of life. Other interpretations have also been given, which view '*bhoga*' as referring to a geographical unity; cf. Deo, 1956, p. 151, n. 58.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 515-519, where details of the correlation between the names of the *gaṇas*, *śākhās*, *kulas*, and *sambhogas* of Mathurā and those of the KS are given.

⁵⁶ "The Mathurā finds represent a stage anterior to the tradition recorded in the Jaina canons available to us. Such facts confirm our inference that most of the texts available today follow the edition of the Mathurā council of c. 300-313 A.D., under Ārya Skandila (i.e. they are post-Kuṣāṇa or later Kṣātrapa in age) and that the extant Niryuktis should naturally post-date this council." U.P. Shah, 1955, pp. 110-111; cf. Deo, 1956, p.40, where Kṣātrapa: circa 1st c. B.C. and Kuṣāṇa: 1st-IVth c. A.D.

All this places us in a setting where certain characteristics proper to Jainism begin to become clear, taking shape from traces engraved or sculptured in stone and having, moreover, a direct bearing on the sādhvis. We shall take for our consideration three closely-linked characteristics; the notion of *caturvidhasaṃgha*, the offering of *āyāgapāṭas* and the contents of certain inscriptions.

Caturvidhasaṃgha

This word refers to the *saṃgha* composed of munis, sādhvis, śrāvakas and śrāvikās, all being subject in differing degrees to the same spiritual demands and also being mutually interdependent.⁵⁷ From the most ancient *Āgamas*, the *Ācārāṅga-sūtra* I and the *Sūtrakṛtaṅga-sūtra* I it would seem that the only path is that of asceticism. These *Sūtras* give the ascetics rules which will help them towards a direct attainment of *mokṣa*; the *gṛhastās*, those who lead a family life and occupy themselves with worldly pursuits, are neglected.⁵⁸ There is no mention of any monastic family incorporating *gṛhastās*, at the very most these *gṛhapatis* (householders) must practise almsgiving to the *śramaṇas*, who furthermore are warned against the dangers of all kinds to which *gṛhapatis* may expose them.⁵⁹ It would appear that little by little there came about a certain drawing together, which resulted in this idea of different elements being organised into one community held together by very close ties. Certain later *Āgamas* speak of *śramaṇa-upāsakas* and *śramaṇa-upāsikās*, the lay men and women disciples of the *śramaṇas*, *śrāvakas* are also mentioned.⁶⁰ The *Upāsakadaśāḥ-sūtra* contains, as its name

⁵⁷ Cf. P 426 ff.

⁵⁸ "The canonical texts belonging to the earliest age exhibit no acquaintance with the problem of a pious householder's duties, their chief pre-occupation being what a monk has or has not to do. Even *Sūtrakṛtaṅga* II contains no systematic exposition of a pious householder's duties, but in two contexts it comes out with assertions which definitely prove that by the time of its composition the concept of a pious householder has emerged on the thought-horizon of the Jaina theoreticians." Dixit, 1978, p.34.

⁵⁹ Cf. e.g. ASI, 7, 2.

indicates, the ten (chapters) of the *upāsaka* which deal with his obligations, these being illustrated by accounts of the lives of ten successive *upāsakas*.

The inscriptions and sculptures of Mathurā indicate that by the beginning of our era, this idea was solidly established and the term *caturvarṇasaṃgha* seems to correspond to the later more widely-used term *caturvidhasaṃgha*.⁶¹ Not only do we find the word *śrāvikā* (*sāvikā*) in the inscriptions,⁶² but these *śrāvikās* are said to be disciples or pupils of an Ārya or muni, which infers a link of spiritual relatedness. Moreover, this *saṃgha* is portrayed in a concrete manner in stone, for the *dharma-cakrā* or Wheel of the Law was one of the symbols venerated by the whole community. The *dharma-cakra* is to be seen erected on a pillar with on its four sides, the figures of a muni, a sādhu, a śrāvaka and a śrāvikā in attitudes of profound reverence.⁶³

Āyāgapata

This is a medium-sized stone tablet on which are engraved various motifs or venerated objects; such a tablet was offered by a śrāvaka or śrāvikā as a sign of devotion and homage to one of the *arhats*. These tablets are of great interest, for they are a unique type of sculpture-work, proper to Mathurā, and succeed in conveying in a limited space

⁶⁰ Cf. KS 135: *samaṇa uvāsagā*; KS 136: *samaṇa uvāsiyā*; US XXI, 1-2: *sāva* for *sāvaga* (*śramaṇa*); cf. also SthS 314b; 321-322. *Upāsaka*: lit. the one who is seated near...in order to serve, honour, venerate, in this instance the *śramaṇas*; the *upāsaka* is also a *śrāvaka*, the one who listens to the teachings of the *śramaṇas*.

⁶¹ "Again, it becomes very probable that the expression *chaturvarṇa saṃgha* 'the community including four classes' which strongly reminds one of the later Śvetāmbara term *chaturvidha saṃgha*, means like the latter, the community consisting of monks, nuns, lay-brothers and lay-sisters." Bühler, vol. I, p. 380; cf. also C.J. Shah, 1932, pp. 200-201.

⁶² Cf. e.g. Lüders, EI, vol. X App. inscr. 23a.

⁶³ Cf. U.P. Shah, 1975, paper no 6, figs. 17; 18; 20; 28 and ns., pp. 70-72; the recorded dates of these sculptures correspond to the 1st and 2nd c.; cf. also U.P. Shah, 1955, p.115.

the entire outward expression of the Jaina worship of that day.⁶⁴ Indeed, by studying a few of them attentively, we observe that the arhat occupies a central place, whether in bodily form or in the form of a miniature *stūpa* or, again, of a *dharmā-cakra*, this last-named symbolising the teaching of the *tīrthaṅkaras*. The other symbols vary according to each *āyāgaṇa*; thus we find:

the *caitya-vṛkṣa*: the Tree, the locus of worship,
 the *dhvaja*: the column,
 the *triratnas*: the Three Jewels,
 the *aṣṭamaṅgalas*: the eight auspicious signs.

The *caitya-vṛkṣa* and *dhvaja* were undoubtedly inherited from a much earlier tradition. *Caitya* means a place of worship, whatever its form, nature or composition; it is not necessarily a temple. *Vṛkṣa* means tree. The *caitya-vṛkṣa* is the Tree which is at one and the same time both the place and the object of worship.⁶⁵ Each *tīrthaṅkara* has, in addition to his *lāñchana* (distinctive sign) a Tree which is special to

⁶⁴ The etymology of this word makes clear its function: *āyāga*, from *āyaj*, to offer in oblation, render homage; it is a gift offered as a sacrifice (the Brahmanic sacrifice being replaced here by worship offered to the *arhats*); *paṇa*: a cloth or a tablet upon which one may write or paint. We may note the permanent, durable character of these offerings; cf. e.g. Bühler, *El*, vol. II, inscs. v, viii, xxxii.

⁶⁵ Cf. U.P. Shah. 1955. pp.43-58 for a detailed study of *caitya*. On the subject of the *vṛkṣa*: "...it must be remembered that this tree-worship, popular in ancient times, noticed in the Vedas, formed an important part of the religious beliefs and practices of the masses with whom Buddha or the Jina was mainly concerned in his opposition to the Vedic priestly class and its rituals... The introduction of the Caitya-tree was especially due to the possible appeal it made to the masses with whom worship of the trees was so popular. The Jainas as well as the Buddhists gave a new meaning to the Tree-Worship. They were the trees under which their leaders obtained Enlightenment." Ibid., pp. 72-73. The words *caitya*, *caityālaya*, are still used nowadays among the Digambaras, *caitya* usually referring to the image or icon and *caityālaya* to the temple; cf. JSK, II, pp. 300-304.

him. It is quite probable that the *āyāgapaṭas* were revered under a *caitya-vṛkṣa*.⁶⁶

Dhvaja denotes an emblem, a flag or a column which is also termed *stambha* or *mānastambha*. Is this perhaps reminiscent of the *yūpa*, the Vedic sacrificial post, or of Agni, the *skambha* or pillar?⁶⁷ Whatever the origin of the *dhvaja*, it has been adopted by the Jainas, particularly by the Digambaras.⁶⁸

Triratnas or *ratnatrayas*, the Three Jewels: right vision, right knowledge, right conduct, which constitute the quintessence of the way of Deliverance.

Aṣṭamaṅgalas, the eight *maṅgalas*, commonly called *māṅgalikas*. The word *maṅgala* means good fortune, prosperity, that which is propitious, favourable. The *aṣṭamaṅgalas* are the eight auspicious signs. They are to be found for the first time in Jain tradition on certain *āyāgapaṭas* of the 1st century.⁶⁹ They have varied according to different epochs and, though adopted by both Digambaras and Śvetāmbaras, have, with the exception of three of them, differed in the two traditions. They are very popular and figure in sculpture, iconography and embroidery. In our own day the Mūrtipūjaka sādhis embroider the *aṣṭamaṅgalas* on a piece of red felt with thread of various colours. This embroidered piece is affixed to the wooden handle of their *rajoharaṇa*, a small broom of white wool.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Cf. U.P. Shah, 1955, p. 83.

⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 60-62, where he quotes A.K. Coomaraswamy.

⁶⁸ Ibid., pp 23; 60-61; 89-90; fig. 56: a *mānastambha* or column of praise at Devagadha.

⁶⁹ Cf. Agrawala, 1976, fig. 23, p. 51 and n. p.171; here we note also the two *dhvajās*, one topped by a *dharma-cakra* and the other by an elephant.

⁷⁰ Cf. P 420.

Here is a list of the Śvetāmbara signs:

Svastika: a cross with arms bent at a right angle,⁷¹

śrivatsa: a sign shaped like a flower and placed on the breast of statues or pictures of the *tirthaṅkaras*,⁷²

nandyāvarta: a type of diagram,⁷³

vardhamānaka: a powder-flask,

bhadrāsana: a throne, seat of glory,

kalāṣa: a jar, pitcher (full),

matsya: fish, always depicted in pairs,

darpaṇa: a mirror.⁷⁴

The Digambaras have adopted the following signs:

bhṛṅgāra: a gilded vase,

kalāṣa: a jar, pitcher (full),

darpaṇa: a mirror,

camara: a small switch to ward off flies,

⁷¹ "A mystical cross which is believed to bring good fortune to the wearer thereof and which resembles a Greek cross with ends turned in at right angles..." Bhattacharya, 1974, p. 143.

⁷² "A diagram resembling a flower of four petals arranged at right angles one to another or a curl of hair." Ibid., p. 143.

⁷³ "It is defined as a *Svastika* with nine comers..." Ibid., p. 142.

⁷⁴ *soṭṭhiya* (*sovatthiya*), *sirivaccha*, *naṇḍiyāvatta*, *vaddhamāṇaka*, *bhaddhāsaṇa*, *kalasa*, *maccha*, *dappaṇā*. *Aupapētika-sūtra* 9.

dhvaja: a banner,

vyajana: a fan,

chatra: a parasol,

supraṭiṣṭhā: seat of honour.⁷⁵

The *āyāgapāṭa* of an unknown donor (Illustr. No. 18, n.76) of which the date is the 1st century at latest, seems to have been intended for the veneration of the *aṣṭamaṅgalas*. It is recognised as being of great importance, for it contains the principal signs, that is, the objects of veneration at that time. The *arhat* is shown at the centre of a very beautiful *svastika* and the other *maṅgalas* as well as the *triratnas*, the *caitya-vṛkṣa* and the *stūpa* all figure in it.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ *bhīmṅāra*, *kalasa*, *dappaṇa*, *cāmara*, *dhaya*, *viyaṇa*, *chatta*, *supayaṭṭhā*. JSK, II, p.302 (11). We observe that only the *kalasa*, the *darpaṇa* and the *bhadrāsana* (*supraṭiṣṭhā*) are common to both traditions and that the *kalasa* and *svastika* are also *lāñchanas* of certain *tirthaṅkaras* in the two traditions; cf. *caturvīṃśatistava* P000 (Introd. I). The *kalasa* is probably the *pūrṇa-kumbha* of the Vedic tradition, symbolising a plenitude unaffected by time; cf. Atharva Veda XIX, 53. As to the origin of the majority of these *maṅgalas* "The origin of a number of symbols and especially the original conception behind them is often shrouded in mystery. The real age of the original conception behind the *svastika* or the *nandyāvarta* or the pair of fish (*mīna-yugala*) etc. is often unknown. Even the shape of the original *nandyāvarta* symbol is not certain. Again, in course of time, the shapes or forms of the symbols like *śrīvatsa* on the chest of a Jina image have also changed. Borrowings or adoptions and assimilations of symbols of rival sects and foreigners, as well as symbols from the old common stock of ancient India result in finer differences of conceptions behind the symbolisms. Still, however, literary evidences of all such sects and peoples explaining symbolism have to be looked into before properly assessing the meaning of any symbol in any sect of India." U.P. Shah, 1975, p. 49. We should bear in mind that the *maṅgala* par excellence is the *Namaskāra-mantra*.

⁷⁶ Tablet VIII. Set up by an unknown donor.

This tablet (J.250 Lucknow Museum, size 3'x 2'. 8") is possibly for the worship of the eight auspicious symbols, suggested by a big ornamental *svastika*, enclosed in a big circle, and with a small *svastika*, a *Śrīvatsa*, a pair

The Contents of Certain Inscriptions

In addition to the *āyāgapaṭas* there was found in the ruins a considerable number of images of naked *tirthaṅkaras*,⁷⁷ especially of Mahāvira, either standing in the *kāyotsarga* posture or seated in *dhyānamudrā*. Certain of these images are called *caturmukha*, four-faced, and form a four-fold statue. On the pedestal, inscriptions indicate the donors' names (both men and women), the nature of the gift (very often: *pratimā*, image), and the date of presentation. These inscriptions are written in a mixture of Prākṛit and Sanskrit in *brāhmī* characters and were probably the work of munis whose knowledge of Sanskrit was not very advanced.⁷⁸ Certain of them are of particular interest, for they relate how such or such a śrāvikā made an offering at the bidding or suggestion⁷⁹ of an Ārya (Aryya) or sādhi. These inscriptions thus reveal to us not only the existence of sādhis exercising a spiritual parentage (*śiṣīni* or *antevasīni*: disciple of a male or female Ārya), but also their function as inspirers of devotion

of fish, and a bhadrāsana (or Indrayaṣṭi?) shown in its four arms. In the centre of the big svastika, is another circle showing the Jina and the tri-ratnas. The circle round the big svastika shows male and female worshippers of the figures of a Jina, a Caitya-tree enclosed in a square railing, a stūpa and another object (badly damaged) represented on four sides in the rim of the circle. The pedestal of the pata shows in the centre a highly defaced inscription and partly defaced eight auspicious symbols, out of which the water-jar, the lotus, the tri-ratna, the śrīvatsa, and the svastika can be recognised easily." U.P. Shah, 1955, pp.81-82. We may take note of the fact that, out of the 9 *āyāgapaṭas* discovered in the ruins of Mathurā and described in the above mentioned work, 5 of them were offered by śrāvikās, which indicates that they occupied an important place in the Jaina society of that epoch. One notices also the variants between the *aṣṭamaṅgalas* which appear in this connection and those which are mentioned in Scripture in a later epoch.

⁷⁷ "All the figures of the Tirthaṅkaras are nude, showing that the difference between images of the Digambaras (sky-clad, worshipping nude images) and the Śvetāmbaras (white-robed, adoring Tirthaṅkaras wearing a lower garment) was posterior to the Kuṣāṇa period." U.P. Shah, 1955, p. 11.

⁷⁸ Cf. C.J. Shah, 1932, pp. 202-203.

⁷⁹ *Nirvartana*: cf. Bühler, EI, vol. I, p. 380.

within the Jaina community at large. It is clear that they fostered faith in the *dharma* and provided an unflagging encouragement and stimulus. These offerings were part of the worship paid to the *arhats*; now, the *arhats* are not dispensers of favours, so this worship constituted, rather, an act of homage to their spiritual perfection, a concrete demonstration of faith in their teaching. These offerings were all meritorious religious acts, they helped in the maintenance of spiritual health in the community, and in keeping up its fervour. We note that certain images were offered "for the well-being of all living beings",⁸⁰ which shows that the essential of the doctrine had profoundly affected the members of the *saṃgha*.

These inscriptions of the Kuṣāṇa epoch are dated from years 4 to 98, which would correspon approximately to years 82 to 176 of our era.⁸¹ Here are the names of the Āryas or āryikās mentioned, each of which is a sign of a life spent in the resolute practice of asceticism: Ārya Jayā (Aryya Jayā); Devā, Ārya Vasulā (Aryya Vasulā) and Ārya Saṃgamikā (Aryya Saṃgamikā); Kumāramitrā (Kumāramitā); Dhanyāśrī (D.iañāśrī); Akakā, Nandā and Balavarmā; Ārya Jinadāsi (Aryya Jinadāsi); Arhaddāsi (Arhadāsi) and Grahavilā; Dattā (Datā) and Ārya Jivā (Ayikā Jivā); Ārya Nāgadattā (Aryya Nāgadattā); Sādītā; Ārya Śyāmā (Aryya Śamā).⁸² In certain inscriptions the title Aryya is followed by a name which is partially effaced;⁸³ elsewhere the name is completely effaced but the word *śiśini* remains.⁸⁴ Despite

⁸⁰ "*sarvasatvan hitasukhaya*": Bühler, EI, vol. II, insc. xxxvii; cf. also insc. xiii; xxxiv.

⁸¹ Despite the uncertainty which exists concerning the exact date of the inscriptions, it seems fairly sure that they belong to the 1st-IInd c., cf. C.J. Shah, 1932, p. 199.

⁸² Cf. Lüders, EI, vol. X, App. insc. 21; 23a; 24 (70); 39; 45a; 48; 50; 59a; 67; 86; 117; 121. One notices that certain names are preceded by the title Ārya and others not; however, these latter have been able to be identified by means of the word *śiśini* which accompanies them.

⁸³ Ibid. insc. 75; 119.

⁸⁴ Ibid. insc. 32; 86.

the brevity of the texts one finds some details here and there, for example, that Ārya Jayā was the sister of a *vācaka*, or preacher, called Ārya Saṁdhika; and that the son of Ārya Kumāramitrā was a *gaṇḍika* or dealer in perfumes, which permits us to suppose that she was a widow or that she had chosen the way of asceticism with the permission of her husband.⁸⁵

To give an idea of these inscriptions, here are three of them:

- on the base of an image:

In the year 4, during the 1st month of summer, the 20th day thereof, the convert (*saḍhachari*)⁸⁶ of Sihamitra (*Sirḥamitra*), the disciple (*śiśini*) of Sathisiḥā (*Śaṣṭisimhā*), the disciple (*śiśini*) of Puṣyamitra...⁸⁷ of Vārana gaṇa, of Ārya Hāṭṭakiya (*Ārya Hāṭṭakiya*) kula, of Vajaṇagari (*Vārjanagari*) śākhā...the gift...together with Grahacheta [and] Grahadāsa.

- on the pedestal of an image:

In the year 15, the third month of summer, the first day: the gift of a four-faced image of Bhagavat by Kumāramitā (*Kumāramitrā*), first wife of *śreṣṭhin* Veṇi, at the request of Aryya Vasulā (*Ārya Vasulā*) the disciple (*śiśini*) of Aryya Saṅgamikā (*Ārya Saṅgamikā*) the disciple (*śiśini*) of Aryya Jayabhūti (*Ārya Jayabhūti*) of Mehika kula.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ Ibid. inscrs. 21; 39; cf. Bühler, EI, vol. I, p. 380.

⁸⁶ Bühler, EI, vol. II, inscr. xi (n.35) "female convert, *saḍhachari* or *śrāddhachari*, the translation is merely tentative."

⁸⁷ Ibid., (n. 33) "at the end of the line the name of the nun has been lost, probably also the word *nirvartanā*." N.B. the organisation into *gaṇas*, *kulas* and *śākhās*.

⁸⁸ Lüders, EI, vol. X, App. inscr. 24. *Śreṣṭhin* denotes an artisan, the president of a corporation; Lüders translates it by "banker"; cf. Thapar, 1981, p.112 on the same subject. We notice the relationship of *śrāvikā* to *Āryikā*, of the disciples (*Āryikās*) among themselves and with an *Ārya*. The name Kumāramitrā is the same as that of Ārya Kumāramitrā of inscr. 39, the

- on the base of an image:

In the year 50 (?), the 2nd month of winter, the 1st day: dedication of an image of Vadha [māna] (Vardhamāna) by Vijayaśiri (Vijayaśrī), daughter of Bubu, first wife of Rajyvasu (Rājyvasu), mother of Devila, [and] paternal grandmother of Viṣṇubhava, who fasted for one month [and] is fulfilling the request (*paṇatihara*) of A[yya]...ghakaraba [?], the disciple (*śiśini*) who is fulfilling the request (*paṇatidhārīta*) of Aryya Jinadasi (Ārya Jinadāsi), the disciple (*śiśini*) of Samadi . . . va Dinara . . .⁸⁹

Certain inscriptions give us information on the social milieu of the śrāvikās; mention is made of the wives of a caravan-leader, a dyer,⁹⁰ and a dancer, of the daughter of a goldsmith,⁹¹ and of the mother and daughter-in-law of a perfumer,⁹² just to give a few examples. It is from this middle-class milieu, of businessmen and artisans, that the Āryas, āryikās or sādhis also came.⁹³

mother of the dealer in perfumes. Both refer perhaps to the same person, and it is possible that between the time of the 1st inscr. dated the year 15 and that of the 2nd dated the year 35 śrāvikā Kumāramitrā became a widow or abandoned the world and joined the sādhis.

⁸⁹ Ibid., inscr. 50 (Vol. II inscr. xxxvi). *Paṇatihara* (Sanskrit: *prajñaptidharā*), *paṇatidhārīta* (Sanskrit: *dhāritaprajñapti*): the person who fulfills a request, carries out an instruction; cf. Bühler, EI, vol. II, p.209 (ns.14; 13). The names at the end of the inscr. are partially effaced.

⁹⁰ Cf. Ibid., inscs. 30; 32.

⁹¹ Cf. Bühler, EI, vol. II, inscs. v; xxiii.

⁹² Ibid., inscr. xvi; Lüders, ibid., inscr. 76.

⁹³ The title Ārya (Aryya) is used for both men and women ascetics. Further investigation into the names of the *gaṇas*, *kulas*, and *śākhās* might help us to discover whether in this epoch the definitive schism between Digambaras and Śvetāmbaras was already in existence and whether the ascetics whose names are mentioned belonged to the one tradition or the other.

This general survey of the different discoveries of the ruins of Mathurā has enable us to reconstruct in part the religious and social context of the ascetics at the beginning of our era.

B - Who are the Bhaṭṭārakas?

Before proceeding to an overall review of sundry documents dealing with the sādhis and āryikās, which have found their way into various regions in the course of the centuries, we must mention here certain particular features of one of the Digambara sources: the *bhaṭṭāraka-sampradāya*. *Bhaṭṭāraka* (from *bhaṭṭa*: lord) is a title of respect used for the gods, venerable personages, masters, learned persons and certain Shivaite monks. In the Jaina tradition, the arhats, siddhas and śramanas are called *bhaṭṭārakas*,⁹⁴ and this title was often accorded to ācāryas also. Moreover, both among the Digambaras and also the Śvetāmbaras one line of religious leaders is called by this name.⁹⁵

Origin and characteristics

Although the origin of the office of *Bhaṭṭāraka* seems to date back to antiquity, no specific mention is to be found of them until the IXth century, when reference is made to their *piṭhas* or *paṭṭas* (seats or headquarters) and it is only from the XIIIth century onwards that one can trace a line of *Bhaṭṭārakas* continuously to our own day.⁹⁶ It appears that, progressively, for reasons connected with social order or dictated by local circumstances, certain ascetics were led to modify their manner of life and thus constitute a group distinct from the main body of ascetics. A *Bhaṭṭāraka* has a role within the Jaina community which is at one and the same time religious, cultural, administrative and social. He remains celibate, possesses land, lives in a *maṭha*, a type of monastery, which has its own private library; he wears a

⁹⁴ Cf. JSK III, p. 216.

⁹⁵ Here we shall confine ourselves to the Digambara branch.

⁹⁶ Cf. BhattSamp, Prastāvanā, pp. 2-4.

garment of pale saffron and wooden sandals; he travels like anyone else and can have students or disciples. In our own day there are only five Bhaṭṭārakas, who reside in certain localities of Mahārāṣṭra and Karmāṭakā. In past centuries this was a flourishing institution which, if we judge by ancient manuscripts and the epigraphy, had a profound influence not only on Jaina society, but on society in general. Their activities extended to literature, science, medicine, the arts, architecture, the organisation of important pilgrimages and to politics. They were also renowned for their possession of miraculous powers, thanks to certain *mantras*. By collecting and preserving in their headquarters a large number of manuscripts, they rendered an immense service to posterity. To sum up, their life was that of noble lords of religion and culture.⁹⁷ Nevertheless, although their manner of life differs from that of the *śramaṇas*, they adhere to the same teaching. They stipulate nudity as an indispensable condition for Liberation and have the same attitude towards womankind.

The *bhaṭṭāraka-sampradāya* is introduced here, for in the not inconsiderable number of literary and archaeological documents this group has left us, mention is made here and there of āryikās being their disciples. References to these documents are made only in regard to the following regions: Panjāba, Rājasthāna, Madhya Pradeśa, Gujarāta, Mahārāṣṭra.⁹⁸

Āryikās disciples of the Bhaṭṭārakas

Certain ancient texts mention this spiritual relationship. However, in our own day, the Bhaṭṭārakas do not have disciples among the munis and āryikās. In fact, the āryikās, having received *dikṣā*, have taken upon themselves the *mahāvratas* or great vows, and are considered to occupy in the *saṃghā* a loftier position than that of the Bhaṭṭārakas, so that an āryikā does not, for example, make the

⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 7-22.

⁹⁸ The documents concerning another part of Mahārāṣṭra and Karmāṭakā have not yet been published.

vandana (ritual salutation) to a Bhaṭṭāraka.⁹⁹ If, however, one goes back several centuries in history, one will find that, in fact and for the most part, the Bhaṭṭārakas appear to have gradually supplanted the ācāryas and thus were to be found fulfilling the functions of these latter.¹⁰⁰

Organisation

The Bhaṭṭārakas were divided into three principal groups, which were subdivided into sākhās, regional branches, each with its own headquarters.

- The Senagaṇa: with headquarters in Mahārāṣṭra.
- The Balātkāragāṇa: with headquarters in Rājasthāna, Madhya Pradesh, Mahārāṣṭra, Gujarāta.
- The Kāṣṭhāsāṃgha: with headquarters in Panjāba, Madhya Pradesh, Mahārāṣṭra.¹⁰¹

These few facts about the Bhaṭṭārakas shed some light for us on the circumstances in which the āryikās mentioned in the religious works or inscriptions lived their lives. It must be added that the documents concerning the āryikā disciples of the Bhaṭṭārakas are not treated

⁹⁹ The Bhaṭṭāraka of Mūdabidure, Śrī Charukirti P. Svāmi told me that he had never considered the question. Āryikā Jñānamati, whom I consulted on this subject, was at first very definite: "An āryikā can not be given *dikṣā* by a Bhaṭṭāraka". Then, after studying the texts, she realised that this had existed in the past.

¹⁰⁰ We cannot treat fully here this very complicated subject. It is sufficient to quote the reply of Professor Joharapurkar to my question in this regard: "This notion of a Muni's and Āryikā's superiority to a Bhaṭṭāraka is a modern one which arose after the revival of Digambara Muni Saṃgha. Bhaṭṭārakas of 13th century and onward were successors of ancient Ācāryas and claimed the same authority. That is why Āryikās could be their disciples. Bhaṭṭārakas claimed that they were observing all the five mahāvratas. See *Anekāla*, December 64 (vol. XVII, p. 231.)."

¹⁰¹ Cf. BhaṭṭSamp, *Prastāvanā*, pp. 6-7. The Senagaṇa and the Balātkāragāṇa were offshoots of the Mūlasaṃgha of the South. The Kāṣṭhāsāṃgha was noted for its heterodox views which had little connection with the true essence of the doctrine; cf. JSK I, pp. 341-342.

completely separately in this study but are included with the Śvetāmbara documents in accordance with a particular geographical order.¹⁰²

The interest of these documents does not chiefly lie in their belonging to such or such a tradition, but in the names of the āryikās and sādhis, which constitute signs of their presence in a particular region or period, and also in the actual nature of the documents. Before undertaking this long tour we must take note once again of that which is a characteristic of all the Jaina women ascetics of all epochs: they are *anagāri*, without a dwelling. The inscriptions and passages of manuscripts cited belong to a specific place; the fact that such or such an āryikā or sādhi is mentioned in no way signifies that she was native of the place in question, but simply that she had sojourned there, passed through there. However, in past centuries the āryikās and sādhis scarcely went beyond the boundaries of the province of their birth and so, as a general rule, we may take it that they were, if

¹⁰² Even though one or other tradition may have predominated in certain regions, a given locality often had among the Jaina community members of each of the sects. The documents of the Bhāṭṭarakas are scattered here and there, not only because of the existence of different branches, but because they themselves moved or changed their headquarters. This makes it difficult to classify according to type references that are already restricted in both number and content. The grouping which follows is generally based on the region which corresponds to the headquarters of a *gaṇa*, a *śākhā*, etc.; however, certain references are introduced within the area of the place mentioned in the particular text and not within the area of the headquarters of one or other *gaṇa*. Furthermore, the āryikās did not necessarily belong to the place indicated in a reference; however, we may certainly consider that they all belonged to the West or the Centre, i.e. the South of Rājasthāna, Gujārāṭa, Madhya Pradesh or Mahārāṣṭra. The texts, which are often in debased and archaic Sanskrit, often cite series of names, lines of Bhāṭṭarakas and of their disciples. Being myself neither an epigraphist nor a historian, I give here only those references concerning āryikās which are based on the original and on its shortened Hindi version. Professor Johrapurkar gave me the necessary details concerning the whereabouts of certain places and the content of certain texts.

not natives of the place, at least of the region to which the manuscripts or inscriptions belong.¹⁰³

A return to the original ideal

The manner of life of the Bhaṭṭarakas, despite certain positive features on the institutional level, represented a real decadence as regards the spiritual message itself and the way in which it was put into practice. It is said that in the XVIth century, in the regions of the North and Centre, the munis and their rule of life were no longer known, except by name. They belonged to a far distant past.¹⁰⁴ The Bhaṭṭarakas put the emphasis on a showy and costly performance of ritual worship, to the detriment of spiritual values. This state of affairs made a profound impression on Banārasidāsa, a famous poet and śrāvaka of Āgarā, when, after a long and painful inner pilgrimage, he discovered that the essential resides first of all in knowledge and the realisation of the *ātman*. Through the testimony he bore, by words and in writing, he was the originator of a genuine renewal, which had its beginning in the early years of the XVIIth century. A zealous and captivating personality, as well as being highly gifted and influential, Banārasidāsa set in motion a movement of resistance to the grip of the Bhaṭṭarakas on the *saṃgha*. He opposed all the errors that had conduced to decadence and aimed at a return to the original ideal. He studied and meditated with fervour upon the works of Ācārya

¹⁰³ It must also be added that the drawing of state-boundaries on a linguistic basis is of very recent date. Previously the country was divided into bigger or smaller kingdoms, whose boundaries changed along with their sovereigns in the wake of local battles. It is fairly easy, either by taking the names of the regions of antiquity or, more so, the name of towns still existing in our own days, to locate these documents in contemporary states. Furthermore, the various documents referring to the Bhaṭṭarakas and others also to which we have recourse do not always give the exact name of a place, but we can, in the case of the Bhaṭṭarakas, assign them to a place fairly accurately from the name of their *śākhā*. As for their dates, they do not always correspond to the time in which a particular sādhi or āryikā lived, but sometimes to the time in which the document in which she is mentioned was written. It is not possible, therefore, to follow a systematic order, for each group of texts must be considered in the context to which it belongs.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. R.K. Jain, 1966, p.43.

Kundakunda. His powerful inspiration led him to compose a poem based on the *Samayasāra*, the Jewel of the Great Sage. He aroused a veritable re-awakening in the Jaina community. Thanks to him, the essence of the ideal and doctrine were once more known and put into practice,¹⁰⁵ and after him the movement pursued its course.

During this same period and in reaction against the type of worship promoted by the Bhaṭṭārakas, some Digambara śrāvakas formed a sub-sect, the Terāhapanthis, whose worship was of a very sober character, employing only non-living substances: *caṇḍana*, sandalwood paste and *akṣatas*, grains of rice.¹⁰⁶ We know, moreover, that prior to this, towards the end of the XVth century, in Madhya Pradeśa, Svāmi Tārāṇa had set in motion a reform in the same direction, but of a still more radical sort: abandonment of every type of worship addressed to images; veneration to be accorded to the books enshrining the doctrine. This reform was confined to its region of origin.¹⁰⁷

The āryikās, having never constituted an autonomous group,¹⁰⁸ were obliged to follow the religious leaders of their epoch and region. Given their manner of life and their practice of austerity, which was less excessive than that of the munis, they were probably basically unaffected by matters concerning rules of conduct. The fact of having lived under obedience to a Bhaṭṭāraka does not signify that they were

¹⁰⁵ For the eventful life of Banārasidāsa, his remarkable personality and his works, cf. *ibid.*, the whole study.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 43; 107. In our own days the majority of the Digambaras called Bisapanthis perform the elaborate type of worship promoted by the Bhaṭṭārakas, with flowers, fruit, milk, etc. The Terāhapanthis are still in existence and are also called Terāpanthis (but are not to be confused with the Śvetāmbara *gana* of the same name).

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p.44; its members still number some several thousand. K.C. Jain, 1963, p. 92 says that the Tārāṇapanthis venerate the 14 texts written by their founder.

¹⁰⁸ We shall see, however, that in Tamil Nāḍu certain of them enjoyed a greater degree of independence owing to their function as teachers; cf. P.238 ff.

less fervent than the āryikās of times past or than those of our own day. The Bhaṭṭāraḥas, even if they let lapse the previous rigorous, radical and uncompromising asceticism, often remained highly cultured religious guides. The āryikās benefitted from this atmosphere, which was conducive to intellectual pursuits, and they took part in the cultural achievements of their own era and milieu.

C - From the Foothills of the Himālayas to Holy Mount Ābū

Subsequent to the inscriptions of Mathurā in the first centuries of our era, we have no exact information, at least as far as I know, concerning the presence of *sādhvis* in the North until the Xth century. Starting from the foothills of the Himālayas and passing through Panjāba and Rājasthāna, one arrives at holy Mount Ābū on the borders of Rājasthāna and Gujarāta. The very brief references to *sādhvis* in these regions are of the period dating from the Xth to the XVIIIth centuries; they are to be found in inscriptions and, especially, in colophons and passages of ancient manuscripts. The first three groups of these documents belong to the Digambaras, the following three to the Śvetāmbaras.

a) In Alamodā District

At Dvārahaṭa, close to a *caraṇapāḍukā* (an impression in the rock of feet symbolising a venerated person) there is an inscription dated *saṃvat* 1044 (988) mentioning Arjikā Lalita Śrī, disciple of Arjikā Deva Śrī.¹⁰⁹ This *caraṇapāḍukā* is a clear sign that Arjikā Lalita Śrī was held in high esteem in the region and that very probably her *mahāprasthāna* (Great Departure) had occurred a short while before the offering of the *caraṇapāḍukā* by some śrāvakas.

b) The Māthuragaccha

This *gaccha* was part of the Kāṣṭhāsraṃgha. On the eighth day of the bright fortnight of *phālguna* (February-March) of *saṃvat* 1688 (1632) in the town of Sapidon in Panjāba, Bhaṭṭāraka Sahastrakīrti caused a *pāḍukā* to be made for his disciple Arjikā Śrī Pratāpa Śrī.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Cf. JSilalekhaSam, vol. 5, inscr. 19, p. 22. *Samvat* or *vikrama samvat*: the era of King Vikramāditya which began in the year 58 B.C. To reckon the corresponding year of our era, one subtracts 57 or 56 years. Arjikā or Ārjikā is another form for Āryikā.

¹¹⁰ Cf. BhattSamp, No. 610, pp. 234-244. The bright fortnight: *sudi* or *śukla-pakṣa*: the fifteen days (i.e. circa 2 weeks or 1 fortnight) during which the moon is waxing; *pāḍukā* or *caraṇapāḍukā*.

c) The Dilli-Jayapuraśākhā

We come now to Rājasthāna, a province in the North-West, where Jainism was already in existence from about the VIIth century. It found there a firm footing in the VIIIth and IXth centuries, several factors conducing in its favour, one of which was the remarkable personality of Muni Haribhadra Sūri. On this largely arid and desert soil and among this proud people, much given to poetry and *bhakti*, as well as being very practical, energetic, stable and accustomed to hard living conditions in a climate which ranges from scorching heat in summer to icy cold in winter, the Jaina *dharma* put down roots which have resisted all political, social or religious storms, and it remains very much alive up to this present day. The state of Rājasthāna, which nowadays is of vast extent, was previously controlled by several small kingdoms. As the ascetics had no fixed abode, it is often difficult in the regions of the North-West and West to know whether the names encountered in the documents belonged to Rājasthāna or Gujarāta. It is known that there existed, and still exists today, a close bond between these two provinces in which exchanges of all sorts have always been frequent. Similarly, if the texts which follow belong for the most part to Rājasthāna, they have often a close link with Gujarāta; for this reason we must approach the two as one whole, even if certain geographical and cultural distinctions need to be borne in mind.

-The Dilli-Jayapura śākhā belonged to the Balātkāraṇa. We are told in a written document in Bijauliyā (Rājasthāna) that on the third day of the bright fortnight of *phālguna* in *saṃvat* 1483 (1427), a *niṣidikā* was erected to Āryā Bāi Āgama Śrī; the names are given of the Āryās in succession from guruṇi to disciple: Āryā Bāi Loka Śrī, Vinaya Śrī, Bāi Cānitra Śrī and Bāi Āgama Śrī. These Āryās belonged to the spiritual family of Bhaṭṭāraka Śubhacandra.¹¹¹ A *niṣidikā* (*niṣidhikā*) or a *saṃādhi*, a small sanctuary built in honour of a deceased person, often a spiritual master, to venerate his memory and, sometimes, to house his ashes. Āryā Āgama Śrī must have been an outstanding āryikā that a *niṣidikā* should have been dedicated in her name.

¹¹¹ Cf. BhautSamp, No. 244, pp. 97; 108.

In the documents of another *śākhā* of the same *gaṇa*, the Nāgaurāśākhā, one finds that: in 1579 a copy of the *Dhanyakumāracaritra* was presented to Āryikā Karmai by Lūṇa, a disciple of Bhaṭṭāraka Lakṣmicandra.¹¹²

d) The Jesalamera manuscripts

In the very heart of the great desert, at Jesalamera, a small fortress-town, are to be found eight Jaina temples nestling among buildings containing exquisite sculptures of an extraordinary artistry. These temples and the *upāśrayas* possessed certain *grantha-bhaṇḍāras*, also sometimes termed *jñāna-bhaṇḍāras* or *śāstra-bhaṇḍāras*, that is, collections of manuscripts. Jesalmera is certainly not the only place famous for its Jaina *grantha-bhaṇḍāras*, for there are a number of others in Rājasthāna, Gujārāta, Mahārāṣṭra and in the South, but those of Jesalamera possess manuscripts of unparalleled quality and antiquity.¹¹³ The most important *bhaṇḍāra* is the one which was established by the scholar Muni Jinabhadra Sūri in the XVth century and which bears his name.¹¹⁴ The collection preserved in it is the oldest one known among the Jains up to date and contains manuscripts of works dating back to the XIth and XIIth centuries; quite a number are written on palm-leaves and several adhere to different Indian philosophical systems.

¹¹² Cf. K.C. Jain, 1963, p. 85. The *Dhanyakumāracaritra* is one of the works composed by the erudite Bhaṭṭāraka Sakalakīrti of the XVth c.

¹¹³ The chief *bhaṇḍāras* of the Śvetāmbaras are in Rājasthāna and Gujārāta, those of the Digambaras in Rājasthāna, Mahārāṣṭra and Karmāṭaka.

¹¹⁴ At the present time all the manuscripts are held in the *bhaṇḍāra* of the temple of Pārśvanātha; they belong to the Śvetāmbaras. The *bhaṇḍāra* is housed in a basement which one enters through a small low door. The manuscripts are preserved in long aluminium boxes within steel cupboards. The 1st catalogue, giving an incomplete list of the collection, was published at the beginning of this century. During the last years, Muni Puṇyavijaya has prepared and had printed the various collections of Jesalamera manuscripts. This new catalogue contains ref. to 2697 texts, 438 of which are on palm-leaves; cf. Jesalmer Coll. NC, *Prastāvanā*, pp. 28-30. All the ref. given in this section are taken from this new catalogue.

Jinabhadra Sūri belonged to the Kharataragaccha, which came into being at the beginning of the XIth century at the time of the reformer Jineśvara Sūri.¹¹⁵ Later, at the beginning of the XIIIth century, in Rājasthāna, Jagatcandra Sūri founded another *gaccha*, the Tapāgaccha.¹¹⁶ Before going through the references to certain sādhis that are found in the manuscripts of Jesalamera, between the XIIth and XIIIth centuries, special mention should be made of Jinadatta Sūri, a very fervent muni of the end of the XIIth and beginning of the XIIIth centuries who, so they say, gave *dikṣā* to seven hundred sādhis!¹¹⁷

In the collection of manuscripts one notes the names of fifteen sādhis, among whom two are the authors of texts.¹¹⁸ These names appear in certain texts, often very short ones, which for the most part form the conclusion of a work. A brief analysis of these references reveal that:

- They appear in certain transcribed manuscripts. The date of the transcription is not always given and still more rarely that of the

¹¹⁵ Sūri: a title commonly bestowed on a learned muni. Often a Sūri was also an Ācārya. The *caityavāsis* or less strict munis, had abandoned the itinerant life and the hardships of asceticism and had installed themselves in the subsidiary buildings of the *caityas* (temples), where they led a sedentary life similar in certain respects to that of the Bhāṭṭārakas. Starting from Gujārāta, the Kharataragaccha established itself firmly in Rājasthāna, Madhya Pradesh, Sindha and round about Dilli. Cf. Guérinot, 1908, p.244, inscr. 684 for a *paṭṭāvali* (*paṭṭa*: seat, seat of honour of the Ācārya; *āvali*: line, rank; we must understand here: *paṭṭadhara*: he who occupies the seat), a list of the line of Ācāryas of the Kharataragaccha from its foundation until 1594-95 at Pāṭaṇa (Gujārāta); cf. also K.C. Jain, 1963, pp. 58; 204; Nāhaṭā, 1971, pp. 1-4. The original name of this *gaccha* was: *vidhimārga*, though later on it was called Kharataragaccha from *kharatara*: extremely hard, sharp, penetrating - characteristics shown by Jineśvara Sūri in a famous speech in the court of King Durlabharāja at Pāṭaṇa, where in 1017 he won the day over the *caityavāsis*.

¹¹⁶ Tapā, on account of this muni's austerity; cf. K.C. Jain, 1963, pp. 58-59.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 205-206.

¹¹⁸ They are introduced in the following sub-section along with other sādhi authors.

original composition which is sometimes earlier by two or three centuries. Certain of these texts are transcriptions of *Āgamas* and are accompanied by a commentary.

- When the names of one or more well-known *Sūris* are quoted in connection with the name of the *sādhvī* in question, one manages to discover in what period she lived. In other cases one can assume that she was contemporaneous with the transcription.
- A great number of these *sādhvīs* probably belonged to the Kharataragaccha, whether in Rājasthāna or in places very close to Gujarāta.
- Taking into consideration the nature of these texts, we may safely come to the conclusion that the *sādhvīs* possessed a solid intellectual grounding, both in the doctrine and also in *Prākṛit* and *Sanskṛit*. They must indeed have been decidedly exceptional.
- The majority of them have a title which indicates their function within their group. Six were *gaṇinīs*, at the head of a *gaṇa*; two were *pravartinīs*, at the head of a group that was probably less important than the *gaṇa*; three were *mahattarās*, which was title given, so it seems, to an aged and venerable *sādhvī* with a role that was both spiritual and administrative.¹¹⁹ Here these few references are given in chronological order:¹²⁰

-On Wednesday the 9th day of the bright fortnight of *māgha* (January-February) of *saṃvat* 1215 (1159), the manuscript [*Svapnasaptikā*, text and commentary] was transcribed with a view to its being studied by Śāntamati Gaṇinī, disciple of Jinadatta Sūri.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ Cf. Deo, 1956, pp. 468-469.

¹²⁰ The passages are given here as seems appropriate, either in word-for-word translation or by a translation of contents based on the brief indications supplied by the Catalogue.

¹²¹ *saṃvat* 1215 *māgha sudi* 9 *budhe pustikā likhitamiti Śrīmat Jinadattasūrisisinyāḥ Śāntamatigaṇinyāḥ sajjhāyapustikā Śrīḥ. Jesalmer*

-Following the transcription of the *Bhagavati-sūtra*, in the XIIth century or thereabouts, we find in several verses that are appended to it a eulogy of Mṛgāvati Pravartini in which she is praised for her self-mastery:

Freed from pride and keeping full control of the self, the lioness Mṛgāvati Pravartini [dwells] for ever in the enclosure of the three excellent *guptis*.¹²²

-At the end of the manuscript of the *Dharmabindu* of Haribhadra Sūri (VIIIth century) and the commentary upon it by Muni Candra Sūri (XIIth century), several names are mentioned and among others, "the disciple of Jagamata Gaṇini" as having received *dikṣā* from Jinapati Sūri; the name of the sādhi is not given.¹²³

-At the end of the manuscript of the *Piṇḍaviśuddhi* of Jinavallabha Gaṇi (beginning of XIIth century) and of the commentary upon it by Yaśodeva Sūri (XIIth century) it is recorded simply that:

This manuscript is in the possession of Śrī Prabhāvatī Mahattarā.¹²⁴

Coll. NC, No 154 (19); p.52. A text dealing with dreams connected with the *ūrthanikaras*, in Prākṛit-Sanskrit; the authors of text and commentary are not named.

¹²² *maṇe bhadāraṇe sihi pavittīṇi Miyāvai asogaseviyā niccam tiguttivajjapamjare*. (6). Ibid., No 4; p. 363. The *Bhagavati-sūtra* belongs to the *Aṅga Āgamas*. *Guptis*: cf. P 358.

¹²³ Ibid., No 225; p.80. The text is a treatise of religion and philosophy, in Sanskrit. It is certain that these sādhis lived between the end of the XIIth c. and the beginning of the XIIIth, seeing that Jinapati Sūri was born in 1153; cf. K.C. Jain, 1963, p. 38.

¹²⁴ *śrīPrabhāvatīmahattarāsatkapustikā*. Jesalmer Coll. NC, No 210; p. 73. A text on the subject of purity of food, in Prākṛit-Sanskrit.

-In one of the verses which are appended to the XIVth century manuscript of a short commentary on the *Āvaśyaka-sūtra* by Tilaka Ācārya, it is stated that:

Cāritrasundari, who before receiving *dikṣā* was called Sarasvati, practised *tapas* (austerity), [for it is] difficult to obtain this happiness (*mokṣa*) by any other means.¹²⁵

-At the end of the manuscript of the *Upadeśamālā* of Dharmadāsa Gaṇi and after the commentary upon it for the use of beginners by Vimalakīrti (XVIth-XVIIth centuries), we learn that: the transcription was made at Viramapura (Rājasthāna), the tenth day of the bright fortnight of *bhādrapada* (August-September) of *saṃvat* 1680 (1624).

to be studied by Sādhvi Puṇyasiddhi Gaṇini, disciple of Padmasiddhi Gaṇini, disciple of Sādhvi Mānasiddhi Gaṇini the most outstanding of the learned (sādhvis).¹²⁶

-At the end of the manuscript of the *Vipāka-sūtra* dated *saṃvat* 1816 (1760) we are informed that: in the city of Jodhpura, the *Vipāka-sūtra* and brief commentary thereon were transcribed for her own use by Vakattu, disciple of Śrī Ārya Purāṇjani.¹²⁷

-In an undated manuscript of the *Upadeśamālā* with explanations of certain words supplied one observes in the middle of each page the following note:

¹²⁵ *grhe Sarasvati nāmnā vrate Cāritrasundari
tapasyati śivāyaiṣā durlabhaṃ hi tadanyathā* (15).

Ibid., No 114; p. 38. A Sanskrit text; the *Āvaśyaka-sūtra* belongs to the *Mūla Āgamas*. The epoch in which Tilaka Ācārya lived is not known.

¹²⁶ *...niḥśeṣaviśeṣavidāhvarā sādhi Mānasiddhigaṇiniśiṣyā
Padmasiddhigaṇini tacchiṣyā sādhi Puṇyasiddhigaṇini paṭhanakṛte.*

Ibid., No 1581; pp. 309-310. The text is a very ancient compendium of instructions written in Prākṛit; the commentary is in Gujarātī.

¹²⁷ Ibid., No 729; p. 246; although the name Vakattu is preceded by no title, it is classified as the name of a sādhi in the index, p.431. The *Vipāka-sūtra* belongs to the *Āṅga Āgamas*; the commentary is in Gujarātī.

This is worthy [of being offered] to Śrī Paramaśrī Śrī Mahattarā, disciple of Śāntivallari Gaṇinī.¹²⁸

Moreover, in addition to these references, Muni Puṇyavijaya has assembled from the *puṣpikās*, postscripts of manuscripts, preserved in other *jñāna-bhaṇḍāras*, twenty-two further names of *sādhvis*, but up to date we have seen no details concerning these *puṣpikās*. These names are:

Gaṇinis: Ajitasundarī, Kīrti Śrī, Jagasundarī, Jinasundarī, Tilakaprabhā, Devasūri, Dharmalakṣmī, Nirmalamatī, Bālamatī, Marudevī, Mahimā, Vijaya Śrī, Śrīmatī.

Mahattarās: Sumerusundarī, Udaya Śrī.

Sādhvis: Kevalaprabhā, Cāntralakṣmī, Nalinaprabhā, Padmalakṣmī, Bhāvasundarī, Bhuvanasundarī, Mayaṇāsundarī.¹²⁹

e) Some learned *Sādhvis*

Between the VIIIth and the XIVth centuries, according to the available documents, six *sādhvis* of Rājasthāna and Gujārāta were, in some cases, associated with the names of highly esteemed *Śūris* and with important literary works or, in the case of others, were themselves authors.

Yākini Mahattarā

She lived in the VIIIth century and is known to have belonged to Rājasthāna. Haribhadra *Sūri*, that remarkable genius, was happy to call himself her "*dharmaputra*", spiritual son.¹³⁰ According to

¹²⁸ *śrī Śāntivallari gaṇinī śiṣyaṇī śrīParamaśrī śrīmahattarā योग्यम्*. Ibid., No 1018; p. 266.

¹²⁹ Cf. Kāpaḍiyā, 1971, pp. 13-14.

¹³⁰ At the end of a manuscript dated 1488 (1432) of the *Daśavaikālika-sūtra-ṭīkā* by Haribhadra there comes the expression: "*mahattarāyā Yākinyā dharmaputreṇa...*" Jesalmer Coll. NC, No 88; p. 30. The *Daśavaikālika-sūtra* belongs to the *Mūla Āgamas*.

tradition, Haribhadra was a learned *brāhmaṇa* of the town of Citrakūṭa, a priest at court. Through the influence of Yākini Mahattarā, he embraced the Jaina faith, becoming a monk and one of the luminaries of the *saṃgha*.

He wrote numerous treatises on different subjects in Prākṛit and in Sanskrit and also some commentaries on the *Āgamas*. A fervent and deeply spiritual ascetic, he deplored the laxity of certain of his confreres.¹³¹

In a XIIIth century work which recounts the lives of eminent munis, the *Prabhāvakacarita*, composed by Ācārya Prabhācandra,¹³² in the chapter devoted to Haribhadra Sūri, there is a passage where the author makes the ācārya of Haribhadra commend Yākini Mahattarā in eloquent terms:

"The guru said: Well-versed in the *Āgamas*, a crown of glory for both men and women ascetics, may this Mahattarā, my spiritual sister, famous under the name of Yākini, win the victory!"

And makes Haribhadra gratefully continue:

I, a priest, though highly proficient in the *śāstras*, was merely a fool, [but] through a most beneficent power, as if by the God of my ancestors, I was enlightened by my spiritual Mother.¹³³

¹³¹ Cf. Saṃghamitrā, 1979, pp. 238-249.

¹³² Hemacandra concluded his history of Mahāvira and the 1st ācāryas with Vajra Svāmin; Prabhācandra continued, proceeding from Vajra up to Hemacandra.

¹³³ *guruḥ avadat tayāgamapraviṇā yami-yatinījanamauliśekhara śrīḥ mama gurubhagīni mahattarā iyaṃ jayati ca viśruta jākīniti nāmnī. abhaṇat atha purohitaḥ anayāhaṃ bhavabhavaśāstraviśaradaḥ api mūrkhahati sukratvaśena dharmamātrā nijakuladevatayā iva bodhitaḥ asmi. Prabhāvakacarita IX, 41-42.*

Gaṇā Sādhvī

She was a collaborator in the large and important Sanskrit work of the famous Muni, poet and literary author Siddharṣi: the *Upamitibhavaprapaṇcākathā* which was completed in the year 906. If the date is exact, this means that Gaṇā Sādhvī lived at the end of the IXth and in the Xth century. She was the disciple of Durgasvāmin. In the temple of Bhillamāla, in Rājasthāna, Siddharṣi recited his poem while Gaṇā Sādhvī committed it to writing.¹³⁴ If we consider the nature of this text in which the working-out of *saṃsāra*, of the plurality of beings and their varied states, is recounted in parables,¹³⁵ we conclude that Gaṇā also must certainly have been both learned and very well versed in the doctrine. Siddharṣi himself called her "the one who is an imitator of the divinity of sacred knowledge."¹³⁶

134 "...we learn from his *Praśasti* that he (Siddharṣi) published the *Upamitibhavaprapaṇcā Kathā* in the chief temple of Bhillamāla and that Gaṇā, a female disciple of Durgasvāmin, wrote the first copy, what we would call the *codex archetypus*. I say the author "published" his work to render *gaḍitā*, he spoke or told it; he apparently read it aloud to the audience assembled in the Jaina temple. Therefore, in the introduction he addresses his hearers and asks them to lend him a willing ear. It seems to have been the habit of authors to give a public reading of their work before a select audience before it was issued...It is probable that Siddharṣi had intended his work for public reading as a religious entertainment; but, of course, this practice must have been ceased when the acquaintance with Sanskrit became a rare accomplishment of laymen. The share of Sister Gaṇā in the publication of Siddharṣi's work seems to have consisted in this, that she prepared the first clean copy of the *Upamitibhavaprapaṇcā Kathā* from the slips on which the author had written the several parts of the work as he conceived them in the course of time. It is, however, just possible that he dictated the book to Sister Gaṇā." *Upamitibhavaprapaṇcākathā*, Preface, pp. x-xi.

135 Cf. Winternitz, 1977, pp. 525-532. The work is in prose but contains numerous verse passages.

136 *prathamādaraśe likhitā sādhvā śrutadevatānukāriṇyā*

Mahānanda Śrī Mahattarā and Viramaṭi Gaṇini

On these two we know very little, except that their names are given by Maladhārī Hemacandra Sūri at the end of his lengthy commentary on the *Viśeṣaśāṣyaka-bhāṣya* of Haribhadra Sūri, in the list of the seven persons, including five *gaṇis*, who assisted him. In view of the subject-matter of the text, this reference, brief as it is, indicates the great merits of these two *sādhvis*.¹³⁷

Jñāna Śrī Āryikā

She is the author of a *tippani* or gloss on the commentary of a text of logic, the *Nyāyāvatāra-sūtra*, written in Sanskrit. The manuscript gives no date, but mentions that she was the disciple of Sarvadeva Sūri, who lived in the XIIIth -XIVth centuries.¹³⁸ She belonged to the same period and very probably lived in Rājasthāna. The manuscript concludes thus:

After consideration, Jñāna Śrī, of outstanding virtues, [was] pressed by her guru Ācārya Sarvadeva Sūri [to write the *tippani*] forthwith.¹³⁹

Guṇaśamrddhi Mahattarā

A disciple of Jinacandra Sūri, she was the author of a *kathā* (history) in Prākṛit of Anjanāsundarī, the Mother of Hanumān, the

Durgasvāmīgurūṇaṃ śiṣyākayeyam Gaṇābhidhaya. Praśasti (colophon) last v.p. 1240. *Śrūta-devatā* also refers to the goddess Sarasvatī; cf. Bhattacharya, 1974, pp. 122-123.

¹³⁷ *Viśeṣaśāṣyaka-bhāṣya* "śiṣyahitā" *bṛhad-vṛtti*, p. 1357.

Maladhārī Hemacandra Sūri was the disciple of Abhayadeva Sūri, and lived at the beginning of the XIIth c. not to be confused with the great Ācārya Hemacandra of the same epoch.

¹³⁸ Cf. K.C. Jain, 1963, p. 155.

¹³⁹ *iti saṁnidhaya cītte Jñānaśrīrāryikā guṇairvaryā ācāryaSarvadevavainirjagurubhiḥ prcītā sapadi*. Jesalmer Coll. NC, No 364 (1); p. 157.

monkey-god.¹⁴⁰ This work, consisting of five hundred and four *gāthās* (verses) was written at Jaisalamera:

In the city of Śrī Jaisalamera in the second half of the year 1407 (1351) of *vikrama*, the anniversary of Jina Vira (Mahāvira), the life of Anjanāsundari was written down.

Whoever despises [this text], that jiva will remain in the continuous cycle of *sarṁsāra*. Whoever respect it will reach the eternal place (*mokṣa*).

Thus ends the story of Śrī Anjanāsundari Mahāsati. This is the work of Śrī Guṇasamṛddhi Mahattarā, disciple of Śrī Jinacandra Sūri.¹⁴¹

Here is a Sādhvi who was also a poetess!

Despite the sparsity of documentation, we find that in different epochs, with various gifts to contribute and with the encouragement of the ācāryas of their own day, certain sādhis proved capable of sustaining a highly valuable collaboration.

In a recent study upon Jaina literature in Rājasthāna, twenty-eight names of sādhis of that region are given who, in one way or another, have made a contribution to literary production. Of these the great

¹⁴⁰ Hanumān plays a major role in the epic, the Rāmāyaṇa, of which the Jains have their own versions, the most important being those composed by Raviṣeṇa and by Hemacandra (TrisalPC VII)

¹⁴¹ *siriJaisalamerapure vikkamcaudahasatuttare varise virajiṇa jammadivase kiyamaṁjaṇasumṛdaricariyaṁ. 503 jo āsāyaṇa kuṇai aṇaṁtasarṁsāru bhamai so jivo jo āsāyaṇa rakkhai so pāvai sāsayaṁ thāṇaṁ. 504 iti śrīAnjanāsundari mahāsatikathānakam samāptam. kṛitiriyam śrīJinacandrasūriśiṣyaṇi śrīGuṇasamṛddhi mahattarāyāḥ. Jaisalmer Coll. NC, No 1278; pp. 281-282.*

majority belong to this present day and some are authors of literary works.¹⁴²

f) On Holy Mount Ābū

Ābū, of which the ancient name was Arbudācala, from *arbuda* which, according to certain legends, means a serpent-demon or, according to another view, ten millions, is a mountain bordering both Rājasthāna and Gujarāta, a very beautiful lonely place, well known since ancient times for its attraction for sages. The Mount is considered holy by Hindus and Jains alike. Far away from all habitation, close to a forest, in a place called Delavādā, five Jaina temples are to be found within a spacious enclosure. Of these, two especially are marvels of architecture, chiselled in white marble. The most ancient temple, dedicated to Ādinātha, was built at the beginning of the XIth century thanks to the generosity of a Jaina minister of that period, Viṃśala, from whom its name: Viṃśala Vasahi, is taken.¹⁴³ The second, Lūṇa Vasahi, dedicated to Neminātha, was constructed two centuries later on the initiative of two Jaina ministers, twin brothers, literary patrons of the period, Vastupāla and Tejapāla.¹⁴⁴

The unique location and the presence of these temples have conspired to make of Mount Ābū an eminent pilgrimage-place. Throughout the ages *sādhvis* have loved to visit it. Among the great number of inscriptions found in these temples, one observes certain ones in which the names of *sādhvis* appear. These inscriptions, which simply record dates and lists of names, are nevertheless the living concrete expression of the *caturvidhasaṃgha*. Thanks to these inscriptions we know that *sādhvis* came there on pilgrimage and that certain *Sūris*, *Ācāryas*, *Gaṇis*, *Upādhyāyas* and *Munis*, accompanied by *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās*, were also actively present. One observes in

¹⁴² Cf. Prākṛit Bhāratī, 1977, index; these *sādhvis* nearly all belong to the two reformed sects, viz. the Sthānakavāsīs and the Terāpanthis.

¹⁴³ Vasahi or Vasati denotes an abode and, thence, a temple.

¹⁴⁴ These temple belong to the Śvetāmbaras, but are visited by the members of the other communities; in the same place, on the other side of the road, is found a Digambara temple.

this way, between the XIVth and XVIth centuries, the names of nine sādhis and the mention of one group. It is not possible to identify the exact places from which they came, but they were either from Rājasthāna or from Gujarāta.

In the Lūna Vasahi, behind the principal sanctuary, is found the Haṭṭiśālā, the Hall of the Elephants, where ten beautiful marble elephants stand ranged in line; there an inscription of saṃvat 1360 (1304) mentions the visit of Kharataragaccha munis, sādhus, sādhis and a caturvidhasaṃgha.¹⁴⁵

The other four inscriptions are to be found in the Vimala Vasahi. That of saṃvat 1494 (1438) mentions after the names of some Kharataragaccha munis those of: Bhāvamati Gaṇini, Dharmaprabhā Gaṇini and Ratnasundari Sādhvi.¹⁴⁶

The second, which is dated saṃvat 1603 (1547) and recounts the visit to Ābū of a fairly large group of the caturvidhasaṃgha of the Pālhaṇapuriyagaccha, mentions specifically: Pravartini Vidyāsumati, Ratnasumati and Lakṣmicūlā.¹⁴⁷

The third, of saṃvat 1608 (1552) gives just one name of a sādhi: Sādhvi Nāthi.¹⁴⁸

Finally, the fourth, of saṃvat 1611 (1555) mentions in the list of pilgrims the names of: Sādhvi Suvirā and Sādhvi Bhānā.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Muni Jayantavijaya, 1937, Part II, inscr. 317; p.130, *sādhv* or muni.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., inscr. 188; p. 71.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., inscr. 214; pp. 78-79. *Lakṣmicūlā*, *cūlā* probably denotes a probationer who had not yet received *dikṣā*.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., inscr. 205; p. 76.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., inscr. 202; p. 75.

Thus, between 1304 and 1555 certain names of sādhvīs who were fortunate enough to make this pilgrimage are known to us, and it is probable that many others, of whom we have no trace, ascended the Holy Mountain, for certainly the presence of eminent munis and śrāvakas would be required for the engraving of an inscription to be commissioned what is of greatest possible interest is to note, in the period following the Mathurā inscriptions of the very first centuries, the vitality and continuing existence of the *caturvidhasamgha*, witnessing as it does to a common faith, a common form of worship and very close bonds existing between the members.

When we are considering Jaina activity in Rājasthāna and Gujarāta, we find that not only did they build temples, go on pilgrimage, teach the doctrine, write and re-copy treatises and commentaries, but also they adorned these manuscripts with coloured illustrations. The *bhaṇḍāras* preserve illustrated manuscripts made out of palm-leaves and, in particular, manuscripts richly adorned with miniatures, as well as paintings on fabric which belong to a period from the XIIth to the XVIth century. Munis and sādhvīs are to be seen in these miniatures, depicted, as a rule, preaching the doctrine.¹⁵⁰ One miniature, painted on wood and probably dating from the middle of the XIIth century, shows some sādhvīs in their *upāśraya* venerating the *sthāpanācārya*.¹⁵¹ Pravarṇī Vimalamati is seated on a stool facing two of her disciples, Sādhvī Nayaśrī and Nayamatī; behind her a śrāvikā, Nandisira, is seated on the ground.¹⁵²

Among well-known sādhvīs we must make mention also of Sādhvī Sumalā who, towards the end of the XIIth century, taught Jaina doctrine to Queen Jayatallādevī of Madapāṭa and Citrakūṭa.¹⁵³

¹⁵⁰ Cf. K.C. Jain, 1963, p. 144.

¹⁵¹ Cf. P 481.

¹⁵² Cf. Nāhaṭā, 1971, pp. 55-56; the miniature is kept in Bikānera, in the collection of S. Nāhaṭā.

¹⁵³ Cf. K.C. Jain, *ibid.*, pp. 29-30; this fact is reported in an inscr. of which the exact date is not given.

Moreover, in the same region, we find at Phalodi in Rājasthāna, a *jñāna-bhaṇḍāra* which contains three hundred and seventy-five manuscripts and is called the Sādhvi Puṣpa Śrī Jñāna-bhaṇḍāra. This sād̥hvi was undoubtedly a source of inspiration to the local *saṁgha*, which accordingly, as a sign of perpetual homage, gave her name to the *bhaṇḍāra*.¹⁵⁴

This long tour, which has taken us, geographically, from the foothills of the Himālayas to Holy Mount Abū and, historically, from the VIIIth to the XVIIIth century, has introduced to us some āryikās and sād̥hvis. Through these Names and the setting in which they appear, we can realise how well integrated they were into the *saṁgha*, within which they constituted an intelligent and active presence.¹⁵⁵ The fact that it is particularly the Names of *gaṇinis*, *pravartinis* and *mahattarās* that are mentioned in no way disparages the other sād̥hvis, for, if these *guruṇis* were outstanding personalities, one may well suppose that their disciples, inspired and trained by them, followed in their footsteps. Moreover, if all the innumerable manuscripts still stacked together in the *jñāna-bhaṇḍāras* could emerge into the light of day and be subjected to scrutiny, perhaps many more names of ś r a m a ṇ i s would be revealed!

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 201.

¹⁵⁵ In order to avoid overloading this section, the emergence of the new Terāpanthī community, which had its origin in Rājasthāna in the 2nd half of the XVIIIth c., is introduced at the end of this chapter.

D - In the land of the great Ācārya Hemacandra

From Mount Ābū one at once enters Gujarāta, where, as in Rājasthāna, the Jaina *dharma* has established firm roots. This state possesses three Mounts of its own, centres of pilgrimage: Śatruñjaya, Girinagara, Kurukula Śikhara (Tāraṅgā). Śatruñjaya and Girinagara are temple-cities. Tradition holds that Jainism had some sort of presence in this region dating right back to extremely ancient days; Neminātha is said to have attained *kevala-jñāna* at Ujjayanta, present-day Girinagara.¹⁵⁶ In the absence of historical documents one can simply affirm that the *dharma* was in existence in Gujarāta in the first centuries of our era.¹⁵⁷ Mount Śatruñjaya, "victory over enemies" - those which militate against realisation of the *ātman* - houses eight hundred and sixty-three temples of different epochs, the ones being built on others which had collapsed in ruins or had been destroyed at the time of the Musulman invasions.¹⁵⁸ Sādhvis consider it a rare privilege to be able to make this *mahātīrtha*, Great Pilgrimage, and certain ones have a *pāṭhaśālā* (school) at Pālītāṇa, the little town at the foot of the Holy Mountain.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. KS 165; P 103 ff.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. Jamindar, 1975, pp. 75-79.

¹⁵⁸ Of the temples extant today the most ancient date back to the XVIth c.; there were temples there at a much earlier date, but they have not been preserved. Cf. Burgess, 1977, Introd.; *ibid.*, pp. 40-47 on the subject of the *Māhātmya*, the very ancient work which recounts several legends concerning Śatruñjaya and speaks highly of the pre-eminent holiness of the place from the time, so tradition affirms, of Ādinātha.

It was in 1089 that there was born in the region of Ahmadābād, present-day capital of Gujarāta, the one who, when he became Ācārya Hemacandra, was destined to be, after Haribhadra Sūri, one of the great Masters of the Svetāmbaras. He was deeply versed in every department of learning and trained a number of disciples, taking an important part the while in the religious, cultural and political life of his time. His influence at the court where he taught was striking and two successive kings, Jayasīṃha and Kumārapāla, were not only well-disposed and tolerant towards the *dharma*, but evidenced great interest in its teaching. Kumārapāla actually embraced the Jaina faith and his kingdom became a place where *ahimsā* was respected, hunting and the slaughter of animals, as well as meat-eating and the consumption of liquor, being prohibited. This influence exercised by Jainism has continued even to our own day and Gujarāta, on the whole, is a vegetarian state. Under Kumārapāla, religious and literary activity knew a fresh vigour, the king had numerous temples built, of which several were dedicated to the *tirthaṅkaras*.¹⁵⁹ This era of great Jaina prosperity lasted in this region from the XIth to the XIIIth century.¹⁶⁰

In order to elucidate certain aspects of life in Gujarāta, the position occupied by Jainism in the society of that day and thus the conditions of life of the *sādhvis*, we must go back to the age of the first editions of commentaries upon the *Āgamas*, that is to say, to the early Middle-

¹⁵⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 26-29; Deo, 1956, pp. 112-113; Winternitz, 1977, pp. 482-483.

¹⁶⁰ "The centuries between the eleventh and thirteenth were never to be excelled as regards the intensity of impact of Jainism in the Maru-Gujara country. To the birth, growth and development of the Maru-Gujara civilization, Jainism substantially contributed, just as it played a very decisive and directive role in the former's consolidation. Not only did the literary activity of the Jainas then see its high water-mark; the art and architecture patronized by and created for the Jaina creed also reached their culmination. Over three hundred Jaina temples were built during this period in western India, though most of them, particularly those in the capital cities and in provincial, commercial and sea-port towns, were destroyed during Muslim invasion and occupation, and the materials taken from the ravaged Jaina shrines-pillars and decorated ceilings - were largely used in the interior construction of the mosques of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries." Sompura & Dhaky, 1975, p. 13.

Ages, from the VIIth century onwards. We shall find the information we require by taking a brief look at the *Niśītha-cūṛṇi*. Next, we shall return to the Bhaṭṭarakas whose documents of this region produce some names of āryikās between the XVth and XVIIth centuries. Finally, after the extremely flourishing period during and after the Musulman invasions, there took place among the Śvetāmbaras two reforms, one after the other, the first being an effort of purification and the other an attempt to revert to the primitive ideal.

a) The *Niśītha-cūṛṇi*

A *cūṛṇi*, from *cūṛṇa*, pulverised, reduced to powder, is a detailed commentary upon an *Āgama* in *Prākṛit-Sanskṛit* prose. The *Niśītha-cūṛṇi* is an elaborately detailed text, with descriptions pertinent to every sphere of life, political, social, literary, artistic, educational and religious. The *Niśītha* is one of the *Āgamas* belonging to the *Cheda-sūtras*, which deal with rules of conduct for *nirgranthas* and *nirgranthis* and with the various *prāyaścittas* or forms of reparation for offences committed.¹⁶¹ Its *cūṛṇi* while adhering to the contents and aim of the *Sūtra*, discourses at some length on the conditions of life prevailing around them, for the *munis* and *sādhvis* were living in contact with society. It was necessary, therefore, not only to forestall strains and stresses with regard to the rules, but also to acquire skill in foreseeing possible exceptions such as would prevent faults. This *cūṛṇi*, recently published, has been the subject of a remarkable study.¹⁶²

Its author is *Jinadāsa Gaṇi* who probably lived towards the end of the VIIth century. While he refers to earlier tradition and mentions places in the East and the North, he lived, certainly, in *Gujarāta* and visited both the surrounding areas of *Mahārāṣṭra* and also *Koṅkaṇa* (the region of Goa). Certain indications, such as certain turns of phrase that he employs, make it fairly clear that he himself must have belonged to *Gujarāta* or, at the least, that he wrote his text in that

¹⁶¹ Cf. P §13.

¹⁶² It was published for the first time in 1960, and the study thereon in 1975: M. Sen, *A Cultural Study of the Niśītha Cūṛṇi*; the sub-section which follows draws upon this study.

region.¹⁶³ Jinadāsa Sūri wrote first and foremost for munis and thus in a direct and realistic manner, without refinement, for as a rule the *Cheda-sūtras* and commentaries upon them were not known to śrāvākas nor even to sādhis. These latter were instructed in certain rules and *prāyaścittas* relevant to them by an ācārya or by a senior monk delegated by the ācārya for the task.¹⁶⁴ This text is therefore written primarily for men ascetics, who were in constant and close contact with society in an age when, enjoying as they did certain forms of royal patronage, they needed to know and, on occasion, use political stratagems; in a province where vast activity ruled the day, for its towns and trading ports were thriving centres of trade and export.

Certain characteristics of the society of that day and age and, more particularly, of Jaina society

This was an age when monarchy was the most prevalent form of government, with all that implies, both as regards the absolute power of the monarch which extended even to the smallest village, involving matters of administration, justice, the army, police and revenue, and also as regards the life-style of the court. The munis and sādhis needed to have an understanding not only of kingly authority, but also of other forms of government that they might meet in their *vihāras* (movements from place to place), for they had to know in whom power was vested.¹⁶⁵

Social life was strictly regulated according to the caste-system of Aryan society, which the Jainas maintained, while at the same time adding their own system. They evidenced, on the whole, a certain disdain for the *brāhmaṇas*, and this mainly for doctrinal reasons, the Jainas having rejected the authority of the *Vedas* and possessing their

¹⁶³ Cf. Sen, 1975, pp. 10-11.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 2. This situation continuous in our own day for a large number of sādhis. However, this text must have been known, since there exist illustrations of it on palm-leaves; cf. U.P. Shah, 1955, fig. 65, of the beginning of the XIIth century at Cambay; fig. 66, undated, of the same place.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Sen, 1975, ch. II.

own Scriptures. On the contrary, they were well-disposed towards the *kṣatriyas* (rulers, warriors). The *tirthaṅkaras* came, according to tradition, from this caste, as did also the local princes. The ones who were the objects of general contempt were the *śūdras* who belonged to the lowest rung of Aryan society, the lowliest of all occupations being reserved for them and for members of the *anāriya*, non-Aryan, tribes. The munis and sādhis needed to be well-informed in regard to these distinctions, particularly those that concerned food. What is in fact strictly enjoined by the *Āgamas* is that the ascetics should never accept food prepared especially for themselves nor food whose preparation or distribution might have caused the damage or destruction of living beings; it is this prohibition that gives rise to all the meticulous rules.¹⁶⁶ However, the mentality of the society in which they live has often influenced the *śramaṇas* and deflected them from the original spirit; thus they have sought above all to avoid displeasing people, accepting no food from members of castes called *abhojya*, that is, those with whom the taking of a meal is prohibited. Within the caste, life was centered upon the family, two or three generations being gathered together under one roof, the grandfather being the master of the house. There was clearly much importance attached to astrology and to signs of good or bad augury. Among the pastimes of that time, contests between animals or birds were highly popular, while gambling, though considered a vice, was nevertheless widely practised.¹⁶⁷

Food was rich and plentiful, made appetising by the addition of various spices, with meat as an everyday item. Drinks and syrups were prepared from fruit-juices and sugar-cane, while wines, liquors and alcoholic drinks were freely obtainable. Food and its preparation varied from one region to another and the ascetics were obliged to adapt themselves to local customs. Perfumes and unguents of all sorts were frequently used. Illnesses were treated either by the use of

¹⁶⁶ Cf. P 496 ff.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Sen, 1975, ch. III.

laxatives to purify the body or by appropriate medicines compounded from powders and oils.¹⁶⁸

Except in ports, which were centres of sea trade, and important cities, where caravans of horses, camels and elephants were frequently arriving or departing or where boats were berthing if a river flowed through the centre, the rest of the population, in the villages, either subsisted on agriculture or on handicrafts.¹⁶⁹

Jinadāsa-Gaṇi was well versed in the literature, both religious and secular, of his day and age and in all the contemporary forms of art. He treats of each: architecture, sculpture, music, dance, and dramatic art.¹⁷⁰

As regards the way in which the ascetics lived out the *dharma* and taught it to others, the *cūṃṇi* testifies to a suppleness of approach, an adaptation to circumstances and situations. These compromises permitted the *dharma* to take root, to survive, to gain new members, to win a certain prestige in society. However, this ascendancy was not accomplished without grave ill-consequences, in particular a certain relaxation in asceticism caused by too close an association with society as a whole and too active a part being taken by monks in the affairs of this world. The excuse was, as in all monastic traditions, that this proximity and social engagement is for the enhancement of men's spiritual welfare. Similarly the text speaks in detail of a certain type of *bhakti* in conformity with that already practised in Mathurā. Here we find a form of worship addressed to the *arhats*, very elaborate in style, a veritable *pūjā* in which, as in Hindu temples, images become the centre of much ceremony with the ritual bath and the offering of flowers. Religious festivals are consciously observed. Stress is laid on fasting as a means to purification; frequent pilgrimages are undertaken. Furthermore, mention is made of certain

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., ch. IV.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., ch. V.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., chs. VI-VII.

successful demonstrations of magic and occult powers and, although the *Nisītha-cūṛṇi* condemns these activities, certain monks made every endeavour to practise them.¹⁷¹ All this gives us a general picture of the society of this early Middle Ages period, one which was vigorously alive and colourful, and in which many differing values were co-existent and intertwined. It was this same society from which the *sādhvis* emerged and with which, though they had renounced it, they remained in contact.

What do we learn from the *Nisītha-cūṛṇi* about the *sādhvis* of that day?

The main body of the rules of the *Nisītha-sūtra*, apart from a few exceptions, being common to both *nirgranthas* and *nirgranthis*, the text of the *Sūtra*, like that of the *cūṛṇi*, is addressed in general to the *nirgranthas*, it being understood that *nirgranthis* are also concerned although, we must repeat, these latter did not have direct access to these texts and were only familiar, through the good offices of the *ācārya* or another monk, with a very small portion of them.

In accordance with a custom which still holds sway in our own day in certain regions, a widow, even though still an adolescent, was not permitted to re-marry. A great number of them, instead of vegetating in a sad and futile condition in the house of their parents or parents-in-law, preferred to adopt the ascetic life, which allowed them to pursue an ideal and to study.¹⁷² The attitude of the Jainas of that day towards womankind followed for the most part that of the *ācāryas* and munis who directed the *saṃgha*, it differed little from that expressed in certain *Āgamas* and, apart from a few shades of differences as regards doctrine, was almost the same as that of men ascetics of other religious traditions of the same epoch, namely, that woman is for the ascetic the source of all ills; he must therefore shun her - which clearly betrays the weak character of these same ascetics. We must note, however, the benevolent and understanding character of the author of the *cūṛṇi*, who stipulates that on no pretext should a *sādhvi* be

¹⁷¹ Ibid., ch. VIII; cf. US XX, 45, where such practices are expressly forbidden to munis.

¹⁷² Cf. Sen, 1975, p. 106.

dismissed from her group. If one of them, abducted by force, should be expecting a child, she was entrusted to the family of some śrāvaka who would take care of her till the child's birth, after which she rejoined her community and the child could also, at a later date, receive *dikṣā*.¹⁷³

Designed as they were for a pluralist society made up of people of all sorts thronging the cities and ports, the rules of the *Nisītha-sūtra* concerning temporary abodes permitted to *nirgranthis* evidence much wisdom and good sense. The *cūṛṇi* simply draws out the implications in order to assure the sādhis of a protection that will allow them an austere, chaste and studious life. Their clothing is made the object of a detailed study; it comprises eleven garments and under-garments, of which the purpose is to envelop them completely to avoid attracting attention or exciting lust. Each sādhi must clothe herself fully before going out of doors.¹⁷⁴ Despite these precautionary measures, it did happen on occasion that miscreants succeeded, by force or craftiness, in abducting sādhis.¹⁷⁵ The *cūṛṇi* recounts how in the port of Bhṛugakaccha (Bhṛgukaccha) on the estuary of the Narmadā River where it flows into the Arabian Sea, some travelling foreign merchants had abducted certain young and beautiful sādhis. Others had been base enough to pretend to embrace the Jaina faith and then, under pretext of inviting them to come and venerate an image of one of the *arhats* that they had set up there, lured some sādhis on to their boat. So soon as they were on board, the brigands weighed anchor!¹⁷⁶

¹⁷³ Ibid., p. 110

¹⁷⁴ Ibid. pp. 165-167.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. Deo, 1956, pp. 489-491, where he is referring in the first place to the *Brhatkalpa-bhāṣya*; we note this interesting piece of information: "...the monks were expected to guard the nuns. A young monk well-versed in the art of fighting was allowed to punish an intruder by disguising as a nun. In certain cases even brother-monks had to protect their sister-nun with the permission of the *ācārya* and the *pravartini*."

¹⁷⁶ Cf. Sen, 1975, pp. 222-223.

The epoch described in the *Niśītha-cūrṇi* was renowned for its intellectual activity and many munis not only studied well their own doctrine but also that of the sects of other *dharma*s so as to be able to defend their own in debate. They learned much by listening to the masters and the *ācāryas* were chosen, not on grounds of age or family background, but on account of their spiritual maturity. They were required to transmit the doctrine to disciples capable and worthy of receiving it, without distinction of caste. One can imagine that in such an atmosphere the *sādhvis* also were encouraged to study and were able to profit by the teaching of these same masters or their disciples.¹⁷⁷

b) The *Sūrataśākhā* and the *Īdaraśākhā*

Among the *Bhaṭṭārakas* are found texts and inscriptions dating from the middle of the XVth century to the beginning of the XVIIth, with references to *āryikās* belonging to the *Sūrataśākhā*, of *Sūrata* in the South-East of Gujarāta, and to the *Īdaraśākhā*, of *Īdara* in the North of the same province. These two *śākhās* were branches of the *Balātkaṛagana*.

The following references are taken from the *Sūrataśākhā*:

-At Ghoghā, on the tenth day of the bright fortnight of *vaiśākhā* (April-May) of *saṃvat* 1513 (1437), Śrī Vidyānandi, disciple of Ācārya Śrī Devendrakīrti, had a *caubisimūrti* erected for *Āryikā Saṃyama Śrī*.¹⁷⁸ This *mūrti* is a type of image peculiar to Jain art: it consists in the image of a *tirthaṅkara* carved out of a block, in which it occupies a central position and is surrounded by sculptures in miniature of the twenty-three other *tirthaṅkaras*.¹⁷⁹

-At *Sūrata* there is a statue of *ksullikā Jinamati* with a *mālā* (rosary) in her right hand and the *picchikā* (small broom of peacock-feathers)

¹⁷⁷ Ibid. ch. VI.

¹⁷⁸ BhaṭṭSamp, No 429; pp. 170; 194. Ghoghā is on the West coast. One is led to suppose that *Āryikā Saṃyama Śrī* was contemporaneous with Bhaṭṭāraka Vidyānandi.

¹⁷⁹ Cf. U.P. Shah, 1955; fig. 37.

and *kamaṇḍalu* (gourd for purpose of ablution) in her left. The inscription, dated *saṃvat* 1544 (1488), mentions the erection of a *niṣidikā* to *kṣullikā* Jinamati, disciple of Bhaṭṭāraka Vidyānandī. Mention is also made of the names *Āryikā Ratna Śrī* and *Āryikā Kalyāna Śrī*.¹⁸⁰

-The fifth day of the bright fortnight of *caitra* (March-April) of *saṃvat* 1582 (1526), the disciple of Ārya Śrī Vimala Śrī, Vinaya Śrī, having been initiated by Bhaṭṭāraka Lakṣmicandra, copied out the *Mahābhiṣekā-bhāṣya* for a disciple of Bhaṭṭāraka Lakṣmicandra: Śrī Jñānasāgara.¹⁸¹

-The second day of the dark fortnight of *vaiśākhā* (April-May) of *saṃvat* 1662 (1606), the woman disciple of Bhaṭṭāraka Ratnakīrti, *Vīramati Bāi* had a statue erected in honour of Mahāvira.¹⁸²

¹⁸⁰ BhattSamp, No 458; pp. 177; 195, and the photo facing p. 194. A *kṣullikā* is not yet an *āryikā*, but has received the *dikṣa* appropriate to this first stage; she may later on become an *āryikā* by means of a second *dikṣa* or she may remain a *kṣullikā* for the rest of her life; cf. P 637 ff. The text is ambiguous, but the statue is probably the *niṣidikā* mentioned in the inscription; moreover this inscr. mentions at the beginning Stambatīrtha, the pilgrimage-centre also called Khambāta or Khambāyata. The text is not very clear, for the statue is found at Sūrata. Khambhāta could be the birthplace of Āryikā Ratna Śrī, who may have been the guruṇi of Jinamati (suggestion of prof. Johrapurkar.)

¹⁸¹ Ibid., No 470; pp. 180; 196. The *Mahābhiṣekā-bhāṣya*: a commentary by Ācārya Śrutasāgara (1473-1533) on the text *Nitya Mahodyota* by Paṇḍita Āśādhara (1173-1243); cf. JSK III, p. 301. *Mahābhiṣekā*: a Great Anointing or aspersion. This is the solemn aspersion of certain images in accordance with an elaborated ritual set forth in this text.

¹⁸² Ibid., No 522, pp. 193; 200. Although the title *Āryikā* is not mentioned in the text, one may conclude, from the fact that she is said to be a *śiṣyāṇī*, disciple, of a Bhaṭṭāraka and is called Bāi, that this is a reference to an *āryikā*. It was customary among the Digambaras of the West to add the word Bāi to the name to designate an *āryikā*; "cf. *Anekanta* vol. VIII, p. 232, where the characteristics of an *āryikā* are listed under this very description "Bāi", a title of respect used for persons of feminine sex." Ref. supplied by Prof. Johrapurkar.

The following text comes from the *Īḍaraśākhā*:

-At Giripura, the tenth day of the bright fortnight of *phālguna* (February-March) of *saṃvat* 1568 (1512), the Śrī *saṃgha* had a *Pañcaviṃśatikā* copied for Āryikā Deva Śrī, sister of Bhattāraka Vijayakirti.¹⁸³

In spite of their brevity these texts and inscriptions not only reveal to us the existence of āryikās in this region but testify, moreover, that certain of them were highly esteemed by the Bhattārakas and local *saṃghas*. References to certain treatises familiar to the āryikās show that they were well versed in the doctrine.

c) Reforms

Towards the end of the XVth century Jainism, which had for a long period flourished greatly in these Western provinces, had to face on all fronts the vigorous onslaughts of the Musulmans.¹⁸⁴ It is told how in this period a śrāvaka, Lonkā Śāha of Ahmadābād, was impressed to

¹⁸³ Ibid., No 365; pp. 145; 155. Giripura is probably to be identified with Dūngarpura in the Southern part of Rājasthāna. The text mentioned is in Sanskrit and was composed by Ācārya Padmanandi (1016-1136) for the use of śrāvakas. It contains 800 ślokas; cf. JSK III, p.10.

¹⁸⁴ There were, however, some monarchs who, under the influence of certain munis, were benevolently disposed towards Jainism, especially Akbar who prohibited the slaughter of animals in the vicinity of the Jaina holy places. At Śatruñjaya on the gateway of Ādiśvara, in an inscr. dated 1593 next to the *paṭṭāvali* of some Tapāgaccha Ācāryas one finds this passage: "...Hiraviṃśaya was a pontiff of renown. The emperor Akbar honoured him with his friendship. At his instigation he promulgated an edict in *saṃvat* 1629 (1582) forbidding for six months the slaughter of animals, as also the confiscation of the property of deceased persons; he abolished furthermore various taxes, released a large number of prisoners, founded a library for the Jains and gave to them Mount Śatruñjaya... He had as a disciple Vijayasena who was also connected with the emperor Akbar. This latter, at his request, promulgated a new edict forbidding the killing of oxen and cows, the confiscation of the property of the deceased and the taking of prisoners of war." Guérinot, 1908, pp. 244-245; inscr. 682. Jahāngir, furthermore, guaranteed the protection of Śatruñjaya.

discover, while copying out the texts of the *Āgamas*, that no mention was anywhere to be found in them of the worship of images. This idol-worship, with all that it involved of expense and show, had assumed immense importance in the West, at the same time entraining with it a certain fading of the original ideal of interiority and purification. To all this *Lonkā Śāha* re-acted, preaching a return to simplicity and the spiritual, and at the beginning of the XVIth century he founded the *Lonkā-sampradāya*, whose members categorically rejected temple-worship. The birth of this *sampradāya* has also been attributed to the direct influence of Islām which, being profoundly iconoclastic in temperament, succeeded in working upon certain spirits among the Jainas.¹⁸⁵ It does not seem, however, that the *sampradāya* spread outside Gujarāta.

Another reform took place at the beginning of the XVIIIth century, when *Viraji*, a śrāvaka of the *Lonkā-sampradāya* living at *Sūrata*, denounced what he felt to be a slackening of ascetic life among the munis. Thus, after receiving *dikṣā*, he in his turn became the founder of a new spiritual family. This reform aimed at recovering the initial strictness taught by *Mahāvira* and stipulated by the *Āgamas*. The members of this *sampradāya* took the name *Sthānakavāsīs* on account of their condemnation of temple-worship; they held their gatherings for spiritual exercises in a *sthāna*, some ordinary building, an *upāśraya* or any other dwelling. A large number of those belonging to the *Lonkā-sampradāya* joined the *Sthānakavāsīs*, who proceeded to establish a firm footing in Gujarāta and Rājasthāna. In addition to the question of worship, they deviate from the other Śvetāmbaras on the subject of the Scriptures: they do not accept the authority of certain *Āgamas*, and do not recognise the *Mahānīśītha*, the *Jitakalpa* of the *Cheda-sūtras*, nor the ten (or eleven, according to another classification) *Prakīrṇakas*; they place, too, the *Nandi-sūtra* and the *Anuyogadvāra* in the *Mūla-sūtras*. (cf. Deo, *ibid.*, pp. 440-441.)

The coming into being of the *Sthānakavāsīs* inaugurated a far-reaching change among the Śvetāmbara sādhus as regards their expression of veneration of the *ārhats*. Until the beginning of the XVIIIth century, texts and inscriptions mention either Digambara

¹⁸⁵ Cf. Deo, 1956, p. 440; K.C. Jain, 1963, pp. 90-91.

āryikās or Śvetāmbara sādhis, whereas from that time onwards it becomes necessary to make a distinction among the Śvetāmbaras between the Mūrtipūjakas, who perform an interiorised form of temple-worship to the *arhats* and the Sthānakavāsīs who stay in an *upāśraya* devoid of all images, all icons.¹⁸⁶

E - From the Citadel of the Devas to Mahārāṣṭra

We come now to the two regions of the Centre and West: Madhya Pradeśa and Mahārāṣṭra. In regard to the history of the Jaina *dharma* these two provinces have from ancient times had in their territory well-established centres, belonging in the main to the Digambaras.¹⁸⁷ We may here simply mention the fact that Ujjayini, now belonging to Madhya Pradeśa, was already before the beginning of our era a thriving Jaina centre.¹⁸⁸ From this region, so Śvetāmbara tradition tells us, came the muni Siddhasena, who was so famous as a poet and logician that they called him: *divākara*, the Sun.¹⁸⁹ He is thought to have lived in the Vth or VIth century,¹⁹⁰ and to have travelled vast distances.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. Part III, where in the introduction to the sādhis' daily life we refer further to these differences.

¹⁸⁷ "Hundreds of Jaina temples once dotted Central India, dedicated primarily to the Digambara sect. The 'Descriptive and Classified List of Archeological Monuments in Madya Bharat' alone lists remains from more than seventy sites." Meister, 1975, p. 223.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. P 132.

¹⁸⁹ Lit. *divā*: the day, *kara*: the maker, maker of the day i.e. the sun.

¹⁹⁰ Opinions differ on the subject; cf. Winternitz, 1977, p. 477, n. 2.

At the eve of his life he undertook the Great Fast while on a journey down in the South. The story goes that he had a sādhvi sister, Siddha Śrī. When a messenger disclosed to her in veiled terms the news of the Great Departure of her brother, saying that:

"Those who are engaged in philosophical discussion in the South are shining like glow-worms",

she perceived his meaning and continued with the words:

"Because now the Sun, Siddhasena the philosopher, has set."¹⁹¹

Thereupon she too, knowing well the frailty of the body, its transient and perishable nature, embarked on the final fast and attained the state of perfection.¹⁹²

The few documents introduced here date from the XIth to XVIIIth centuries and refer only to the Digambara āryikās, because it is certain groups of ancient and famous temples of that tradition and some seats of Bhaṭṭārakas that are available for our study. The three first sets of documents belong to Madhya Pradeśa, the others to Mahārāṣṭra.¹⁹³

a) At Devagadha

The Citadel of the *devas* is situated, according to present-day state boundaries, in the border-area between Uttara Pradeśa (Northern Province) and Madhya Pradeśa (Central Province). In a lonely hilly spot beyond the small town of Lalitapura is to be found this Citadel of thirty-one temples, all of them Digambara, built during different periods. *Deva*, in this context, denotes in the first place the *arhats* and also, but only secondarily, the divine beings of the heavenly realm. The use of the same word, *deva*, for both could lead to confusion - the

¹⁹¹ *sphuranti vādikhadyotāḥ sāmpratam dakṣināpathē nūnamastangato vādi Siddhaseno divākaraḥ. Prabhāvakacarita VIII, 174.*

¹⁹² *sāpi sāvāyatarāṁ kāye vimṛśyānaśanaṁ vyadhāt gitārthavihitāradhānāyāsau sadgatīm yayau. Ibid. VIII, 175. cf. Saṁghamitrā, 1979, pp. 198-207.*

¹⁹³ The archaeological and epigraphical documentation of these regions is rich, but has not been fully released or studied. Only that which concerns the āryikās has been used here.

arhats are not divine beings - yet anyone who is familiar with Jaina doctrine knows that the celestial beings are, by nature, inferior to human beings, for only these latter can attain mokṣa. The *ārḥats*, including the *tirthaṅkaras*, represent a state of human perfection, in which the *ātman*, freed from all attachment and totally purified, experiences perfect knowledge.¹⁹⁴ It must also be added that, to lesser degrees, the ascetics also find a place among the *devas*, in the sense that they are on the path of Realisation, of the *ātman*, and are thus worthy of veneration. This concept of *deva* is, moreover, pictorially conveyed at Devāgadhā where there are present images not only of tirthaṅkaras but also of *ācāryas*, *upādhyāyas*, *munis*, and *āryikās* as well as some of eminent *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* such as the parents of *tirthaṅkaras*. As for the representation of divine beings which are also to be observed in these temples, as in a great number of Jaina temples, these depict *yakṣis* or *śāsana-devīs*. These by definition belong to the class of semi-divine beings; in actual fact they are often called: *devī* (goddess). Each *tirthaṅkara* has a *yakṣa* or *yakṣī* who is his guardian or messenger, the favourite being Āmbikā Mātā, the *yakṣī* of Neminātha, and Cakreśvārī, that of Ādinātha.¹⁹⁵ It is more than possible that the *yakṣas* and *yakṣis*, like the *vṛkṣas* (trees), belong to an earlier religious cult and were adopted by the Jains in the course of the development of their own piety.¹⁹⁶ It is noticeable that at

¹⁹⁴ The concept of *deva* here refers to the supreme Realisation of the *ātman* in human beings.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. Bhattacharaya, 1974, ch. II; figs. XXX-XXXI; XXXIII-XXXIX; XLIV-XLVI. Sometimes a *yakṣī* has acquired a position of such importance in the worship that she has supplanted her Lord; cf. Settar, 1975, p. 40, where he quotes as example Padmavati, the *yakṣī* of Pārśvanātha. Jvālāmālīnī, the *yakṣī* of Candraprabhānātha (8th *tirthaṅkara*) was the object of such devotion that an entire text, the Jvālīnikalpa, was consecrated to her in the Xth c. by Indranandī; cf. Singh, 1975, p. 53.

¹⁹⁶ We may note that there are no representations of *yakṣas* or *yakṣis* among the Mathurā sculptures; cf. U.P. Shah, 1975, pp. 49-74; and, 1955, p. 19: "The traditional period witnessed, in c. 8th century A.D., the introduction of the twenty-four *yakṣas* and *yakṣinis*, as attendants of different Tirthaṅkaras." cf. TriSaIPC IX, 3, 362-365; X, 5, 11-13, for the *yakṣis* of Pārśvanātha and Mahāvira.

Devagadhā, along with Ambikā Mātā and Cakresvāni, an important role has been given to *Sarasvatī*, or *śrūta-devatā*, the goddess of the knowledge of Scripture.¹⁹⁷ Other minor goddesses, such as the sixteen *vidyā-devīs*, goddesses of knowledge, are also often represented in iconography.¹⁹⁸

The first temples of Devagadhā probably date back to the Gupta era (circa 320-600),¹⁹⁹ but of these sanctuaries only some scattered fragments remain. The most ancient of the extant temples was built at some date between the VIIIth and IXth centuries,²⁰⁰ while others go back to the Xth century or later. Devagadhā is also noted for its *stambhas* (pillars) and its numerous sculptures.²⁰¹ Among the many brief inscriptions one finds some mentioning the names of āryikās and there are also some statues portraying them:

-In temple number twenty, an inscription of *saṃvat* 1135 (1079) mentions the name of Āryikā Lavaṇa Śrī.²⁰²

197 Cf. Meister, 1975, pp. 231-236. *Śrūta* is one of the forms of *jñāna*, knowledge; cf. TS I, 9. *Sarasvatī*, in the Rg Veda, is the name of a goddess-river; at a later period *Sarasvatī* is the goddess of knowledge, of wisdom, and it is in this guise that the Jains have adopted her and that she is nowadays known and honoured in all the different regions; cf. Bhattacharya, 1974, figs. XL-XLII. The rite of *pratīkramaṇa* among the Mūrtipūjaka sādhis includes a paean of praise to *śrūta-devatā*; cf. *Pañcapratīkramaṇa-sūtra* (37).

198 Cf. Bhattacharya, *ibid.*, ch. VI

199 Cf. Agrawala, 1976, p. 10.

200 Cf. Meister, 1975, p. 223; this temple is No 12.

201 Cf. Bruhn, 1969, p. 1 "...of greater importance than the temples are 1000-1100 images in the temples or in the open air."

202 JSilalekhSam, vol. 5, inscr. 50, p. 33.

-In temple number sixteen, certain partly effaced and therefore illegible inscription do not permit us to decipher either the date or the reason for which certain names are engraved; however, we may guess that they are the names of donors or of visiting pilgrims. Among these names we find those of:

Ārjikā Sirimā, Ārjikā Padma Śri, Saṁjama Śri, Ratna Śri, Lalita Śri, Jaya Śri.

In the case of certain of these the name is followed by: "*praṇamati*" lit. she bows as a sign of reverence, respect, submission. This indicates, perhaps, that these inscriptions were offered as a sign of homage to the *arhats* whose statues were in the temple.²⁰³

-A piece of sculpture of a period between the Xth and XIIth centuries is composed of the following group: an *upādhyāya* seated centrally and holding a text of scripture; on either side a seated muni, apparently preaching; behind them, standing, two munis holding their *picchikās* (small brooms); on the pedestal, several *sthāpanās*, tripods symbolising the presence of the ācārya in front of which some munis and āryikās are prostrating themselves as a sign of veneration.²⁰⁴

-In temple number ten of the XVIth or XVIIth century there are two statues of an āryikā in the *dhyānamudrā* posture, each positioned in a niche of column two with an illegible inscription above.

-Inside the niches of columns one and three are found two images of *kṣullikās* in standing posture. Near each, the *picchikā* and *kamaṇḍalu* are discernible, while to the left of the second a śrāvikā is seated. Here also the inscriptions are illegible.²⁰⁵

²⁰³ Ibid., insers. 352; 354, p. 119. Prof. Johrapurkar in reply to my question said he thought that these texts being so fragmentary, one could not be certain of their meaning and that it is possible that the images were those of āryikās before whom āryikās on pilgrimage used to bow in reverence.

²⁰⁴ Fisher & Jain, 1977, fig. 56; the No of the temple is not given. For *sthāpanā* cf. P 481.

²⁰⁵ Jñānamati, 1976, p. 11, figs. 2-5; these carvings (columns 2 and 1) are attributed there to the VIth and VIIIth c., but they are in all probability of a

b) Out of the exuberance of Khajurāho

In the depths of the countryside, among some thirty temples dedicated to Śiva and Viṣṇu, are to be found three important Jaina temples and about six others in varying degrees of preservation. The temples of Khajurāho, whose architecture and location combine to impart to them a harmonious overall effect and an extraordinary delicacy of detail, belong to the age of the kings of Candella's line who ruled for a period of about one hundred years, 950-1050 A.D.²⁰⁶ of the three major Jaina temples, one is dedicated to Pārśvanātha, a second to Ādinātha and the third is called Ghaṇṭai, from ghaṇṭā: a bell, on account of the motifs in the shape of chains of small bells carved all over its pillars.²⁰⁷ A fourth temple and certain sanctuaries are dedicated to Śaṇṭinātha.²⁰⁸

The temple of Pārśvanātha, which is of great beauty, includes (from the base upwards) three panels, one above the other, of sculpture-work representing gods, goddesses, apsarās (nymphs), divine consorts and pairs of vidyādharas, fairy-like beings that possess magical powers.²⁰⁹ Thus, a temple dedicated to an arhat who both followed and taught the way of asceticism blends harmoniously in its lay-out and in its wealth of sculptured figures with the temples dedicated to Śiva and Viṣṇu. This exuberant vitality and expression of rapturous enjoyment of all kinds, which emanates from the whole group of Khajurāho temples, in no way detracts from the message of the ascetics. We know that the world of the gods is a world of pleasure, the nature of the pleasure depending on the category to which the gods belong. But this state of imperfect happiness

considerably later date. We must also note that: "In contradistinction to the 'ācārya', a monk is never represented with a book. Nuns are distinguished from monks by the fact that they are dressed. Monks and nuns are always represented as miniature-figures." Bruhn, 1969, p. 24.

²⁰⁶ Cf. Agrawala, 1976, p. 26.

²⁰⁷ Cf. Deva, 1975, p. 261.

²⁰⁸ Ibid. p. 257.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.; pp. 257-258.

constitutes just a stage; once this stage is concluded, birth in a human body will usher in the final stage which, through the practice of asceticism, will lead to Liberation and perfect well-being. This is the goal of which the statues of the arhats remind us. Moreover, among all the exuberance, we find in the temple of Śāntinātha one single inscription mentioning an āryikā, which is an almost certain indication that other āryikās also passed that way. This inscription is on the pedestal of an image of a *jina* and records that: the fifth day of the bright fortnight of *māgha* (January-February) of *saṃvat* 1215 (1158), Paṇḍita Śrī Rājanandi of the Deśigaṇa, his disciple Śrī Manukirti and Āryikā Meku Śrī paid continual homage to Lord Abhinandana.²¹⁰

c) The Ateraśākha

This *śākha*, which takes its name from Atera, a town of Mādhyā Pradeśa, was a dependency of the Balātkāragāṇa. Among the documents one finds the names of certain āryikās of the XVth and XVIth centuries; they were probably of that region or of neighboring provinces:

-The fifth day of the bright fortnight of *phālguna* (February-March) of *saṃvat* 1531 (1475), Bhaṭṭāraka Śirṃhakirti installed a *kalikunḍa-yantra* for ksullikā Śrī Āgama Śrī.²¹¹

-The second day of the dark fortnight of *śrāvana* (July-August) of *saṃvat* 1621 (1565), the names of Āryā Śrī Cāitra Śrī and of her disciple Guṇasundari are mentioned in connection with a

²¹⁰ Abhinandanasvāminam nityam praṇamanti, JsilalekhSam, vol. 5, inscr. 100, p. 47; Abhinandana is the 4th tīrthāṅkara

²¹¹ BhattSamp, No 308; pp. 126; 132. *Yantra*: a diagram made by tracing one or several *mantras*, syllables or words possessing supernatural power, positioned according to exact rules, generally inside a circle or some other geometrical figure. *Yantras* are often engraved in brass. They are used, in accordance with a specified ritual, at a certain moment in the *pūjā*, at the erection of a statue, at a *dikṣā* and on other ceremonial occasions. Of the most important *yantras*, we are familiar with 48; cf. JSK III, p. 358. This practice is restricted to the Digambaras and is probably due to Tantric influence; cf. P 656, n.57.

Yaśodharacaritra copied by Paṇḍita Garibadāsa, an inhabitant of Alvāra, for Hirā Bāi and Candā Bāi.²¹²

d) The Kāranjāsākhā, the Nanditagaṇaccha and the Sepagaṇa

Kāranjā, a small town of Mahārāṣṭra was the headquarters of a *śākhā* belonging, like the preceding, to the Balātkāragaṇa. In the archives of the Bhaṭṭārakas of this *śākhā*, one finds some names of āryikās of the XVIth XVIIIth centuries.

-At Eraṇḍavela, the fifth day of the dark fortnight of *kārttika* (October-November) of *samvat* 1641 (1565), Muni Śrī Devendrakīrti copied an *Ambikārāsa* for Harṣamati Bāi.²¹³

-The fifth day of the bright fortnight of *bhādra* (August-September) of *samvat* 1787 (1731), when Bhaṭṭāraka Devendrakīrti was at Sūrata, he had a copy made for Āryikā Pāsamati of a *Kathākośa* composed by Bhaṭṭāraka Śrī Candra.²¹⁴

²¹² Ibid., No 309; pp. 127; 132. Hirā Bāi and Candā Bāi are very probably āryikā, Guṇasundarī, the text implies, is a very zealous kṣullikā, for the adjective *tapasguṇarājimati* seems to refer to her: the one whose penitence and nobility of disposition resembled those of Rājimati. *Yaśodharacaritra*: a narrative stressing the importance of *ahimsā*, of which King Yaśodhara is the hero (explanations furnished by Prof. Johrapurkar).

²¹³ Ibid., No 109; pp. 51; 71. Harṣamati Bāi, same comment as in preceding note. *Rāsa*, a word frequently employed in Gujarāṭa, denotes a story written for performance in song, this particular one being composed in honour of the yakṣī Ambikā.

²¹⁴ Ibid. No 159; pp. 61; 74. This Bhaṭṭāraka travelled widely. Āryikā Pāsamati, belonging to this same *śākhā*, was probably a native of Mahārāṣṭra, even if the text destined for her use had been copied out in Gujarāṭa. *Kathākośa*: a collection of religious stories. "These are stories to illustrate the verses of Aradhana of Śivārya. The *Kathākośa* of Śrī Candra is in Apabhraṃśa, published in *Prākṛit Text Series* edited by the late Dr. H.L. Jain; the title is *Kahakosu*." (n. of Prof. Johrapurkar).

-In *saṃvat* 1828 (1772), the disciple of Bhaṭṭāraka Dharmacandra, Vṛṣabha, at the request of Āryikās Śāntamati and Indumati, composed a *Ravivṛatakathā*.²¹⁵

There is one reference to the Nanditāṭagaccha, which takes its name from present-day Nandeda on the banks of the Godavari in the Marathavada region of Mahārāṣṭra; although its headquarters was in Gujārāta, this *gaccha* belonged to the Kāṣṭhāsraṅgha.

-The eleventh day of the dark fortnight of *vaiśākha* (April-May) of *saṃvat* 1604 (1547), an image of Pārśvanātha was erected by Bhaṭṭāraka Śrī Vidyābhūṣana at the request of Anantamati Bāi who had received *dikṣā*.²¹⁶

-The Senagaṇa had also a centre at Kāranjā. A single reference: In the village of Devala in *saṃvat* 1816 (1760), one Vānārsidāsa, a disciple of Śrī Ārjikā Śrī Sikhara Śrīji (herself the disciple of Bhaṭṭāraka Śāntisena) made a copy of a *Harivaṃśarāsa*.²¹⁷

If we take into consideration the inscriptions, works of sculpture and frequent mention of the copying-out of texts, we see that in Madhya Pradeśa and Mahārāṣṭra the āryikās were both in evidence

²¹⁵ Ibid., No 181; pp. 66; 75; *ravivṛata* or *ravivāravṛata*: a sunday-vow, which consists in fasting on 9 consecutive sundays over a period of 9 years. The period of 9 sundays starts on the last sunday of the bright fortnight of *aṣāḍha* (June-July); in addition to the fast, one must practise *japa*, the meditative and repetitive recitation of the *Namaskāra-mantra*; cf. JSK III; p. 406. The *Ravivṛatakathā* is a narrative illustrating the benefits accruing from this vow; cf. Johrapurkar, "vṛatakathā in old Marāṭhi", 1978, pp. 1-4.

²¹⁶ BhaṭṭSamp, No 676; pp. 271; 295. Anantamati Bāi is called: *grhitadikṣā*, she had received *dikṣā* as a *kṣullikā* or āryikā.

²¹⁷ Ibid., No 73; pp. 22; 34. Devala is probably present-day Deulgaon in the Dt. of Buldānā in Mahārāṣṭra. *Harivaṃśarāsa*: a condensed version of the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*, a Jaina version of the *Mahābhārata* of which the 1st Sanskrit text was made in the VIIIth c. by Jināsena, other texts being edited later in Apabhraṃśa (a Prākṛit dialect).

and highly respected in the *saṃgha*. The references to the texts copied for them gives us an idea of the spirituality which inspired them and the type of worship they offered day by day. Among the Digambaras this worship is very elaborate, although their temples, by contrast, are generally very plain, particularly as regards images of the *arhats*. Herein is a contradiction, which is to be explained in part by the adoption, in the course of centuries, of external elements into their worship-forms and devotion and by the integration of them into already existing patterns.

There remain to be mentioned the cave-temples of Elāpura, all Digambara,²¹⁸ which form part of this extraordinarily rich and magnificent complex of architecture and sculpture. Among the images of *arhats* and of *yakṣas* and *yakṣis*, including Ambikā Mātā, one discovers in a bas-relief below the figure of Pārśvanātha, representations of a muni and an āryikā in meditative pose.²¹⁹

²¹⁸ Cf. Pereira, 1977.

²¹⁹ Cf. Fisher & Jain, 1977; fig. 37 of the 'little Kailāś'a, dated *circa* IXth c.

F - Fervent faith in Kaṇṇāṭaka

As we proceed on our tour we arrive in the South, as the munis, who left Magadha at the time of the great famine and established themselves in Kaṇṇāṭaka under the guidance of Ārya Bhadrabāhu, were obliged to do.²²⁰ Why did they choose to go so far and why to this area? One can scarcely explain it by obvious reasons, but it may very well have been, as has been suggested, that it was due to the already existing presence of a Jaina community in these kingdoms of the South.²²¹ This supposition seems plausible, for if a considerable number of munis were involved, it would be normal to betake themselves to places where they could be received in friendly fashion by members of the *Samgha*. According to this tradition the presence of Jainas in the region, which included also part of present-day Āndhra Pradesh, would date back to about the IVth century before our era.²²² From the first centuries of our era up until the XIIIth -XIVth centuries doctrinal and grammatical treatises and literary works, as well as epigraphical documentation, all bear witness to a very flourishing period in the history of Jainism. This was probably due, on the one hand, to the zeal, flexibility and adaptability of the munis and also to the patronage of a line of sovereigns, especially those belonging to the dynasty of the Gaṅgas established in the South of Kaṇṇāṭaka, who had adopted Jainism as state religion. Other sovereigns of neighbouring principedoms, those of the Kadamba dynasty, if they did not all embrace the Jaina faith themselves, at least showed tolerance, benevolence and generosity towards it in varying

²²⁰ Cf. P 131

²²¹ Cf. Chakravarti, 1974, pp. 10-12.

²²² *Ibid.* p. 13.

ways.²²³ Literature, iconography, architecture and sculpture knew at that time a vigour of which traces still remain today.²²⁴

Kaṇṇāṭaka, the home of the Kannaḍa language, was on account of its geographical situation, the serene beauty of its variegated countryside, its climate and the benevolent attitude adopted by most of the rulers of the princely states in its territory, an area highly favourable to a peaceful and deeply-rooted implantation of the Jaina *dharma* in co-existence with other *dharmas*. The etymological origin of *Kaṇṇāṭa* and its meaning are uncertain. Some have proposed: *kar-nāḍu*, black country, with black soil, good for cotton-growing; or again: *kammitu-nāḍu*, fragrant country, because of its forests of *candana* (sandal-wood) and its numerous pools where the lotus flourishes.²²⁵

In this peaceable countryside the *śrāvikās*, members of differing classes in society, openly evidenced their faith. Here, probably for the first time in history since Maḥāvira, the ladies of the nobility, wives of generals and officials, showed themselves to be zealous disciples of the *arhats* and gave an initial impulse in which other *śrāvikās* then

²²³ Cf. Deo, 1956, pp. 122-129; Singh, 1975, chs. I-II.

²²⁴ "Jainism was the dominating religious faith of this region for centuries...Jainism had penetrated into almost every nook and corner of this province; and wherever we go, our searching eyes are confronted with the Jaina relics, temples, sculptures and inscriptions. This is perhaps true in greater measure in respect of the unexplored area of the Hyderabad Kaṇṇāṭaka." Desai, 1957, p. 174. Cf. Dhaky, 1975 a, b, pp. 185-204; Mankodi, 1975, pp. 205-214. Towards the end of the XIVth c., the sovereigns of the line of the Kalaṣas, who were fervent Jainas, instigated the erection of numerous temples of great artistic value and the setting-up of *bhaṇḍāras* in the South-East of the country: these treasures are preserved in the districts of Tuḷunāḍu, Mūḍabidure, Kārakaḷa and Vēṇūru; cf. Ramesh, 1975, pp. 109-122.

²²⁵ Cf. Narasimhacharya, 1969, p.42.

joined.²²⁶ We recapture here, but in another age and in other places, the atmosphere which must have prevailed at Mathurā. In Karmāṭaka, if the śrāvikās of princely and noble circles enjoyed great riches, their generosity in regards to all that had to do with cultic practice, that is, temples, sanctuaries, images, as well as to religion and culture in general, was proportionate to these riches. This generosity was the expression of ardent faith and devotion. The example is often given of Attimabbe of the Xth century, the daughter of General Malappa and wife of Nāgadeva, who had a thousand copies made of the *Śāntipurāṇa*, the work in Kannada of the writer and poet Poona, and had erected one thousand similar munificence in lesser degrees. To give another example, we may mention Jakkīyabbe of the same epoch, a widow and capable administrator of her principality, who not only showed zeal for the *dharma* but also, when afflicted with an illness, decided to abandon her goods and her own body by undertaking the vow of *saṃlekhanā*, the Absolute Fast.²²⁷ Later, at the beginning of the XIIth century, when the influence of the *dharma* was on the decline, Queen Śāntaladevi, wife of King Viṣṇuvardhana, displayed a lavish generosity in gifts in kind, such as food, shelter and books, for the ascetics. She had built at Śravaṇa Beḷgoḷa the temple of Savatigandhavāraṇa, adorned with a statue of Śāntinātha, and offered as a gift to her spiritual master the village of Mottenavile for the benefit of the faithful. Then she too ended her life by the Great Fast.²²⁸

This short introduction to the social environment in which for a period of about ten centuries the āryikās lived their lives would be incomplete if one omitted to mention several factors: the Jaina *saṃgha* was undeniably, and throughout the whole of the South, directed by Digambara munis, of whom the most outstanding were

²²⁶ Cf. Saleore, 1938, ch. V "Women as defenders of the faith."

²²⁷ Ibid., pp. 155-156; cf. P 567 ff.

²²⁸ At Śivagaṅga in 1131; *ibid.*, pp. 166-167.

closely involved in the affairs of this world, through their close bonds with the ruling families. Consequently, it seems that the original strictness of their sect was somewhat relaxed and that adopted local customs in the same way as did their Śvetāmbara counterparts of Gujarāta and elsewhere, with the aim and object, no doubt, for furthering the deep-rootedness of the *dharma* among the population, even, on occasion, of preventing its eradication.²²⁹ Connected with this first, there is a second factor to be considered: the presence of a sect which probably originated in the North of Karmāṭaka, namely, that of the Yāpaniyas, whose history is little known up to the present day. It had, it would appear, considerable influence on account of its liberal views, but petered out towards the XVIIth century at the time when Jainism had lost its ascendancy in the kingdoms of the South. The Yāpaniyas were in evidence in both Karmāṭaka and Tamiḷ Nādu. They were neither wholly Śvetāmbara, it is said, nor wholly Digambara and they combined beliefs and practices culled from both. Their munis observed nudity; moreover - and this is very important - they had a liberal attitude towards women, according to them the same rights as to men, that is to say, a right to *mokṣa*, which, so they believed, was attainable by śrāvakas and śrāvikās alike. Their attitude towards other *dharma*s showed a similar open-ness, for they admitted that their members also could reach Liberation. It seems that their Scriptures were those of the Śvetāmbaras.²³⁰ It is probable that, in addition to their own disciples, they influenced the members of other sects also and that the general attitude towards women was thus characterised by less doctrinal strictness.

We come now to the centre, the heart, of this whole religious movement: Śravaṇa Belgola.

²²⁹ There were Śvetāmbaras also in Karmāṭaka and in the region of Āndhra, where their presence is clearly indicated up to the XVIth century; cf. Desai, 1957, Preface, p. xi

²³⁰ Ibid., pp. 163-164; 167-168; cf. JSK I, pp. 346-347 (24). For a more thorough study, cf. Upadhye, 1974.

a) At the White Lake of the Śramaṇas: Śravaṇa Beḷgoḷa

From ancient times, according to Digambara tradition, ever since the coming of Bhadrabāhu in about the year 365 B.C. Śravaṇa Beḷgoḷa has been a high place of Jainism. It is even recounted that it was there that Bhadrabāhu ended his earthly existence by the Absolute Fast, in the presence of his disciple Candragupta.²³¹ The town of Śravaṇa Beḷgoḷa is in the depths of the country, close to a small lake and surrounded by two rocky hills called Cikkabeḷṭa, the little hill, and Doddabeḷṭa, the large hill, or Candragiri, in memory of Candragupta, and Indragiri. The austere beauty of this place is in perfect harmony with the spirit of Jaina asceticism. Among the temples of differing epochs, with their statues and pillars bestrewn amongst these windswept rocks, are to be found numerous inscriptions, of which several refer to āryikās. There is this point in particular about these inscriptions: they nearly all describe, sometimes in expressive and poetic terms, the Great Departure, on one or other of these hills, of certain āryikās. This fact alone is enough to justify the veneration of the Jainas of the region for these places. One notes that the words used to designate the āryikās are: *ganti*, *gantiyar*, *kanti*, *kantiyar*, *kantiyār*, *arya*, or simply: *matī*, *matī* added to the person's name; one finds also the word *avve*, used for a lady of repute, not necessarily an āryikā. Here are the texts of a few of these inscriptions.²³² With the exception of the last, they are all of the VIIth century and are found on Cikkabeḷṭa (Candragiri).

²³¹ Cf. DravSam, Introd. pp. xxv-xxvi. This disciple has often been identified with Candragupta, the Mauryan King of Magadha. In a recently published and most thorough study, however, Vasantharaj, relying both on Jaina and Buddhist literary sources and on the inscriptions of Śravaṇa Beḷgoḷa, comes to this conclusion: "A search, thus, into the ancient literary record brings to light the reign of a king by name 'Nanda-Chandragupta' prior to the rule of Maurya Chandragupta, and in addition it reveals that it is this Chandragupta who is referred to in Bhadrabāhu Kathā. This King Nanda Candragupta reigned 372-367 B.C.; cf. Vasantharaj, 1981.

²³² We give here the English translation of the texts of EC, Vol. II, Institute of Kanaḍa Studies, 2nd revised edition, Mysore, 1973.

-Nāgamati-gantiyar, female disciple of Mōṇi-guravaḍigaḷ of Chittūr-nāḍu, having observed the vow for three months, ended her life.²³³

-Success! Possessed of noble qualities and devotional acts, of extensive study, Śasimatiganti, of stainless penance and virtue, came to Kaṭvappu and, seeing the length of her life and saying: "this is the course I have to follow", observed the vow of *ārādhana* on the top of the holy mountain (*tirthagiri*) and ascended the abode of heaven.²³⁴

-Rājñimati-ganti of the Āji-gaṇa, of the holy Namilūra -saṁgha, pre-eminent for her pure conduct and virtues, excelling other pious people, saying: "this is good for me to day", went up to the hill, adopted *sanyāsana*. . .and ascended to the abode of heaven.²³⁵

-Prabhāvatī of the fortunate Namilūra-saṁgha...having observed the vow on this mountain, attained a body endowed with natural beauty. The nun Amitamati of the Mayūragrāma-saṁgha, staying in the middle of the Kaṭvapra mountain, accomplished *samādhi*.²³⁶

-On Wednesday, the fifth lunar day of the bright fortnight of Phālguna, in the śaka year 1041, the year Viḷambi, Śrīmatiganti, ending her life by the rite of *sanyāsana*, went to the world of the gods. Her good penance being immense, the meritorious

²³³ EC, Vol. II, Śravaṇabelgoḷa, inscr. 23; p. 367.

²³⁴ Ibid., inscr. 86; p. 397.

²³⁵ Ibid., inscr. 112; p. 401.

²³⁶ Ibid., inscr. 132; p. 404

Mām̐kabbe-ganti, adorned with the ornaments of good qualities, caused to be set up this epitaph to her great guru.²³⁷

The last inscription is not found on either of the hills, but in the village itself. It bears not only to the fervour of Śrīmati-ganti, but also to the veneration in which she was held by her disciple Mām̐kabbe-ganti. One observes that the name of the *Saṁgha* to which an āryikā belonged is sometimes given, also the name of the ācārya. To denote this final step of the abandonment of the body by way of ritual fasting until the Great Departure, the following words are employed: *ārādhana*, adoration; *sanyāsana*, renunciation, abandonment; *saṁādhi*, deep concentration upon the *ātman*, all of them words charged with profound meaning for the faithful of that day.

Of certain other inscriptions some are very brief and others partly effaced:

-On Cikkabeṭṭa (Candragiri) two inscriptions of the VIIIth century name: Saundaryā Āryā, who attained *saṁādhi*, and Guṇamati-avve.²³⁸

-An inscription of the Xth century mentions: Sāyibbe-kantiyar;²³⁹ and an epitaph of the XIth century in a poor state of preservation mentions: Pollabe-kantiyar.²⁴⁰

²³⁷ Ibid., inscr. 484; p. 523; śaka year 1041: 1119 of our era. The śaka era was founded by Śalivāhana in 78 A.D.

²³⁸ Ibid., inscr. 123; p. 403; inscr. 129; p. 404.

²³⁹ Ibid., inscr. 168; p. 423.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., inscr. 203; p. 438.

-On Doḍḍabeṭṭa (Indragiri) an inscription of the XIIth century gives the names of: Gaurāśri-kanti, Somaśri-kanti, Dēvaśri-kanti, Kanakaśri-kanti.²⁴¹

-In the village an inscription of the XIIth century mentions Kaṇṇabe-kanti.²⁴²

Again, it is at Śravaṇa Belgōḷa, towards the end of the XIth century that Cāmuṇḍarāya, the high official and General of Rājamalla Satyavākya (or Racamalla), one of the monarchs of the Gaṅga dynasty, had erected on the summit of Doḍḍabeṭṭa the gigantic statue of Bāhubali, son of Ādinātha, who, having renounced his kingship, became a *mahāyogin*. The deep inner reality of this state is conveyed by this statue, carved out of the rock with gracefulness and a profound aesthetic sense, better than by all the treatises on doctrine. This *mahāpuruṣa* through its complete nudity, its attitude of *kāyotsarga*, its deeply-concentrated expression, which is at one and the same time intent and serene, transmits perfectly the message of the Jaina *dharma*.²⁴³

²⁴¹ Ibid., inscr. 374; p.488; the rest being illegible, the reason for which these names were engraved is not known.

²⁴² Ibid., inscr. 521; p. 530.

²⁴³ We cannot resist quoting at this point the following beautiful description of the Bāhubali statue: "The carving of the almost rounded head (measuring 7,6 feet or 2,2m in height) erect, facing the north, with a sublime composure, is a marvellous composition of any age. The half closed and long contemplative eyes with gaze turned upwards, the tip of the sharp and sensitive nose, the well-shaped pouting lips wearing a benign and serene smile, could be discerned from any angle from which the viewer or the devotee gazes at the colossus. The rounded face with sharp and sensitive nose, the slightly projected and dimpled chin and the imperceptibly high cheek, the long-lobed ears, and the subdued and voluted curls of locks on the pate, a few rebellious ones invading the broad forehead (*lalāṭa-phalaka*), all go to enhance the grace and charm of the sculpture. . . The stark nudity of the sculpture indicates with force the absolute renunciation and self-control of a Jina. At the same time the severity of the pose is offset by the mildness of

If Śravaṇa Belgōḷa was an remains a unique spot where faith and the devotion it kindles are, as it were, condensed, inspiring numerous pilgrims of all ages who have climbed these rocky hills, nevertheless one finds in many other places of this same region traces of this same firm faith.

b) A Queen and certain others. . .

-An epigraph of the end of the Xth century relates how Queen Pāmbabbe, who was probably of the royal family of the Gaṅgas, a disciple of Nāṇabbe-kanti who was herself a disciple of Abhinandi Paṇḍitadeva of the Deśiyagaṇa, embraced the path of asceticism and lived a life of severe penance for thirty years.²⁴⁴

-Another epigraph of Maṇṇe, in the district of Nelamangala mentions the great departure of Mārabbe-kantiyār, disciple of Devendra Bhaṭṭāraka, in the year about 1000.²⁴⁵

-At Honnūru, in the district of Kolhāpura, an undated inscription mentions the building of a temple constructed by Bammagāvunḍa, a śrāvaka, disciple of Kanti Rātrimati (Kāntimati?).²⁴⁶

The following inscriptions are in the possession of the Bhaṭṭārakas of the Saurāṣṭragaṇa, who had also affiliations in the South.

the contemplative gaze. . ." Srinivasan, 1975, pp. 177-178; cf. also the magnificent issue of *Marg*, vol. XXXIII No 3 (Bombay), in homage to Bāhubali and Śravaṇa Belgōḷa, on the occasion of the *mahāmastakābhiṣeka*, the great anointing of the head of the statue, February 1981.

²⁴⁴ Cf. Saleatore, 1938, p. 157.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 257.

²⁴⁶ Cf. Desai, 1957, pp. 119; 166; 169. Desai suggests circa 1110 as a possible date. This āryikā belonged to the Punnāgavṛkṣamūlagaṇa, a branch of the Nandisamgha (usually associated with the Yāpaniyyas).

-At Soratūru an inscription of 1071 relates a somewhat unusual fact: General Baladevalayya commissioned the building of a temple and entrusted the oversight of the task, and also that of the adjoining property to Huliyabbājjike, an āryikā disciple of Śrinandī Paṇḍita of the Saurāṣṭragaṇa.²⁴⁷

This āryikā must have been somewhat exceptional, for as a rule responsibilities of this kind were entrusted to munis.

-At Gudigere, in the district of Dhāravāra, in 1076, Aṣṭōpavāsi Kantiyār (Kantiyār of the eight fasts), disciple of Śrinandī Paṇḍita, made at the request of this latter, a gift of a piece of land for the temple of Pārśvanātha.²⁴⁸

-In the place called Somavāra an inscription dated the seventh day of the bright fortnight of *bhādra* (August-September) of śaka 1017 (1095) mentions the name of Arsabbe Gantiyar, disciple of Bhaṭṭāraka Ramacandra of the Saurāṣṭragaṇa.²⁴⁹

After the XIIIth century, inscriptions are found more rarely and among those that are known, no mention, it seems, is made of the names of āryikās; this indeed, is in keeping with the slow decline of Jainism in the region, a decline that was due to political, social and religious factors. The influence of the great Śrivaishnavite sage, Rāmānuja, a Master of great power who set forth the doctrine of

²⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 143-145; 169; Huliyabbe-ajjike, *ajjike* for āryikā; disciple: *śishyinti*.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., pp.144; 169. A question arises, viz., since an āryikā after *dikṣā* no longer owns any property, so was there perhaps in existence a less strict sect as regards *aparigraha*? Or had this kantiyār not yet pronounced the *mahāvratas*?

²⁴⁹ BhattSamp, No 13; pp. 7; 29.

viśiṣṭādvaita,²⁵⁰ was considerable throughout the South. King Viṣṇuvardhana of the Hoysāḷa dynasty was converted to Vaiṣṇavism and subsequently his descendants in the same dynasty adopted that *dharma*.²⁵¹

Directly the monarchs, princes, officials of state and generals ceased, though without showing hostility, to take an interest in the Jaina *dharma* or to popularise its doctrine or promote its worship by gifts of land or money for the erection of temples, shrines and images, the *Samgha* gradually subsided into being a minority group which, without losing its fervour in the faith, found itself turning inwards again and exercising less impact on local society. This state of affairs continued during the following centuries. It must be added that this progressive decline was also due later on to a considerable animosity towards the Jainas on the part of the *viraśaivas* or *līṅgāyats*, which resulted, it is thought, in a conversion of Jainas to that religious sect. The *saṃgha*, now very reduced in numbers, found itself less and less able to see to the preservation of its temples, of which many now fell into ruins, or to make inventories of the manuscripts held in the *bhaṇḍāras*, which were of inestimable value, especially those located in the headquarters of the Bhaṭṭāraḱas.

However, a flame still burns, the hearth-stone of glowing faith at Śravaṇa Beḷgola has never been extinguished. High up on the summit of the hill Bāhubali continues to bear witness to the *dharma*, teaching it simply by his presence there, not only to Jaina pilgrims, but to pilgrims of all religions and nationalities.

c) The great Munis

While the much venerated statue of Bāhubali illumines the beholder by its very presence, numerous valuable written works bear witness to the profound thinking of the learned munis and poets of the region, their concern to clarify the doctrine and their literary productivity between the first centuries of our era and the XIIth.

²⁵⁰ I.e. *viśiṣṭādvaita*: (the doctrine of) qualified non-dualism.

²⁵¹ Cf. Deo, 1956, p.129; Saletore, 1938, p. 79.

Among authors best-known and most studied we may mention: Ācārya Kundakunda, among the early masters the greatest, whose numerous works include the *Samayasāra* and the *Pravacanasāra*.²⁵² Opinions differ as to the age in which he lived: the IInd century perhaps, or later. It is not known exactly where he was born, but it was very probably in this region.²⁵³ He is mentioned in inscriptions at Śravaṇa Belgola.²⁵⁴

- Vācakara Umāsvāti, the author of the *Tattvārtha-sūtra*, a basic doctrinal work regarded as authoritative by all the Jāinas. According to Digambara tradition he was probably, if not a direct disciple, at least in the spiritual line descended from Kundakunda; he too is mentioned in some inscriptions at Śravaṇa Belgola.²⁵⁵

- Pūjyapāda (Devanandi) of the Vth or VIth century, a grammarian, poet and philosopher, famous for his commentary on the *Tattvārtha-sūtra*, the *Sarvārtasiddhi*.²⁵⁶

²⁵² Cf. Upadhye, PSa, Introd., pp. 23-120 for the works of Kundakunda and an exhaustive introd. to the PSa.

²⁵³ "... conclusive proof if now adduced to show that he hailed from Konakonḍha in the Gooty Taluk of Anantapur Dt. now in Ādhra State. This village formerly belonged to Karnāṭaka and its earlier name was koṇḍakunda. This conclusion is arrived at after a critical examination of all the relevant material on the subject including the local antiquities and inscriptions." Desai, 1957, Preface p. xi,

²⁵⁴ Cf. Upadhye, *ibid.*, p. 8. Kundakunda may have been the head of the Mūlasaṃgha which traces its origin as far back as the beginning of our era. cf. JSK I, pp. 340-341 for the lineage of the ācāryas of the Mūlasaṃgha.

²⁵⁵ Cf. Upadhye, *ibid.*, pp. 4-5. Malvania (TS Sukhlal Preface) puts the composition of the TS between the IVth and Vth centuries. Sukhlal, (*ibid.*, pp. 50-51) mentions that the text was in all probability written at Pāṭaliputra and thence concludes that Umāsvāti must have been a native of the East.

²⁵⁶ Cf. JSK III, pp. 81-82.

-Yogīndudeva, probably of the VIth century, author of the *Paramātmaprakāśa*, a jewel of Jaina mysticism.²⁵⁷

- Raviscna of the VIIth century, author of the *Padmapurāṇa*, a Jaina version of the *Rāmāyaṇa*.²⁵⁸

- Jinascna and Guṇabhadra of the IXth century, the authors of the *Mahāpurāṇa*.²⁵⁹

- Siddhānta Cakravartin Nemicaṇdra, the author of the *Dravyasaṅgraha*, the *Gommaṭasāra* and other important texts; he lived in the age when the erection of the statue of Bāhubali took place, at the end of the Xth century.²⁶⁰

At the end of the XIIth century Bālacandradeva, whose sphere of activity had its centre in Śravaṇa Belgola, published in Kannaḍa commentaries upon all the works of Ācārya Kundakunda. Moreover, in several inscriptions his name is held in high honour on account of his ascetic fervour.²⁶¹

With regard to the presence of the Jaina *dharma*, its growth and influence and continuing existence, in Āndhra Pradeśa, we have well-documented information up till nearly the XVIth century. It is very possible that, before the beginning of our era, munis from Kalinga

²⁵⁷ Cf. Upadhye, *Introd.* to this work.

²⁵⁸ Cf. JSK III, p. 406.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, II, p. 330; 245.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, II, p. 629; Siddhānta Cakravartin means: "he who like a ruler of the world has a mastery over the totality of the sacred writings." Winternitz, 1977, p. 585.

²⁶¹ Cf. Upadhye, *PSa*, *Introd.*, pp. 100-101.

established themselves in the North of this region where later, Buddhism found a foothold and, so it seems, proceeded to oppose Jainism. Then, on account of the powerful predominance of Islām, the *saṃgha* disappeared from Āndra Pradesh. There remain a few inscriptions here and there and some works of sculpture, but no place of worship, no centre of pilgrimage; moreover, local literature perhaps because of a latent antagonism on the part of other *dharma*, has retained no trace of any influence stemming from notable Jaina authors.²⁶²

²⁶² Cf. Desai, 1957, pp. 23-24. On account of the lack of a stable Jaina community, no specific historical study has been made of the *dharma* in the region.

G - In Tamiḷ Nāḍu: Rise and decline

From Śravaṇa Belgola and the surrounding district the munis certainly penetrated further towards the South, in the final centuries before our era, into that area possessed of great wealth and antiquity of language and culture: Tamiḷ Nāḍu, nāḍu, the country where Tamiḷ is spoken.

It has been established with certitude, thanks to numerous caves and caverns containing inscriptions in Tamiḷ-brāhmī,²⁶³ that round about the IIIrd and IIrd centuries B.C. these were the *pāḷis* (dwellings) of munis, situated at some distance from all other habitations, shielded from all inclemency of weather and fixed for occupation in a rudimentary fashion, just with bunks hewn out of the rock, one part being raised for the head, and a remarkably efficient system of water-drainage during the rains.²⁶⁴

At a later date, probably a little before the IVth c. A.D., these caves were adorned by images carved from the rock itself.²⁶⁵ Sometimes, as for example at Kalugumalai in the district of Tirunelveli, one gets a magnificent vista of images, of the twenty-four *tirthaṅkaras* carved out

²⁶³ These caves are for the most part situated in the districts of: North Arcot, Tirucirāpaḷḷi, Madurai, Tirunelveli; cf. Soundara Rajan, 1975, pp. 158-159 and figs. 1; 2; 10; 15; 26; 30; 32; N.B. Arcot is derived from Arkkāḍu and Arcatus (IIrd c. B.C. up till IIIrd c. A.D.); thereafter it becomes Arkāt (in the XVIIth and XVIIIth c.); cf. Atlas, pp. 20b; 24a; 46a.

²⁶⁴ Cf. Krishnan, 1975, p. 87 "The word *pāḷi* used in early times is found in the IXth century in the forms *pāḷi* and *paḷḷi* used simultaneously. There appears to be a sharp distinction between the two. *Pāḷi* seems to refer to the resting-place of the Jaina monks with their deities and *paḷḷi* refers to the entire establishment including the provisions made for the monastic order.", *ibid.*, p.88. cf. also Nagaswamy, 1975, p. 123; the inscs. in *brāhmī* found in these caves number up to 75; cf. Soundara Rajan, 1975, p. 139.

²⁶⁵ Cf. Nagaswamy, *ibid.*, p. 123.

of one immense rock in three lines, one above the other.²⁶⁶ Here, in these caverns, now turned into temples and centres of pilgrimage, homage was paid to the *arhats*; indeed, one finds there inscriptions of a much later date than those in *tamiḷ-brāhmī*, which mention the names of donors and chronicle the visits to these spots of both men and women pilgrims. In addition to images of the *arhats*, images of *yakṣas* and, more especially, of *yakṣis* were also fashioned. Little by little the munis returned to the built-up areas and lived on the outskirts of towns, as we shall see in the *Cilappatikāram*, though this did not prevent at least certain ones of them from returning to the caves.

The fact that the Jaina *dharma*, with its important centres located at Kāñci and Madurai, had a profound influence upon the religious and cultural life of that whole region is due above all to the spiritual and intellectual worth of the *ācāryās* and munis, supported by the members of the local *saṃghas*. It was never a state religion nor did it enjoy for centuries local patronage, as in Kārṇāṭaka. The dynasties which ruled over these territories, the Pāṇḍyas at Madurai, the Cēras at Uṛaiyūr and Vañci, the Pallavas at Kāñci, Tanjāvūr and Tirucirāpaḷli, the Cōḷas at Tanjāvūr and Tirunelveli proved themselves to be, if not benevolent, at least tolerant in their attitudes. From the epigraphs we are led to believe that the *dharma* was flourishing, particularly around Madurai and Tirunelveli, up to the VIIIth and IXth centuries, and that the *saṃgha* still remained active in the districts of Tirunelveli and North Arcot up till the XIth century.²⁶⁷ From the VIIth century onwards the Jaina *saṃgha* was obliged to face hostility aroused by several factors, the zeal of the Śaivite and Vaiṣṇavite Masters, the appearance on the scene of Śaṅkarācārya, the adoption of Śaivism by the last Pallava and Pāṇḍya kings.²⁶⁸ The Jaina *dharma* now suffered

²⁶⁶ Cf. Soundar a Rajan, *ibid.*, p. 159 and fig. 30.

²⁶⁷ Cf. Chakravarti, 1974, App. p. 139.

²⁶⁸ Cf. Deo, 1956, pp. 130-131. The term persecution has also been used; the opinions of historians and archaeologists are divided on this point. Religious zeal can lead to fanaticism and it is also possible that the harbouring of a hidden animosity may lead one to exaggerate the facts, but it

a progressive decline and gradually lost its prestige and ascendancy. It had, however, taken firm hold from the North of Tamiḻ Nāḍu right down to the far South; the region of Nāgarakōyil was an important centre and the famous temple of Nāgarāja was certainly a Jaina sanctuary before it became a place of Hindu worship.²⁶⁹ Another indication of the importance of the Jaina centres in the region of Cape Comorin is to be found in the inscriptions found in different parts of the area, which give the names of several learned munis and their disciples, natives of the region of Nāgarakōyil.²⁷⁰

To give a brief survey of the important contribution of Jaina scholars, for the most part monks, to the religious, literary and cultural achievement of the early centuries and up to the Middle Ages, we may mention the following works:

- The *Tolkāppiyam*, a detailed grammar, probably compiled by a Jaina author. This is the most ancient work of research known on the Tamiḻ language, divided into three major chapters dealing with letters, words and meaning; of these the last mentioned treats many subjects such as love and war.²⁷¹

cannot be denied that the Jainas were the object of open hostility, which contributed to the defection of a number of its members who went over to sects that had come into being out of Brahmanism.

269 Cf. Soundara Rajan, 1975, p. 158; this is a well-known and striking example of the transformation of a centre of Jaina worship into a sanctuary of some other religion, but there are many other examples also in these parts.

270 Cf. Padmanabhan, 1969, p.24.

271 Cf. Chakaravarti, 1974, pp. 19-28; Soundara Rajan, *ibid.*, p. 137. Opinions differ as to the date of its completion. It is very possible that this is an extremely ancient text of a time preceding our era. Some suggest the Vth c. B.C.

✓ The *Tirukkuraḷ*, a text made up of aphorisms and remarkable for the sublime ideal it lays before the reader; a highly respected and extremely popular guide-book, whose author, if not himself a Jaina, had certainly been strongly influenced by the *ahiṃsā-dharma*.²⁷²

- The *Nālaḍiyār*, a well-known ethical work with a Jaina flavour,²⁷³ as have also several texts belonging to the eighteen collections of didactic writings.²⁷⁴

- The *Jivaka-cintāmaṇi*, the *Vaḷaiyāpati* and the *Cilappatikāram*, three of the five great Poems which are of undoubted Jaina authorship.²⁷⁵

- Five less important Poems which are probably of Jaina authorship, *Yaśōdhara* being the work of a muni.²⁷⁶

- As the *Tirukkuraḷ* possesses a unique character and is of considerable importance, we shall try to make a brief survey of it and to disengage from it certain ideas that seem to have been inspired by the Jaina *dharma*. These ideas fit harmoniously into the rest of the work of which one of the principal characteristics is its universality of outlook, for it touches on all aspects of human life, without any trace of sectarianism, either religious or social.

²⁷² Cf. Chakravarti, *ibid.*, pp. 28-40; Meenakshisundaram, 1969. Here again opinions differ as to its author and what religion he professed. Cf. Upadhye, P.Sa, *Introd.*, pp. 19-20, where he examines closely the bases of the opinion: "Kundakunda as author of *Kuraḷ*", without coming to a definite conclusion.

²⁷³ Cf. Chakravarti, *ibid.*, pp. 40-44.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 44-48. According to Chakravarti (p. 27) the ethical works such as the *Kuraḷ* and the *Nālaḍiyār*, are of earlier date than the poetic works.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp 48-83; the text of the *Vaḷaiyāpati* is lost.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 83-109.

Chapter 1 appears to be an address to an *arhat*, and verse 9 mentions - without naming them - the eight characteristics of a being who is worthy of veneration; the mind here goes to the *siddhas*.

Chapter 3 deals with the greatness of the ascetics and sages: v. 30 emphasises the respect in which the ascetics hold all living beings.

Chapter 4 is on purity of intention, equanimity, detachment from all passions.

Chapter 13 is concerned with the virtue of self-control.

Chapters 26 and 33 constitute together a plea for respect for all life, abstention from animal-slaughter, vegetarian diet. In v. 323 the two primordial principles, namely, respect for all life and freedom from falsehood are set forth.

Chapter 27 treats of the value of austerities, especially those of endurance, tolerance and kindliness.

Chapter 30 deals with the capital importance of *vāṃmai*, veracity.

Chapters 35 and 37 are on radical detachment, liberation from all forms of egoism and possessiveness, in the positive sense of Realisation of one's true self in this life and in prospect of eternal Happiness.

Chapter 36 is on right and enlightened knowledge, on wisdom.

These few references, though suggestive of Jaina inspiration, do not constitute definite proof of it. Furthermore, many of its other ideas have nothing specifically Jaina about them and could belong to any *dharma*. The *Tirukkuraḷ* is not a doctrinal and religious treatise and one thing is certain, namely, that one finds there no trace of the radical asceticism demanded by the *Āgamas* and other works; on the contrary, family life is praised and is even said to be better than the ascetic state.²⁷⁷ What is remarkable is, precisely, the tendency,

²⁷⁷ Cf. e.g. ch. 5, vs. 47-50.

discernible in regard to all the subjects under consideration, to emphasise the positive virtues, such as respect for all beings, equanimity, tolerance, harmony, graciousness, as means to an assured well-being and happiness in society at large.

As for the age of which the *Tirukkural* belongs, several hypotheses have been put forward,²⁷⁸ while its author, venerated by all under the name of Tiruvalluvar, has been the subject of sundry legends.²⁷⁹

Many other works less well-known than those mentioned above have been produced by the Jainas,²⁸⁰ as well as treatises of Prosody and Grammar (such as *Neminātham* and *Nannūl*), of Mathematics, Astronomy and Astrology. We must here stress the importance of the classical works of this region of Tamil Nāḍu which, though their inspiration was Jaina, possess 'universal' value.

This introduction will have provided some idea of the context in which the Jaina women ascetics of Tamil Nāḍu lived, for their way of life presents some aspects peculiar to this region.

a) Kavunti Atikal

The *Cilappatikāram* (from *cilampu*: an anklet and *atikāram*: chapter, section, subject of treatise) is the marvellous long epic poem of which the dramatic denouement centres upon the anklet of the heroine Kaṇṇaki.²⁸¹ The author is Ilḷaṅkō Aṭikal (from *iḷaṅkō*: junior

²⁷⁸ Meenakshisundaram, 1969, p. 5 thinks that it cannot be later than the IIIrd c. of our era.

²⁷⁹ Cf. Sripal, 1972, pp. 6-8 for an interesting connection between Tiruvalluvar and the temple of Nayanar at Mayilapur or Mayilai ('The city of peacocks'), the modern Mylapore, Madrás.

²⁸⁰ Cf. Chakravarti, *ibid.*, pp. 110-137.

²⁸¹ Cf. Dikshitar, *Cilappatikāram*, whose translation we here follow, as also his transcription (the text being in ancient Tamil), though referring at the

prince, *aṭikaḥ*: ascetic), a prince of the Cēras who, having renounced all claim to the throne, became a Jaina *nirgrantha*. The prince's erudition and culture have both contributed to the richness of the poem which contains a wealth of most interesting details concerning the social and cultural life of the three kingdoms of that period from the end of the IInd to the VIth century. However, many passages must have been added later.²⁸²

The drama unrolls in an atmosphere that is profoundly spiritual and void of any sectarian spirit. In it worship is performed in honour of Śiva and of Viṣṇu, dances are performed in honour of Kṛṣṇa, his elder brother Balarāma is also accorded veneration, as are also goddesses such as Maṇimēkalai, the guardian of the sea. There are frequent important references to Jaina doctrine and to its ascetics; mention is also made of the Ājivikas and of the Buddha. We are plunged into the very lively atmosphere of the age and enter into close contact with all classes of society: the princes amid all the pomp and ceremony, the rich and prosperous merchants, the artisans, the village-dwellers. The whole gives us an impression of general prosperity. Dance and ritual accompanied by music, songs which hymn the sea, the mountains and the rivers, bespeaking thus a harmony with nature, all form part of daily life and imbue it with religious feeling. The description of the country scenes is exquisite poetry, while that of the towns conveys beautifully the lively atmosphere prevalent in them.

Here is an outline of this great epic poem in which the ascetic Kavunti Aṭikaḥ plays a leading part. Kōvalaṇ and Kaṇṇaki, a young couple from the wealthy merchant-class of the seaside town of Pukārr

same time to the original. This poem includes 30 songs arranged in 3 main sections, each with the name of a large city, capital of a kingdom:

- I - *Pukār̥k Kāṇṭam*, named after Pukār (Puhār) capital of the Cōḷas;
- II - *Maturaik Kāṇṭam*, named after Madurai, capital of the Pāṇḍyas;
- III - *Vaṇcīk Kāṇṭam*, named after Vañci, capital of the Cēras, the family of the author, their kingdom being in the coastal area of present-day Kēraḷa.

²⁸² Opinions are divided on this question.

on the estuary of the Kāvēri, are leading a happy life together until the day when Kōvalaṇ falls in love with Mātavi, a charming courtesan, and spends all his fortune in her company. However a slight feeling of mutual doubt steals over the one and the other and Kōvalaṇ with terror realises the gravity of his fault. He returns to Kaṇṇaki who had borne all with patience and he decides to go to Madurai to earn his living. Kaṇṇaki insists on accompanying him. They depart at night, unobserved. All they possess is the pair of anklets belonging to Kaṇṇaki. In the course of their wearisome and perilous journey on foot they encounter Kavunti Aṭikal, a Jaina ascetic who accompanies them along the way. At Madurai Kōvalaṇ offers one of the anklets to the court goldsmith who promises him a good price. But this same goldsmith, who has previously stolen one of the queen's anklets, hastens to find the king and denounces to him Kōvalaṇ as being the guilty party. The king, seeking no further information, has Kōvalaṇ executed. Kaṇṇaki, despite her unspeakable grief, repairs to the king with her second anklet and breaks it, proving thus the innocence of her husband, for this anklet contained precious stones, whereas that of the queen contained pearls. The Pāṇḍya king is so profoundly moved by the enormity of his mistake that he dies of grief. Kaṇṇaki, desirous that justice may be fully done to Kōvalaṇ, tears her left breast from her bosom and flings it over Madurai, cursing the city the while and praying that it be destroyed by Agni, the god of fire. This latter consents to act in accordance with this curse and consumes all except the just (those who follow the *dharma*), virtuous women, children and animals. At this point the goddess of the city and of the royal family, Maturāpati, appears to Kaṇṇaki in the midst of the flames and explains to her way Kōvalaṇ, on account of a fault committed in a previous life, has been thus unjustly executed. She predicts, moreover, that after a short period Kōvalaṇ will invite her to rejoin him in heaven. Thereafter the heroic Kaṇṇaki was proclaimed goddess of Chastity.

Let us now return to the moment in the story when Kavunti Aṭikal appears and let us follow her through the various stages during which

she accompanies Kōvalan and Kaṇṇaki.²⁸³ *Kāvuntī* is the term used for a Jaina woman ascetic, but here the word is used as a proper name;²⁸⁴ *aṭikaḷ* is a title of respect for ascetics in general, used for both men and women and for ascetics of any religion. Sometimes the name Kavunti Aiyai is used, the word *aiyai* being also used to denote a woman ascetic.²⁸⁵

When Kōvalan and Kaṇṇaki were walking along the bank of the Kāvēri, they came to a grove of flowering trees where Kāvuntipallī, the hermitage of Kavunti, was located.²⁸⁶ They prostrated themselves at her feet. Straightaway Kavunti spoke to them of the Jaina *dharma* and offered to accompany the young couple as far as Madurai, for she was desirous of visiting the ascetics of that place and of listening to their spiritual discourses. She gave them a poetic and accurate description of the various roads they might take leading to their goal, being careful both to soften for Kaṇṇaki the hardships of the way and to respect *ahimsā*, mentioning punctiliously the places to avoid so as not to harm living beings. Then without delay, with her *kaṭijñai*

²⁸³ Cf. Cantos X-XV.

²⁸⁴ It is extremely possible, given the antiquity of the work, that Kavunti, her proper name, may later have been used to denote a woman ascetic, on account of the celebrity of the original bearer of the name.

²⁸⁵ Cf. e.g. X, 45; the original text sometimes has Kavunti, sometimes Kāvuntī. We may note that: "In Tamil: Ammai, Kanni, Paimmai, Sāmi, Perumāṭṭi, Ācān, Talaivi, Aiyai, etc. were employed to refer to Jain women ascetics." Meenakshisundaram, 1961, p. 125.

²⁸⁶ *Cilappatikāram*, p. 177. It seems, judging from the inscriptions, that the ascetics had permanent dwellings. No mention is made of any companion-ascetics of Kavunti and it is possible that she had a type of hermitage in the srikōil, a complex consisting of a temple and dwellings for ascetics. Chakravarti, 1974, p. 54 mentions: "...an āśrama of the Jaina ascetics on the northern bank of the Cauvery. In that āśrama he (Kōvalan) met the female ascetic Kaundhi..."

(begging bowl) in its *urī* (a sort of string bag) upon her shoulder and her *kaippili* (small peacock-feather fan) in her hand, and praying that the *pañcamantra* might act as their guide upon the road, Kavunti, the supremely virtuous, joined the young couple and all three set forth on foot.²⁸⁷

After several days' travelling through fields and villages, following the bank of the Kāvēri, they arrived at Śrirangam.²⁸⁸ There they met a *cāraṇa*, a particular sort of Jaina ascetic possessing supernatural powers;²⁸⁹ this latter, addressing himself to Kavunti, broke into a spontaneous utterance in which he extolled the *arhats* or *jīnas*. Kavunti, inspired by this hymn of praise, replied with one even more sublime in which she proclaimed the consecration of her whole person to the worship of the *arhats* who, according to the authentic Jaina angle of vision, must travel the road towards supreme Realisation. Then the *cāraṇa* blessed them and they continued on their way, crossing the Kāvēri in a boat to reach the south bank of the river. As they were resting after the crossing, an inquisitive wastrel and his female companion came up and pestered them with idle questions. Kavunti, indignant, cursed them and charged that they should be turned into jackals, which at once, so the tale goes, took place, for this curse came from the mouth of an ascetic. Kōvalaṇ and Kaṇṇaki

²⁸⁷ Cf. *Cilappatikāram*, pp. 178-180; *pañcamantra*: *Namaskāra-mantra*.

²⁸⁸ A very ancient holy place. It is nowadays part of the city of Tirucirapalli, which is of much more recent date. The Atlas only refers to this latter from the XIIIth c. onwards.

²⁸⁹ *Cāraṇa*, from *cāraṇa* or a form of *ṛddhi*: supernatural powers possessed by certain munis, powers which accrued to them thanks to their purity of life and their practice of certain austerities. These powers include e.g. levitation, walking on water without causing the least ripple, travel at speed through space etc.; cf. JSK I, pp. 475-483; 483-487 for other types of *ṛddhi*. Certain inscrrs. of Śravaṇa Belgola indicate that Kundakunda possessed the power of levitation and that he moved at will through space; cf. Upadhye, PSa, *Introd.*, p. 8, ns. 1; 2; cf. also P 300 n.59.

pleaded on behalf of these ignoramuses and Kavunti predicted that after one year they would recover their human form.

The three travellers then arrived at Uraiyūr.²⁹⁰ There Kavunti Aṭikaḷ repaired to the Jaina temple and conversed with the ascetics who were dwelling near by in the shady groves. The next day at dawn they again took the road. On the way, they came upon an eloquent *brāhmaṇa* who launched into a lengthy discourse, extolling the might of the king and also that of Viṣṇu. He then gave them a pictorial description of the different roads leading to Madurai with numerous religious allusions and comment, inviting them to stop on the way in a mysterious cave inhabited by a *yakṣi*. Kavunti Aṭikaḷ heard him to the end and then replied categorically in a fashion that was firm, lucid, brief and in direct contrast to the high-flown speech of the *brāhmaṇa*: "There is nothing he has advanced that the Jaina Scriptures do not contain, and more still. Do we not inherit in this life the consequences of acts performed in an earlier existence? Is not the true path that of *ahimsā*, non-violence and *satya*, truth?" She exhorted the *brāhmaṇa* to follow his own path and his God,²⁹¹ while, as for them, they themselves knew what was their way!²⁹² Here is a reply worthy of a Jaina ascetic!

Until they reached Madurai, in order to avoid the glare of the sun, they walked at night by the brightness of the moon. Finally, after several adventures, they crossed by raft the river Vaikai and arrived on the outskirts of the town, to the place where the ascetics were living. Next day Kōvalan requested Kavunti to keep Kaṇṇaki under her holy protection while he busied himself with his affairs in the city. Kavunti consented and in her reply she mentioned the effects of past *karmas*; then, turning to human love and the sufferings caused thereby, she most appositely quoted episodes from the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the

²⁹⁰ Cilappatikāram, pp. 184-189.

²⁹¹ In this passage *kāmuṟu teyvam* can be interpreted in two ways, either: the God that you love, or: the God of Love; cf. XI, 160

²⁹² Cf. Cilappatikāram, pp. 192-199.

Mahābhārata. However, the places where the ascetics dwelt, being far-removed from normal habitation, were inconveniently placed for people of the world and so Kavunti searched for someone who could give lodgement to the young couple in the city. At this very moment an aged woman named Mātari of the cow-herd caste, after making her devotions at the near-by temple, came to prostrate herself at the feet of Kavunti Aṭikaḷ. Thinking that a community concerned with the nurture of cows and with milk-products was sure to live a simple life without causing harm to any living being, Kavunti Aṭikaḷ addressed herself to Mātari and in tender and poetic language entrusted Kaṇṇaki to her care, praising the heroic courage of the young woman and furthering her remarks by stressing the indescribable merits earned by the hospitable. Mātari listened gladly, addressed in her turn praise to kavunti and at sunset let Kaṇṇaki away.²⁹³ While Kōvalan and Kaṇṇaki went on to undergo their terrible ordeal, Kavunti Aṭikaḷ stayed among the ascetics and sages to converse with them about the *dharma*. Her task with the young couple was completed.

Kavunti Aṭikaḷ is a faithful portrait of a Jaina woman ascetic of the time of the *Cilappatikāram*. Even if she is a fictitious character, it is not that the author has invented her; he has, rather, described her, evoking scenes of the life of his day. This Aṭikaḷ is probably a Digambara āryikā although she possesses a *katijñai* (begging bowl) for receiving the food offered, which the āryikās, at least those who are our own contemporaries, do not, their bowl being their cupped hands.²⁹⁴ Kavunti lives simply, and with conviction, her *dharma*. When, at opportune moments, she declares it, it is no exercise in rhetoric but the spontaneous expression of her belief. Her words, which are characterised by sobriety and firmness, reveal her profound knowledge of the teaching and the solidity of her faith. She is cultured, is well-acquainted with the classical texts of Brahmanism and quotes them aptly. She is venerated highly on account of her

²⁹³ Ibid., pp. 239-251

²⁹⁴ Cf. P 668 ff. the kṣullikās can receive their food on a platter or plate, either that of the family who is offering the meal or their own. The Śvetāmbara sādhis have each a *pātra* (bowl); cf. P 423-424.

rigorous asceticism and her learning. She is also a poetess and knows and describes most beautifully the region through which they pass. She shows no hesitation in setting out on the journey and all along the way proves an immense help to Kovalan and Kannaki, knowing as she does how to act wisely and take timely decisions, being always guided by her concern for *ahimsā*.²⁹⁵ Finally, she, a woman, is daring enough to reply to a *brāhmaṇa* in a few brief and direct words, expressing her own belief clearly, moderately and without hesitation.

b) The Kuratti Aṭigaḷs, teacher-ascetics

Numerous epigraphs of the IXth-XIth centuries make mention of the *kuratti aṭigaḷs* or *kurattigaḷs*, sometimes also called *kurattiyārs*, the feminine honorific form (plural) of *kuravar* derived from the Sanskrit *guruvaḥ*; sometimes also we come across the word *bhatārigaḷ*, for *bhaṭṭārikā*, the feminine of *bhaṭṭāraka*.²⁹⁶ Despite the brevity of the inscriptions it is not difficult to grasp that these *aṭigaḷs* were teachers who had grouped around them quite a large number of women ascetic disciples and other pupils, these last named being probably young candidates for the monastic life who received a general education. Some *aṭigaḷs* had *śrāvakas* as their disciples. Certain ones were themselves disciples of an *Ācārya* or *Bhaṭṭāraka*, while others were themselves *guruṇis*, *ācāryas* of a certain sort themselves as their title indicates, and thus they enjoyed some independence and exercised authority over their own disciples.

This phenomenon, unique in the history of Jainism, is only found in Tamiḷ Nāḍu.²⁹⁷ If we are not to base our conclusions simply on

²⁹⁵ We observe, however, that she has no scruple in crossing two rivers in a boat, which normally is only done in a case of absolute necessity - this, of course, being out of consideration for *ahimsā*; cf. AS II, 3, 1, 13-21; 2, 1-13; cf. also P 533.

²⁹⁶ Cf. Chakravarti, 1974, App. of Ramesh. pp. 192-193.

²⁹⁷ Cf. Desai, 1957, p. 77: "The Kurattiyārs of the Tamiḷ country constitute a surprisingly unique class by themselves."

certain epigraphs, we need more definite clues to enable us to discover more of the background of this period and the reasons which favoured the coming into being of these groups. These kurattiyārs were probably Digambara in allegiance, but to which *saṃgha* or *gaṇa* did they belong?²⁹⁸ From what we learn from the inscriptions, their manner of life differed from that of the Digambara āryikās as we know them and from that of the Śvetāmbara sādhis. They led an organised life in a stable institution, a type of monastery-school which constituted part, along with the temple, of one composite local *saṃgha* and was called a *pen-paḷḷi* (residence of women ascetics). It is also known that in certain places munis resided in the same complex. Certain inscriptions imply that, given the educational function of the institution, such permanent residence was then normal, for example:

-At Viḷappākam, in the district of North Arcot, an epigraph of the middle of the Xth century mentions the gift of a well for the use of a *pen-paḷḷi* by Paṭṭinikkuratti Aṭṭiḷ, disciple of Ariṣṭanemi Bhatāra of Tiruppānmalai.²⁹⁹ There are two points here worth noticing: the gift of a well implies that a *pen-paḷḷi* was a permanent residence, while the fact that an aḍiḷ had this well dug suggests that she was a person of authority in that place; the necessary sum of money must have been offered to her by members of the local *saṃgha*.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁸ Desai has demonstrated very well and convincingly the impact of the Yāpaniyas, whose ideas as to the position of women were very liberal and certainly influenced other local sects.

²⁹⁹ Cf. Krishnan, 1975, p. 97; No 20; *paṭṭini*: fast, abstinence from food; an aḍiḷ is given thus a spiritual characteristic as a name and not a personal name.

³⁰⁰ Desai, 1957, pp. 41-42 gives the following information: "The well and a house were afterwards constituted into a nunnery and placed under the supervision of the twenty-four of the village...The Jaina residents of the place had organised themselves and constituted a representative council of 'twenty-four' members to look after their interests - reminiscence of the twenty-four Jinas."

Here we may refer to a few inscriptions, some of which concern the kurattiyārs of local *pen-paḷḷis* and the others kurattiyārs on pilgrimage to the cave-temples:

-At Veḍāl, in the district of North Arcot, an epigraph of 885-886 mentions a dispute between the five hundred pupils of Kanakavira-kkurattiyār and a group of four hundred *tāpasigaḷs*; subsequent to this conflict, Kanakavira-kkurattiyār was able to assure the food-supply for her pupils.³⁰¹ We know that there existed some sort of canteen-arrangement where food was distributed free, thanks to gifts provided by the local neighbouring community. In this case it is probable that after the dispute the kurattiyār and her pupils were deprived of the food previously assured through the canteen and that then the local śravakās came to her aid.

-At Ayyampālaiyam, near Palani in the district of Madurai, in the Xth century, Avvanandi-kkurattiyār had an image erected to the *dēvār* (god). She was *mānākkīyār* (disciple) of Paṭṭini-kkurattiyār.³⁰² The

³⁰¹ Cf. Chakravarti, 1974, App. inscr. 21; pp. 160-161. Here it is only possible to hazard some conjectures, the inscr. being so tersely worded. *Tāpasigaḷ* denotes an ascetic, man or woman; there is nothing in this instance to indicate the gender. Certain remarks can be made and questions asked: the women *tāpasigaḷs*, as regards their role in the *saṃgha*, were probably devoted only to spiritual pursuits and not to teaching, that is to say, they probably were Jaina ascetics of a traditional type, leading, however, so it seems, a stable life. The *tāpasigaḷs* could be men ascetics and we know that quite often they were residing in close proximity to the kurattiyārs, which sometimes led to quarrels. Moreover, we do not know what the organisation within the wider group was, nor who was responsible for the care and food of the pupils. If *tāpasigaḷ* here refers to men ascetics, it would seem plausible that, wielding their authority, they may have had the power to deprive the kurattiyārs and their pupils of their food-supply. This community must have been flourishing and important, for the *tāpasigaḷs* and pupils together represent no less than 900 persons. It is probable that Kanakavira-kkurattiyār was assisted in her tasks by other kurattiyārs.

³⁰² Ibid., inscr. 39; pp. 171-172: this is the 2nd time that *paṭṭini*, fast, is the name of a kurattiyār.

name of the god is not given and it was probably a question of an image of a *tirthaṅkara*.

The following references all belong to the vast cave-temple of Kalugumalai in Tirunelveli district, where three rows, one above the other, of images of the twenty-four *tirthaṅkaras* are carved into the rock. The inscriptions, dating back to the Xth and XIth centuries, are to be found in most cases at the feet of the images. It is noteworthy that the majority of kuratti aṭiḡals who came there on pilgrimage are referred to by the name of the place from which they came rather than by a proper name and that no *saṁgha* or *gaṇa* is mentioned. The names of sixteen kuratti aṭiḡals have been identified, as also that of their guruṇi who figures several times in different epigraphs, which testifies to the importance of the person in question. These epigraphs can be arranged into three groups:

In the first group the text tells how such or such a kurattiyār of a certain place had an image carved and erected;³⁰³ generally the name of her guruṇi and of her ācārya are given. The words used to denote a disciple are: *mānākkīyār* and *mānākkīḡal*, while those used to denote statue or sacred image are: *tīru-mēṇi* and *paḍimam* (from *pratimā*). We note the names of:

Piccai-kkuratti³⁰⁴ of Śīrupolal in the district of Iḍaikkalanāḍu; Tiruccāraṇāttu-bhaṭṭāṇṭiḡal,³⁰⁵ disciple of Miḷalūr-kkurattiyār;

³⁰³ I.e. this kurattiyār caused the erection of the statue; this may be understood as meaning either that she herself directly caused the erection or that she had inspired another person to get the task executed. No donor is named and probably the community of śrāvakas had collaborated to meet the expenses of the project.

³⁰⁴ *Piccai*: alms another example, similar to *paṭṭini*, of the aṭiḡals being named after some characteristic of their vocation. Desai aptly remarks on p. 80: "Indications are furnished by the epigraphs to surmise that, as social workers and spiritual teachers, the Jaina monks and nuns came into close contact with the masses who treated them with deference and a feeling of attachment. This may be gleaned from the manner in which Jaina teachers

Nāṭṭiga-bhaṭāra, disciple of Nālkūr-kkurattigaḷ;
 Iṇaneccurattu-kkurattigaḷ, disciple of Tīrtha-bhaṭāra;
 Araṭṭanēmmi(Ariṣṭanemi)-kkurattigaḷ, disciple of Mammai-kkurattigaḷ;
 Tirupparutṭi-kkurattigaḷ, disciple of Paṭṭini-bhaṭāra;
 Miḷalūr-kkurattigaḷ, disciple of Pērūr-kkurattiyār.³⁰⁶

In the second group of texts it is stated that the *kurattiyār* is presenting an image in the name of another person - it being understood that this religious act is meritorious both for the person who makes the offering and also the one in whose name the offering is made, this latter being usually a *śrāvaka*.³⁰⁷ These *śrāvakas* were probably disciples of the *kurattiyār* in question, although this is expressly stated only once. We must add that, these inscriptions being so brief, it is possible to interpret in two ways the relationship between *kurattiyārs* and *śrāvakas*: the *śrāvaka* was either a disciple of the *kurattiyār*, the *guruṇi* of the particular place, or of the *kurattiyār*-community of this same place. For example an image was sculpted for *Ēnādi kuttan mānākkān* (disciple) of Tirumalai-kkurattigaḷ which means that he was the disciple of the head *kurattigaḷ* of Tirumalai or a disciple of the *kurattigaḷs* of that place.³⁰⁸

and preceptors are generally mentioned even in such public documents as the inscriptions on stone and rock..."

³⁰⁵ Tiruccāraṇattu, prob. derived from Tiruccāraṇam, a mountain of Travancore; cf. Desai, *ibid.*, p. 67.

³⁰⁶ Cf. Chakravarti, 1974, App. inscr. 51; 53; 61; 64; 66; 67; 73; pp. 180-181; 185-188; 191.)

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, inscrs. 54; 55; 57; 74; 75; pp. 181-183; 191-192. According to these inscrs. the person on whose behalf the *kurattiyār* had made the offering is also in all probability the donor who has contributed to the expenses of the setting up of the image.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, inscr. 65; p. 187.

Finally, certain inscriptions quote names without furnishing any further explanations.³⁰⁹

It is important to consider these inscriptions in their proper context, i.e., as belonging to a totality which includes many other inscriptions of the same epoch; they are the visible signs of a contemporary *saṃgha* that was both well-organised and of fervent faith.³¹⁰ These epigraphs record not only the erection of images by various members of the *saṃgha*, but the presentation of many other gifts connected with the worship and with the upkeep of the ascetics. Mention is sometimes made of *paḷḷiccandams*, gifts of land to a temple, a monastic institution or a sage;³¹¹ gifts of *kaḷañjus*, gold pieces to help meet the food-expenses of the ascetics; gifts of sheep, with a view to clarified butter being extracted from the ewes' milk for the maintenance of the temple lamps. Furthermore, a rich person gives money for the repair of a temple or monastery or for the building of a new sanctuary or the installation of a large bell.³¹² Certain epigraphs record the Great Departure of an ascetic after a prolonged fast.³¹³

Other recorded facts indicate that some kurattiyārs and certain śrāvikās were scholarly: the celebrated commentator Naccinārkkiniyar (XIVth-XVth century), in his commentary upon the *Jivaka-cintāmaṇi*,

³⁰⁹ Ibid., e.g. inscr. 62; pp. 185-186.

³¹⁰ Chakravarti, App., gives 85 epigraphs. These inscs. are written either in *vaṭṭeḷuttu* characters, an ancient Tamil script, or in Tamil, or in *grantha*, a script with characters very close to the Tamil ones, which is used in writing Sanskrit.

³¹¹ Ibid., inscs. 5; 12; 13; 82; pp. 143-146; 151-153; 154; 199-200.

³¹² Ibid., inscs. 7; 11; 14; pp. 147; 150-151; 154-155. Gifts in gold coins to assure the ascetics' food were frequent, which confirms the belief that canteens existed to which men and women ascetics could go to ask for alms.

³¹³ Ibid. inscs. 6; 45; pp. 146; 177-178.

mentions that a woman ascetic named Kandiyār inserted some interpolations into the text, which allows us to suppose that she was very erudite.³¹⁴ Ancient Tamil literature contains certain ethical works written by Avvaiyār, who was probably a Jaina ascetic who presented in brief format a teaching directed principally to women.³¹⁵ Lastly, we know the name of Kāḷkaipāṇiniyār, a learned śrāvikā who belonged to the school of Tamil metrical-verse composition. Her work is entitled *kāḷkaipāṇiniyām* and was composed between the IInd and Vth centuries.³¹⁶

From the inscriptions, as also from the literary works, we gain an overall impression of the social and religious background in the Tamil Nāḍu of that day: one outstanding feature to be noted is its liberal and positive attitude towards women, who did not appear to take a secondary place in society, but had access to possibilities of study and exercised a genuine influence and a certain authority in the local community. The existence in institutional form of *kuratti aḍigaḷ*s must have contributed to this influence. That institution, very flourishing from the IXth to XIth centuries, certainly made its mark on the surrounding society, if one is to judge by the number of pupils taught by the *kuratti aḍigaḷ*s and the active part taken by them in the worship. They certainly followed Jaina doctrine but, contrary to the rule of life of the ascetics, they led a stable existence within a complex of community buildings donated to them.³¹⁷

Apart from the *kuratti aḍigaḷ*s there is scarcely any evidence at all as to whether there existed other groups of *āryikās*, *anagāris*, going from place to place and begging for food and temporary shelter.

³¹⁴ Cf. Mecnakshisundaram, 1961, p. 124. Kandiyār is probably a corrupt form of Kavundiār of Kavuntiyār.

³¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 124-125; the epoch is not given.

³¹⁶ Cf. Pitchai, 1978.

³¹⁷ Further researches in other documentation of the period would perhaps shed some additional light on this organisation.

One last question comes to mind, that which concerns the Jaina presence in Kēraḷa. The *saṃgha* did certainly exist in this region where in the northern part a few families still reside up to this day. From the few existing ruins of temples and from inscriptions we gather that Jainism penetrated into Kēraḷa from Tamiḷ Nāḍu - into the South to the district of Kanyākumāri and into the central area to Pālghāt and its surrounding countryside - and from Kaṇṇāṭaka into the North at a considerably later period. The traces which still exist in the district of Kozhikode date from the period between the IXth and XIth centuries. They consists in cave-temples of a later period than those found in Tamiḷ Nāḍu; in ordinary temples and works of sculpture. It seems highly probably, however, that sanctuaries originally of Jaina origin may have belonged at a later age to other religious groupings.³¹⁸ Moreover, we know that the author of the *Cilappatikāram* (early A.D.), Illaṅkō Aṭikaḷ, a Jaina ascetic, was from the royal family of the Cēras, the rulers of present-day Kēraḷa.³¹⁹

³¹⁸ Cf. Sarkar, 1975, pp. 215-221.

³¹⁹ Cf. Nair, 1984, on the Jaina ascetics in Kēraḷa and on their impact on the local culture in the early centuries of the Christian era.

H - The Desert blooms again ✓

After touring the length and breadth of the country and covering a span of time from the beginning of our era until the XVIIIth century and having reached Kanyākumārī in the extreme South, why return to Rājasthāna and its barren desert? This we need to do because of the birth at the beginning of the second half of the XVIIIth century of a *gaṇa* created out of a reform among the Sthānakavāsīs who had spread from Gujarāta into Rājasthāna.³²⁰ The *gaṇa* of Terāpanthīs issued from the last Śvetāmbara reform; it was destined to breathe fresh vigour into its region of origin, Mārayāda, which includes the districts of Jodhapura and Bikānera. Its members, except in the case of a very few, are all of Rājasthāna, even if, for professional reasons, one comes across them in many areas and in big cities. The nature of their native soil, due particularly to its lack of water, obliges a great number of its inhabitants to emigrate, but the majority of families retain a few members on the spot; their roots are there and the paternal roof. In whatever place they find themselves, the Terāpanthīs organise their own local *saṁgha* affiliated to the central *saṁgha* under the authority of one sole ācārya. Another feature special to them is to maintain a regular chronicle, and that since their foundation.³²¹ These manuscripts are of immense value for the history of the *gaṇa*. It is thanks to these documents that the following pages can give a general account of the Terāpanthī sādhis from 1764 up till the beginning of the XIXth century.

Furthermore, the sādhis belonging to other *saṁghas* and *gacchas* and to Rājasthāna by birth have continued to exist in their own area; indeed, since the end of the last century to our own day their activity has received a fresh impetus due primarily to the faith, courage and

³²⁰ The Terāpanthīs themselves in their archives call themselves a *gaṇa*. However, they evolved in a very independent way with certain strongly-marked characteristics and nowadays they in fact constitute a separate spiritual family, although they have much in common with the Sthānakavāsīs.

³²¹ The archives are carefully preserved in steel cupboards in the Seva Kendra in Lāḍaṇūm, the only stable dwelling-place that has been in existence since their commencement, the home for aged and sick sādhis.

intelligence of remarkable sādhvis such as Sādhvi Punya Śrī and Suvarṇa Śrī, the pioneers. In their memory the śrāvakas of their gaccha, the Kharataragaccha, have constructed sanctuaries called samādhi-mandiras. The latest in date is that of Sādhvi Sunandā Śrī, of the Tapāgaccha, a native of Gujarāta, who came on vihāra to Rājasthāna; it was there, not long ago, that her Great Departure took place.

The archives of the Terāpanthi sādhvis and the samādhi-mandiras of these other sādhvis are visible signs of the continuing vitality of the ancient Jain trunk in a recent period which brings us right up to our own day. While all the documents hitherto introduced: epigraphs, manuscripts, works of sculpture, belong to a distant past after which most of the roots, except in Gujarāta and Rājasthāna, withered, leaving only a few scattered shoots, the Terāpanthi sādhvis belong to a new branch in which fresh sap is circulating vigorously, while the gurunis of the Kharataragaccha have during the last century injected new life once again into their very ancient gaccha. To dip into the chronicles, admire the samādhi-mandiras and meditate in their vicinity are all present-day possibilities, for the saṃghas of these groups of sādhvis are alive and active at this present time. The sādhvis of today have inherited the testimony of the life and teaching of their revered elders. The transmission from guru to disciple is not a distant affair, for the foundresses in the one case and the pioneers in the other are there among us, present in the persons of their disciples who continue to transmit the message to the new generation.

a) First dikṣās among the Terāpanthi Sādhvis

In 1760 a Sthānakavāsi muni of Māravāda felt inspired to launch a reform among his fellow-ascetics, whom he considered too half-hearted and lax. For forty-three years he was the first ācārya of the branch adhering to the strict observance. In 1764, Ācārya Śrī Bhikhāna (Bhikṣu) received the first sādhvis.³²² what are the special

³²² This account draws upon the voluminous unpublished manuscript (written in several parts) entitled Śāsana-samudra, a compilation of those passages in the archives which deal with the sādhvis, by the historian Muni Navaratnamala. Thus we have access to a line of sādhvis from 1764 up to our own days. The biographical accounts of the sādhvis are grouped in a

characteristics of the Terāpanthis? Like the Sthānakavāsīs out of which they sprang, they offer no temple-worship. They possess for the whole *gaṇa* one single ācārya, nominated by his predecessor. This institution, namely that of having one sole religious and administrative authority, does not exist in the other sampradāyas. It conduces towards strict discipline, but it also contains the disadvantages proper to any organisation centralised upon a single person. All the members who can do so gather each year by their thousands around the ācārya for several days to discuss the different problems which beset the *gaṇa*, take decisions and receive the directives of the ācārya. The culmination of this assembly is the *māryādā-mahotsava*, the great festival of the Rule, which commences on the seventh day of the bright fortnight of *māgha* (January-February), the anniversary of the establishment of the rule of life proper to ascetics; these are days of fervour, spiritual renewal and fellowship.

Another characteristic of the Terāpanthis is their lack of upāśrayas. The munis and sādhis can lodge in rooms put at their disposal by śrāvakas or in unoccupied premises.³²³

In regard to the doctrine, their interpretation of *ahiṃsā* (non-aggressiveness, respect for all beings), *dayā* (compassion, pity) and *dāna* (gift, offering) is based on that strictness of vision which looks beyond the present moment, the immediate circumstances, the living being which one addresses or meets, to consider on each occasion the ultimate goal. Thence derives an attitude which, at first sight, may

chronological order following the sequence of the 9 ācāryas. Muni Śrī, being also a poet and desirous of rendering this historical treatise more agreeable to read, composed for each sādhi some *dohās*, which present the chief features of her character and her life story, followed by the biographical notes. During my stay at Lāḍanūm in Nov. 1978, Muni Śrī gave me permission to peruse *Śāsana-samudra* and take notes.

³²³ The characteristic marks of the Terāpanthī sādhis are noted in Part III P 429-430; 442.

seem to be mere indifference, lack of goodness and generosity, but which is not so at all!³²⁴

φ.

We may further note that the present ācārya has provided new impulse and inspiration in three different spheres: an attempt, firstly, to emancipate women from the oppressive customs to which in Māravāda they were obliged to conform; thus, to enable the sādhvis to live an ascetic life to the full and at the same time help the śrāvikās free themselves from so many prejudices in the human and social dimensions of life, they are strongly encouraged to study. Next, the study of the Scriptures - and thus also of Prākṛit and Sanskṛit; to these are added literary studies, all sādhvis who are desirous of writing being invited to do so.³²⁵ Finally, their horizon extends to all the regions and thus groups of sādhvis are sent out to places as far afield as the Himālayas in the North and the extreme South.

Here are some interesting facts concerning the sādhvis under the first three ācāryas.³²⁶ Three sisters, young widows, received dikṣā together; two of them, Sādhvi Śrī Kuśālārā and Sādhvi Śrī Maṭṭu, persevered, while the third, Sri Ajbū, had to leave after several years;

³²⁴ Cf. P 343-344 regarding this type of approach and the subtle distinctions that it involves.

³²⁵ Many young women candidates for dikṣā pass several years in a study-centre where they receive a course of general instructions; cf. P 469 ff.

³²⁶ This period extends from 1764 to the beginning of the XXth c. However interesting and accurate a complete chronicle would be, we can give here only a brief glimpse, such as fits into the whole picture and includes the other spiritual families. To expatiate on the highly detailed history of one of these, even if that particular one has preserved its records intact, would disturb the over-all harmony and would require a special study. The period of office of the 5 following ācāryas goes from 1851 to 1936. Thus the present period starts in 1936 with Ācārya Śrī Tulasi.

these were the first Terāpanthi sādhis.³²⁷ The majority of sādhis of the period were from Māravāḍa, some were from Mevāḍa (in the district of Udayapura) and others from unidentified places, though they were certainly places in Rājasthāna.

The great majority of them, under the first two ācāryas, were young widows who had been married at a very early age. There were also a few young women who left both husband and children to receive *dikṣā*. It was only under the third ācārya, though even then very exceptionally, that some *kumārī-kanyās* (girls) presented themselves as candidates. The first one, Sādhvi Motām, received the *dikṣā* in 1834.³²⁸

A fairly large number of sādhis are called "*tapasvini*" on account of their fervent embrace of *tapas*. In the case of those who were particularly zealous, a detailed account was kept over the years of their fasts, particularly during successive periods of *cāturmāsya*, the four months of monsoon.³²⁹ The first to distinguish herself in this domain was Sādhvi Śrī Malūkām, who received *dikṣā* in 1831. Now and again mention is made of a sādhvi practising "*sita-pariṣaha*", the ordeal of cold,³³⁰ in which during the icy winter months a person

³²⁷ The chronicle gives the dates, either exact or approximate, of the *dikṣā* and the *mahāprasthāna*, the Great Departure. Those who had to leave the *gaṇa* are mentioned in the chronicle with the title of Śrī. Each sādhis name is preceded by Śrī and followed by *jī* as a sign of respect. This is for the most part only used in letters or in other writings; the *jī* can also be used when speaking of or to them. This having been stated, we give in the following pages, in order to simplify, the names preceded by Śrī, leaving the *jī* to be understood.

³²⁸ Cf. P 435 ff. on questions concerning family circumstances.

³²⁹ Cf. P 541 ff.

³³⁰ Cf. P 364 ff.

covers herself only with the pachevadi, the large light-weight veil ³³¹ It is reported, for example, that Sādhvī Śrī Kastū practised sita-parīṣaha for twelve years.³³²

The records frequently bring out the character-traits of one or another sādhvī, qualities that she developed. Thus, Sādhvī Śrī Rāyakarā was extremely meticulous in living the ascetic life as perfectly as possible; in the least lapse, she made confession immediately.³³³ Certain ones seem to have achieved a happy harmony and balance within their practice of asceticism; we read, for example, that Sādhvī Śrī Mainārī was very erudite, she knew the Āgamas, gave vyākhyānas (teaching on the dharma), was very courageous and practised tapas.³³⁴ It is added that Ācārya Bhikhā, noting these qualities, entrusted to her without delay responsibility for a group or siṃghadā (in the māravādī language). A general perusal of the chronicles reveals that, though tapas was incontrovertibly the means par excellence of purification, nevertheless study and teaching were not neglected, even if at that time neither was according to a fixed programme.

The type of mahāprasthāna of most of the sādhvīs was noted in detail. We gather, from what these accounts tell us, that at the beginning of this reform movement the ascetic practice was that of the strictest observance. Oftentimes the sādhvīs used to end their earthly existence by anaśana, severe fasting. Certain ones undertook saṃlekhanā, the fast which brings about the annihilation of the body, according to the doctrinal precepts, that is to say, by stages, the fast

³³¹ Cf. P 420 ff.

³³² "sitākāla mein bāraha varṣa rātri ke samaya eka pachevadi mein rahi" Navaratnamala, MS. Part I, pp. 104-107, the 47th to receive dikṣā in 1801.

³³³ "āpa sādhanā mein badī jāgarūka rahati, alpamātra bhi doṣa lagane se tatkāla usaki ālocanā kara leti..." ibid., MS. Part II, p. 59; the 118th to receive dikṣā in 1830.

³³⁴ The 15th to receive dikṣā in 1777.

commencing several years in advance.³³⁵ This was the case with Sādhvi Śrī Kallū, herself the mother of three munis, whose fast lasted eleven years.³³⁶ In the case of others, it is recorded how they left this earth in *samādhi-marāṇa*, departure in joy, having attained a state of spiritual awakening and awareness of being. Again, others among them passed away in *pandita-marāṇa*, that is to say, in fidelity to their vows.³³⁷

Certain ones were dismissed from the *gaṇa* on various grounds: inflexibility of character, difficulty in submission,³³⁸ a tendency towards insubordination with refusal to do penance for some fault³³⁹, unsuitability of temperament for the ascetic life and unwillingness,³⁴⁰ constitutional weakness of character incapable of exercising self-control,³⁴¹ or, it may be, some incurable malady,³⁴² just to quote a few names and examples from among the first sādhis. Ācārya Bhikhaṇa must certainly have been on his guard lest elements of dissension and indifference enter in to spoil the spirit of the reform;

335 Cf. P 566 ff.

336 The 74th to receive *dikṣā* in 1813.

337 The above explanations were given by Muni Navaratnamala himself.

338 "*āpa prakṛitī ki kathoraṭī evaṃ anuśāsana mein rahane ki kaṭhinatā se gaṇa se alaga hui*". Śrī Netū, MS. Part I, p. 10.

339 Four names mentioned: Śrī:Phattū, Akhū, Ajbū, Candū.

340 "*prakṛitī sudhāra na karane ke kāraṇa gaṇa se alaga hui*." Śrī Rattū; MS. Part I, p. 35.

341 "*parīṣaha na saha sakane se tathā samyama na pāla sakane se gaṇa se pṛthak hui*." Śrī Vannā, MS. Part I, p. 38.

342 Śrī Lālā.

for this reason, from the beginning, he divided the sādhvis into siṃghadas, small groups. Out of fifty-six sādhvis to whom he gave dikṣā he dismissed seventeen.

It was only under the third ācārya, Śrī Rāyacandra, that the sādhvis had a Pramukhā at their head, under the direct authority of the ācārya: Sādhvi Śrī Saradārā. She received dikṣā in 1841 after she had given evidence of most admirable constancy. Married as a child, she lost her young husband five months after the wedding. Through her persistent effort to obtain from her deceased husband's family, who were totally opposed to the idea, permission to embrace vairāgya (renunciation), she already gave proof of her potentiality. As soon as she was made Pramukhā she organised with great competence the one-hundred and twenty one sādhvis into twenty-three siṃghadas. The chronicle narrates at great length her activities, her vihāras, cāturmāsyas and tapas.³⁴³

From the list of cāturmāsyas of certain well-known sādhvis we come to the conclusion that their vihāras usually happened in Rājasthāna, though sometimes in Madhya Pradeśa also.

From the time of the third ācārya onwards, it is noticeable that there was an increasing tendency for members of the same family to follow the path of asceticism. Sādhvis had sometimes a son, a husband, a step-brother or a brother among the munis and munis a daughter, mother or sister among the sādhvis.

The chronological record from the first to the ninth ācārya reveals this interesting fact: during these two hundred and eighteen years, one thousand four hundred and thirty-nine sādhvis received dikṣā and only sixty-four were dismissed from or left the gaṇa; during the same period only seven hundred and nine munis received dikṣā and out of this number dismissals or voluntary departures numbered two hundred and thirty-one.

³⁴³ 46 pp. of the chronicle are consecrated to her; MS. Part III, pp. 171-172.

b) Three *Samādhi-mandiras*

When studying certain epigraphs and sculptures one notices that in the course of the centuries the devotion felt by śrāvakas and śrāvikās for the *arhats* was widened to include ascetics also. In order to express their veneration, record their gratitude and leave a sign for future generations, śrāvakas have erected - and continue to do so - *samādhi-mandiras*³⁴⁴ to those munis and sādhis who, during their life-time have been guides for the *saṃgha*, inspiring people by their lives and guiding them by their wise counsel. In these ascetics the śrāvakas and śrāvikās have found living examples of the ideal they are striving to follow and hence this profound veneration in their regard, a veneration which they manifest concretely in stone, that it, in time, for the engraved Names transmit a message to future ages. In expressing their devotion the śrāvakas and śrāvikās are performing a profoundly religious act, both personally and as a group, for this requires a local organisation, the collection of funds and the supervision and execution of plans. In this way they together re-affirm their faith and their sense of belonging to the *dharma*.

In Rājasthāna *samādhi-mandiras* have been erected in our own day in three different places: Jayapura, Bikānera and Ābū Road. They are contemporary pointers to the life-testimony of the sādhis and the vitality of the *dharma* in this waterless region, where life is hard but faith finds its expression in an ardent, poetic devotion.

The *samādhi-mandira* of Sādhvi Puṇya Śrī

This is located in Jayapura.³⁴⁵ Sādhvi Puṇya was a pioneer in the Kharataragaccha from the time of her *dīkṣā* in 1873 till her Great

³⁴⁴ The *samādhi-mandiras* correspond to the *niṣīdikās* of the Bhaṭṭarakas mentioned earlier; the design and sculptures-work may vary. A *samādhi-mandira* is a small sanctuary erected in memory of a man or woman ascetic and containing either his or her *mūrti* (image, statue) or *caraṇapādukā* with one or more epigraphs. Here the members of the *caturvidhasaṃgha* pay homage to the memory of such ascetics.

³⁴⁵ Cf. Sādhvi Sajjana, 1960, p. 416.

Departure in 1916.³⁴⁶ At her birth the Terāpanthi sādhis were already well-organised in another part of Rājasthāna with their first Pramukhā at their head. Sādhvi Puṇya came from a village in the district of Jesalamera, right out in desert country, where the Kharataragacchas had for several centuries a centre of fervent religious and literary activity with accompanying temples and *bhaṇḍāras*.

The samādhi-mandira of Sādhvi Suvarna Śrī

Sādhvi Suvarna also belonged to a family of Rājasthāna, but one that was settled in Ahmadnagara in Mahārāṣṭra. As a young married woman she met Sādhvi Puṇya and, with great determination, asked permission of her husband and his family to receive *dikṣā*, which took place in 1890. Endowed by nature with a profoundly religious temperament and with high intelligence, she continued the task begun by Sādhvi Puṇya and took her place as *pravartini*. She imparted to the *gaccha* a new orientation which is still perceptible in her spiritual descendants, the sādhis of today.³⁴⁷ Her *samādhi-mandira* is at Bikānera, desert-city.

The guru-mandira of Sādhvi Sunandā Śrī

Sādhvi Sunandā was a native of Gujarāta and came from a Tapāgaccha family. As a young widow she received *dikṣā* along with her small daughter, who became Sādhvi Nirmalā Śrī. An unpretentious gūṛuṇī, with unswerving fidelity to her ideals, Sādhvi Sunandā left this world at the foot of Holy Mount Ābū in 1968. As Sādhvi Nirmalā is very well-known in Rājasthāna on account of the camps for both younger and teenage girls that she organises annually, the śrāvakaś and śrāvikaś, desirous of expressing to her their gratitude, have had erected at Ābū Road a *guru-mandira* in honour of Sādhvi

³⁴⁶ Cf. P 575 ff.

³⁴⁷ She was also the kinswoman of Sādhvi Vicakṣaṇa Śrī; cf. P 584 ff.

Sunandā, her revered mother and guruṇi.³⁴⁸ The *pratiṣṭhā-mahotsava*, the celebration following the erection of the *guru-mandira* with *caranapādukā*, took place in the course of a long ceremony, in which the ritual *pūjās* prescribed for such an occasion were performed one after another, during the end of the dark fortnight of *māghā* and the beginning of the bright fortnight of *phālguna* (end of February - beginning of March) 1976.³⁴⁹

These *samādhi-mandiras* are all signs that
'the Desert has bloomed again!'

The Names of the Sixteen Satis

Every day the *sādhvis* not only sing praise to the *tirthaṅkaras*, but also utter the Names of the sixteen Satis, Holy Women venerated in tradition for their virtues, especially for their strength of character in remaining faithful to the vow of chastity taken in youth or to their marriage-vow and for their perseverance later on in renunciation. All these Satis except one, Sulasā, received *dikṣā*.

The recitation with deep faith of these holy Names produces the same effect as a *maṅgala*. These Names have, in themselves, a purifying and elevating power. We must fully grasp the extreme subtlety of this form of worship: the worshipper does not petition any favour, but firmly believes that the pronunciation of the Name already constitutes a benediction:

Brāhmi,

³⁴⁸ Although the word '*guru*' is usually addressed to a muni, it can also be used for a *sādhvī* but '*guruṇi*' is much more commonly used; *guru-mandira* has the same meaning as *samādhi-mandira*. We must add that the reformed communities, the *Sthānakavāsīs* and *Terāpanthis*, who perform no temple-worship, do not erect *samādhi-mandiras*, though this, it goes without saying, in no way diminishes their veneration for the ascetics.

³⁴⁹ The invitation to this *pratiṣṭhā* gave all the details of the forthcoming ceremony.

Candanā,
 Rājimati,
 Draupadi,
 Kauśalyā,
 Mṛgāvati
 Sulasā,
 Sitā,
 Subhadrā,
 Śivā,
 Kuntī,
 Damayanti,
 Puṣpacūlā,
 Prabhāvatī,
 Padmāvatī,
 Sundarī

May they afford us Happiness every day! ³⁵⁰

³⁵⁰ *pratidinaṃ kurvantu no maṅgalam!* (apud JSBSam V, p. 185) Brāhmi, Sundarī, Rājimati, Candanā, Mṛgāvati, Sulasā (cf. P 99; 103; 122). Śivā, Prabhāvatī and Padmāvatī were sisters of Mṛgāvati (cf. PPN, pp. 795 (1); 436 (3); 419-420 (8); Subhadrā also was of the same epoch as Mahāvira (cf. PPN p. 827 (13); Kuntī, Draupadi and Damayanti figure in the Jaina version of the *Mahābhārata* (cf. TrisalPC VIII 3, 277-1077; 6, 264-378; 10, 1-93; also PPN, pp. 185; 390; 359;). Kauśalyā and Sitā appear in the Jaina version of the *Rāmāyaṇa* (cf. TrisalPC VII) For Puṣpacūlā, cf. PPN p. 468 (2). These Names are not recited according to the traditional or chronological order; cf. JSBSam V, pp. 185-376. Many śrāvakas and śrāvikās also recite them every day. The Digambara āryikās venerate: Brāhmi, Sundarī, Rājimati, Kuntī, Draupadi, Sitā, Subhadrā, Candanā and other Satis of their own tradition; cf. Jñānanati, 1976, pp. 68-74. These 16 Names are just a few chosen out of very many others; cf. *Pañcapratikramaṇa-sūtra* of the Mūrtipūjakas, pp. 233-241, where 47 Names of Satis are listed.

PART II

THE PATH LEADING TO NIRVĀṆA

The Supreme Reality [is], in truth the ātman, the Pure, the Omniscient, the Wise, the Knower; ascetics absorbed in the ātman, attain nirvāṇa.¹

Our lengthy journey, traversing the centuries and the various regions, has already familiarised us with the quintessence of the Jaina *dharma's* basic intuition, an intuition extremely simple in itself, which became a consistent doctrine thanks to the progressive elaboration it received at the hands of the first ācāryas and their successors. This elaboration has always aimed at maintaining intact the original intuition; it has sought to guard against diluting it and to avoid any deviation from the path traced by the *arhats*, while at the same time rendering the arduous ascent of this same path accessible to human beings. The ācāryas directed their endeavours above all towards an explanation of the contents of the original teaching so as to make it intelligible, while always attaching great importance to the psychological and physical make-up of the human person, for it is the total human being who, guided by the doctrine, must collaborate in the liberation of his or her *ātman*. The ācāryas have time and again evidenced great subtlety of thought as well as a profound knowledge of human nature even in its most inaccessible and secret places. They have noted in a lucid manner the weaknesses inherent in this nature and have expressed themselves with good sense, wisdom, moderation and firmness.

¹ *paramaṭṭho khalu samao suddho jo kevali muṇi pāṇi tamhi tṭhidā sahāve muṇiṇo pāvaranti nirvāṇam*. Samsa 151; the Supreme Reality: *paramaṭṭha* (*paramārtha*); *ātman*: *samaya* (cf. P 277 n.43). Absorbed in the *ātman*: lit. established in the very nature (of this *ātman*).

This Part consists in an introduction to the teaching and to the chief obligations of the sādhuvis and āryikās, who are required by their consecration to journey towards the goal in unwavering fidelity to all the demands of the *dharma*. In accordance with this angle of vision and through the texts quoted and references supplied, this introduction sets out to describe the basic doctrine which inspires and sustains the life of the ascetics; it endeavours to explain in a preliminary way, but one which always clings to the essentials, the various aspects, procedures and austerities of Jaina asceticism. Many other features of the teaching are not described for, though they may form part of the ascetics' belief, they are not part of the immediate demands laid upon them by their vows. As a preface to this Part we may make certain remarks a propos of its contents, about the part direct and indirect played by both sādhuvis and āryikās in its composition and about certain notions, texts and their contexts that are basic to it.

1. The way ahead

The above verse of Ācārya Kundakunda, in its profundity and its succinct and clear mode of expression, gives utterance to the quintessence of the doctrine:

The Supreme Reality [is] in truth the ātman, the Pure, the ātman which is, in essence, the principle of consciousness of being and of life. The whole universe is permeated by *ātmans* (*jivas*), the cosmos vibrates with life; each human being, each animal, each plant is an *ātman*, but an *ātman* bound to matter by its animal or vegetable body. The body - every body - is inert, lifeless matter and because of its association with a body the original purity of the *ātman* is tarnished, its capacity to awake to its own being is reduced. It follows that the body is the chief obstacle to Liberation. Through this body, *karman* - a highly subtle material substance formed as a result of action and the passions - infiltrates and veils the infinite potentialities of the *ātman*. Hence arises a relentless struggle to free the *ātman* from all harmful activity, from the body, from matter, to rescue it from their debasing clutches. The entire teaching underlying such a wealth of considerations, classifications and implications inculcates definitively this one single truth: the Supreme Reality is the *ātman*, pure *ātman* disengaged from matter and from every psychic manifestation. Here

we must make an important observation. When we speak of the Supreme Reality, this Reality is viewed from a spiritual point of view and as the goal set before every living being. Each one, according to his own degree of knowledge and awareness, is on the way towards the plenitude of his *ātman*, liberated from all else. The ascetic life, because of the detachment it demands, helps towards a progressive purification of both body and spirit. The greater his renunciation, the closer the ascetic gets to his chosen goal: the Realisation of his own *ātman* in pure consciousness of being, in perfect and undifferentiated unity with this same *ātman*.

The *ātman*, according to Jaina doctrine, is not the one and only Reality in the Vedāntic meaning of the word. We shall see, as we study the doctrine, that reality - that which is - that is also termed substance, includes *jivas* or *ātman*s, living substances and also *ajivas*, non-living substances. There is here a dualist system. However, among the substances, only those that are living enjoy, in different degrees, consciousness of being and can thus liberate themselves. Thus, although reality as such is dualist, the Supreme Reality for each living being is clearly the *ātman* (his own *ātman*) which is absolutely pure in essence but tarnished through its association with matter, which is non-living substance. Since we are endeavouring here to follow the path of the ascetics, each time we mention the Supreme or even Unique Reality we are referring to that (individual) reality towards the attainment of which each ascetic must bend his every effort.

The Omniscient, the Wise, the Knower, that is, the *ātman* which is detached, purified from all that is not its own nature, in which the functionings of the mind and of speech and body diminish and then disappear completely, so that only the vital function of breathing remains, the *ātman* is then the *kevalin* or omniscient one who knows all things, the supremely wise, the knower who himself knows himself fully and completely.

Ascetics, absorbed in the ātman, reach nirvāṇa, this, then, is the ascetics' goal, total absorption in their *ātman*, for this and this alone is the aim of ascetic practice. The rules of life, vows, the daily rite, rituals, expiations, austerities and the practice of mental concentration are simply means contributing to the purification of the *ātman*. Those

ascetics who have fully realised the *ātman* reach *nirvāṇa*, which signifies both the extinction of all that is foreign to the nature of the *ātman* and also the infinite beatitude of the *siddha*, the perfect one.

Through the labyrinthine maze of curves and bends in the doctrine, its philosophical intricacies, its myriad rules and complicated casuistry we must neither go astray nor lose sight of the one direction so clearly indicated by Kundakunda in this and many other verses.

2. The voice of the sādhvīs

The sādhvīs, from the very day they receive *dikṣā*, pledge themselves to journey towards Liberation.² Their voice, all along the way is an existential voice, that is to say, it is the expression of their life of faith in the *dharma*, it is the voice of disciples of the *arhats* who commit themselves to a life in conformity with the ideal; it is also the voice of pilgrims who study and meditate upon the *Āgamas* and the works of the Masters and are capable in their turn of guiding others.

Faith in the dharma, the śruta and the teaching of the Sages is strengthened by knowledge

Among the sādhvīs, faith is generally something that is inherited in a family setting and supported in the group to which they belong by a certain knowledge of Scripture and doctrine. On the whole this faith finds expression in a sincere belief such as adheres closely to doctrinal formulations, with, almost always, an element of *bhakti*, of veneration for Mahāvira and daughterly submission to his teaching as well as to the teaching of the *gaṇadharas* and the *ācāryas*. This fidelity to the teaching as it is distilled in the *śruta* and in the major doctrinal treatises, or in other words right belief, is the first condition necessary for an engagement on the path towards Liberation. This belief must always be accompanied by right knowledge, condition number two.³ A high proportion of the sādhvīs, on account of the way the *saṅgha* is

² The above-mentioned question of the Liberation of women among the Digambaras (P 63, 140) will be discussed later.

³ Cf. P 269 ff.

organised, the mentality of the society in which they live, unfavourable as it is towards serious study for women, a certain monopoly being exercised by the ācāryas and munis, do not get further than a form of faith and belief which is based on a bare orthodoxy; this means that they force themselves to learn by heart, without always going into them more deeply, certain *sūtras* and formulas which constitute the correct verbal expression of the *dharma*, because tradition enjoins this upon them. Often they go no further than this stage in assimilating the transmitted body of beliefs, simply accepting it as such, studying it by heart because this comprises a part of what one must believe, without asking questions, without much reflection or deeper thought in its regard. On account of this the second dimension, that of knowledge, atrophies. Hence, although the *sādhvis* believe in the fundamental doctrinal tenets outlined in the following chapters and despite the fact that they on the whole know the main points of these basic tenets, many have never had the possibility of undertaking that exercise of reflection upon them that this description of them implies and they would certainly not have committed them to writing in this way. We must realise that, being as they are within a system and in a fairly closed milieu, it is difficult for them to stand back, as it were, gain perspective and pose questions. Furthermore, if certain questions should confront them, many *sādhvis*, for want of knowledge and a sufficiently large vocabulary, would not know how to formulate them in words. Nevertheless, certain very courageous *sādhvis* pioneers, conscious of these deficiencies, have encouraged study and reflection. More and more we find a very positive movement in favour of serious study, with exactly this aim and object of deepening belief through and towards more enlightened knowledge.⁴ Our study endeavours to transmit what certain *sādhvis* and *āryikās*, very well versed in their doctrine, would themselves express, except that having never gone out of their own setting, they would use a more restricted terminology.

Faith and knowledge shape life and facilitate right action

Right conduct is inseparable from belief and knowledge and the three, when fully implemented, lead to Deliverance. The life of the

⁴ All this will be studied in Part III.

sādhvis is shaped by its own particular orientation and by a number of practices of which the purpose and aim is always the purification of the *ātman*. As their faith is firm even if their knowledge is often slight and unenlightened, they usually evidence both courage and perseverance, as well as integrity in the whole sphere of action. They allow themselves to be guided by their own *ācārya* and their *guruṇi*.⁵ Even if routine is often a dominating factor - and in this regard one can never repeat too often that the attitude of society towards women has scarcely aided their intellectual and spiritual progress⁶ - it remains true none the less that, precisely because of their faith in the *dharma* and their conviction of the value of the path they are following, they succeed in acting rightly. Some of their number have attained a loftily spiritual level through their faith and firm convictions, coupled with heroic virtues.⁷ The description that follows, which summarizes the teaching concerning ascetics and which treats together, for they are inseparable, the various aspects of belief, knowledge and action, is as regards action, an account of the life undertaken by the *sādhvis*; if this were the only aspect to be taken into consideration, quite a number of them could well have presented what follows in a very similar manner.

Guides on the path

We are referring here to the treatises that have guided our synthesis and constitute its supporting pillars. One of the most important tasks of the *sādhvis* is *svādhyāya*: the reflective, meditative reading of Scripture and the major doctrinal texts. Making a personal *svādhyāya* my starting-point and having received counsel from several *sādhvis* as regards the selection of texts, I have tried to transmit the essence of the doctrine. My guides have been the following:

⁵ As we shall see in Part III, the personality of the *guruṇi* is of great importance.

⁶ Cf. P 87 ff.

⁷ Cf. P 571 ff. for accounts of several unusual lives.

1. For the composition of the Part and the presentation of the doctrine:

- The *Tattvārtha-sūtra*, followed without exception by both Digambaras and Śvetāmbaras, and the commentary thereon, the *Savārthasiddhi*.
- The *Dravyasaṃgraha*, a treatise which is of brief compass but very compact and of remarkable consistency.⁸

2. For the spirit which has guided the writing of this Part:

- The *Pravacanasāra* and the *Samayasāra*. In connection with these two important treatises I readily acknowledge that I owe to Āryikā Śrī Jñānamatī my discovery of Ācārya Kundakunda as the Master par excellence; I have followed him very closely because of his profundity of thought issuing from his experience, his clarity and his sure grasp of the teaching. Himself a sage of the Digambara persuasion, Kundakunda is no prisoner of compartmentalised sectarianism, he finds his place within the spiritual treasury of humanity. Moreover, he is accepted by all the Jainas and, during these last years, several Śvetāmbara sādhus have been studying him.

For the more specific subjects:

- The *Anagāradharmāmṛta* for the *āvaśyakas*, the daily duties.
- The *Ācārāṅga-sūtra* and the *Daśavaikālīka-sūtra* for the *mahāvratas*, the great vows.

⁸ I have known the *Dravyasaṃgraha* since my stay in Ghatakpar in 1971 when I was following the courses of Śramaṇi Vidyāpiṭha (cf. P 467). This work of Siddhānta Cakravartin Nemicaṇḍra (cf. P 224) was written towards the end of the Xth c. for Cāmuṇḍarāya, a minister of King Rājamalla, this same minister was the one who caused the statue of Bāhubali to be set up at Śravaṇa Belgola. This text was translated into Hindi (in verse and prose) by Āryikā Jñānamatī in 1977.

- The *Dhyānaśataka*⁹ the *Tattvānuśāsana* and the *Yogaśāstra*¹⁰ for *dhyāna*, mental concentration.

For numerous references on the various subjects:

- The *Sthānāṅga-sūtra*, the *Sūtrakṛtāṅga-sūtra*, the *Uttarādhyayana-sūtra* and the *Karmagrantha*, the *Mūlācāra*.

Out of all these texts, certain ones belong to the Digambara tradition, others to the Śvetāmbara tradition; their origin is of little importance; what interests us is the possibility of apprehending through these *Sūtras* and treatises the depth and boundless wealth of the sages' teaching, which constitutes a guide for the *sādhvis*, the *āryikās* and all those who take interest in religious traditions.

3. Some guidelines for the study

To make the doctrine more easily accessible and the voice of the *sādhvis* more audible we must follow a certain method, an approach which aims above all at securing ready comprehension. This means that, in order to grasp better from the inside the nature of a spiritual journey that is guided by an elaborate and firmly-based body of teaching, there must be some landmarks or points of reference which are of importance for the whole and help to sustain a constant effort of reflection.

Words and notions

The *Jaina dharma*, despite its originality, has its roots in the Indian soil which has produced a variety of ancient traditions with features in common as well as divergencies. Each of these traditions is based on

⁹ *Sādhvi Rājimati*, who is herself the author of studies upon the subject, introduced me to the *Dhyānaśataka* of *Ācārya Jinabhadra* in the course of our discussions at *Sri Dūmgaragadha* in 1975.

¹⁰ The *Yogaśāstra* of *Ācārya Hemacandra* was composed for King *Kumārapāla* in the XIIth c. These two treatises, the *Dravsam* and the *YSas*, which were intended respectively for a minister and for a sovereign, give us the benefit of a clear and complete synthesis of the teaching.

a well-defined doctrine expressed in a specific language. The words used to transmit the doctrinal teaching are often common to several traditions, but they have taken on within each a special connotation. Without entering into philological details, we may simply say that in the two following Parts the original meanings, or meanings, of the most important words is indicated and then the idea expressed by this word within the *dharmā*. These words are loaded with meaning, they are the symbols, sap, roots, essence, if one may so express it, of the doctrine. They are never abstract, for, though not entities in themselves, they are linked to other words by a whole network of internal communications and it is precisely because of these close associations. That we are enabled to grasp the fundamental notions those which belong to a whole, to a thought-structure. As one advances further and further along the path, one finds that only a few words are left, all of which express one notion: that which is, the Supreme Reality.

Texts and their contexts

The quoting of texts gives us direct contact; through them we are gripped, so to speak, by the sages and acquire a certain rootedness in the *dharmā*; these quotations are not isolated phenomena, they spring from the bedrock of the doctrine. The texts quoted from part of a vast contextual tapestry woven out of innumerable texts, to which allusion is made in the many reference-notes. Selection cannot but be somewhat subjective and arbitrary; in place of the texts chosen one could well have cited others. However, in the present study certain criteria underlie the choice of texts quoted and references supplied. Those quoted are:

- Certain texts which serve as articles of faith for the sādhis and others which express their vows or comment upon these same vows.
- Those which belong to the most ancient *Āgamas*; in this regard care is always taken to go back to the origins.
- Those which best transmit the spirit or quintessence of the *dharmā*; in this regard Kundakunda is the great Master.

Within all these texts is to be discerned a harmony, for they complement each other, each one expounding some particular aspect. Finally, the translation of the texts and the introductions thereto, being based on the original, take their inspiration from the translations and commentaries of the *ācāryas*, *munis*, *sādhvis* and *āryikās* of today. This is very important, for they know better than anyone the vital intrinsic value of the texts, such as is infinitely beyond the mere words, and thus in their translations and explanations they transmit all that they themselves have assimilated of the commentaries of the sages of the past.

We may remark at this point that the *Āgamas* used by the *sādhvis* are concerned primarily with rules of life. They do also contain elements of the doctrine, but these are little explained and only rarely systematised. For this reason, we follow here certain genuine treatises which, though not included in the *śruti*, are nevertheless recognised as possessing great authority, precisely because their authors had drunk deep of the *Āgamas*. Furthermore, by following systematically certain treatises, by studying them and meditating upon specific texts, we perform our own *svādhyāya* and thus participate forthwith in the primordial task of the *sādhvis*' life, for by means of *svādhyāya* based on faith in the Scriptures one acquires that right knowledge which moulds one's life.¹¹

¹¹ This Part sets forth the doctrinal basis and explains how action must be in conformity with it. In Part III we shall see in detail the translation into action of this basis in all its implications, in the life of the *sādhvis* and *āryikās*. Everything hangs together.

Chapter 1

At the starting-point, a vista of the path: The *ratnatraya*, the Three Jewels

<i>samyak-darśana</i>	right vision,
<i>samyak-jñāna</i>	right knowledge,
<i>samyak-cāritra</i>	right conduct [constitute]
<i>mokṣā-mārgaḥ</i>	the path leading to Liberation. ¹²

Jaina doctrine used the term *ratnatraya*, the Three Jewels, for these three distinct and yet inseparable aspects of the spiritual path leading to *mokṣa*.¹³ Before attempting to define *ratnatraya* we must first adopt a fundamentally Jaina perspective by taking cognisance of the two *nayas* or points of view, complementary angles of vision: *vyavahāra* and *nīścaya*. *Vyavahāra*, a word often used in contemporary parlance, means: conduct, comportment, in the sense of: way of being, behaviour towards persons and things, that which comprises the uninterrupted flow of action in everyday life. *Nīścaya* means: certainty, exact knowledge, and also, decision, determination. The word implies something absolute. Starting from these normal and agreed definitions, the *ācāryas*, at least certain ones among them, have imparted to each of these words particular shades of meaning in its own particular context. Thus: *vyavahāra* denotes the way of conceiving and regarding substances according to distinctions, aspects, modalities, forms and anything else which may be an object

¹² *samyak-darśana-jñāna-cāritrāṇi mokṣa-mārgaḥ*. TS I,1.

¹³ Cf. US XXVIII, 2 where *tapas* (austerity) is added to the Three Jewels; in point of fact *tapas*, both external and internal, is one of the virtues leading to *nirjarā*, the disintegration and elimination of *karman*. We may add that justification for adding *tapas* to the Three Jewels resides in the fact that only the human being can attain Liberation - and that precisely because of his capacity to practise austerity of which the loftiest form is *dhyāna*, mental concentration; cf. P 367 ff.

of analysis for the senses and intellect and, thence, a way of living in accordance with philosophical and spiritual values; while *nīścaya* is the authentic attitude, the one thing needful, that which pierces through the envelope of temporality and goes straight to the essence of that which is under consideration, beyond all form and appearance. Through *nīścaya* the substance is apprehended in its pure essential selfhood, without distinction, and in this apprehension the one apprehending and that which is apprehended or, we may say, the knower and the known are only one. This way of approach applies, first and foremost, to the *jīva* (*ātman*) in its ultimate Reality and leads, if one may so express it, to a movement of enstasy. *Nīścaya* is also called by Ācārya Kundakunda: *suddha-naya* and *paramārtha-naya*.¹⁴ These two ways of viewing, *vyavahāra* and *nīścaya*, are inextricably intertwined for one desirous of attaining realisation of the *ātman*; that is to say, one must advance by stages and, in the beginning at least, one cannot dispense with an analytical approach before arriving at the threshold of being.¹⁵ Those who are content to remain on the level of the empirical, the palpable, the thinkable and the discursive do not go beyond the level of *vyavahāra*. Only those who search for the purest ultimate, that is to say, the sages, succeed in viewing everything in the light of *nīścaya*.¹⁶

A - Ratnatraya: The Three Jewels

These are Three Jewels which comprise in fact just one. The Scriptures insist that they cannot be separated, that one cannot possess one of them without possessing the others. Studying them one by one,

¹⁴ Cf. e.g. SamSa 11; 12; 14; 141; *ibid.*, 8; 43; *paramārtha* can also denote the Supreme Reality, cf. e.g. SamSa 151; 152.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 11-12. For a study on the subject, cf. JSK II, pp. 551-568. We are going to encounter these two angles of vision frequently in the DravSam and the SamSa. Generally there is first a consideration of some object according to *vyavahāra* and then according to *nīścaya*, but certain texts reverse this order, e.g. DravSam 7.

while keeping the others in our consciousness, let us try fairly briefly to understand the meaning of each. We may note first that, in order to stress the unity that exists between them, the word samyak, meaning: beneficial, right, just, exact, perfect, is ascribed to each of the jewels.

i) *Samyak-darśana*

Darśana is the act of seeing, vision in the sense of a penetration inwards, to the heart, the innermost, of that which eye contemplates. The word, according to context, is translated: perception or intuition. This apprehension of reality is a comprehensive one.¹⁷ Right vision here means: faith, the adherence of one's mind, one's being, to that which the *siddhānta*, the doctrine, declares to be reality. This is well-defined in the *Tattvārtha-sūtra*: "samyak-darśana [is] śraddhā (faith) in tattvārtha (the real, the true)",¹⁸ which in the doctrine denotes: *dravya* (substance), something-as-it-truly-is. This right vision or perception may be the spontaneous fruit of an innate disposition of heart or it may be acquired through study.¹⁹

Darśana, together with *jñāna* (knowledge), constitutes what the doctrine calls *upayoga*, a word which is very important, but difficult to define. *Upayoga* means 'consciousness' in the sense of an awareness, the awakening of a person's being to his own state, with certain shades of meaning according to the different contexts in which it is used; it is the nature itself of the *jīva* (*ātman*).²⁰ Four types of *darśana upayoga* exist:

¹⁷ *jaṁ sāmāṇyaṁ gahaṇaṁ bhāvāṇaṁ neva kaṭṭumāyāraṁ
avisesidūṇa atthe dāsaṇamidi bhāṇaye samaye.* DravSam 43.

¹⁸ *tattvārthasraddhānāṁ samyagdarśanam.* TS I, 2; cf. DravSam 41.

¹⁹ Cf. TS I, 3.

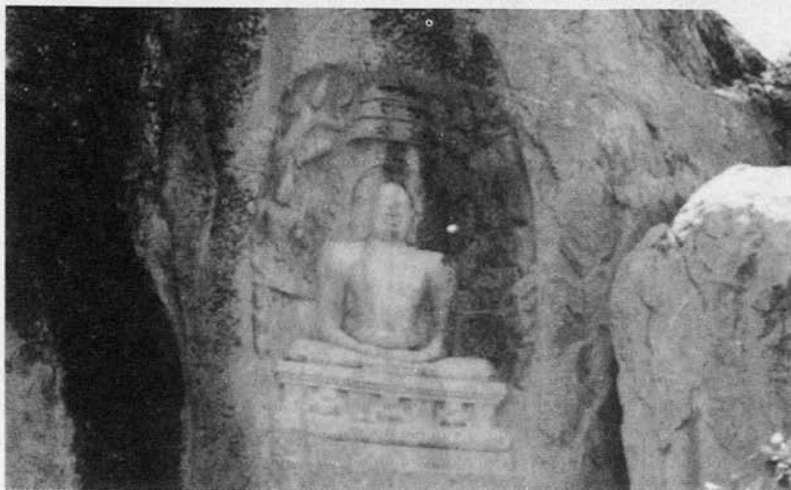
²⁰ Cf. P 284 ff. Lit. the word means usage, application, use. The word is made up of the prefix *upa*: near, towards, with, and *yoga* which, in the doctrine, refers to the threefold activity of body, speech and mind (P 302 n. 65). By *upayoga* is to be understood that capacity for knowledge, that condition of consciousness, which is inherent to the *ātman* which, according to circumstances and by means of the sense-organs, directs itself towards (or



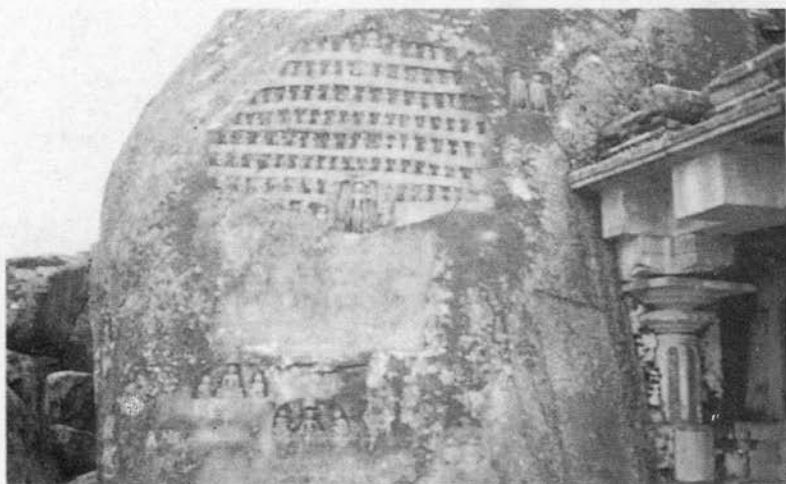
1. Stūlabhadra and his seven sisters sādhyis, *Kalpa-sūtra*



2. Bāhubali with Brāmi and Sundari, *Kalpa-sūtra*



3. Samanarmalai, Mahāvira



4. Śravaṇa Beḷgoḷa, Indragiri, the rock of the siddhas



5. Samanarmalai, the line of carvings and epigraphs in the rock



6. Sādhvīs, painting of a vijñaptipatrā, by Śālivāhana



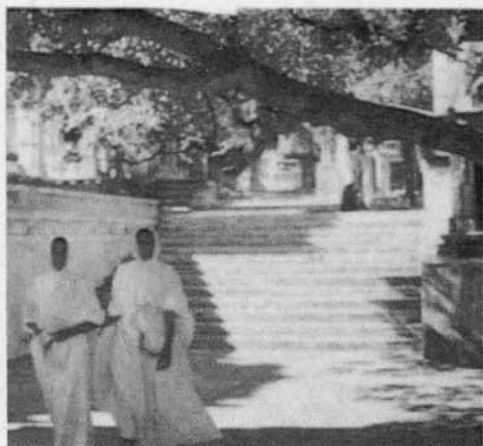


10. Dilli, image of Sādhvi Vicakṣaṇa Śrī



9. Ābū Road, caranapādukā of Sādhvi Śunandā Śrī in the samādhi-mandira

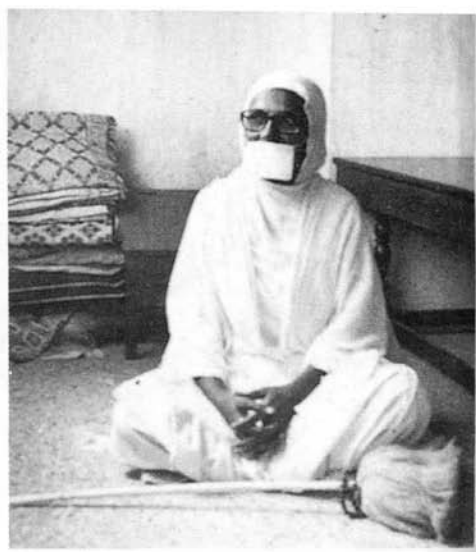
8. Namaskāra-mantra



11. Śātruṅjaya Sādhvis descending



12. Āryikā Śrī Jñānamati Mātājī (Digambara)



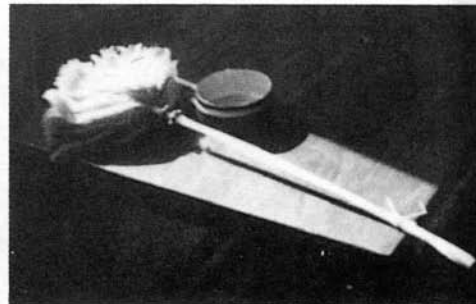
13. Mahāsati Śrī Tarulatā (Sthānakavāsi)



14. Pātras, Mūrtipūjaka sādhis



15. Sādhvi Nirmalā Śrī (Mūrtipūjaka, Tapāgacch)



16. Rajoharaṇa and pātra, Sthānakavāsi sādhi

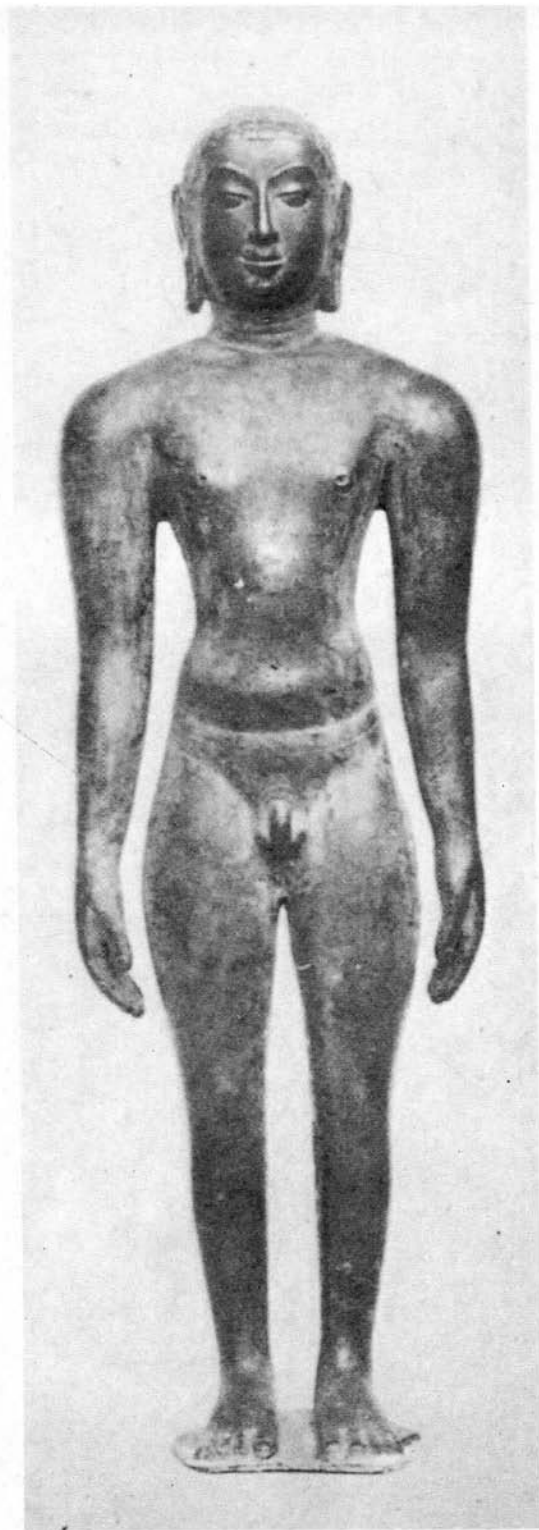


17. Aṣṭamaṅgala, embroidery



18. Mathurā, āyāgapāṭa

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19. Jina in kāyotsarga

cakṣur-darśana, visual perception;

acakṣur-darśana, non-visual perception, that is, perception through the other sense-organs;

avadhi-darśana, perception, vision, direct intuition of a limited sort such as is directed towards material things only, or clairvoyance;

kevala-darśana, all -embracing, direct vision, omniscience such as is brought to bear upon all substances and their various modifications.²¹

Darśana and *jñāna* are interdependent, that is to say, *darśana* is the initial apprehension of substances in a general way, while *jñāna* is the apprehension of them in a second movement and thus in their particularities. This is why, with ordinary people, *darśana* always precedes *jñāna*, but in the case of the omniscient, at least according to certain texts, these two activities occur simultaneously.²²

ii) *Samyak-jñāna*

The *Tattvārtha-sūtra*, though it defines in detail all the possible forms of *jñāna*, gives in no single sūtra a definition of right knowledge; however, the *Dravyasaṃgraha* says this:

constitutes an effort towards) a particular form of activity such as manifests itself in one, two or three ways, through the operation of body, speech, mind. Sukhlal TS, p. 80 refers to "cognitive operation." *Upayoga* is a psychic function inseparable from *labdhi* (TS II, 18). *Labdhi* means, lit.: acquisition, gain. It is the capacity of some sensory or mental activity to evidence itself, while *upayoga* is the conscious actualisation of this activity, an actualisation productive of modifications in the *jīva*. *Labdhi* also signifies the acquisition, thanks to an ever-alert lucidity, of greater and greater purity of spirit and conduct as bad *karmas* are progressively eliminated; cf. P.S. Jaini, 1979, pp. 142-143; JSK III, pp. 424-429.

²¹ Cf. *DravSam* 4; TS II, 9.

²² Cf. *DravSam* 44; TS I, 29.

samyak-jñāna: the grasp of the nature of the *ātman* and other [substances] in their every aspect, free from doubt, error or aberration; [there are] various types of *samyak-jñāna*.²³

There follows an exposition of great clarity which verifies what has gone before: *samyak-darśana* is to believe in the substance, more precisely in the seven categories of substances, taught by the doctrine, while *samyak-jñāna* is to apprehend the *ātman* and other substances in their natural properties.

What are the different types of *jñāna*? They number five, of which two are indirect, that is, they require an intermediary: *mati*, sensory knowledge, which is acquired through both the senses and mental activity; *śruta*, knowledge acquired through study of the Scriptures or, to be more exact, through the hearing of the message of the doctrine; this type of knowledge is grounded solely in mental activity, though it is preceded by sensory knowledge.²⁴

The three other sorts of knowledge are direct, without intermediary:

avadhi, clairvoyance;
manahparyaya, telepathy;
kevala, omniscience.²⁵

²³ *saṃsaya vimoha vibhrama vivajjīyaṃ appaparasarūvassa gahaṇaṃ sammāṃ ñāṇaṃ sâyāraṃ aṇeyabheyaṃ ca*. DīavSam 42. The question here is of subtle forms of ignorance very similar to one another which may affect right knowledge in different ways: *vimoha* here has the meaning of *viparyaya* (*vibhrama*) means uncertainty, confusion, lack of clarity.

²⁴ Cf. TS I, 20.

²⁵ Cf. TS I, 9. indirect knowledge (perception) or *parokṣa*; direct knowledge (perception) or *pratyakṣa*; cf. TS I, 11-12; US XXVIII, 4.

Two of these types of direct knowledge, namely, clairvoyance and omniscience, correspond to the two direct types of vision or perception mentioned above. We may note, without going here into all the intricacies of these forms of *jñāna*, that, taking into our purview the essential factor of *karman*, we shall discover that *jñāna*, as also *darśana*, varies in degree of purity according to the quantity of *karman* that obscures it.

We must stress at this point the importance of *śruta-jñāna*, the knowledge of Scripture;²⁶ *śruta-jñāna*, an aspect of *samyak-jñāna*, is inextricably woven into the life-pattern of the *sādhvis* and *āryikās* and constitutes an important part of the vision of the path to be followed.

Śruta-jñāna is the solid framework upon which assimilation of the doctrine rests. This naturally involves study and a conscious, meditative, profound knowledge; the fact of learning by heart a large number of *Sūtras* does not render them less well understood; on the contrary, the absorption of the words and their sounds and the identification of the person with the text recited have a helpful effect, provided always that the effort of memory is accompanied by an effort of reflection.²⁷ We may add that the *pravacanas*, spiritual discourses that the *sādhvis* give to *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās*, always take their inspiration from the Scriptures, which fact presupposes that they are well-acquainted with them and have assimilated them themselves in order to transmit to those who 'hear' with their ears and their minds the teaching of Mahāvira, the *ācāryas* and other sages.²⁸ This being the case, this present study is based on these same Scriptures, those which are the guides of the ascetics, though it is recognised that this is only one aspect of *jñāna* and that the study of the texts must blend harmoniously with right belief and right conduct.

²⁶ Cf. ADh III, 1-3; 5-7.

²⁷ Cf. *svādhyāya* P 490 ff.

²⁸ Two chief types of *śruta-jñāna* are distinguished: *aṅgapraviṣṭa* or the knowledge of the contents of the 12 *Aṅgas*; and *aṅgabāhya*, which is a quite different knowledge of the doctrine, based on the works of the sages.

We do not intend here to embark on a technical study of *śruta-jñāna*,²⁹ but to extract the essential, that is to say, that which moulds the life of the ascetics even though in itself this is only a stage that needs to be transcended. Here are some passages of Ācārya Kundakunda which explain these ideas:

The one whose attention [is] fixed on one sole object [is] a *śramaṇa*; this state of concentration [comes into being] through an exact knowledge of categories; [it is] through study of the *Āgamas* that this exact knowledge [is obtained], which is why the assiduous study of the *Āgamas* is primordial.³⁰

The *śramaṇa* who does not know the *Āgamas* knows neither the *ātman* nor the other [categories]; not knowing the categories, how can the *bhikṣu* destroy *karman*?³¹

And here is a rare pearl:

The eyes of the Saints:³² the *Āgamas*,
the eyes of all living beings: the senses,
the eyes of the gods: clairvoyance, and
the eyes of the *siddhas*:³³ on all sides.³⁴

²⁹ Certain texts expound the subtle aspects of *śruta-jñāna*, NandīS 37-44 enumerates 14; KarmG I, 7 enumerates 20.

³⁰ *eyaggagado samaṇo eyaggam nicchidassa atthesu
nicchitti āgamado āgamaceṭṭhā tado jeṭṭhā*. PSa III, 32.
This trans. is not a literal one; it is based on the commentaries and endeavours to convey the meaning of this v.; *attha* (*artha*) here means *padārtha* or the categories which constitute reality; cf. next chapter.

³¹ *āgamahiṇo samaṇo nevappāṇaṃ paraṃ viyānādi
avijāṇanto atthe khavedi kammāṇi kidha bhikkhū*. PSa III 33.

³² The ascetics.

³³ Those who have attained absolute perfection.

³⁴ *āgamacakkhū sāhū imdiyacakkhūṇi savvabhūdāṇi
devā ya chiacakkhū siddhā puṇa savvado cakkhū*. PSa III, 34.

This is a reference to the different degrees of knowledge. One can easily grasp the importance of *śruta-jñāna* for ascetics, because by means of it they "see", it constitutes their faculty of right and penetrating insight. Nevertheless, adds Ācārya Kundakunda - and here one observe the close connection between *darśana* and *cāritra*, the third Jewel - the study of the *Āgamas* is not enough: if one does not have faith in the Reality, if one has not renounced all, one will not attain *nirvāṇa*.³⁵ This is made clear also in the following passages of which the essential is voiced by the mystics of all religious traditions:

Again, the one [who has] the slightest attachment to his own body or to anything else, even if he knows all the *Āgamas*, cannot attain Liberation.³⁶

And with regard to the attainment of this goal:

That man has only the outward appearance of a *śramaṇa*, [even though] he has self-mastery, perform penitence and knows the *Sūtras*, if he has no faith in the doctrine taught by the *jīnas*, of which the *ātman* [is] the most important category.³⁷

The practice of asceticism and extensive and profound knowledge are nothing if, above all else, one does not have faith in the reality of the *ātman*.

iii) *Samyak-cāritra*

This third Jewel, right conduct, takes for granted certain factors: the existence of the human person, his freedom of action and of decision, his insertion in society, his membership of the Jaina

³⁵ Cf. PSa III, 37.

³⁶ *paramānupamāṇaṁ vā mucchā dehādiessu jassa puṇo vijjati jati so siddhiṁ na lahadi savvāgamadharo vi.* PSa III, 39.

³⁷ *na havadi samṇo tti mado samjamatavasuttasampajutto vi jati saddahadi na atthe ādapadhāṇe jīṇakkhāde.* PSa III, 64.

community, his acceptance of the *śiddhānta*, the complete and perfect orthodoxy of this community, and a determination to live according to its norms. One grasps immediately the importance of this Jewel, which is emphasised by the fact that it comes last of the three. It is not possible, in fact to stay in the realm of pure abstraction; the most sublime concepts must be incarnated in the whole person. We shall see how the mechanism of *karman* involves every faculty and it is the entire human person that is engaged in a sustained effort towards purification. This effort, which undergirds the least intention, the slightest action, is directed towards *samyak-cāritra*. However, there can be no right action without a seeing, without belief or knowledge and, reciprocally, unless they are actualised in everyday life, *samyak-darśana* and *samyak-jñāna* are mere sterile abstractions.³⁸ We must always keep in mind that we are on the path which leads to *nirvāṇa*, for the attainment of which the *ātman* must needs be liberated from matter. Now this Liberation concerns the whole of the human personality.³⁹ This is to say that:

The most perfect form of *samyak-cāritra* taught by the *jīnas* [is] the stoppage by the knower of both external and internal actions, in order to destroy the causes of *saṃsāra*.⁴⁰

A brief analysis of this passage reveals that the one who sets forth on the path of right conduct must have a certain degree of *jñāna*, which presupposes a like degree of *darśana*. The aim of *samyak-cāritra* is to transcend *saṃsāra*, the cycle of successive existences in time, and the means of achieving this is to follow the teaching of the

³⁸ Cf. US XXVIII, 29-30, where *samyaktva*: perfection probably means *samyak-darśana*.

³⁹ Cf. AS I, 4, 4 to which Muni Nathamala gives the title: *samyak-cāritra*; cf. Ayaro, pp. 163-167; 171-173.

⁴⁰ *bahirabbhaṃtarakiriyāroho bhavakāraṇappaṇāsaṭṭham
ñāṇissa jaṃ jīnuttam tam paramam sammacārittam*. DravSam 46; The knower or *jñānin* is the one who is already on the road towards perfection.

jinas on the means one must employ to control, master and finally stop all forms of external and internal activities which tarnish the *ātman*.⁴¹

We return now, after this brief account of each of the Three Jewels, to the ideas mentioned at the start: *vyavahāra* and *nīścaya*. Here our special interest, because we desire to understand the essential nature of the Jewels which lead to *mokṣa*, is in *nīścaya*, without, of course, ignoring *vyavahāra*, for the two form a pair together.⁴² Ācārya Kundakunda, at the beginning of his admirable treatise the *Samayasāra*,⁴³ makes a clear distinction between what he calls *sva-samaya*, the *ātman* in its pure and essential being, that is to say, the real, and *para-samaya*, all that is other than *ātman*; he says, furthermore, that the *jīva* which is grounded in the Three Jewels is *sva-samaya*, while all that is conditioned by material *karman* is *para-samaya*.⁴⁴ One may also, to be more precise, say that, according to *vyavahāra*, the Three Jewels are the cause of *mokṣa* but in reality, according to *nīścaya*, it is the *ātman* who possesses the Three that is the cause of *mokṣa*.⁴⁵ Kundakunda further affirms that the one who possesses right vision knows the nature of the knower, which is to say

⁴¹ A large portion of this study will be devoted to the means leading to *samyak-cāritra*, means which the *sādhvis* must use, not as ends in themselves, but as guides, while using also those which lead to the attainment of the two other Jewels.

⁴² The *Sūtras*, which act as guides for the ascetics, though emphasising strongly *nīścaya*, go at length into the *vyavahāra* aspect also. This is to be expected, but all these minute regulations must never make us lose sight of the essential. ADh consecrates a whole ch. to each of the Three Jewels, maintaining a good equilibrium between the two aspects; cf. ADh II-IV.

⁴³ *Samaya* means: doctrine, which is then identified with the *ātman*; *samayasāra*: the quintessence of the *ātman*.

⁴⁴ Cf. SamSa 2.

⁴⁵ Cf. DravSam 39; and:
rayaṇattayaṁ ṇa vaṭṭai appānaṁ muyattu aṇṇadaviyamhi
tamhā tattiyamaio hodi hu mokkhassa kāraṇaṁ ādā. DravSam 40;
 cf. SamSa 7; 16.

that the *ātman* is the nature of the knower,⁴⁶ or the *ātman* is the knower,⁴⁷ liberated from doubt and from fear.⁴⁸ In an outpouring of purest faith he says:

The one who has tender devotion towards the Three Jewels, the path [which leads] to *mokṣa*, must be regarded as the perfect believer, being confirmed in tender devotion [towards the way].⁴⁹

The *ātman* who, mounted on the chariot of knowledge, proceeds on pleasant paths, proclaiming the Jaina teaching, must be regarded as the perfect believer.⁵⁰

Belief in the nine-categories: right vision, the sure and certain knowledge of these categories: right knowledge, liberation of the self from all forms of attachment: right conduct, this is certainly the path to Liberation.⁵¹

Let one know that *jñāna* [is to know] the *Ācāraṅga*

46 *evaṃ sammāñiṭṭhi appāṇaṃ muṇaḍi jāṇaḡasahāvaṃ udayaṃ kammavivāḡaṃ ca muṇaḍi taccāṃ viyāṇaṃto*. SamSa 200; cf. also PSa I, 35: *jo jāṇaḍi so ṇāṇaṃ*. . . "The one who knows [is] knowledge."

47 Cf. SamSa 6.

48 *sammāñiṭṭhi jivā ṇissāṃkā hoṃti ṇibbhayā teṇa sattabhayavippamukkā jaṃhā taṃhā du ṇissāṃkā*. SamSa 228.

49 *jo kuṇaḍi vacchalattaṃ tiṇhe sādḡhūpa mokkhamaggammi so vacchalabhāvajudo sammāñiṭṭhi muṇeyavvo*. SamSa 235; *vacchala* (*vātsalya*): tenderness, affection, the love of parents for their children.

50 *viṇṇārahamaṇūḡḡho maṇorahapaḡhesu bhaṃai jo cedā so ṇiṇaṇāṇapahāvi sammāñiṭṭhi muṇeyavvo*. SamSa 236.

51 *jivādisaddahaṇaṃ sammattaṃ tesimadhigamo ṇāṇaṃ rāḡādi parihaṇaṇaṃ caraṇaṃ eso du mokkḡapaho*. SamSa 155.

and the other [Āgamas], *darśana* [is to believe in] the *jiva* and the other [categories], *cāritra* [is to refrain from harming] the six types of living beings; this is called *vyavahāra*.⁵²

He goes on, however:

According to *nīścaya*, my *ātman* [is] knowledge,
my *ātman* [is] faith and conduct,
my *ātman* [is] renunciation,
my *ātman* [is] the cessation of *karman* and concentration.⁵³

We find ourselves, thus, on the path with this clear vision and with certitude that the essential to be known and to purify, which is at one and the same time that through which we know, see and believe and also the locus of purification, is the *ātman*.⁵⁴

B - *Dravya*: Substance

This word has a very important place in the doctrine. *Dravya* in a Jaina context, always has the meaning of substance.⁵⁵ At the

⁵² *āyārādiṇāṇaṃ jivādidamśaṇaṃ ca viṇṇeyāṃ
chajjivaṇikāyaṃ ca taḥā bhāṇai carittāṃ tu vavahāro.* SamSa 276; cf. DS IV, 4-10 where these 6 types are described.

⁵³ *ādā khu majjha ṇāṇaṃ ādā me damśaṇaṃ carittāṃ ca
ādā paccakkhāṇaṃ ādā me samivare jogo.* SamSa 277.

⁵⁴ Cf. YSas IV, 1-3 where Ācārya Hemacandra, several centuries after Ācārya Kundakunda, says exactly the same thing.

⁵⁵ *Dravya* is probably derived from *dru*, *dāru*, wood. This interesting analogy is given: just as the carpenter and craftsman work on wood, impart to it different forms without the wood being changed in what pertains to its nature, so likewise *dravya* is modified by internal and external causes which do not affect it in what pertains to its underlying base, its substratum; cf. JSK

beginning of this chapter we saw that *samyak-darśana* means to adhere to reality, believe in this substance as it truly is, while the word used for substance is *tattvārtha*. How is this to be understood? The answer is fairly simple: the concepts *sat*, *tattva*, *tattvārtha*, *padārtha*, *dravya* all mean: reality, substance, existence; no distinction is made between these terms. Reality is substance and vice versa.⁵⁶ The word *dravya* is much the most frequently used. The notions essential to *dravya* are given in the *Tattvārtha-sūtra*:

"The proper sign of *dravya* (substance) [is] *sat* (existence, the fact of being)."⁵⁷ "Substance [is] itself existence" says Kundakunda.⁵⁸ Existence is characterised by "coming into being, disappearance and immutability."⁵⁹

These three characteristics may appear contradictory, but they are not so, for that which is essential to substance is its immutability, the other

II, p. 452. The fundamental characteristic of *dravya* is, precisely, its quality of being *dhruva*, stable, constant, immovable, in other words, its immutability. Since *dru* generally means: to flow, the other aspect of *dravya* has also been noted in this etymology: change, becoming.

⁵⁶ Cf. Mehta, 1971, pp. 60-63.

⁵⁷ *sat dravyalakṣaṇam*. TS V, 29; *lakṣaṇa*: characteristic, differentia.

⁵⁸ ... *dravyaṃ sayam satva*. . PSa II, 13.

⁵⁹ *utpāda-vyaya-dhrauvya-yukkaṃ sat*. TS V, 30; *utpāda*, a coming into being, indicates that substance is constantly acquiring new modes, due to *vyaya*, the disappearance of old modes; but throughout these continual changes, the immovable foundation, be-ing, persists. For example, out of a lump of clay the craftsman fashions a jug; *utpāda*, the coming-into-being of the jug happens through *vyaya*, the disappearance of the lump as such; but *dhrauvya*, the immutability of the clay-substance, persists. There is no coming-into-being without some disappearance and both are impossible without the permanence of the substance; cf. PSa II, 8; 11; 18.

attributes being modalities subject to time.⁶⁰ Furthermore: That which is permanent and imperishable: the essential nature [of *dravya*].⁶¹

Again, *dravya* is defined as: "The qualities and modes."⁶² The *guṇas* (qualities or attributes) belong to each substance and this is what distinguishes the substances one from another, while the *pariyāyas*, modes, are the particular modifications particular to each substance.⁶³ *Dravya*, as such, is different from both qualities and modes, but at the same time it is these *guṇas* (characteristics) which cause such or such a substance to be what it is. *Dravya* and *guṇa* are always in association; for example, matter as a substance is associated with taste, colour and smell, which are its attributes, while the *pariyāyas*, particular modes, are not invariably linked in their particularities to some substance, for they change, are renewed, are the manner of being of a substance at a given moment, in certain particular circumstances. For example, a porcelain cup is green, its colour is a *guṇa*, an attribute of the *dravya* porcelain, while green is a *pariyāya* or particular mode of colour. Tomorrow the cup may be painted red, while the porcelain persists, as does also colour as such, but it has changed.

This particular approach in which each object possesses multiple aspects is called *anekāntavāda*: it includes in its embrace unity, difference, the universal, the particular, change, permanence, substance and its modes. *Anekāntavāda* is also termed *syādvāda*, the

⁶⁰ Cf. PSa II, 27-28 where this point is clearly explained.

⁶¹ *tadbhāvavyayam nityam*. TS V, 31; PSa II, 11

⁶² *guṇa-pariyāyavat dravyam*. TS V, 38; cf. PSa I, 87; II, 1; US XXVIII, 5-6. Mode: *pariyāya* can also mean repetition, periodic return, like that of the seasons.

⁶³ Cf. PSa I, 10; II, 22.

doctrine of *syāt* or theory of a plurality of perspectives.⁶⁴ For example, the jug exists, it is made of clay baked in the kiln, but presents also certain other features. This is to say that it is because an object is *anekāntāmaka*, that it possesses different characteristics, that one can consider it in one or other of its aspects; *anekāntavāda* and *syādvāda* are interdependent.⁶⁵ This is just a very brief and general outline, such as will provide a basis or point of reference for a further study of different substances and in particular of *jīva* (*ātman*), the life-principle.

We may note furthermore that the two major categories of *dravya* are: *jīva-dravya* or substance possessing life and consciousness⁶⁶ and *ajīva-dravya*, or non-living, un-conscious substance. Now we know that:

"That which proceeds from the attributes of a substance is identical [to that substance]."⁶⁷ One may therefore have both knowledge and certitude that all that is produced by *jīva* has life and consciousness and that all that is produced from *ajīva* has neither life nor consciousness.

In the Jaina context this is a basic datum, for the whole of human effort is directed precisely towards knowing both *jīva* and *ajīva* in order to liberate *jīva* [the *ātman*] from *ajīva*, all that is foreign to its nature, i.e. matter.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ *Syāt* means: perhaps, but in this context it means: from a particular point of view, according to one or other aspect; cf. PSa II, 23.

⁶⁵ Cf. Mehta, 1971, pp. 168-170.

⁶⁶ Consciousness, used here in the sense of: awareness, a being-conscious-of, and not in a moral sense.

⁶⁷ *daviyam jam uppajjai guṇehim tam tehim*. . . SamSa 308.

⁶⁸ It is impossible to overemphasise the fact that knowing is indispensable, that the effort towards *samyak-jñāna* must be constant and sustained, because the one who does not recognise *jīva* and *ajīva* cannot claim to have self-control; cf. DS IV, 23, 12.

Chapter 2

Tattva, Reality

<i>jīva</i>	<i>living substance</i> [the life-principle, principle of vitality, characterised by consciousness]
<i>ajīva</i>	<i>non-living</i> [non-conscious] substance,
<i>āsrava</i>	<i>penetration</i> [of the <i>jīva</i> by karmic matter, good and bad],
<i>bandha</i>	<i>servitude</i> [of the <i>jīva</i>],
<i>saṁvara</i>	<i>cessation</i> [of karmic penetration],
<i>nirjarā</i>	<i>elimination</i> [which is progressive and consists in the destruction of karmic matter],
<i>mokṣa</i>	[the complete] <i>liberation</i> [of the <i>jīva</i> from all karmic matter, good and bad alike; all this, taken together, constitutes]:
<i>tattva</i>	<i>reality</i> [substance, that-which-is]. ¹

Here, presented in an extremely concise manner, in a sequence of rigorous logic, are what are termed the seven categories that constitute *tattva*, reality. Endeavouring to follow this same logic we shall first turn our attention briefly to the first four categories and everything appertaining to them; the remaining three will be studied later.²

¹ *jīva-ajīva-āsrava-bandha-saṁvara-nirjarā-mokṣāḥ tattvam*. TS I, 4; certain texts give 9 categories, adding: *puṇya*, merit and *pāpa*, offence; cf. SamSa 13; US XXVIII, 14. DravSam gives 7 categories including *puṇya* and *pāpa* and lists *jīva* and *ajīva* separately; TS VI, 3 lists *puṇya* and *pāpa* along with *āsrava*.

² We follow closely the TS, despite the fact that it introduces *bandha* later, after the *mahāvratas*, while we place it after *āsrava* in order to make the sequence more easily comprehensible; it is important, furthermore, to respect the order given by TS I, 4, namely: *bandha* follows *āsrava* and precedes *saṁvara*.

Before addressing the task of defining the various aspects appertaining to each of these categories we must not lose sight of the fact that we have here a very ancient tradition, one of the most ancient that has been preserved without major alteration to our own day. This fundamentally cosmic concept of the universe and of beings, these continuous debates on the part of the sages concerning the struggle between spirit and matter, this consciousness of the extraordinary vitality which invests all things, of the connaturality of man with innumerable *jivas* both visible and invisible, of the capacity for purity and absolute perfection within each of them, are so many component parts of the teaching and reveal its origins. In them we have an inheritance, a unique and inestimably valuable "gift", the more so in that, despite the dust-covered manuscripts in the *bhaṇḍāras* and unidentified ruins and inscriptions, this heritage is in our own day and age a still lively and living tradition.

All the notions that we are going to study are indissociable from the life of the *sādhvis* and *āryikās*. Let us recall *darśana-jñāna-cāritra*, that these notions must not only be believed and known, but also lived out in all their practical and direct implications. We shall understand the better the meaning of the ascetic life and all it comprises and shall comprehend the better the depth and subtleties of the daily recited texts in proportion to our grasp of the concepts underlying the doctrine. Now the first pre-requisite for an inner grasp of the essence of this doctrine is to lay aside from the start every other category, concept and way of thought and to plunge forthwith into the Jain context.

A - *Jiva (Ātman)*: Living, conscious substance

There is inherently no essential difference between these two words; some texts use now the one, now the other, sometimes within the same verse,³ other texts use only one of the two, but

³ Cf. e.g. SamSa I, which is consecrated in its entirety to *jīva*, but where *ātman* is just as much the object of reflection. It appears that *jīva* has been a specifically Jain term, the one in general use, but *ātman* (*āyā*) is already found in AS I; cf. e.g. AS I, 1, 3-5; I, 5,5,5. It is possible that *ātman* was borrowed from the other systems. There is also to be found, but in rather late

commentators sometimes add the other in brackets. However, one may also say that *jīva* is, in certain texts and contexts, a more generic term, indicating rather the animate, incarnate being. *Ātman*, the Self, would accordingly be more precisely that potentiality and possibility inherent in human nature of knowing the life-principle and its inmost essence and, by knowing and itself becoming identified with this knowledge, of travelling towards its own plenitude.⁴

Before considering *jīva*, it is important to take note of this point: *jīva*, in whatever guise or place, always possesses in potentiality the *ananta-catuṣṭayas*, that is, the four capacities that the *siddha*, the perfected one, possesses in plenitude: infinite vision, infinite knowledge, infinite bliss, infinite power. It is simply through the association of the *jīva* with matter-body, through activities resulting in *karman*, that these perfections are to varying degrees affected, veiled. We now proceed to follow the more important doctrinal texts, which describe both that which is inherent or intrinsic to *jīva* (*ātman*) and also the path which leads to its dissociation from karmic matter, to the destruction of this same karmic matter and to its becoming in full measure that which it is.

It is useful first of all to state clearly and briefly the properties of *jīva*:

The *jīva* [is living], conscious, formless, capable of action, [it has] the same dimension as the body it inhabits [which is determined by its *nāma-karman*], it reaps [the fruits both good and bad of its *karman*]. [it is] subject to *saṃsāra*, [it is potentially] *siddha*, [it possesses the ability to] move upwards in a natural manner [after reaching Liberation].⁵

texts, the word *paramātmān* to denote the perfectly realised *ātman*, that of the *siddha*.

⁴ In order to avoid over-simplification in the realm of the imperceptible we must retain in our minds both terms, preserving, of course, in each quotation the one chosen by the author.

⁵ *jīvo uvaogamao amutti kattā sadchaparimāṇo*

The verses which follow in the DravSam enlarge upon these properties. Let us take them one by one:

***Jīva* - "living"**

According to *vyavahāra*, the *jīva* [possesses] the four *prāṇas*: *indriyas* [the senses], *bala* [strength], *āyu* [life], *āṇa-prāṇa* [breathing] in the three times [past, present, future]; and according to *niścaya*, [it is] *cetanā* [consciousness].⁶

***Jīva* - "conscious"**

Upayoga is the capacity of consciousness, an idea we have already defined in connection with *darśana* and *jñāna*.⁷ It is the essential constituent of the *jīva* (*ātman*): "*ātman upayogātmā*", says Kundakunda;⁸ it is that through which the *jīva* is conscious of its own being and through which it experiences beings and things. *Cetanā* (*citta*) mentioned in the preceding verse seems to correspond to the undifferentiated state of *upayoga*, but sometimes these words appear to convey the same notion.⁹ We may add, to avoid separating off the several aspects one from another, that it is, so to speak, due to the

bhottā saṁsārattho siddho so viśasoddhagāi. DravSam 2; TS II, 1 gives as being characteristic of the *jīva* such qualities as result from its association (in varying degrees of closeness) with *karman*.

⁶ *līkkāle cadupāṇā imdiya balamāu āṇapāṇo ya vavahārā so jīvo nīcayanayado du cetanā jassa*. DravSam 3; cf. PSa II, 54-55.

⁷ Cf. DravSam 4; TS II, 8-9; Upadhye translates by: "The manifestation of consciousness" and defines it as: "It is a condition of the soul which is an embodiment of consciousness"; cf. PSa, index, p. 417. One may also, according to the context, say that we have here a question of conscious attention.

⁸ *appā uvaogappā*. . . PSa II, 63.

⁹ Cf. e.g. SamSa, 49, where *cetanā* is said to be the characteristic of the *jīva*.

veiling of the *upayoga* by karmic matter that the other powers and faculties are also themselves veiled.¹⁰

Furthermore, the *Tattvārtha-sūtra* gives, as a property belonging to the *jīva* (*ātman*): *bhavya*, the capacity for Liberation, and *abhavya*, the lack of that same capacity for Liberation.¹¹ The brief commentary on this text does not permit us to know for certain whether *abhavya* is an absolute, irremediable and eternal. The idea as such does not appear in the ancient *Sūtras*. Kundakunda speaks of it as a well-established belief; he does not state the initial cause but affirms that a *jīva* (*ātman*) characterised by *abhavya* does not believe in *mokṣa*, it is incapable of freeing itself from the clutches of matter and thus will never acquire right vision and right knowledge, even if, moreover, it knows the Scriptures and follows the path of asceticism; Kundakunda compares it to a snake which, even if it drinks sweetened milk, remains poisonous.¹²

Jīva - "formless"

It is both *amūrti* (without form) and also *mūrti* (possessing a concrete appearance), that is to say that according to *nīścaya*, the *jīva* is not possessed of any form, while according to *vyavahāra*, the *jīva* occupies a material body which of necessity involves colour, taste, smell and touch.¹³

¹⁰ Enlarging on the effects of karmic matter, Kundakunda reaffirms: *jīva* (*ātman*) whose nature is *upayoga*; cf. SamSa 36; 57; 89-90; 94-95.

¹¹ Cf. TS II, 7; the other substances do not possess this property.

¹² Cf. PSa I, 62; SamSa 273-274; 317; cf. also P.S. Jaini, 1977, where the author mentions: "the remarkable concurrence between the Jains and the Buddhists on the concept of *bhavya* and *abhavya* . . ."

¹³ *vaṇṇa rasa paṇi gaṇḍha do phāsā aṭṭha niccayā jīve
no samīti amuttī tado vavahārā mutti baṇḍhādo.* DravSam 7; cf. PSa I,
55; II, 38-40.

Jiva - "capable of acting"

It is *kartā* (the originator of its actions). From the perspective of *vyavahāra*, the *jiva* is the origin of acts which produce material and thus non-conscious type of *karman*, of which the effect is to darken knowledge; from the perspective of imperfect *nīścaya*, it is the origin of acts which produce a conscious type of *karman* which is thus imprinted on the psyche, while, from the perspective of perfect *nīścaya*, it is the origin of activities of rare degree of purity such as presuppose a state conducive to the Three Jewels.¹⁴

Jiva - "reaping the fruits of its karmas" (good and bad)

According to *vyavahāra*, the *jiva* (*ātman*) reaps the fruits of its material *karman* such as pleasure or suffering; according to *nīścaya*, it enjoys a state of pure unalterable consciousness.¹⁵

Jiva - when embodied is "determined by its nāma-karman"

The *jiva*, though immaterial in itself, occupies, according to *vyavahāra*, a body; this body is determined by *nāma-karman*, that is to say that particular state of the body assumed by the *jiva* corresponds with one of the four conditions of existence. The assumption of a body in such or such a condition of existence is the consequence of good and bad *karmas* accumulated in previous lives.¹⁶ According to *vyavahāra* the body adopted by the *jiva* has the exact dimension of that *jiva*'s karmic body; according to *nīścaya*, there is no limit to the space a *jiva* may assume.¹⁷

¹⁴ *puggalakammāḍiṇaṃ kattā vavahārado du ṇiccayado cedaṇakammāpādā suddhaṇayā suddhabhāvāṇaṃ*. DravSam 8.

¹⁵ *vavahāra suhadukkhāṃ puggalakammaphalaṃ pabbhūṃjedi ādā niccayāṇayado cedaṇabhāvāṃ khu ādassa*. DravSam 9; cf. PSa II, 31-33.

¹⁶ Cf. TS VIII 4; 11; P 301 ff.; 306 ff.

¹⁷ *aṇugurudchapamāṇo uvasarīhārappasapapdo ceda*

Jiva - "Subject to *saṃsāra*", to the temporal ¹⁸

Jivas that are subject to the earthly state are of two sorts: *trasa*, those that move, and *sthāvara*, those which are motionless.¹⁹ Among the latter type are put: the Earth (terrestrial body), Water (watery body), Vegetables (with a vegetable body); these are classed together as motionless bodies possessing one single sense, that of touch. Moving bodies include beings possessing two, three, four or five senses, the last-named being human beings.²⁰ Among those *jivas* that possess five senses, a distinction is made between those which possess intelligence, the reasoning faculty and faculties of judgement and discrimination and those which do not possess these faculties.²¹ These distinctions are made in accordance with *vyavahāra*; but according to *nīścaya* all *jivas* are pure, that is, they are endowed with pure existence and have only one nature; there is no distinction between them.²²

asamuḥado vavahārā ṇiccayaṇayado asaṃkhaḍeso vā. DravSam 10; cf. TS V, 15-16.

¹⁸ *Saṃsāra* means: go, wander hither and thither; the word denotes at the same time both the cycle of temporal existence, its ever-ceaseless flow until Liberation is achieved, and also the world, in the sense of worldly life with all its family and social bonds, thus a state of servitude opposed to that of the ascetic life; the phenomenal world.

¹⁹ SkrS I, 11; 7-8.

²⁰ Cf. AS I, 8, 1, 11-13; DravSam 11; TS II, 12-14; PSa II, 90; it must be added that both divine and infernal beings are likewise subject to *saṃsāra* and their existence is likewise temporal. US XXXVI, 48-247 gives all details concerning each category of beings, their various types, names, descriptions, etc.

²¹ Cf. DravSam 12.

²² *maggāṇaḡuṇāṇehi ya caudasahi havaṃti taha asudhaṇayā viṇṇeyā saṃsāri savve suddhā hu suddhaṇayā.* DravSam 13.

***Jiva* - "the potential *siddha* with ability to proceed naturally towards the heights"**

Each *jiva* is "on the way" towards being a *siddha* and when it attains this state everything is very simple. Liberated as it is from all its *karmas*, it is deterred no longer from realising to the full its four capacities; relieved of the weight of matter, it leaps upwards to the summit of the universe.²³

The nine properties of the *jiva* having been described in some detail, certain facts need still to be given concerning the different *gatis* or states of existence. These number four: infernal existence, infra-human existence (of being of the animal and vegetable worlds), human existence, celestial existence.²⁴ How, according to *vyavahāra*, may one acquire a knowledge of the *jiva* and the other categories? The *Tattvārtha-sūtra* in reply gives several discursive methods, each of which have their own approach and validity. The choice of the one or the other depends on the point of view of the one studying the question. The most popular method makes use of *pramāṇa* and *naya*. Etymologically, *pramāṇa* means evidence, proof, a notion which is based on certainty; *naya* means method, conduct. In the context that concerns us, it is declared that *pramāṇa* is a comprehension or knowledge that includes all the elements of a particular substance, while *naya* considers one aspect of a particular feature of this

²³ Cf. *DravSam* 14; TS X, 6-7; P 401.

²⁴ Cf. TS II, 6; III-IV where these states and the cosmography of each of these worlds are described in detail. On the whole it seems that there is more preoccupation with describing the world below than the world of the gods, probably with a view to instilling in the faithful the fear of sin, to removing their ignorance, keeping them on the right path and inculcating in them a lively appreciation of the virtues; cf. e.g. *SkrS* I, 5; US XIX, 47-74. This tendency is still present. Certain *sādhvis* showed me pictures of the pains of hell drawn or painted by themselves for use in the villages in the course of their teaching-sessions with an audience composed for the main part of illiterate persons. These pictures depict in crude detail the penalties awaiting those who eat meat, drink alcohol, are unfaithful spouses, etc.

substance.²⁵ According to *nīścaya*, one knows that the knower of the *jīva* (*ātman*) is the *ātman* itself and that the way par excellence to know the *ātman* is *dhyāna*.²⁶

To conclude this short explanation, we shall quote certain texts that speak of the *ātman*. The *Ācārāṅga-sūtra* transmits to us the concern of the first sages. It starts by an affirmation of the existence of the *ātman*²⁷ then, further on, says concisely that

The *ātman* [is] the knower [and] the knower [is] the *ātman*; that through which one knows [is] the *ātman*.²⁸

The *Uttarādhyayana-sūtra* contains a passage that is both concrete and profound:

My *ātman* [is] the river Vaitaraṇī,
my *ātman* [is] the thorny Śālmali,
my *ātman* [is] the cow Kāmadughā,
my *ātman* [is] the Forest of Joy.²⁹

²⁵ Cf. TS I, 6; cf. 7-8 where other methods leading to knowledge of the substance are indicated, e.g.: description, consideration of place, duration, etc.

²⁶ Cf. P 373 ff.

²⁷ Cf. AS I, 1, 1-5.

²⁸ *je āyā se viṇṇāyā, je veṇṇāyā se āyā*
jeṇa vijāṇati se āyā. AS I, 5,5,5; Muni Nathamala has described very well in his commentaries the profundity of this passage and the preceding one; cf. *Ayaro* pp. 222-223; 52-55.

²⁹ *appā nadi veyaraṇi appā me kūḍasāmali*
appā kāmaduhā dhenū appā me naṁḍaṇaṁ vaṇaṁ. US XX, 36. The *śālmali*: "'silk-cotton tree', any of various tropical trees (family Bombacaceae, the silk-cotton family) with palmate leaves and large fruits with the seeds enveloped by silk-cotton." Webster's *Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary*, it is described in US XIX, 52 as being covered with very sharp thorns. Nandanavana is the 2nd forest near Mt Meru (the intermediate world), where are to be found, at the four cardinal points: the abodes of the gods, guardians of the universe (Soma, Yama, Varuṇa, Kubera), where the

The *ātman* makes and unmakes its [own] pleasures and sorrows,
the *ātman* [is] its [own] friend as regards its good deeds,
the *ātman* [is] its [own] enemy as regards its evil deeds.³⁰

The connection between these two verses is, moreover, clear: Vaitaraṇi, the river of caustic acid and Śālmali, the thorny tree, are associated with hell, while the cow Kāmadughā who fulfils all desires and Nandanavana, the Forest of Joy are associated with pleasure. It is the *ātman*, the originator of deeds good and bad, who travels the path leading to hell or to the happiness of the divine beings.

This passage reflects accurately the type of teaching often given by the sādhis to the śrāvakas and śrāvikās ensnared in the trap of worldly activities, worldly possessions and riches of all sorts. There is a need for concrete admonitions, to avoid missing the mark by aiming too high. *Mokṣa* and *nirvāṇa* together constitute the ultimate goal of the *ātman*; let us therefore, begin by knowing the *ātman* in our own deeds, by examining them carefully, in the knowledge that in the near future our Enemy or our Friend will carry us off to hell or to the gods, both states being, moreover, transitory, but likely to be of fairly long duration!

We cannot refrain from quoting once again Ācārya Kundakunda whose *Samayasāra* is a study of the *ātman* and comprises both a vision of and knowledge of the *ātman* continuous praise to the *ātman*, in short, an experience of the *ātman*:

Concerning one who does penance and who makes vows but is not centred upon the Supreme Reality, those who know all things say that such penitence and such vows [are those] of a child.³¹

afore-named pass their time in enjoyable pursuits; 4 temples dedicated to the *jinas*; and, beyond the temples, certain goddesses; cf. JSK III, pp. 466-467; P 674 ff.

³⁰ *appā kattā vikattā ya dukkhāṇa ya suhāṇa ya*
appā mittamamittaṃ ca duppaṭṭhiya supaṭṭhiyo. US XX, 37.

³¹ *paramaṭṭhammiya aṭhido jo kuṇaḍi tavaṇi vadaṇi ca dhārayadi*

B - Ajiva: Non-living, non-conscious substance

<i>ajivakāya</i>	the bodies of non-living substances [are]
<i>dharma</i>	movement,
<i>adharma</i>	repose,
<i>ākāśa</i>	space,
<i>pudgala</i>	matter. ³²

i) Pudgala

Matter is distinguished from the three other categories by form, which includes: touch, taste, smell, colour³³ The characteristics of matter, its different modes are:

Sound [word], union, slightrness, massiveness [breadth, bulk], shape [stature], separation, obscurity, shadow [image], warmth [of the sun], shining [of the moon].³⁴

taṁ savvaṁ bālatavaṁ bālavadaṁ vimūḍhaṁ savvaṇṇu. SamSa 152; *paramaṭṭha* (*paramārtha*): Supreme Reality; cf. also PSa I, 27; II, 67-68; SamSa 3-4; 7; 9; 14-16; 31-32; 69; 71; 75; 82-86; 92-98; 101-102; 104; 115; 124-125; 183; 185-189; 200; 269; 277; and YSas XII, 7-8; 54.

³² *ajivakāyā-dharma-adharma-ākāśa-pudgalāḥ.* TS V, 1; *kāya*: body, or *astikāya*: that which exists with bodily form, this latter being called: *pradeśa*, or unity of space; in this context, *kāya* denotes a conglomeration of unities of space. The ideas of movement and repose are denoted by *dharma* and *adharma*, not to be confused with the word *dharma* used in a religious context. Other texts, cf. DravSam 15; US XXVIII, 7 add: *kāla*, time, though the TS, while including it under *ajiva*, treats it separately, for reasons that are connected directly with *kāya*.

³³ Cf. TS V, 23; also DravSam 15. "The word '*pudgala*' has two parts: '*pud*' and '*gala*'. The first part '*pud*' means 'to combine' and the second part '*gala*' means 'to dissociate'. Hence the etymological meaning of the word '*pudgala*' is: that substance which undergoes modifications by combinations and dissociations. This process of combination and dissociation does not occur in the other substances." Mehta, 1971, p. 114.

³⁴ *saddo baṁdho suhamo thūlo saṁtṭhāṇabhedaṁ machāyā ujjodādasavahīyā puggaladavvassa pajjāyā.* DravSam 16 (TS V, 24); US XXVIII, 12-13.

We may here take note that *bandha*, union, is either natural or induced by human effort, including the union of a living substance with a non-living, that is, *jīva* and *karman*. Matter is divided into: *skandhas*, molecules, and *aṇus*, atoms.³⁵

ii-iii) *Dharma-adharma*

Movement and repose are immaterial substances that permit the movement and repose of the *jīvas*. On account of their not possessing life, of their being non-material, these substances do not occupy a defined, limited space, but fill the entire universe.³⁶ They play their part with detachment, i.e., with impassiveness; they are not themselves the cause of movement or repose on the part of the *jīvas* and matter, they do not meddle in these substances, so to say, but they facilitate the forward movement or its cessation:

In the same way as water assists the movement of the fish, so too *dharma* [assists the movement] of the *pudgala* and the *jīva*; it [*dharma*] does not move the immobile [*jīva* and *pudgala*].³⁷

The comparison given for *adharma* is that of the shadow which permits repose and cessation of movement to the weary traveller.³⁸

iv) *Ākāśa*

³⁵ Cf. TS V, 25-28.

³⁶ Cf. TS V, 13.

³⁷ *gaipariṇayāṇa dhammo puggalajīvāṇa gamaṇasahayāri toyaṃ jaha machāṇaṃ acchaṃtā neva so ñei.* DravSam 17.

³⁸ *thāṇajudāṇa adhammo puggalajīvāṇa thāṇasahayāri chāyā jaha pahiyāṇaṃ gacchaṃtā neva so dharai.* DravSam 18; cf. TS V, 17.

Space is that which gives all substances the possibility of assuming their proper places.³⁹ Here it is necessary to make a distinction between the subtle notion of: *lokākāśa*, the space that can be perceived within the limits occupied by other substances both material and immaterial, namely, what is termed the universe and: *alokākāśa*, the space that is not perceived, from which the other substances are absent and where the *ākāśa* exists alone in its totality and to eternity; this is that which is non-universe, namely, empty space.⁴⁰

v) *Kāla*

Among the *ajīvas*, *kāla*, time, is in a class on its own.⁴¹ From the viewpoint of *vyavahāra*, time is that which permits *parivartana*, change, and *pariṇāma*, modification in the other substances; from the viewpoint of *nīścaya*, *kāla* is identical to *vartanā*, the minute, imperceptible, continual change within the interior of a substance, which permits a slow and gradual transformation. It is this factor which permits substances to continue in existence, while at the same time undergoing a slow and ceaseless transformation.⁴² Time as such is like an uninterrupted, eternal, unbounded flow, but in so far as it is associated with given substances - and it is this that enables them to follow their own existential course - it also is affected by successive modifications.⁴³

By way of contrast to other substances which are *astikāya*, *kāla* is *anastikāya* (without a bodily form), it consists of particles that are so

³⁹ Cf. DravSam 19.

⁴⁰ Cf. DravSam 20; TS V, 12; US XXXVI, 7-8; with reference to PSa II, 41-42, Upadhye, *ibid.*, p. 398, n. 3, explains: "The experience of this empty space is possible for the omniscient, since our ordinary experience is always relative. And since omniscience is capable of comprehending even empty space, there is no propriety of calling empty space as a mere theoretical abstraction: thus the Jaina authors accept the possibility of empty space."

⁴¹ Cf. TS V, 39.

⁴² Cf. DravSam 21; TS V, 22.

⁴³ Cf. US XXXVI, 9.

many separate units, each occupying a *pradeśa* (unit of space) and together forming one single *pradeśa*, while the other substances, including the *jīva*, contain innumerable *pradeśas* that intermingle.⁴⁴ The *Dravyasaṃgraha* gives this frequently cited comparison: precious stones heaped together form a mass of precious stones, each one nonetheless remaining what it is; in the same way, each region of the universe possesses a unit of time different from the rest; so, the regions being innumerable, *kāla* is an infinite *dravva* and *kālāṇu*, each unit of time, is an independent *dravya*.⁴⁵

C - *Karman*: A highly subtle form of matter

Up to this point we have described the essential attributes of what may be called the pure state; now we are going to observe them, within the human person, in the clutches of an external element which bids fair, under different guises, if not to destroy them utterly, at least to tarnish their absolute purity, becloud them to a greater or lesser extent. The element that is here operating is *karman*, which is of immense importance.⁴⁶ In the *sūtra* with which this chapter commences the word *karman* does not appear; in fact, after *ajīva* comes *āsrava*, which signifies the penetration of the *jīva* by karmic matter. Before studying in more detail the modes of operation of *āsrava* and its direct repercussions upon the *jīva*, let us try to elaborate further the idea of *karman*. According to Jaina doctrine, *karman* is an extremely subtle form of material substance; it is *raja*, a very fine dust.⁴⁷ So *karman*, as a material substance, belongs to the *pudgala* category of *ajīva*. *Pudgala*, like everything else that is *ajīva*, is an *acetana-dravya*, a non-conscious substance. We know, furthermore, that *jīva* is essentially *cetana-dravya*, i.e., living and conscious

⁴⁴ Cf. PSa II, 43; TS V, 8-9.

⁴⁵ Cf. DravSam 22-25; TS V, 40

⁴⁶ Cf. § A where this idea has already been mentioned. *Karman* means action, either ritual action or a conscious, voluntary act. In Jaina doctrine, *yoga* denotes action and *karman* is the consequence of *yoga*; cf. § D.

⁴⁷ Cf. PSa II, 95-96.

substance. At first sight, one is struck by this basic difference and fundamental contrast between *cetana-dravya* and *acetana-dravya*. It is difficult to see how these two substances are going to enter into relationship, relationship so close that each will modify the other for it is a well-established belief that *jiva* and *karman* are, from all eternity, closely linked.⁴⁸ Thus we must now, in a very general way, try to make clear the process through which the original purity of the *jiva* is obscured in each of its four perfections by this truly material substance, karmic dust.

Before going into details concerning this process, we may note that this subject has been a constant preoccupation for Jaina sages and philosophers of all ages, and that already in the most ancient *Āgamas* the idea of *karman* is present as a fundamental hypothesis, though it is not explicitly elaborated, or only partially so.⁴⁹ The elaboration of this theme will later become extremely detailed. It is explained in numerous texts: the *Tattvārtha-sūtra* gives a brief, but comprehensive introduction on this subject,⁵⁰ and Ācārya Kundakunda made a special study and exposition of the philosophical basis of this doctrine.⁵¹ Nemicandra, in the *karmakāṇḍa*, the second part of his *Gommaṣāsāra*, makes a detailed study of it, of which the *Dravyasaṃgraha*, in a noteworthy synthesis, delivers the essential. At a later date the *Karmagrantha*, a major work attributed to Devendra Sūri, further completes the study of this theme;⁵² among other shorter but no less

⁴⁸ Cf. SamSa 89; KarmG I, Introd.

⁴⁹ Cf. e.g. AS I, 1, 5-6; I, 3, 1, 3-4; I, 4, 2, 1; Dixit, 1978: "The *karma* doctrine in a primitive form" p. 9 and pp. 16; 20; 39. The *Ṣaṭkhaṇḍāgama* discusses *bandha* in detail. Cf. US XXXII which is both detailed and comprehensive.

⁵⁰ Pt. Sukhlal calls it: "The entire *Karma-sāstra*"; cf. TS Introd., pp. 89-90.

⁵¹ The SamSa is a profound, somewhat laboured, account of certain categories of which clearly *jiva* (*ātman*) and *karman* are fundamental ingredients. The PSa expresses in brief compass the same ideas.

⁵² A work in Prakrit of the XIIIth c. Certain sādhis study it and one of them, Mahāsati Lalitā Bāi, has recently translated the karmG into Gujarātī.

classical texts, we may mention the *Karma-prakṛti* of Abhayacandra Siddhānta Cakravartin, where the author describes in detail the different types of *karmas* related to the *guṇasthānas*, the several stages of spiritual progress.⁵³

For our study of this progressive association of *jīva-karman*, we shall try to follow the main lines of Kundakunda's rigorous treatment of the subject as given in the third chapter of the *Samayasāra*. A *jīva*, in itself, in its pure and unalloyed state, does not modify karmic matter nor, however, is it non-karmic matter.⁵⁴ Amṛtacandra in his commentary upon the *Samayasāra*, gives the example of a potter fashioning an earthenware jug. In this operation, the clay is the *upādāna-kāraṇa*, the substantial cause, and the potter is the *nimitta-kāraṇa*, the external cause, the agent who fashions the jug. This, applied in the domain which is of interest to us, means: the substantial cause, the *upādāna-kāraṇa*, of modifications in the particular *karman* and modifications in the particular *jīva* is *pudgala*, matter in the form of particles; but how are we to explain the *nimitta-kāraṇa*? Who is the potter the external agent? Not, certainly, the *jīva*, living, conscious, immaterial substance. On the other hand, *pudgala* cannot be the *kartā*, the agent of psychic modifications in the *jīva*. However, if the *jīva* and the *pudgala*, two absolutely antithetical substances, cannot be brought into relationship to each other by a process of material causality, any identity between the two being impossible, they can never the less be related through instrumental causality. This is to say that the modifications undergone by each are the result of their mutual conditioning, each of the substances being the substantial cause of its own modifications. Although each operates within its own substance, the two do indirectly condition each other, and the *nimitta-kāraṇa*, the

⁵³ A Sanskrit work of the XIIIth c. It is clear that, in amplifying and commenting upon it, the authors have introduced ideas and subtleties that were not in the ancient texts. Though some effort of clarification was doubtless necessary, nevertheless the fact remains that the elaboration of structures and the piling up of them one upon another result in a certain heaviness, while the proliferation of classifications renders the whole inassimilable to most readers.

⁵⁴ Cf. SamSa 75.

instrumental cause, the agent, is, precisely, the result of this conditioning.⁵⁵ This becomes clearer when we introduce the following distinctions: according to the doctrine, two different aspects of *karman* are to be noted: *dravya-karman* which consists of material particles and *bhāva-karman*, i.e., the psychic modifications caused in the *jīva*. *Dravya-karman*, being *pudgala* (matter), is *acetana-dravya* (non-conscious); in this instance, the *upādāna-kāraṇa* is karmic matter corresponding to the earthenware jug, whereas the *bhāva-karman* is imprinted on the *jīva* in the same way as the jug is imprinted on the imagination of the potter, and thus produces modifications in the *jīva*; here the *upādāna-kāraṇa*, is the *jīva*. Originally, however, the *jīva* is the direct cause of the *bhāva-karman* and the *bhāva-karman* in its turn is the cause of the *dravya-karman*; this means that the *jīva* invites through certain *bhāvas* (attitudes) an invasion of its being by *dravya-karman*, karmic matter. There are, therefore, two sorts of *karman*, each having its own *upādāna-kāraṇa*, or different substantial cause.⁵⁶

If we are to consider these data in the light of *nīścaya* and *vyavahāra*, we may say that according to *nīścaya*, the *jīva* is the agent which produces transformations and modifications within its own consciousness,⁵⁷ while according to *vyavahāra* it is the cause productive of karmic matter and hence of modifications in the *pudgala*. However, Kundakunda explains clearly that this mode of expression according to *vyavahāra* is purely figurative, for it is the impure *jīva*, and thus the empirical non-real *jīva*, which causes the production of karmic matter, while the real *jīva* is only the instrumental cause of these impure, temporal experiences.⁵⁸

We must now proceed in a more concrete fashion to introduce the concept of body, the visible, palpable body, the clothing, as we might

⁵⁵ Cf. SamSa 80-82 and comm. thereon.

⁵⁶ Cf. SamSa 87 and comm. thereon; DravSam 8 and comm.

⁵⁷ *kuvvaṃ sabhāvamādā havadī hi kattā sagassa bhāvassa*. .PSa II, 92.

⁵⁸ Cf. SamSa 83-108.

say, of the *jīva* on account of its connection with karmic matter, the body being formed of particles of matter. How are we to explain this connection? It is impossible to conceive that the *jīva*, by its own intrinsic power, could bring about the transformation of the *pudgala* out of original particles, since the *jīva* is substantially *cetana* and the *pudgala* is *acetana*, wherefore it is *pudgala* which of its own nature is capable of transformation and it is this process of the self-transformation of matter that results in the formation of different types of *karmas*. At the same time, for this to be possible, it is conceded that the impure empirical *jīva* is in fact capable of undergoing psychological modifications when it is under the influence of karmic matter. Here it is the *jīva* which is ignorant of its own real nature and tends to identify itself with objects foreign to its nature that is under consideration.⁵⁹

Kundakunda concludes his exposition with two verses in which he explains the quintessence of the teaching:

According to the point of view adopted, the *jīva* [is] linked with and also not-linked with *karman*; beyond every point of view it is to be termed *saṁayasāra* (*jīva* in its essential nature).⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Cf. SamSa 120-141; PSa II, 77. We may here note that the teaching recognises 5 types of *śarīra*, body: i) *Audārika*: the organic body of human beings, animals and vegetables, such as we observe. ii) *Vaikrīyika*: the subtle body of celestial and infernal beings and of certain human beings possessed of supernatural powers; this can be transformed at will. iii) *Āhāraka*: subtle body formed of particles of meritorious *karmas*; this type of body is possessed, according to tradition, by certain munis called *caturdaśapūrvins*, i.e., knowing the 14 *Pūrvas* (cf. P 143); they are able, thanks to this body, to move at will through space for purely spiritual purposes. iv) *Taijasa*: luminous body, composed of fire; it effects the digestion of food. v) *Kāmaṇa*: extremely subtle form of body which remains with the *jīva* after the end and destruction of the *audārika* body. These types of body, composed in each case of karmic particles, are classified according to progressive degrees of subtlety and their possession by a given *jīva* depends upon its *nāma-karman*; cf. § A; PSa II, 79; TS II, 36-49.

⁶⁰ *kammaṁ baddhamahaddhaṁ jīve eḍaṁ tu jāṇa ṇayapakkhaṁ pakkhātikkaṁto puṇa bhāṇṇadi jo so saṁayasāro*. SamSa 142.

[The *śruta-jñānin*] recognises only two points of view; when he has realised his essential nature, he [is] beyond the relativity of this discrimination.⁶¹

This brief account of *karman* serves to indicate its great importance, an importance that is clearly discernible not only in numerous doctrinal treatises, but also in many literary works in various local languages, as also in iconography. *Karman* crops up always and everywhere in its many different forms and guises.⁶²

The highest form of ascetic practice is by definition, directed towards one single unique goal: that of realising the *jīva* in its original purity and, to this end, of striving to disconnect it from the *karmas* which are the cause of its opacity, that is, for a start, from this material body.⁶³ We shall see in the following pages the way in which this *karman* infiltrates and penetrates the faculties of the *jīva* and, later, what methods are to be employed to dissociate the *jīva* from its *karman*.

D - Āsrava: The invasion of the *jīva* by karmic matter

The word *āsrava* denotes a state of flux, the flowing of some substance or the act of invasion, penetration by some substance. This word is used to express the action of karmic matter upon the *jīva*.

⁶¹ *doṇhavi ṇayāṇa bhaṇidaṁ jāṇai ṇavarim tu samayapaḍibaddho ṇa du ṇayapakkhaṁ gīṇhadi kiṁcivi ṇayapakkhaparihiṇo*. SamSa 143; lit. beyond every point of view, all trace is lost of any point of view. The *śruta-jñānin* is the one who, thanks to assiduous study of the Scriptures, is capable of understanding the *jīva* according to both *vyavahāra* and *nīścaya*, but he has not yet experienced the essence of the *jīva*.

⁶² Cf. TS II, 1.

⁶³ To give a very concrete example, we may mention Sādhvi Śrī Bālū, called "*videha ki sādhiḱā*," the one who follows the spiritual path without a body. The biography of this sādhi relates how, during the last years of her earthly life, she became more and more conscious that the *ātman* and the *deha* (body) are totally incompatible. Thence arose her zeal to expend her every effort on becoming ever more intensely aware of this reality.

Before studying its mode of penetration, the conditions which favorise it and the consequences thereof, we must first make this point clear: *āsrava* is of two types: *bhāva-āsrava*, i.e., the mental and psychological attitudes and activities that conduce towards the penetration of karmic matter and *dravya-āsrava*, the actual penetration of the *jīva* by karmic matter.⁶⁴ Thus, for *āsrava* to happen, there must be some activity. All activity, according to the doctrine, is termed *yoga*,⁶⁵ and is threefold, being caused by vibrations proceeding from the body, from speech and from the mind.⁶⁶

From the viewpoint of *nīścaya*, it is clear that in itself all activity is harmful, because it produces *karman* and tarnishes the *jīva*; for this reason the ideal state towards which one must strive is that of the *ayogin*, the one who performs no activity. However, according to *vyavahāra* there is a distinction between good, virtuous and meritorious activities and bad ones. The first are the cause of *puṇya*, merit, while the second are the cause of *pāpa*, sin.⁶⁷ Every activity,

⁶⁴ Cf. *DravSam* 29; cf. also *ADh* II, 36-37; *SamSa* V.

⁶⁵ Cf. *TS*, 1-2; VIII, 1. *Yoga* means in the first place: yoking, that which is joined, coupled, united; thence it comes to mean also: method, action, co-ordinated activity and thence: philosophical system, a disciplinary technique aimed at the unification and co-ordination of bodily and mental activities in order to reach Liberation. In Jaina doctrine it usually denotes: a subtle activity, vibration; but it can also refer to a disciplinary method, e.g., the *Yogaśāstra* of Hemacandra.

⁶⁶ Mind: *manas*. This word generally refers in a very broad sense to the inner organ, seat of the intellectual activities and also of the sentiments, emotions, sensations and will. It can therefore on occasion mean: intellect, understanding, thought, imagination, consciousness, will, heart. According to the doctrine, when the activities of *manas* are mentioned, the reference is to mental activities.

⁶⁷ Cf. *TS* VI, 3; cf. also *SthS* 676-677; *ADh* II, 40; *DravSam* 38; *PSa* I, 77; II, 89; *SamSa* IV, 263-264. The *SkrS* has a whole passage consecrated to a detailed study of the 13 activities of which 12 are associated with sin and cause an increase in bad *karmas* while the 13th group comprises activities performed by a *śramaṇa*, very slight and unavoidable deeds devoid of passion; cf. II, 2, 1-24; the following passage (25-65) describes in realistic

bodily, mental and verbal may therefore produce either good and meritorious types of *karman* such as contribute to temporal well-being and towards a future life in one of the higher forms of existence or bad types of *karman*, the source of sin and misery, such as leads to a future life in a lower state of existence.

Whether the *yoga* is good or bad is determined by the goodness or badness, in varying degrees, of the mental attitude and intention.⁶⁸ It is at this point that the *kaṣāyas* or passions, as they are commonly called, which have an important place in the doctrine, enter the arena as the determining factor as regards the quality of the *āsrava*. Thus two types of *āsrava* are distinguished: that of persons acting under the influence of the passions, i.e., those who are *sakaṣāya*, and that of persons liberated from the clutch of the passions, i.e., those who are *akaṣāya*.⁶⁹

The word *kaṣāya* can have several closely connected meanings: it denotes an astringent; it is synonymous with *rāga*, colour, the colour red, a tincture or hue; thence it has been used to denote emotions of greater or less intensity, affective feelings, states of mind which lead to inner or outer violence, to vehement desires, attachments and errors. These sentiments and emotions give rise in the *ātman* to: *kaṣa*, scraping, friction; their effect is: *karṣaṇa*, a tugging, twisting, churning up of the *ātman*. The result of this attack and grip upon the *ātman* is to render it: *kaluṣa*, impure, soiled, and thus to bring about: *śleṣa*, the *ātman-karman* amalgam.⁷⁰ Thus *kaṣāya* refers to all that produces a profound effect upon the *ātman*, does violence to it, makes inroads upon it, irritates it, squeezes it, tinges it, colours it, tarnishes its purity - all of which metaphors point to important factors contributing to the penetration of the *ātman* by *karman*. We may note

detail men's violent activities, highlighting by contrast (69-73) the virtuous activities of the *śramaṇas*.

⁶⁸ Cf. TS VI, 6.

⁶⁹ Cf. Ibid., 4.

⁷⁰ Cf. JSK II, p. 35.

that in the ancient *Āgamas* the word is not used, but each of its manifestations is mentioned by name: *krodha*, anger, etc.⁷¹ The authors have invariably translated *kaṣāya* by: passion, a generic word used to denote a violent emotion. In a number of languages, following the Greek, this word originally bore the meaning of suffering. Other languages as, for example, classical Latin were accustomed to express this type of affective state by words such as: agitation, confusion, tumult.

Because karmic dust adheres to the *jīva* from all eternity and because, furthermore, this same invisible, extremely fine karmic dust in its primary state fills the universe, the infiltration of karmic molecules into the *jīva* will be occasioned by *yogas*, or vibrations, caused by one or other of the passions, even if their influence is very slight. Thereafter, according to the nature of such passionate activity, karmic matter will assume the form of fixed *karman*. The activity of a person who is *akaṣāya*, totally purified from all forms of attachment, produces no *karman*; this state is enjoyed only by the omniscient.

The passions number four: *krodha* (anger), *māna* (pride), *māyā* (deceitfulness), *lobha* (covetousness), in all of which the degree of intensity may be greater or less.⁷² These passions operate through the five senses, these senses being, not the cause of the passions, but doors which can permit them a free course.⁷³

⁷¹ Cf. Dixit, 1978, pp. 7; 15.

⁷² On the subject of the *kaṣāyas* in general, cf. AS I, 3, 4, 1; 4; DS VIII, 36-39; SkrS I, 1, 2, 12; 1, 4, 12; 2, 2, 29; 6, 26; SthS 249; 708; US IX, 54; cf. also KarmG I, 17-20; *Karmaprakṛti* 40; YSas IV, 6-23. certain texts speak of *nokaṣāyas*, 9 passions, though the above mentioned 4 are classed as the major passions.

⁷³ Cf. TS VI, 5; the TS here develops the theme further by mentioning other harmful *yogas* that involve the *jīva* in a mass of karmic matter, to be purified from which a large number of existences will be necessitated. Contrariwise, the *akaṣāya jīva* is already on the road towards *mokṣa*. Re victory over the senses, cf. YSas IV, 24-33.

Although the *yogas* and *kaṣāyas* are the principal elements producing *āsrava*, certain texts add three further factors:⁷⁴ *mithyātva* or *mithyādarśana*, false belief, error; *avirati*, lack of renunciation, lack of self-control; *pramāda*, negligence, carelessness, a lack of vigilance in one's behaviour, a tendency against which the ascetics must constantly struggle.⁷⁵ These three *āsrava*-producing factors are connected with the *yogas* and *kaṣāyas* and it is important to be aware of them in order to avoid bringing about *āsrava*.⁷⁶

The type of *āsrava* predominant in the life of a living being will determine to what category of beings he will automatically belong when his material body perishes.⁷⁷ The *āsravas* and thus the four corresponding states of existence will each depend upon the nature and degree of intensity of the actions performed. These states are: the life of the regions below, animal and vegetable life, human life, life in the heavenly regions. Life in the regions below is destined for those in whose activities violence, cruelty and excessive attachments have predominated.⁷⁸ Animal or vegetable life is consequent upon

⁷⁴ Cf. SthS 418a and DravSam 30; SamSa 109; 157-159; 161-163; in TS VIII, 1 these 5 elements are listed as causing *bandha*, which comes to the same thing.

⁷⁵ The US devotes to this a whole chapter entitled: *pramādashāna*, the state of negligence, in which the ascetics are warned against the slippery path which may lead them to the clutches of the passions and engulf them in the mire of *karman*; cf. XXXII; numerous passages exhort them to vigilance; cf. IV, 1; 6-8; X, 1-4; 26-30; 33-34.

⁷⁶ These activities belong to the category *bhāva-āsrava*.

⁷⁷ Cf. SthS 373. Furthermore, the condition of life is said to depend on the *nāma-karmas* which are aspects of the *bandha*; cf. PSa II, 25; 61. *Āsrava* and *bandha* are indissolubly linked and for this reason the TS reverts time and again to these states of life in a specific, one might even say, personal manner by introducing the *nāma-karmas*.

⁷⁸ Cf. TS VI, 15; cf. TS III, 1-6 for a description of the infernal regions and also SkrS 1, 5, chs 1 & 2; II, 2, 66-68; US XIX, 47-74 and KarmG III, 4-8.

behaviour characterised by deceit, lack of truthfulness and trickery.⁷⁹ Human life is the lot of those who have lived peaceable lives, characterised by respect for others and goodness of heart, and have manifested only slight attachments.⁸⁰ Life in the heavenlies belongs to those who have led a disciplined though not wholly detached life, whose virtuous conduct has been imposed upon them by circumstances and not by choice - there is thus a meritorious but involuntary *āsrava* - and whose austerities have been excessive or injudicious;⁸¹ this state is reserved for those also who have achieved right belief. They will find their abode in the highest realm of all, that of the *devas*.⁸²

E - *Bandha*: The state of servitude of the *jīva*

Āsrava, the penetration of the *jīva* by karmic matter, is just the beginning of an elaborate process of which the second phase is termed *bandha*: the state of servitude to which the *jīva* is reduced on account of this element foreign to its nature. The penetration of karmic matter, its invasion and installation, so to speak, in the *jīva* are operations of great delicacy which mask themselves and achieve their task without it being possible to define them with precision. It is for this reason that certain texts place under *āsrava* aspects that other texts place under *bandha* without, however, implying any difference in the doctrine.

What are the causes of this bondage? The same as those we mentioned in connection with *āsrava*, namely: *yogas* and *kaṣāyas*.⁸³

⁷⁹ Cf. TS VI, 16.

⁸⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, 17-18; it is to be noted that these dispositions are the opposite of those which lead to hell; cf. also KarmG III, 9.

⁸¹ Cf. TS VI, 20.

⁸² Cf. *ibid.*, 21; cf. TS IV on the subject of celestial beings and also: SkrS II, 2, 74 and KarmG III, 10-11.

⁸³ Cf. TS VIII, 2.

With reference to *bandha* we must observe the same distinctions as for *āsrava*: the state of consciousness in the *jīva* that permits the penetration of karmic matter is the *bhāva-bandha* while the condition of servitude of the *jīva* on account of this matter is the *dravya-bandha*.⁸⁴

With regard to the effects, transformations and modifications produced in the *jīva* by this *bandha*, we may say that they depend upon four factors: *prakṛti*, the nature of the particular *karman*; *sthiti*, its duration (temporal), *anubhava* (*anubhāga*), the degree of intensity of its effectiveness; *pradeśa*, the number of points in space occupied by the *karman*. Its *prakṛti* and *pradeśa* depend upon the *yogas* in question, i.e., on the activities of thought, word and body, while the *sthiti* and *anubhava* depend upon the *kaśāyas*, on their greater or lesser degree of intensity.⁸⁵

Prakṛti-bandha operates in eight different ways:⁸⁶

- *jñānāvaraṇa-karman*: it beclouds knowledge;
- *darśanāvaraṇa-karman*: it obscures vision;
- *vedaniya-karman*: it arouses sensations of pleasure and pain;
- *mohaniya-karman*: it gives rise to error, deviation, in matters of faith or conduct;
- *āyu-karman*: it determines the duration of life in one of the states of existence;⁸⁷
- *nāma-karman*: it determines to which of the states of life a being belongs and produces its bodily specifications;⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Cf. *DravSam* 32.

⁸⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, 33; *TS* VIII, 3.

⁸⁶ Cf. *TS* VIII, 4; *TS* VIII, 6-13 for particulars of each of these types of *karman*; cf. also *TS* VI, 10 for *jñānadarśanāvaraṇa*.

⁸⁷ Cf. *SamSa* 248-249.

⁸⁸ One of the functions of *nāma-karman* is to determine the physical constitution of beings. One of the aspects of this physical constitution is

- *gotra-karman*: it determines family, background, social class;
- *antarāya-karman*: it inhibits the abilities of the *jīva*; in this context, we must understand that this inhibition affects generosity of giving, the acquisition of wealth, enjoyment of same, efforts made; i.e., this type of *karman* prevents these four capacities.⁸⁹ *Karman* of types *jñānāvaraṇa*, *darśanāvaraṇa*, *mohaniya*, *antarāya* are *ghātiya*, destructive of the four infinities of the *jīva*; ⁹⁰ the other four types of *karman* are *aghātiya*, non-destructive.⁹¹

Each of these eight types of *karman* is subdivided into several categories.⁹² Here the concept of *anubhava* must be introduced. By means of *anubhava* the *jīva* experiences to a higher or less high degree of intensity either pleasure or pain according to the nature of the meritorious or bad *karmas* that has reached its *vīpākā*, its maturity⁹³. This maturation may be slow or less slow, depending upon the degree of intensity of the passions; moreover, each coming to fruition happens within a given *karman*, each one proceeding independently according to its sort; for example, the maturation of *jñānāvaraṇa-karman* concerns only *jñāna* and has no influence on the maturing-

saṁhānana, the bony structure; this structure may be more perfect, solid and strong, or less so; 6 degrees are distinguished. Later on we shall see that the quality of this structure has a great importance for the practice of mental concentration; cf. P 374; 642.

⁸⁹ Cf. TS VIII, 13.

⁹⁰ Cf. P 285; 394.

⁹¹ Both facets of this idea are explained in the TS, although the words *ghātiya* and *aghātiya* are not mentioned; cf. *DravSam*, comm. on vs. 38 and 50.

⁹² Cf. TS VIII, 5-13; Mehta, 1971, ch. VIII; concerning the duration of the different types of *karman*, cf. TS VIII, 14-20.

⁹³ Cf. TS VIII, 21.

process of *mohanīya-karman*.⁹⁴ Once matured, the *karman* will simply be shed and disappear.⁹⁵ It must be understood that *karman* may mature and fall away in accordance with its own natural cycle, but equally it may disengage itself long before the conclusion of its cycle. Here the importance of asceticism enters in: through the renunciation involved in asceticism - partial renunciation of activity, complete renunciation of the passions - the aim is, precisely, to hasten the process of elimination of every sort of *karman*.⁹⁶

To complete this account of the various notions attached to *bandha* we must add two more: that of the six *leśyās* and that of the fourteen *guṇasthānas*.

a) *Leśyās*: Colorations of the *jīva*

Leśyā is used to denote a coloration of the *jīva* which varies in accordance with the nature of the *karman* that affects it. Hence again we must make a distinction between *bhāva-leśyā* which corresponds to the psychological modifications produced by the *āsrava* in the *jīva* and *dravya-leśyā* which is the coloration of the *jīva* by karmic matter. These *leśyās* are of six types, each designated by its own colour. Thus there are black, blue, grey, red, yellow and white *leśyās*. The three first correspond with bad *karmas* produced by passions whose intensity diminishes with the vividness of the hue: a black *leśyā* is the sign of a passionate state that is far more violent than that evidenced by a grey *leśyā*. The following three *leśyās* correspond with progressively better *karmas*, while the white *leśyā* is the *leśyā* of perfection. The *leśyās* are dependent upon the karmic matter in

⁹⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, 22.

⁹⁵ *pakke phalammi padide jaha na phalaṁ bajjhade puṇo vimṭṭe jīvassa kammabhāve paḍide na puṇodayamuveī*. SamSa 168; cf. TS VIII, 23.

⁹⁶ Cf. P 367 ff. On the subject of *bandha*, cf. also ADh II, 38-39; PSa I, 84; II, 25-26; 57; 61; 82; 85; SamSa 70; 105; US XXXIII and KarmG I, 1-2; 9; 27; 31; 35; 52; 61; *Karmapraṅkti* 3-189.

question and are subject to the same modifications as this matter as regards degree of manifestation and duration.⁹⁷

b) *Guṇasthānas*: Successive stages of the spiritual journey

The *guṇasthānas* are the stages to be covered on the path leading to Liberation. This type of structured advance has probably been worked out in the course of centuries with the aim of precision; it is not found in the *Āgamas* except in the *Śaṭkhaṇḍāgama*⁹⁸ and is not mentioned or explained in the *Tattvārtha-sūtra*. By way of contrast, the far more recent texts such as the *Karmagrantha* accord it an important position. Each of these stages is called by a name that indicates the nature of the karmic dust which shrouds the faculties of the *jīva* and its degree of intensity; since it is by these stages that one journeys towards Deliverance, each one in turn marks a diminution of the passions and hence of *karman* and heralds an advance on the path. The fourteen *guṇasthānas* are: ⁹⁹

1. *Mithyātva*, defective vision, a state of blindness, of erroneous beliefs, of lack of respect towards the *arhats* and spiritual masters.
2. *Sāsṡādāna* (*sāsādāna*), a brief fall subsequent to a beginning on the way of right faith, occasioned by some passion.
3. *Miśra* or mixture, a state of instability and indecisiveness between the true and the false.
4. *Avirata-samyak-dṛṣṭi*, a state of right vision, with relaxation, however, of renunciation so that advance is impeded¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ They are: "as it were, the reflection of *karman* on the soul. . ." Jacobi SBE XLV, p. 196, n. 2; cf. also US XXXIV, a detailed study of this subject; TS II, 6; III, 3; IV, 20-22; and KarmaG III, 21-22; 24; IV, 13; 23.

⁹⁸ The *Śaṭkhaṇḍāgama* in the section called *jīvasthāna* makes a study of 14 *jīvasamāsas*, degrees of spiritual advancement, which correspond with the progressive destruction of *karmas*.

⁹⁹ Cf. DravSam 13 and comm.; KarmaG II, 2 and comm.

¹⁰⁰ *Mithyātva* can be of 5 sorts, *avirata* of 7 sorts.

5. *Deśa-virata*, partial renunciation; this is the stage of fervent śrāvakas and śrāvikās and of the Digambara āryikās.¹⁰¹
6. *Pramatta-saṁyata*, a state of commitment to renunciation, that of the ascetics, not devoid, however, of lapses.
7. *Apramatta-saṁyata*, renunciation with no relapse, a state of collectedness and *dharmā-dhyāna*.
8. *Nivṛtti-apūrvakaraṇa-bādara*, well-nigh perfect control of the passions, intense recollectedness and first degree of *śukla-dhyāna*.¹⁰²
- 9.10. *Anivṛtti-bādara-samparāya* and *sūkṣma-samparāya*, stages of progressively more perfect control of the passions.
11. *Upasānta-kaṣāya-vitarāga*, a state of absolute detachment, perfect mastery of the passions; nevertheless some regression is as yet inevitable in that *karman* is not totally eliminated.
12. *Kṣiṇa-kaṣāya-vitarāga*, the final stage in which, the passions being annihilated, the *jīva* is firmly established on the path of final Liberation.
13. *Sayoga-kevalin*, annihilation of the four destructive sorts of *karman*, the state of *kevala-jñāna*; only the corporal activities remain, and non-destructive sorts of *karman*.¹⁰³
14. *Ayoga-kevalin*, an extremely brief stage when all activity is suppressed. It is the stage preceding Liberation.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Cf. P 640 ff.

¹⁰² For *dharmā-dhyāna*; *śukla-dhyāna* cf. P 376; 381.

¹⁰³ Cf. P 392 ff

¹⁰⁴ Cf. 7 B P000.

These stages have been thought out in a careful and consistent manner and an acquaintance with them can be of help to progress on the path. However it is clear that the majority of them concern the as yet impure *jīvas* and are regarded from the viewpoint of *vyavahāra*. They correspond to different degrees of darkness of the *jīva*, due to *mohaniya-karman*, the *karman* that gives rise to error and illusion; on account of their association with *karman* these stages are not connatural to the *jīva*, for in reality and from the viewpoint of *nīścaya*, all *jīvas* in their essence are perfectly pure.¹⁰⁵

To sum up, we may say: *āsrava*, or the penetration of the *jīva* by karmic matter, is the dominant factor in the *jīva-karman* relationship and the state of *bandha*, as a result of this *āsrava*, comes about owing to psychological factors precipitated by the said *āsrava*. Certain psychic phenomena occur, each corresponding to the sort of *karman* that has evoked it. It is the empirical *jīva* that experiences the effects of the *āsrava* and *bandha*, whilst the real *jīva* is unaffected by this type of experience. The doctrinal texts lay great emphasis on those types of *karman* which becloud each of the Three Jewels; they stress those types of *karman* which tarnish vision and knowledge, for *cāritra*, conduct, can only be right if vision, faith and knowledge are so also. At the same time practical, concrete and positive steps are prescribed in order to aid the *jīva* towards self-purification and to assist in the destruction of *karman*. This is what we are now going to study.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. SamSa 56; 68 (DravSam 13).

Chapter 3

The first steps on the path: The āvaśyakas, the daily duties

The six different āvaśyakas [are:]
sāmāyika, [the vow to] *renounce all blameworthy action*
[*sāmāyika* being a state of life],
caturviṃśatistava, *the hymn of praise to the twenty-four*
tirthaṅkaras,
vandana, *the reverential salutation* [addressed to the Ācārya, the
Upādhyāya, the Pravartini, the Guruṇi, the Sādhvis,
in order of seniority],
pratikramaṇa, *the act of repentance for faults and negligences*
[committed consciously or unconsciously] *and the rite of general*
confession,
pratyākhyāna, *the promise to perform particular acts of*
renunciation for a specified length of time,
kāyotsarga, *the act of renunciation of one's own body* [through an
attitude which combines bodily immobility and mental
concentration].¹

These spiritual activities are classed as *puṇyas* and are considered both virtuous and meritorious, for they are a strong defence against the passions. Each in its own way produces good *karmas* and prevents *āsrava*² and thus, if practised with conviction and sincerity,

¹ *sāmāyikam-caturviṃśatistavaḥ-vandanā-pratikramaṇam*
pratyākhyānam-kāyotsargaḥ ca āvaśyakasya ṣaḍbhedaḥ. ADh VIII, 17.
The Digambara tradition, to which the ADh belongs, puts *pratyākhyāna*
before *kāyotsarga*, while the Śvetāmbara tradition inverts the order; this is
of little importance, the basic doctrine and the attitudes inspired thereby
being exactly the same; cf. also MA I, 22; VII, 15; US XXIX, 8-13.

² Cf. ADh VIII, 1-15.

contributes to the reduction of karmic matter and its disassociation from the *jiva*. The regular observance of them constitutes in itself a sign that a start has been made on the right path, while for ascetics it is the sign of a definite pledge; indeed, the chief act in the rite of *dikṣā* is the taking of the vow of *sāmāyika* for life, a vow which is renewed twice a day.³ *Sāmāyika* is at one and the same time a state of life and the primordial *āvaśyaka*.

The word *āvaśyaka* means: necessary, obligatory, indispensable, inevitable, that from which one cannot exempt oneself. In this context it refers to spiritual observances which are obligatory for all Jainas, because they constitute the implementation and practice in daily life of essential features of the doctrine. Since the first stage on the way towards purification is non-subjection to the passions, the sages consider the meaning of *āvaśyaka* from this perspective: the one who is not under the domination of the *vaśyas* (the senses) is *a-vaśya*, stable, and he does not give in to cravings and impulses. His actions are *āvaśyaka*, those of someone who possesses self-control.⁴

In terms of *vyavahāra* and *nīścaya* the following aspects must be taken into consideration for each *āvaśyaka*: *nāma*, name; *sthāpanā*, structure; *dravya*, consistence; *kṣetra*, place; *kāla*, time; *bhāva*, attitude.⁵ What is of supreme importance is the fundamental attitude, that is to say, the basic dispositions and uprightness of intention of the person pledged to this path. This attitude is manifested in concrete ways in daily life before or after certain actions and also at prescribed specific moments. There is thus the *vidhi*, the rite of the *āvaśyakas*, which takes place morning and evening in accordance with an

³ This applies to the Śvetāmbara sādhis; the Digambara āryikās observe the rite of *sāmāyika* 3 times a day; cf. P 661 ff. śrāvakas and śrāvikās make this vow for a limited period.

⁴ Cf. ADh VIII, 16; MA VII, 14.

⁵ Cf. AnuS 149 and ADh VIII, 18-70.

established order for the recitation of the *sūtras*, accompanied by appropriate gestures.⁶

The *āvaśyakas* form one harmonious whole in which each contributes towards the attainment of the Three Jewels.

A - *Sāmāyika*: Renunciation of all blameworthy action

The root *sama-* expresses the idea of harmony, equality, smoothness, the absence of unevennesses, homogeneity. *Sāmāyika* is the state in which one is pledged to renounce evil, master and subjugate the passions, to regard with equanimity each and every being, thing or happening, to look upon them serenely, impartially, without variability of mood, without getting upset or overcome.

Master, what fruits accrue to the *jīva* from *sāmāyika*? Through *sāmāyika*, the *jīva* abstains from all reprehensible activity.⁷

The vow of *sāmāyika* is very simple, it is a life-promise:

- to renounce all reprehensible action, whether of the mind, of speech or of the body;
- to refrain from causing others to do such actions;
- to refrain from approving such actions.⁸

⁶ We now introduce each of the *āvaśyakas* with some observations on the corresponding rite among the Śvetāmbara sādhis. In Part III we shall see how they are integrated into the daily life of the sādhis and āryikās. Part IV contains the principal *sūtras* of this rite.

⁷ *sāmāicṇaṃ bhaṃte! jīve kiṃ jaṇayai? sāmāicṇaṃ sāvajjajogaviraṃ jaṇayai.* US XXIX, 8.

⁸ Cf. AS I, 8, 4, 8, where Mahāvira maintains *sāmāyika* at the time of begging for food.

The vow concludes with a brief formula, common to certain other *āvaśyakas* also, expressing comprehensive repentance for all faults, denunciation of the same and renunciation of whatever in the *ātman* has committed any blameworthy act.⁹

Much emphasis has been laid upon the predominant aspect of equality, similarity, unity in the concept of *sāmāyika*. To consider it in more detail, let us look at its different aspects:

i) *Nāma-sāmāyika*

Whether one's own name is uttered with affection and respect by friends or in an insulting tone by foes, one must evince neither attachment towards well-wishers nor anger towards those who wish one ill. Words of whatever sort must have no effect upon the *jīva* (*ātman*).

ii) *Sthāpanā-sāmāyika*

The shape or appearance of objects, as, for example, of a statue of an *arhat*, whether it be beautiful or ugly, must evoke no feelings of pleasure or aversion, for one must not identify oneself with an object.¹⁰

iii) *Dravya-sāmāyika*

Whatever the nature of substances may be, whether of gold or of clay, one must regard them as "other" substances, independent of the *jīva*, that is, with a detached look, one that attaches no more importance to the one than to the other.

⁹ Cf. III P 700; 702; 706; 707.

¹⁰ *Sthāpanā*: establishment, erection, in particular of an image; here the word denotes that which is stable in an object.

iv) *Kṣetra-sāmāyika*

No adverse sentiment should be evoked, whether one is in a royal palace or a wild jungle, for the one and only real "place" is the *jīva*; all the rest are neither pleasant or unpleasant.

v) *Kāla-sāmāyika*

The seasons, whether the period of scorching heat or the rains or the cold of winter, should have no effect whatever on the *jīva*. Here we must introduce the following subtle idea: *kāla* (time) possesses neither shape, smell, taste nor touch and it is a distortion of *kāla* due to matter when we attribute such to the seasons; the *jīva* which is formless has no relationship with these manifestations of matter.

vi) *Bhāva-sāmāyika*

The *jīva* (*ātman*) is eternal, pure consciousness; all that is transient, namely, impression, feelings, everything to which psychic manifestations give rise, cannot touch it. According to *nīścaya*, no manifestations of this sort, such as life (the one limited to the body), death, profit, loss, happiness, suffering, friendships, enmities, affect the *jīva*. Wherefore the attitude towards all other *jīvas*, to whatever category they belong, whether they be persons, animals, or plants, should be one of friendship and respect; this is the loftiest form of *sāmāyika*.¹¹

B - Caturviṃśatistava: Praise of the twenty-four *tīrthaṅkaras*

This expression is made up of two words: *caturviṃśati*, twenty four, and *stava*, praise. It refers to the supreme hymn of praise to the *tīrthaṅkaras*.¹²

¹¹ For these 5 aspects, cf. ADh VIII, 19-36; for the characteristics of *sāmāyika*, cf. MA VII, 20-25. As regards virtue in conduct, cf. AnuS 144; for *sāmāyika* as an obligatory duty, cf. SthS 206; 530; as the supreme form of self-control, cf. SthS 428; as the highest of the 5 sorts of conduct, cf. TS IX, 18; US XXVIII, 32.

¹² Cf. P 69 ff.; 701.

Master, what fruits accrue to the *jīva* from the *caturvīṃśatistava*?
Through the *caturvīṃśatistava* the *jīva* obtains purity of belief.¹³

Right *darśana* is confirmed and increases, not only proportionately to the devotion, recollectedness and sincerity which accompany the praise offered to the *tirthaṅkaras*, for this is in itself a holy and meritorious action, but above all as one goes beyond what each one was in the history of the tradition to emulate what each one is and remains eternally in *nirvāṇa*.¹⁴

At the beginning of the hymn one addresses all the *arthas* who have transmitted the light of knowledge, established the *tirtha*, the ford of the *dharma*, all the *jīnas* who have been victorious over *rāga* and *dveṣa*, attachment and aversion. Next, each *tirthaṅkara* is named and saluted; then follows a eulogy of their spiritual struggles and victories, along with the expression of a strong desire to imitate them. The hymn concludes with a brief passage of praise to those who are purer than the luminaries of the moon, more brilliant than the luminaries of the sun and deep like the ocean.

The *caturvīṃśatistava* is a form of *bhakti* which includes the six aspects mentioned in connection with *sāmāyika*:

i) *Nāma*

The Name of each of the *tirthaṅkaras* constitutes in itself a cosmic chant, expressive of the character of each. In a spate of ardent devotion a thousand and one epithets have been found to glorify the *tirthaṅkaras*, each title indicating one aspect of their spiritual

¹³ *cauvisatthaṇaṃ bhaṇite! jīve kiṃ jaṇayai? cauvisatthaṇaṃ daṃsaṇavisohiṃ jaṇayai.* US XXIX, 9.

¹⁴ A very large number of hymns have been composed in praise of the *tirthaṅkaras*, certain ones to the 24 and a greater number still to one or another, generally to Ādinātha or to Mahāvira; Śānthinātha, Neminātha and Pārśvanātha come next in the number of hymns addressed to them. However, only the recitation of this hymn of the AvaS is obligatory.

prowess.¹⁵ However, the Name as such is only a support, the staff, as it were, of the pilgrim. Gradually the Name must be abandoned, in order that one may discover in the case of each *arhat* the *siddha* fixed firm in the state beyond every Name.

ii) *Sthāpanā-stava*

This comprises all that the architecture, sculpture, and iconography of every age have bequeathed to us and that is held in veneration. These, however, are the work of human hands and can be seen and touched. They are merely aids towards interior veneration.

iii) *Dravya-stava*

This comprises all that reflects the person of each *tirthaṅkara*, his physical appearance with all its particular features, his family and social background, to all of which factors tradition attaches great importance, because they impart a certain joy, that joy that comes from contemplating a human being who has attained perfection of body, faculties and behaviour.

iv) *Kṣetra-stava*

Here are included the kingdoms, towns, villages, or mountains where, according to tradition, the major events of the earthly life of each *tirthaṅkara* took place: his birth, *dikṣā*, *kevala-jñāna*, entry into *nirvāṇa*. These places popular faith has made centres of pilgrimage.

v) *Kāla-stava*

This refers to the epoch in which tradition places each of these events.

vi) *Bhāva-stava*

¹⁵ Cf. ADh VIII, 39. Devotion, if truly alive, does not stay satisfied with the contents of tradition; fresh strains of praise are always being added; for example, Āryikā Jñānamiati, during the course of these last years, has composed several hymns.

This is a eulogy of *kevala-jñāna*, of that state of pure knowledge which the *tirthaṅkaras* reached thanks to their outstanding courage, which made of them *vitarāgas*, those who have renounced all attachments, *jinendras*, those who have mastered their senses and *jinās*, victorious ones. *Bhāva-stava* is the most perfect form of praise.¹⁶

This praise of the *tirthaṅkaras* repeated several times a day is like a purificatory and strengthening bath. The repetition of these Names together with spiritual concentration upon their virtues gives spontaneous rise to a desire to follow their teaching and their example. The devotee feels imbued with the courage which inspired them and reinforced in a pure faith, with an unshakeable conviction that through the imitation of their virtues he or she is following the right path which leads to Liberation.¹⁷

C - *Vandana*: Salutation to the religious superiors

Having sung the praises of the *tirthaṅkaras* one addresses with profound respect those men and women on this earth who are pledged to follow them, in the first place those who bear authority in the *saṃgha*: one's Ācārya, Upādhyāya, Pravartini, Guruṇi and each Sādhvi in order of seniority, according to her date of *dikṣā*.

Vandana means: respectful salutation, sign of reverence, humility, obedience. This salutation is also called *dvādaśāvarta-vandana* or the *vandana* of the twelve *āvartas*; *āvarta* refers to a circular movement from right to left with palms joined in front of the face, a gesture which expresses veneration.¹⁸ In a group of *sādhvis*, *vandana* during

¹⁶ Cf. ADh VIII, 37-45, where mention is made of all these aspects.

¹⁷ In the daily rite *caturvīṃśatistava* is closely linked to *kāyotsarga*; cf. P 710 ff.

¹⁸ Nowadays in practice the rite is simplified and the *sādhvis* do not perform the 12 *āvartas*.

the rite of the *āvaśyaka*s is addressed either to the *ācārya* or to the *guruṇi*, the spiritual mother; this varies according to communities.¹⁹

Master, what fruits accrue to the *jīva* [from the practice of] *vandana*? Through [the practice of] *vandana* the *jīva* destroys such *karmas* [as determine birth in] an inferior social milieu and acquires [such *karmas* as determine birth in] a noble family; [such a *jīva*] is loved by all, its behests are respected, it arouses favourable sentiments [towards itself].²⁰

The text of this *āvaśyaka* is a compilation characterised by exquisite moderation; one can distinguish four parts:²¹

- Permission to approach the *guruṇi*; this permission being granted, the *sādhvī* touches the right foot of the *guruṇi* with her forehead and hands.²²
- Then the *sādhvī* respectfully asks her the following questions:
has she passed a good day (or night)?
is her inner pilgrimage proceeding well?

19 i) The *Mūrtipūjaka* *sādhvis* perform the great *vandana* only to the *ācārya*. Moreover, since at the time of this rite, they are on their own, they have always one or several *sthāpanācāryas* in their midst, as a symbol of the presence of the *ācārya* (III P 481), and they group themselves around them for the rite.

ii) The *Sthānakavāsi* *sādhvis* perform this *vandana* to the *ācārya*, when present, and also to the *guruṇi*.

iii) The *Terāpanthi* *sādhvis* turn to face the place where the *ācārya* is located and address to him the lesser *vandana*; they next do the same to the leading *sādhvī* in the group (they do not have a *guruṇi*); cf. P 429.

20 *vaṇḍaṇaṇaṃ bhaṇṭe! jīve kiṃ jaṇayai? vaṇḍaṇaṇaṃ niyāgoyaṃ kammaṃ khavei, uccāgoyaṃ nibaṇḍhai, sohaḡgaṃ ca ṇaṃ appaḍihayaṃ āṇāphalaṃ nivvattei, dāhiṇabhāvaṃ ca ṇaṃ jaṇayai.* US XXIX,10.

21 The word *guruṇi* may replace *ācārya* where indicated.

22 In the case of the *ācārya* these tokens of respect are expressed in the mind only; the *sādhvis* do not touch the feet either of the *ācārya* or of a *muni*.

is she in good health, with the senses well-controlled and the spirit free?

- Then follows the request for pardon for the faults of the day (or night); no specific personal fault is mentioned, but a general sincere repentance for all faults is expressed.

At this point, with the request for pardon, the second aspect of *vandana* comes to the fore, that aspect that stresses the nature of the faults from which one must be purified, lesser faults involving a greater or less great degree of culpability, infringements of the rules of less or more importance due more particularly to negligence which is recognised as the fault against which one must guard oneself in order to avoid the slippery downward path of evil. These faults have various names.

Atikrama is an inclination or tendency to evil, however slight it be.

Vyatikrama denotes a certain, even though minimal, consent to evil.

Āśātanā is lack of respect or deference towards the *guruṇi* and other *sādhvis*. It is especially from this type of fault, imperfection and negligence that one must purify oneself during the *vandana*; *āśātanā* can adopt different guises, hence the request for pardon for *duṣkṛtas*, blameworthy acts of thought, word and deed, due to the four passions.

Aticāra, i.e., even the slightest violation or transgression of the vows by some minor infidelity.²³

These notions relate to slight offences where the will is only slightly or even not at all involved; the important point in this context where all is centred upon the purification of one's being and on respect towards all other beings, is equally the actual fault - because of its repercussions both on the person who commits it and also on other

²³ Cf. *SramanS*, pp. 287-290; no order of gravity of faults is followed within any one *sūtra*.

beings - and also the degree of consent to a blameworthy act. Even if the offence is slight in itself, its effect is always harmful.

The *sūtra* concludes, like the one on *sāmāyika*, by an energetic condemnation of faults. What all commentators stress in connection with *vandana* is the idea of *vinaya*, humble submission, obedience.²⁴

In the course of the rite, the *sādhvis* frequently perform the *laghu-guruvandana*, or small *vandana*, while reciting the corresponding *sūtra*. This *sūtra* is not included in the *Āvaśyaka-sūtra* but, along with certain other added *sūtras*, it forms an integral part of the rite.²⁵ It is addressed to the *guruṇi* and elder *sādhvis*. Outside this rite and in addition, the *sādhvis* perform this *vandana* individually each time they ask permission for something important from the *guruṇi*; for normal requests they join the palms, inclining the head.

As regards the six different aspects: *nāma*, *sthāpanā*, etc. we must understand the term *vandana* in the broad sense of respectful homage addressed to the holy men and women of the past, to the sages from the beginning until our own days; reflection on these aspects will be similar to that made already on the subject of the *caturvirṇśatistava*.²⁶ The importance of *bhāva-vandana*, which the *sūtra* itself expresses very well, must be emphasised, comprising as it does an attitude and disposition of filial respect towards the *ācārya*, the spiritual mother

²⁴ Cf. ADh VIII, 47-48; MA VII, 83-86; P 486; 701.

²⁵ Cf. P 710 ff. for the *laghu-guruvandana* one makes 3 *āvartas* (*Sthānakavāsis*, *Terāpanthis*) or places the hands together (*Mūrtipūjakas*), then performs the *pañcāṅga-nāmaskara*, the prostration of the 5 members (i.e. hands, knees and forehead touching the ground), reciting the while the *sūtra* (which differs according to the *sampradāyas*), this movement being repeated three times. This lesser *vandana* is the most common, being performed by the *sādhvis* on occasions other than that of the rite of the *āvaśyakas* for the *ācārya* and for *munis*. The *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* (*Sthānakavāsi*, *Terāpanthi*) perform it for the *ācārya*, for *munis* and *sādhvis*, but the *Mūrtipūjakas* perform this triple *vandana* only for the *ācārya* and for *munis*.

²⁶ Cf. ADh VIII, 46; 49.

and the elder *sādhvis*, because they are already well-advanced on the path and it is they who transmit the teaching of Mahāvira.

D - *Pratikramaṇa*: Repentance for and ritual confession of faults

The fourth *āvaśyaka* possesses one specific function, namely purification. When combined with the other *āvaśyakas*, it subsumes, so to speak, the whole lot so efficiently that the morning and evening rite incorporating all the *āvaśyakas* is commonly termed *pratikramaṇa*.

The etymology of the word clearly indicates the function of this *āvaśyaka*: *prati*, backwards, return, and *kramaṇa*, walk; it means to make a walk back, come back, return, in this instance to return to the state which preceded that of impurity due to offences committed. Each *āvaśyaka*, it is true, has to a different degree a purifying effect, but *pratikramaṇa* exercises a direct role in purification, through the contents of its numerous *sūtras*, in proportion to the conviction with which they are recited.

The *sūtras* take as their theme the specific faults for which repentance is being expressed. This is a community rite, a shared general confession for all the faults that can be committed, especially through negligence, inattention and weakness.²⁷ It is to be distinguished from the *ālocanā*, personal confession to a guruṇi (or to the *ācārya*), which is always followed by a *prāyaścitta*; reparation to be made in the form of a penance prescribed by the guruṇi (or *ācārya*)²⁸.

Master, what fruits accrue to the *jīva* from *pratikramaṇa*?
Through *pratikramaṇa* the *jīva* makes reparation for lapses

²⁷ Cf. P 112-113 for the rite of *pratikramaṇa* at the time of Pārśvanātha and from the time of Mahāvira onwards i.e. our own epoch.

²⁸ The *ālocanā* and the *prāyaścittas* do not figure in the list of *āvaśyakas*; however, two of the *āvaśyakas*, namely, *pratikramaṇa* and *kāyotsarga*, are also considered as being expiatory. Furthermore, *pratikramaṇa* requires the same sincerity of intention as the *ālocanā*; cf. MA II, 56-58; P 369 ff.; 514 ff.

from the vows,²⁹ and thus it halts *āsrava*, [it reverts to] irreproachable conduct, [it observes] with vigilance the eight *pravacana-mātās* [the mothers: *guptis*, *samitis*],³⁰ [it is in] perfect [control of the senses], it dwells in profound absorption.³¹

While in the text of the rite the three other *āvaśyakas* are each contained in a single *sūtra*, the portion of the rite dealing with *pratikramaṇa* contains a large number of *sūtras* expounding multifarious obligations. *Pratikramaṇa* is not only a revision of life leading to a state of penitence, but also a summary of the doctrine. The whole is both of vast scope and highly detailed; it is an elaborate formal ritual, whose basic structure is remarkably harmonious.³²

As for the nature of possible offences, certain ones are described by the same words as those used in the performance of *vandana*: *aticāra*, *duṣkṛta*; but as each *sūtra* deals with different aspects of conduct and of the teaching, these offences according to context have their own particular nuance of meaning. Mention is also made of *khaṇḍana* and *virāḍhanā* which signify a conscious infringement of some vow; it appears that *khaṇḍana* is a lesser infringement than *virāḍhanā*,³³ and in the *iryāpathika-sūtra* which treats of comings and goings *virāḍhanā* denotes minor faults against the vow of *ahimsā*.³⁴

²⁹ "Lapses" for *chidda* (*chidra*), hole, opening, breach, default.

³⁰ The *samitis* and *guptis* are connected with *saṁvara*, the cessation of karmic flow.

³¹ *paḍikkamaṇeṇaṁ bhamite! jive kiṁ jaṇayai? paḍikkamaṇeṇaṁ vayachiddaṁ pihei. pihiyavayachidde puṇa jive niruddhāsava asabalacaritte aṭṭhasu pavayaṇamāyāsu uvautte apuhatte suppaṇihic viharai.* US XXIX, 11.

³² Cf. P 703 ff. for the structure of the rite of *pratikramaṇa* and P 713.

³³ Cf. *Sramaṇa*, p. 51.

³⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 54-66; cf. P 706.

Out of the six aspects of *pratīkramaṇa*, it suffices to mention: *kāla-pratīkramaṇa*, the moments during a day, a year or a life-time when *pratīkramaṇa* is obligatory. Generally, seven *kāla-pratīkramaṇas* are distinguished.

daivasika: of the day, to be performed each evening;

rātrika: of the night, to be performed each morning;

iryāpathika: after goings and comings in the outside world;³⁵

pākṣika: each fortnight;

cāturmāsika: every four months;

sāmvatsarika: of the preceding year;

uttamārtha: the final *pratīkramaṇa*, that which precedes the Great Departure.

With the exception of the *iryāpathika* which consists in a single *sūtra*, the remaining *pratīkramaṇas* are composed of *sūtras* belonging to the daily rite, each one containing certain variations.³⁶

The aim of these *pratīkramaṇas* performed at regular intervals is to sustain fervour, avoid carelessness and, by means of this interior discipline, help towards purification.³⁷ The essential throughout is *bhāva-pratīkramaṇa*, the attitude of sincere penitence. The rite is of

³⁵ *Ir*: go, move; *iryā*: the movement from place to place of the itinerant ascetic and *iryāpatha*, the path of the ascetic, hence: the precept which aims at not hurting any living being in one's comings and goings.

³⁶ Cf. ADh VIII, 57; MA VII, 116.

³⁷ Cf. SamSa 383; TS IX, 22 where *ālocanā* and *pratīkramaṇa* are mentioned as forms of inner asceticism preparatory to *dhyāna*; cf. P 369 ff.

great importance, because it conduces to a common renewal and the maintenance of this attitude as a community.³⁸

E - *Kāyotsarga*: Renunciation of attachment to one's own body

The four preceding *āvaśyakas* were laying special stress on the question of inner attitude, while at the same time taking into consideration the totality of the human being and in particular the body; this last, being matter, and thus a constant source, through the sense-organs and their activities, of karmic penetration, must be mastered. It is the body, furthermore, that, through gestures and appropriate postures such as express and reflect the right inner orientation, performs the rites.

The fifth *āvaśyaka*, *kāyotsarga*, stresses in first place the specific bodily attitude conducive to inner purification, to concentration, in a word, to a consciousness of the *jīva* (*ātman*) - *kāya* (the body, matter) duality.³⁹

The inner attitude adopted in *kāyotsarga* corresponds to that which the sages call: renunciation of all *mamaiva-bhāva*, that is, the basic disposition which renounces all forms of possession, of making things one's own, of appropriating them; this, if adopted with an absolute rigourousness which pushes non-possession to an extreme, means renunciation and abandonment of the body.⁴⁰ We must now study the meaning, nature and various aspects and implications of this type of renunciation and also see how *kāyotsarga* is closely linked with the other *āvaśyakas* and spiritual activities.

³⁸ For *nāma-pratīkramaṇa* etc., cf. ADh VIII, 57-61; MA I, 26.

³⁹ As we mentioned at the beginning, the Digambara tradition lists *kāyotsarga* as last of the *āvaśyakas*; here we are following the order given by the AvaS.

⁴⁰ Cf. MA I, 28.

The etymology of the term is simple and straightforward: *kāya*, body; *utsarga*, abandonment.⁴¹ How is *kāyotsarga* to be practised? Either in the *jinamudrā* posture, i.e., standing, immobile, heels a little apart in such a way that the legs do not touch each other, the arms hanging loosely at a small distance from the body, the gaze fixed on the tip of the nose,⁴² or in the seated posture⁴³ called *padmāsana* or *paryāṅkāsana*.⁴⁴ However, no particular *āsana* is obligatory; the important point is to adopt a position favourable to concentration⁴⁵. *Kāyotsarga* can also be practised in the prone position, during repose or in the case of physical fatigue.⁴⁶

⁴¹ *Utsarga* has slightly different shades of meaning according to context and means also: throw back, set to one side, omit, free.

⁴² Cf. ADh VIII, 70.

⁴³ *pralambita-bhuja-dvandvam ūdharva sthāsyāśīṣitasya vā sthānam kāyānapēkṣam yat kāyotsargaḥ sa kirtitaḥ*. YSas IV, 133.

⁴⁴ *Padmāsana* or *paryāṅkāsana*: the legs crossed, so that each foot, with sole upturned, rests upon the opposite thigh; in this posture the palm of the right hand rests on that of the left hand. This terminology is well-established among certain authors and archaeologists; cf. e.g. Bhattacharya, 1974, pp. 138-139; U.P. Shah, 1955, p. 57. However, other authors consider *padmāsana* and *paryāṅkāsana* to be two different postures; cf. ADh VIII 83 and comm.; JSK I p. 295; YSas IV, 125; 129.

⁴⁵ Cf. YSas IV, 134; the *sādhvis*, during their spiritual exercises, are generally seated in the posture called *sukhāsana*, "like a tailor"; cf. Rājimati, 1974, p. 55. During *kāyotsarga* the Mūrtipūjaka *sādhvis* place the back of each hand on the corresponding knee, while among the other *sādhvis* the palm of the right hand rests on that of the left hand.

⁴⁶ Cf. US XXX, 36 where the prone posture is mentioned, though there it is a question of *vyutsarga*, one of the forms of inner asceticism (cf. P 369 ff.) which is in fact the same as *kāyotsarga*. We may observe that *vyutsarga* is an incorrect translation of the Prākṛit *viussaga* which should be translated by *vyavasarga* (cf. Jacobi, SBE XLV, p. 179, n. 1); cf. also *Kāyotsargaśāṭaka* 1510.

Corresponding to this immobile bodily posture is *dhyāna*, mental concentration; *kāyotsarga* of short duration is accompanied by silent recitation of the *Nāmaskāra-mantra* and concludes with that of the *caturviṃśatistava*. Simultaneously, i.e. with the body motionless and the spirit held by the recitation of the *mantra*, one may, though it is not obligatory, match one's rhythmic *ucchvāsa*, or respiratory movement, to the recitation. The recitation of the *Nāmaskāra-mantra* takes three *ucchvāsas*.⁴⁷ Certain texts give precise instruction concerning the number of *ucchvāsas* to take for the different *pratikramāṇas* of the year and for the daily activities in which *kāyotsarga* is obligatory;⁴⁸ for example, after relieving oneself,⁴⁹ on return from begging one's food,⁵⁰ after *vihāra*.⁵¹ In addition to the times prescribed, one may practise it freely for longer or shorter periods, according to the times devoted to *dhyāna*. The one goes along with the other.

Master, what fruits accrue to the *jīva* from *kāyotsarga*? Through *kāyotsarga* the *jīva* is purified from faults past and present [requiring] expiation. Purified by this expiation, the *jīva*, like a man relieved of the burden he has been carrying, peaceable and absorbed in praiseworthy mental concentration, abides in a state of joy.⁵²

The rite proper to *kāyotsarga* is to be found in the great Rite of the *āvaśyakas* and is inserted at certain moments in the other *āvaśyakas*.

⁴⁷ Cf. Jñānāmāti, 1976, pp. 45-46.

⁴⁸ Cf. ADh VIII, 72-73 and Kailāśacandra ADh, Introd., table p. 24; MA VII, 159-164.

⁴⁹ Cf. *utsarga*, P 359 ff.

⁵⁰ Cf. P 496 ff.

⁵¹ Cf. P 533 ff. *kāyotsarga* also constitutes an expiation (P 514 ff.)

⁵² *kāussaggeṇaṃ bhaṃte! jive kiṃ jaṇayai? kāussaggeṇaṃ tiya-paḍuppanna pāyacchittaṃ viśohe. visuddhapāyacchitte ya jive nivvuyahiyaḥ ohariyabharu vva bhāraḥ pasatthajjhāṇovagae suhaṃsuheṇaṃ viharai.* US XXIX, 12; cf. also XXVI, 39; 41-43.

For example, one performs a *kāyotsarga* during the *sāmāyika*.⁵³ The particular rite for *kāyotsarga* consists of diverse *sūtras* such as the *sāmāyika-sūtra* and of two brief *sūtras* specific to itself; the first *sūtra* gives the reasons necessitating *kāyotsarga*. The second *sūtra*, in a list of exceptions, mentions all involuntary movements, such as breathing, coughing, yawning, etc. which do not invalidate *kāyotsarga*. It ends with a promise to rest silent and motionless, concentrated and in a state of renunciation of the body (at least for the time it takes to repeat one time the *Nāmaskāra-mantra*).⁵⁴

As for the six aspects: *nāma*, *sthāpanā*, etc., the first four are concerned with the state of culpability from which *kāyotsarga* purifies and delivers the *jīva*. *Kāla-kāyotsarga* indicates the particular times when *kāyotsarga* should be performed, while *bhāva-kāyotsarga* is the interior disposition that leads to renunciation, abandonment of the body, of matter, of sin, in order to achieve, little by little, in silent motionlessness and a state of concentration, the highest possible degree of awareness of the *jīva* (*ātman*).⁵⁵

It must be added that Jaina sculpture and iconography, both so rich, have immortalised *kāyotsarga*. A great number of the most ancient images of the *arhats* depict them standing in the *jinamudrā* posture. Among the best known, we may mention those of Elapura. Others, moreover, depict them seated in the *dhyānamudrā* or *yogamudrā* (*padmāsana* or *paryāṅkāsana*) posture, or again in that of *ardhaparyāṅkāsana* (*ardha-padmāsana*), the half-*paryāṅkāsana*.⁵⁶

⁵³ Cf. P 712.

⁵⁴ Cf. P 708; 714.

⁵⁵ Cf. MA VII, 151.

⁵⁶ In the *ardha-paryāṅkāsana* the right foot rests on the left thigh and the left foot under the right leg; this posture is found in most of the sculptures of the South; cf. Sundara Rajan, 1975, paper no. 13, figs. 5; 11; 16; 21-23; 26-27; 29; 30-32; 34; U.P. Shah, 1975, paper no. 26, figs. 10; 19; 35; 56 and the other figs. for *padmāsana* and *jinamudrā*. Another form of *ardha-paryāṅkāsana* is the posture in which the left leg is bent and the other leg

F- Pratyākhyāna: **Abstinence for a limited period**

The word means: rejection, refusal, denial, denegation, disapprobation. According to the doctrine, it indicates that rejection or refusal which leads to *vitarāga*, which is the state of one who is non-attached, who is free from desires.

Pratyākhyāna consists in the daily promise to reject in future any form of attachment, though it also deals with specific questions of attitude and behaviour. Although this promise is in itself comprehensive and has a bearing on all that constitutes pleasure or enjoyment of any sort, renunciation in fact and in practice consists primarily in abstinence from eating and drinking for a pre-determined period. We can perceive now the link between the *āvaśyakas*; *sāmāyika* is a vow for life, renewed daily, to abstain from all evil; it is a perpetual state, and thus is the here and now, the present. *Pratikramaṇa* is, by means of repentance, the purification which cleanses past stains; it is a state relating to both past and present. *Kāyotsarga* quiets, leads within; it relates to the present and also to the future, for its beneficial action goes beyond the present moment. *Pratyākhyāna*, however is always of the future; it forestalls, anticipates, goes direct to the source of the evil which *sāmāyika* rejects, that is, to the cravings of body and mind and to enjoyments in general which lead to attachment.

Master, what fruits accrue to the *jīva* from *pratyākhyāna*?
Through *Pratyākhyāna* the *jīva* blocks the entrance against
āsrava.⁵⁷

hanging down, a posture frequently depicted for the *yakṣas* and *yakṣis*; cf. e.g. Sundara Rajan, *ibid*; figs. 9; 33.

⁵⁷ *paccakkhāṇeṇaṃ bhaṇṭe! jīve kiṃ jaṇayai? paccakkhāṇeṇaṃ āsavadārāṃ nirumbhai.* US XXIX, 13.

This is clear and to the point and there is no need to seek any further effects thereof, for once the flow of karmic matter is contained, controlled, stemmed, no other darkening of the *jīva* can occur.

The texts of the *pratyākhyāna-sūtras* are brief. They comprise ten *sūtras* which specify: the nature of renunciation, its duration, possible exceptions; each *pratyākhyāna* refers to abstinence from certain foods and drinks.⁵⁸

The *sādhvis* make a promise to abide by complete *pratyākhyāna*, that is to say, abstinence from food or drink, including water, from before sundown till just before dawn and before dawn they renew this promise until one *muhūrta* (48 minutes) after sunrise.⁵⁹ In addition to this promise which is common to all and which is inserted in the ritual, the *guruṇi* gives the *sādhvis* such or such a *pratyākhyāna* to observe personally and each individual *sādhvi* may ask permission from her to observe a *pratyākhyāna* for a longer or shorter period.

The carrying into effect of these specified fasts belongs to *vyavahāra*; as regards *nīścaya*, it is once again Ācārya Kundakunda who offers a penetrating explanation:

Knowledge of the *ātman* [results in] renunciation of all inclinations, which are thereby recognised as being other than the *ātman*; this is why in reality this knowledge must be deemed to be *pratyākhyāna*.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Cf. ADh VIII, 65-69; MA I, 27; VII, 140-146.

⁵⁹ Cf. P 708-709. The pre-sunset *pratyākhyāna* is not necessarily inserted in the great Rite of the *āvaśyakas* which may happen at a later hour. The pre-dawn *pratyākhyāna* is generally part of the morning rite. The *āryikās*, after their one daily meal, make a promise of total abstinence from food and drink until their meal the following day; cf. P 668 ff.

⁶⁰ *ñāṇaṁ savve bhāve paccakkhādi ya paretthi ñādūṇa tamhā paccakkhāṇaṁ ñāṇaṁ ñiyamā mupedavvaṇi*. SamSa 34; the *ātman* is not explicitly mentioned, but is understood. Inclination: *bhāva*; this word, which is used to describe both mental and psychic activities, has a vast range of meanings; cf. SamSa 384.

This knowledge is in fact *kevala-jñāna*, omniscience in all its power. As the karmic veil which darkens knowledge gradually becomes less thick, the *jiva* purified, discerns and recognises forthwith all that is foreign to its nature and spontaneously detaches itself therefrom. The *āvaśyakas* and the rite embodying them are only props, temporary aids that must be used and then transcended.

Chapter 4

The final commitment: The *mahāvratas*, the five Great Vows

<i>vrata</i>	the vow [is one of]
<i>virati</i>	abstention from:
<i>himsā</i>	[all] harmful activity [aggressiveness, violence],
<i>anṛta</i>	[all] lack of truthfulness,
<i>steya</i>	[all] appropriation to oneself of things that are not given,
<i>abrahma</i>	[all] sexual activity,
<i>parigraha</i>	[all forms of] possessive attachment. ¹

The term *vrata* implies a choice, a determined act of the will. It is a promise made for a spiritual purpose.²

¹ *himsā-anṛta-steya-abrahma-parigrahebhya-viratiḥ vratam*. TS VII, 1.

²The word is very commonly used in all the religious traditions. It comes from the root *vr* which can mean: to cover, protect, surround, enclose, or sometimes: choose. Kane, 1958, vol. V, Part I, p. 5, gives the following explanation concerning the meaning of *vrata* in the *R̥g Veda*, a meaning which has been adopted by most of the other traditions:

"I derive the word from the root '*vr*' (to choose). From this root comes the word '*vara*' (bridegroom who is chosen from among several men by a maiden or her guardian), which occurs in Rg. IX, 101.14 and X.85.8 and 9. Choosing involves willing or volition on the part of the person choosing. Hence '*vr*' also means 'to will'. Therefore, when the word *vrata* is derived from '*vr*' with the suffix '*ta*', the meaning of *vrata* can be 'what is willed' or simply 'will'. The will of a person in power or authority is a command or law unto others. Devotees believe that gods have laid down certain commands to be followed by themselves as well as by all beings. Thus comes the sense of 'law or ordinance'. A command of a superior imposes and implies corresponding duty to obey. When commands are obeyed or duties are performed in the same way for long, they become the patterns of obligations i.e. customs or practices. When persons believe or feel that they must perform certain acts as ordained by gods, then arises the sense of religious worship or duty. If a man imposes upon himself certain restrictions as to his

In our own particular context what characterises the *vrata* is *virati*, abstention from certain types of activities, attitudes and external or internal reactions such as constitute major obstacles to the purification of the *ātman*. The *vrata* is a means of which the end is the purification of the *ātman*.

The early *Āgamas* make mention of these reprehensible types of activity, unworthy of the sages, but do not indicate that avoidance of them is a primary obligation.³ Later on, when the *ācāryas* made a *vrata* of these five forms of renunciation, an obligation absolutely binding upon the ascetics, they rightly imputed primordial importance to *ahiṃsā*, the vow par excellence. The other forms of abstention are closely linked to *ahiṃsā*, indeed they are inseparable from it, safeguarding it, as one might say,⁴ and each of them is considered a *vrata* in its own right. On account of their importance, one calls these *vratas* the five *mahāvratas*, Great Vows.⁵ The *mahāvratas* betoken a decisive and permanent commitment to the way of asceticism; indeed, it is only a certain length of time after her *dikṣā* when she makes the vow of *sāmāyika* for life, that the new *sādhvī* pronounces the *mahāvratas* which constitute a profession of perfect adherence to the doctrine. It is through this profession that the *sādhvī* is fully integrated into the community of ascetics.⁶

behaviour or food to win the favour of gods, that becomes a sacred vow or religious observance. Thus the several meanings of the word 'vrata', which I derive from the root 'vr', are command or law, obedience or duty, religious or moral practices, religious worship or observance, sacred or solemn vow or undertaking, then any vow or pattern of conduct."

³ Cf. e.g. *SkrS* I, 3,4,8; I, 9, 10; cf. Dixit, 1978, pp. 7; 15; 19; *US* XII, 41.

⁴ Pūjyapāda in his comm. on *TS* VII, 1 explains this clearly; cf. also *JSK* I, pp. 224-227; *TS* Sukhlal, pp. 258-278.

⁵ The *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* take the *anuvratas* or little vows; these are of the same character as the Great Vows, but observance of them does not demand the same radical renunciation; cf. *TS* VII, 2.

⁶ Cf. P 465.

The *mahāvratas*, like the *āvaśyakas*, form part of the virtuous and meritorious activities which halt karmic penetration. In the same way as *sāmāyika*, the *mahāvratas* pledge one to a state of life, that state that is the starting-point for any progress on the way. They mark the start of the long march towards *mokṣa* and herein lies their extreme importance. The *Ācārāṅga-sūtra* II deals with them in detail, giving them a formal structure which other texts develop, preserving the same basic contents, though with certain variations as regards expression.⁷ Together the *mahāvratas* form a whole, of which *ahiṃsā* is the foundation-stone, the pillar of *samyak-cāritra*,⁸ while each individually rests upon secondary pillars which are called *bhāvanās*⁹

According to *vyavahāra*, each *mahāvrata* has a bearing upon certain acts of body, speech and mind, but every act is posterior to some intention, *bhāva*, interior disposition, orientation of mind or being, and this is *niścaya*; on occasion the intention may not issue in action. Each *mahāvrata* contains two aspects: that which one must not do or be (negative aspect) which prompts the opposite act, attitude or intention (positive aspect). To go straight to the heart of each *mahāvrata*, we refer to each by the word which best expresses the corresponding attitude: *ahiṃsā*, *satya*, *asteya*, *brahmacarya*, *aparigraha*.

⁷ Cf. AS II, 15 (i-v); ADh IV, 19-150; DS IV, 11-17; VI, 8-20; MA I, 5-9; V, 92-97; SthS 389a; YSas I, 19-24. In these texts the words used to denote each of the *mahāvratas* vary, although the meaning is the same. The DS and SthS refer to them in this way: *prānātipāta-mṛṣāvāda-adattādāna-maithuna-parigraha-viramaṇa*. ADh IV, 19 gives: *curā* for *asteya* and YSas I, 19; *sūṇṭa* for *satya*

⁸ Cf. YSas I, 18.

⁹ The word generally means: reflection, consideration, meditation; here it is a question of practical counsels that one must bind oneself to observe, which presupposes some previous reflection on the subject. Certain texts treat, first, each *mahāvrata* and then its *bhāvanās*, e.g. the ADh and the AS which we are following: others deal with them separately, e.g. MA V, 140-144; TS VII, 3-8; YSas I, 25-33.

A - *Ahimsā*: Abstention from all harmful activity

In order to grasp the importance of this concept in Jaina doctrine a concept that is not one of abstract speculation, but is deeply involved in real-life situations, penetrating all spheres of human and social existence - we must return to the origins, to the dawn of an era when the continent was covered with jungle and when men, animals and plants lived in constant contact with each other.

The awareness at one and the same time of cosmic vitality and of the fact that to strike beings, harm them, destroy them, is the gravest possible offence and thus that the *dharma* consists above all in respecting all living beings and harming none of them, is very clear in the ancient texts. *Ācārāṅga-sūtra* I an *Sūtrakṛtāṅga-sūtra* I, which are addressed to the ascetics, revert often and insistently to *āramba*, a synonym for *himsā*,¹⁰ which, together with *parigraha*, possessive attachment, are the two major sins, closely linked to one another and to the passions.¹¹ The injunction against all forms of violence, a rule to which no exception is to be made, is set forth clearly and in detail and is made the subject of commentary:

...One must neither kill, nor rule over, nor subject to oneself, nor cause to suffer, nor attack violently any sort of living being.¹²

Mahāvira had observed and examined closely the earth, water, fire, wind, plants and moving creatures; through his own acute perceptions he had grasped that they are all living and he took pains not to harm them.¹³ Among rules of conduct he assigned first place to *ahimsā*.¹⁴

¹⁰ Cf. e.g. AS I, 1, 2-7; 2, 1, 3; 3, 4, 1; 4; SkrS I, 1, 1-6; 7, 5-9; 9, 2-9; 11, 9-12; Dixit, 1978, p. 5: "Āramba and Parigraha: the worst sins"; "The sixfold objects of Āramba" p. 6 and pp. 14-15; cf. also DS VI, 26-45; VIII, 2-18; X, 1-4.

¹¹ Cf. e.g. AS I, 2, 6, 1-2; SkrS I, 9, 10-11.

¹² ...*savve pāṇā savve bhūtā savve jivā savve sattā na haṁtavvā, na ajjāveyavvā, na parighetavvā, na paritāveyavvā, na uddavcyavvā*. AS I, 4, 1, 1, to quote just one ex. setting forth this idea.

¹³ Ibid., I, 8, 1, 11-12

But, one must surely query, why this extreme attention not to destroy, hurt or harm all that lives? It is first and foremost to avoid any passionate or possessive intention or emotion on the part of the ascetic. *Ahiṃsā* is closely linked to *aparigraha* and to *saṃyama*, which is to say that renunciation of possession or domination is the outward expression of diligent, active and perfect self-control.¹⁵ By *saṃyama* one avoids the impurities consequent upon karmic penetration and the *ātman* proceeds on its way towards perfect knowledge.¹⁶ At the same time one knows that life is dear to all beings, they fear suffering and dread their own destruction, for which reason to kill is a very grave offence from which a *nirgrantha* must

¹⁴ Cf. DS VI, 8.

¹⁵ Ibid., *saṃyama*: act of retaining, constraint, restriction, bridle, control, particularly control of the senses.

¹⁶ This strong emphasis on the primacy of the principle of *ahiṃsā* and the stress laid by the Jinas from the first on vegetarianism is not confined to them alone; certain *Upaniṣads* mention respect for all life and the *Mahābhārata* and the *Purāṇas* are very explicit in this regard; cf. Kane, 1962, vol. V, Part II, pp. 944-947. But the underlying reason for respect for all life is not the same as in the Jaina *dharma*: "The Chandogya Up. III.17 considers that *tapas*, charity, straight forwardness, *ahiṃsā* and speaking the truth are the 'fee' (of the symbolic sacrifice). The same Up. (VIII.15.1) emphasizes that the wise man who has attained correct knowledge does not cause any injury to *bhūtas* except in the case of sacred rites and reaches the world of *brahma* and does not return to *saṃsāra*. It appears that the causes that led on to the giving up of flesh at least by some people were many, the foremost being the metaphysical conception that one Supreme Entity pervades the whole universe, that all life was one, and that even the meanest insect was a manifestation of the divine Essence and that philosophical truths would not dawn upon the man who was not restrained, free from crude appetites and had not universal kindness and sympathy. Another motive for the insistence on *ahiṃsā* was probably the idea of defilement caused by eating flesh, Śaṅkha asks people to give up flesh, wine, onions and garlic because the body is built up on the food eaten." Kane, 1974, vol II, Part II, pp. 775-776; cf. also Dumont, 1966, 65 "Sur le histoire du végétarisme".

abstain.¹⁷ One knows further that violence excites hatred,¹⁸ but that respect for all beings is the essence of wisdom,¹⁹ for the sage is conscious of the evil, the terrible pain caused by violence and he turns away from it,²⁰ he realises that equanimity towards both friends and foes and abstention from all harmful activity are very difficult to achieve, but that therein lies his chosen path.²¹ He must maintain towards all that benevolence that causes him to identify himself with them, to the point of considering each to be as himself:

Bad *karman* has no hold on him who identifies himself with all beings, who regards each one with the same look, who has stopped the karmic flow and masters his senses.²²

The verse which follows this passage explains that knowledge comes first and compassion flows from it.²³ Here a process is discernible: the fact of respecting all beings, of "considering the six categories of living beings as himself"²⁴ is the sign of non-assumption of possession of these beings, of mastery of the passions, whence comes the stoppage of the flow of karmic matter, which in turn presupposes knowledge. Everything holds together, one cannot isolate *ahimsā* from the rest of the doctrine and thus from praxis, nor make of it an absolute; however, it is in fact given a primordial importance.

¹⁷ Cf. AS I, 2, 3, 4; DS VI, 10; SkrS I, 7, 19; 11, 9; US VI, 6.

¹⁸ Cf. SkrS I, 1, 1, 3.

¹⁹ Ibid., I, 11, 10.

²⁰ Ibid., I 10, 21.

²¹ Cf. US XIX, 25.

²² *savvabhuy'appabhūyassa sammam bhūyāim pāsao pihiyāsavassa dāntassa pāvam kammam na bamidhai.* DS IV, 23, 9.

²³ *paḍhamam nānam tao dayā evam cittaṭṭhai savvasamjajae...* DS IV, 23, 10.

²⁴ . . . *attasame mannejja chappi kâe.* . DS X, 5.

According to the most ancient texts, the basic principles of this wisdom would seem to have been formulated as a result of the prevailing conditions of life, at a time when men had an acute awareness of life and of a certain connaturality between themselves and the cosmos. Furthermore, they needed to defend themselves against natural phenomena, wild animals, enemies. They lived in surroundings where the bloody sacrifice of animal victims was practised and it was with the precise aim of overcoming all these manifestations of violence that they laid stress upon a rigorous asceticism, in which mastery of the passions was connected first and foremost with non-violence, non-cruelty, non-aggressiveness and non-possession. Later on, in elaborating the doctrine of *karman*, they automatically associated the two concepts of *ahimsā* and *aparigraha* with the stoppage of the karmic flow.²⁵

Once we have located ourselves in the context which gave rise to this injunction, we can attempt to analyse the signification attached to the vow, its character and implications. The etymology of the word, like that moreover of each of the *mahāvratas*, indicates its content unambiguously and completely: *a-himsā*, or absence of *himsā*, is, in concrete situations, to abstain from killing, destroying, hitting, assaulting, harming, hurting in any conceivable way, whether it be a question of bodily, mental or verbal activity.²⁶ Consequently, the vow of *ahimsā* is a very positive undertaking to maintain respectful behaviour towards all beings. It is clear that the vow applies essentially to voluntary and intentional forms of *himsā*, such as are excited by the passions.²⁷ There are, of course, a number of natural acts, such as walking, that involve a certain sort of involuntary *himsā* and with regard to these constant vigilance is enjoined.

²⁵ Although *āsrava* is already mentioned in AS I, it is en passant; no doctrine on the subject is expounded; cf. AS I, 4, 2, 1.

²⁶ *Prāṇātīpāta*, used instead of *himsā* in certain texts, describes well violence inflicted on the *prāṇa*, the breath of life, the living being.

²⁷ Cf. TS VII, 13; and also ADh IV, 19-35; AS II, 15 (i), 1-5; MA I, 5; V, 92; YSas I, 20.

By this vow, and the same goes for each of the others, one pledges oneself not only to abstain from all action that is harmful to beings, but also not to cause others to harm them nor approve and encourage violence. We have here therefore, in this radical threefold renunciation the affirmation of a state, way of behaviour and spirit that influences the whole of life.

Master, the first great vow [is that of] abstention from acts harmful to living beings. Master, I renounce all harmful acts towards living beings great or small, moving or unmoving. I will not harm any living being, I will not be the cause of others harming them nor will I approve any such act. For all my life long I will perform [none] of the three sorts [of harmful activities], of mind, speech and body; I will not be the cause [of any such act], I will not approve of them, I condemn them, I repudiate my *ātman* [in regard to all the reprehensible deeds it has done]. Master, I take to myself this first Great Vow; to abstain from all harmful behaviour towards all living beings.²⁸

This act of renunciation having been performed by way of a seal upon a way of life, we must now discover how the implications of the vow are to be concretely lived out day by day and it is here that the *bhāvanās* find their place, like props helping one to stay faithful to the initial undertaking. These five *bhāvanās* are:

²⁸ *paḍhame bhaṇṭe! mahavvaḥ pāṇāivāyāo veramaṇaṁ. savvaṁ bhaṇṭe! pāṇāivāyaṁ paccakkhāmi, se suhumaṁ vā bāyaraṁ vā tassaṁ vā thāvaram vā, neva sayam paṇe sivācchā, nev' annehiṁ paṇe aivāyāvejjā, paṇe aivāyaṁte vi anne na samaṇujāṇejjā. jāvaṇṇivāc tivaṇṇaṁ tivaṇṇaṁ, māṇṇaṁ vāyāc kācāṁ, na karemi na kāravemi kareṇṇaṁ pi annaṁ na samaṇujāṇāmi, tassa bhaṇṭe! paḍikkamāmi nimiddāmi garahāmi appāṇaṁ vosirāmi. paḍhame bhaṇṭe! mahavvaḥ uvaṭṭhiṁ mi savvāho pāṇaivāyāo veramaṇaṁ. DS IV, 11; one notes that the second part: "For all my life. . .[reprehensible deeds it has done]" belongs also to *sāmāyika*, AvāS 2, P 700. The texts of the other *mahāvratas* have exactly the same structure, the points relevant to each one being clearly set forth.*

Control of words and thoughts, vigilance in movements, in the way in which one handles objects and in which one scrutinises food and drink [before accepting them].²⁹

In the context of the sādhis' life each of these has a very precise meaning.³⁰

The vow of *ahimsā* involves radical consequences that impart to the life of the sādhis a very particular character.

- Fire contains *jīvas* and is a source of destruction; the wood or charcoal used often contain living beings; so, one never lights a fire or does any cooking. Furthermore, when one goes in search of food, one never announces one's presence, one accepts only a small amount of food from that which the hosts have prepared for themselves.³¹

- Water contains *jīvas*; so, one never takes a bath and one only drinks boiled water.³²

- The earth swarms with *jīvas*; so, one does not wear sandals for fear of striking, crushing or trampling underfoot living beings, insects or plants, and one always goes barefoot.

²⁹ *vāk-manogupti-iriyā-ādānanikṣepapaṇasamiti-ālokitapānabhojanāni pañca*. TS VII, 4; cf. ADh IV, 34; MA V, 140; TS IX 5; YSas I, 26; P 353.

³⁰ Cf. P 496 ff.; 529 ff.

³¹ Cf. DS VIII, 8; X, 4; US XXXV, 10-12.

³² Cf. DS VI, 60-62; X, 2. The sādhis beg for water just as they do for food and only accept boiled water. At first sight one is tempted to object that the śrāvikās who boil this water are committing a fault involving *himsā*. Infact, however, this is not so, for during some 8 hrs after the water is boiled, no organism can develop, whereas in unboiled water living organisms are constantly doing so. Hence one imbibes infinitely more living organisms if one drinks unboiled water than if one drinks boiled water; cf. Baid, 1980, pp. 104-105. The sādhis keep boiled water in the *upāśraya* for about 8 hrs and then renew it. The Mūrtipūjaka sādhis who keep the water overnight put in it a pinch of lime with the precise aim of preventing the development of any organism.

- All means of locomotion involve in their use a certain sort of violence; hence one uses no means of locomotion, one always proceeds from place to place on foot, thus reducing to a minimum movement that might damage the earth and all its inhabitants.

Before concluding this subject we must indicate briefly the approach of Ācārya Bhikṣu (Bhikṣaṇa), the founder of the Terāpanthis, who laid particular stress on the close relationship between *ahiṃsā* and *saṃyama*. He posed with perspicacity the question: what is the ultimate goal of *ahiṃsā*, *ātma-śuddhi*, the purification of the *ātman* or *jīva-rakṣā*, the protection of the *jīvas*? His reply is clear and unequivocal: *ātma-śuddhi* is the true goal of *ahiṃsā*, because *ahiṃsā* and *saṃyama* are inseparable and *jīva-rakṣā* is only the consequence of *saṃyama*; to make *jīva-rakṣā* the goal of *ahiṃsā* is to view things according to *vyavahāra*. In his commentaries he explains that to make an effort to help others, to succour them, entail often a certain attachment, obliges one to enter into all sorts of considerations and to let oneself be drawn into complex situations which, with their psychological and emotional aspects, deflect one from self-mastery and renunciation. Furthermore, the help that one endeavours to bring is not always a benefit for those to whom it is directed. Ācārya Bhikṣu gives, among several others, this illustration: late one night in a village, near to a house of ill-fame, three munis were meditating upon the Scriptures: Three men came along to pass that way and the munis, speculating within themselves, asked: "Who are you? Where are you going at an hour like this?" The men hesitated to reply. "It is a bad thing they thought to lie to munis; on the other hand, if we tell them the truth, they are going to know that we are going to go to a prostitute's house." The munis, struck by their honesty, encouraged them to repent, to subjugate their passions and give up this relationship, which they proceeded to do. Meanwhile, the prostitute, seeing that they did not appear, sallied forth to look for them and, when she found them implored them to follow her, but they refused. She threatened to throw herself down a well, but they remained adamant. She then committed suicide by jumping into the well. The moral of this story is that, even if the counsels of the munis were a benefit for the three men, they were at the same time the cause of an act of terrible violence.

In the same way, Ācārya Bhikṣu considered that *dāna*, any sort of gift - this being of concern to śrāvakas and śrāvikās in particular - must be confined to ascetics and renunciates, for this is pure giving, this is the *dharma*. Indiscriminate giving is not exempt from an element of attachment, of self-interest or of the passions and thus results in the accretion of bad *karmas*. Ācārya Bhikṣu used to say that he did not forbid the practice of *dāna*, but he indicated those to whom one should give.

Next, what is *dayā*, compassion? Compassion is, essentially, *abhaya-dāna*, the gift one gives to the *jīvas* by not frightening them or filling them with fear, not distressing or tormenting them; and this is precisely what *ahiṃsā* is from the point of view of *ātma-śuddhi*.³³ This approach may at first sight seem too radical and idealistic, nevertheless, it is very right and proper, for it goes below the psychological and emotional level to the level of sheer being. However, it must be understood and practised with discrimination, in accordance with increasing clarity of vision; one must not lay claim to detachment too quickly and this attitude, if adopted prematurely, could give rise to harshness and a certain type of egoism.

To sum up what has been said, we may add that it is important to practise the multi-faceted discipline inculcated by this vow, without losing sight of *nīścaya*, the essential, namely, that equanimity which is specially connected with *saṁyama* and which aims at avoiding activities that are harmful to beings, rather, according them, infinite respect. This attitude of mind will, in proportion as knowledge is purified, give rise to a desire that others should attain Liberation and supreme Happiness and therefore - in imitation of the *tirthaṅkaras* - one will preach the way of Liberation to all, to instruct and enlighten them. The *sādhvis* must not only study the Scripture and the doctrine in order to acquire knowledge, but they must teach others. Now at the root of this concern to enlighten others, we find *ahiṃsā* in its positive aspect.

³³ Cf. Yuvācārya Mahāprajña, 1979, chs. 4-5; cf. P 247 ff.

B - Satya: Abstention from all untruthfulness

The second *mahāvratā* is a prolongation of the first. It is a form of *ahimsā* vis-a-vis the real, the authentic, the true, the acceptable particularly with regard to words, language, the manner in which one communicates with others. Language, however, is only the outward expression of sentiments, of an inner attitude. When enumerating the *mahāvratas*, the *Tattvārtha-sūtra* gives *aṇṭa-virati* as second and goes on to explain *aṇṭa* as being *asaṭ*.³⁴ To renounce *aṇṭa* is to renounce all that is false, crooked, deceitful; it is to renounce *asaṭ*, the non-real; this is its negative aspect, while its positive aspect is to be situated in *saṭ*, that which is, that which exists, the real; this is the meaning of *satya*; reality, veracity, authenticity.³⁵

Through this vow one makes a pledge for life to renounce all lying speech, all that is lacking in truthfulness, whether it is conveyed through bodily gesture, speech or mental attitude. One promises to make every endeavour to be truthful.³⁶ The special components of *satya*, which are the theme of the five *bhāvanās*, are:

Renunciation of anger, covetousness, fear, idle talk and [a resolve] to be circumspect in one's speech.³⁷

The passions incite to lying speech, whereas authentic speech must be as concise as a *sūtra*.³⁸ To this aspect of renunciation of all that is

³⁴ Cf. TS VII, 1; 14.

³⁵ Other texts speak of *mṛṣāvāda-viramaṇa*: renunciation of lying words. Hemacandra mentions: *sūṇṭa*, the acceptable and the true in speech, in opposition to *aṇṭa*; cf. YSas I, 21.

³⁶ Cf. DS IV, 12.

³⁷ *krodha-lobha-bhirutva-hāsyapratyākhyānany-anuvicibhāṣaṇaṁ ca pañca*. TS VII, 5.

³⁸ Cf. ADh IV, 45 where the word *sūtra* is mentioned: cf. also AS II, 15 (ii); DS VI, 12; US XIX, 26; YSas I, 27.

inauthentic there corresponds the very positive aspect of self-mastery, moderation, serious-mindedness.

So far, despite the solid framework that these considerations provide for this second *mahāvratā*, we have been speaking in a general way. We must now describe in brief the essence of the teaching imparted to the *sādhvis* on this subject in numerous texts. The *Daśavaikalika-sūtra* has a chapter entitled: *vākya-śuddhi*, purity of speech.³⁹ Before proceeding to a few texts, we must stress this point: *satya* always implies an element of benevolence, of kindness, goodnatureddness, amiability; words spoken must be *priya*, friendly. *Satya* does not mean only to refrain from lying and deceit and to say things as one perceives them to be; it is something deeper, more subtle, with the attainment of *sat*, neither more or less, as its goal - *sat*, the essence of being, to which one addresses oneself and which one approaches with respect. One must avoid hurtful words⁴⁰ As to the rest of the rules and considerations upon this subject, here is the following brief but comprehensive synthesis:

[A muni] must not speak unless he is requested to do so; he must not interrupt another speaking, he must not slander, he must guard himself from deceitful lies. On no occasion should he use hurtful language such as expresses hostility or arouses a reaction of anger in the one to whom he is speaking;

[A muni], being master of himself, must speak of what he has himself seen, with moderation, without hesitation or ill-humour, with depth, clarity, conciseness [and] thorough understanding.⁴¹

³⁹ Cf. DS VII.

⁴⁰ Ibid., VI, 11-12; VII, 11-13; cf also AS II, 4, 2, 1-2; US I, 15.

⁴¹ *appucchio na bhāsejā bhāsamāṇassa amāraṁ piṭṭhimaṇsaṁ na khācejā, māyāmosaṁ vivajjac.* DS VIII, 46.
appattiyāṁ jeṇa siyā, āsu kuppejja vā paro savvaso taṁ na bhāsejā bhāsaṁ ahiyagāmiṇiṁ. DS VIII, 47.
diṭṭhaṁ miyaṁ asaṁdiddhaṁ paḍipunnāṁ viyaṁ jiyaṁ.

ayamṇīra-maṇuvviggāṁ bhāsaṁ nisira attavaṁ. DS VIII, 48; cf. also ADh IV, 36-47; AS II, 4; DS VIII, 49; MA I, 6; V, 93; US I, 8-14; XXIV, 9-10; ShS 741 enumerates 10 sorts of *satya*, 10 sorts of *mṛṣāvāda* and 10 sorts of *satyamṛṣā* i.e. language in which there is a mixture of truth and falsehood.

What is important and frequently re-iterated in the *Sūtras* is the need in all circumstances for a sense of moderation, the avoidance of all forms of exaggeration, vanity, deceit, wordiness, vulgarity, lack of consideration for others. Hemacandra has expressed very clearly the deep meaning of this *mahāvratā*:

Friendly, kind and genuine is termed the vow of *sūnṛta*; disagreeable and unkind speech [is] not genuine even [if it is] true.⁴²

This means that, even if the spoken word adheres to the facts, is just in itself, it is not a genuine word, for it lacks the expression and inner attitude of friendly benevolence which is a sign of harmony within.

According to *nīścaya*, the *jiva* (*ātman*) is the supreme and sole Reality; all forms of criticism or appreciation concerning both beings and things, even if correct, are only very relative, have no value and are even harmful if, in pronouncing them, one impairs anyone's peace of mind, one's own or that of the one with whom one is speaking. For speech to be truly genuine it must be *priya* and *pathya* (or *hita*): friendly, benevolent and salutary.

C - *Asteya*: Abstention from stealing

The third *mahāvratā* concerns renunciation of covetousness, that type of covetousness that impels one to appropriate to oneself things that belong to others, without their consent. It also implies *ahiṃsā*, for this sort of appropriation always involves, in varying degrees and according to the nature of the object, a certain form of violence. *Asteya* is to renounce *adattā-dāna*, any object that is not given. The text of this *mahāvratā* indicates clearly that it is a question of renouncing, wherever one may be and in whatever circumstances, the appropriation to oneself of anything whatever that has not been given and that this applies to objects both insignificant and significant, living or inert.⁴³

⁴² *priyaṃ pathyaṃ vacaḥ tathyaṃ sūnṛta vratam ucyate
tat tathyam api no tathyam apriyaṃ ca ahitaṃ ca yat.* YSas I, 21.

⁴³ Cf. AS II, 15 (iii); DS IV, 13; VI, 13-14; cf. also ADh IV, 48-58; MA I, 7; V, 94; SkrS I, 5, 1, 4; 10, 2. TS VII, 15; US XIX, 27.

Hemacandra, in defining this vow, stresses that form of inward *himsā* that the man who appropriates to himself some object that is not his own inflicts upon himself.⁴⁴ In reality, the man who takes some object always does so under the influence of one passion or another. He loses his self-control and opens the door to karmic penetration.

The five *bhāvanās* mentioned by the *Tattvārtha-sūtra* indicate the type of life and conduct favourable to the faithful adherence to this vow. As covetousness is generally the result of an attraction felt at the sight of seductive objects, the texts counsel retreat, solitude - a solitude not only as regards the place chosen, but also as regards one's own solitary way of life. It is also recommended that one should be peaceable, reserved, not cause trouble for others, be watchful concerning the purity of food and not quarrel with the members of the community.⁴⁵

Other texts emphasis the necessity of an attitude of submission, obedience, respectful dependence, an attitude which affirms that in very truth one possesses nothing, that nothing is one's due, that even knowledge is not a personal possession, but is transmitted, taught by the guru from whom one humbly asks for teaching. Even as regards needed objects, one must first ask permission before taking them for one's use and one must not become attached to them.⁴⁶ One must always show the food for which one has gone in search before consuming same, in order to avoid eating what may be forbidden or helping oneself to too large a quantity.⁴⁷ In the very close-knit community-life of the *sādhvis*, if it is a fervent group, one does

⁴⁴ *anādānam adattasyāsteya vratam udiritam*
bāhyā prāṇā nṛmā artho haratā taṁ hatā hite. YSas I, 22.

⁴⁵ *śūnyāgāra-vimocitāvāsa-paroparodhākaraṇa-bhaikṣasudhi-*
sadharmāvisaṁvādāḥ pañca. TS VII, 6; cf. ADh IV, 56.

⁴⁶ Cf. ADh IV, 57 and comm.; MA V, 142; YSas I, 28-29.

⁴⁷ Cf. AS II, 15 (iii), 2; cf. P 496 ff.

nothing and uses nothing without first asking the guruṇi's permission, even when it is a question of fasting.

Asteya, then, is to make use of nothing, even in thought, without having asked for it. This is an unvarying mental disposition, which leaves the *jīva* detached from all superfluity, free from all covetousness and thus more deeply conscious of its own being.

D - *Brahmacarya*: Abstention from all sexual activity

Ahimsā extends its influence into all the spheres of human life; it must penetrate the farthest reaches, control the most natural, the most indomitable forces. *Brahmacarya* is the renunciation of *a-brahma*, sexual activity.⁴⁸ *Abrahma* has the same meaning as *maithuna*, the sexual act of *mithuna*, coupling.⁴⁹ *Brahmācārya* is the *mahāvratā* by which one pledges to renounce all sexual activity. This type of activity has, indeed, a passionate violent aspect and leads to attachment, arouses further desires which may well lead in turn to thefts, quarrels or other types of behaviour that stop progress towards Liberation and are incompatible with the ascetic life.⁵⁰ One must abstain from *maithuna*, which is associated in a very direct fashion with *pudgala*, matter. The ascetics are protected by their rules against

⁴⁸ The origination of this word is explained by the fact that in the Vedic tradition continence was strictly enjoined upon the young man who was spending several years with his master studying the *Vedas*, after which he returned to his own home and got married. *Brahmacarya* was the term used for the state of life proper to the student of the *Vedas* or of *brahman*, a word which also signifies the Absolute, and thus, as this state required continence, the word *brahmacarya* stayed in use as a synonym for chastity. The ancient Jaina texts usually refer to: *maithuna-virati*, renunciation of copulation.

⁴⁹ Cf. TS Sukhlal, pp. 275-276; TS VII, 16.

⁵⁰ Cf. DS IV, 14. The vow refers primarily to the human couple; however, these texts also mention the possibility of infringements of the vow on account of animals or gods of the opposite sex. Therefore one will keep away from animals and from the contemplation of certain statues and representations of gods and goddesses. Cf. also ADh IV, 59-103; DS VI, 15-16; MA I, 8; V, 95; US XIX, 28; YSas I, 23.

onslaughts of bodily *abrahma*, but there always remains the possibility of subtle infiltrations of the passions through words and thoughts. Most of the texts on this subject provide proof of a delicate knowledge of psychology on the part of their authors, who excel in the art of unmasking all possible and imaginable ruses. We might add that these texts have been edited by men ascetics for their disciples and colleagues, of whom the chief enemy, source of all stumbling and slipping on the path, is womankind.⁵¹

To avoid falling into various snares, to guard against negligence and loss of fervour, to be capable of struggling and conquering, to remain rooted in this attitude of detachment and not to succumb to sense attractions which present themselves not infrequently in crafty guises, there is the help and solid tower of defence of the *bhāvanās*. We must not forget that the *sādhvis* live an itinerant life; it is true that a strict discipline is conducive to interior stability, but they are to be found none the less on the roads and highways, in densely populated cities, in daily contact with the world. The rules were formulated at a time when life was more simple, more tranquil and if these rules are still valid today in regard to what is essential, yet the manner in which they are to be kept must be adapted in accordance with place and circumstance.

The *bhāvanās* of *brahmacarya* comprise five sorts of renunciation:

To renounce listening to provocative tales about women, contemplating the beauty of their bodies, recalling to mind past sexual pleasures, consuming inflammatory drinks and foodstuffs and wearing finery.⁵²

Certain texts replace the last *bhāvanā* by this other one: to abstain from using an *āsana* or bed, rug or mat, that may have been used by a

⁵¹ Cf. AS I, 2, 4, 3; 5, 4, 4-5; 8, 1, 16; DS VIII, 53-57; SkrS I, 4, 1.

⁵² *strirāgakathāśravaṇa-tanmanoharāṅganirīkṣaṇa-pūrvaratānusmaraṇa-vṛṣṇa-śaraṣa-svaśarīrasaṃskāra-tyāgāḥ pañca*. TS VII, 7; cf. ADh IV, 101, MA V, 143; US XVI.

woman, a eunuch or some female animal.⁵³ The texts giving the rules on this subject are repetitive, for great is the danger run by munis in the vicinity of women, as great as that of a mouse in the vicinity of a cat, and, corresponding to this immense danger there is an unparalleled glory awaiting the one who resists feminine charms, who is detached therefrom, for he has surmounted a major obstacle to which all other obstacles are mere trifles!⁵⁴ In order to give the *śramaṇas* a distaste for women once for all, the example is given of a muni who was seduced and whose life was rendered impossible by his seducer who treated him exactly like a slave.⁵⁵

The direct consequences of *brahmacharya* are radical ones and are branded upon the life-style of the *sādhvis*. Their clothing is plain and simple, modest, white in colour. They wear no jewellery, not even a watch, nor do they use scent, oil or any unguent. They veil their heads and twice a year undergo *keśa-luñchana*, the plucking out of the hair as a sign of renunciation of every type of vanity or attention paid to the body.⁵⁶ Except in exceptional cases, the *sādhvis* live in groups of not less than three. As to their relationship with munis and with men in general, although they practise hospitality of a very simple sort at certain hours of the day, always as a group, they do not receive men guests after dusk.⁵⁷ They do not even go alone to confession in front of their *ācārya*; at the time of confession one *sādhvi* is always accompanied by an appointed and discreet second.

Brahmacharya consists in laying aside all disorderly imaginings, all vanity, all self-seeking, it is to have that straight-forward outlook

⁵³ Cf. AS II, 15 (iv); YSa I, 30-31; in these texts, when applying them to the *sādhvis*, one inserts the masculine sex instead.

⁵⁴ Cf. US XXXII, 13-18; one recalls the prowess of Sthūlabhadra, P 133-134.

⁵⁵ Cf. SkrS I, 4, 2.

⁵⁶ Cf. P 547.

⁵⁷ Cf. P 538.

which sees in the members of the other sex one's own family members, a father, a brother, a son,⁵⁸ in order to concentrate the mind on the essential, namely, the purification of the *ātman*.⁵⁹

E - *Aparigraha*: Renunciation of possessive attachment

The fifth *mahāvratā* might well have been placed fourth after *asteya* of which it is an extension; however, as it expresses a renunciation that is no less than total, it is the last-named. It both summarises and completes all the other vows. *Parigraha* expresses the idea of taking hold, taking possession of, being attached to,⁶⁰ and *a-parigraha* expresses that of releasing hold, dispossessing oneself of something. Two other words in common use are even more full of meaning: *mamatva* for *parigraha*, literally, that which is mine, that which is in my possession, belongs to me. The ascetic must free himself, empty himself of his 'me', and follow the path towards *nimmamatva* or *a-mamatva*:

For this reason, having understood that the *ātman* is by nature the knower, I renounce all possessive attachment and I embrace non-possession.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Cf. MA I, 8 addressed to munis, where one says "mother, sister, daughter."

⁵⁹ Ācārya Bhikṣu edited in 1841 a small treatise in Māravāḍī poetry: *Sila ki nava bāda*, inspired by an earlier text of Jinaharṣa. *Sila*: *brahmacarya*; *bāda*: means of protection, that is to say "The 9 disciplines of *brahmacarya*." This text, composed in the local language and comprising a synthesis of the principal passages of the US on this subject, can be sung to a melody, recitation by heart being thus facilitated. This is an example of the way in which one can acquaint oneself with the *dharma* by assimilating under a simple and easy form its various facets and precepts.

⁶⁰ Cf. TS VII, 17; as mentioned previously in connection with *ahimsā*, AS I and SkrS I emphasise strongly *ārambha* (*himsā*) and *parigraha*; cf. e.g. AS I, 2, 3, 1-4; 2, 6, 1-2; 5, 2, 4-5; 5, 3; 7, 3, 1 and SkrS I, 1, 1, 1-6; 9, 2-9; 7, 23-28.

⁶¹ *tamhā taha jāpittā appānam jāṇagam sabhāvaṇa parivajjāmi mamattīm uvaṇṇhido nimmamattammi*. PSa II, 108; cf. II, 98; III 39.

The second word used for *aparigraha* is *ākīñcanya*, total stripping, a letting go, poverty. This word goes right to the very core of the state of asceticism, a stripping off of externals being only an outward sign of an interior stripping.⁶²

The wording of the vow expresses complete renunciation of all forms of attachment, whether the object possessed is of great value or of little, living or inert.⁶³ Attachment under one guise or another, in varying degrees and according to circumstances, is always aroused by the passions. Now the passions are engendered by the senses and, since there is not realm of life to which *aparigraha* does not apply, the *bhāvanās* will clearly relate to the five senses. We have here a question of maintaining an attitude of detachment towards all impressions received through the sense-organs, whether pleasant or unpleasant, soothing or irritating. Whatever the impression may be, one must be on one's guard not to allow oneself to be swayed by *rāga*, excessive pleasure, or by *dveṣa*, aversion bordering on hatred.⁶⁴ The *bhāvanās* guide one towards detachment from impressions recorded by the body, but it is necessary to go further and renounce any attachment whatever to the body itself.⁶⁵

However, we may well say, the *sādhvis* lead the life of a human being in community, in contact with society; they are, no doubt, separated off to a certain extent by their commitment, but how is such absolute renunciation, even that of the body itself, to be reconciled with this human community life with its needs, even if they be

⁶² Cf. Adh IV, 104 and comm.

⁶³ The 5th vow, as regards its subject-matter, is similar to the 3rd; cf. AS II, 15 (v); DS IV, 15; cf. also ADh IV, 104-148; DS VI, 17-21; MA I, 9; V, 96; US XIX, 29; YSas I, 24.

⁶⁴ *manoñña-amanoñña-indriyaviṣaya-rāga-dveṣa-varjanāni-pañca*. TS VII, 8; cf. ADh IV, 148; YSas I, 32-33.

⁶⁵ Cf. DS VI, 21; PSa III, 24; III, 39 (P 275); one sees here the link with *kāyotsarga*.

reduced to a minimum? The answer is that we must view *aparigraha* in the context of the *sādhvis* life-style, where all is envisaged as taking place within the *caturvidhasaṃgha* in accordance with the basic doctrine and with an ever-present vision of the goal to be attained.⁶⁶ The *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* play an important part, enabling the *sādhvis* to live both a life of detachment and also a life in contact with society. We may take as just one aspect of this, the question of a dwelling. The *sādhvis* do not possess a fixed abode of any sort, even as a group, but the *saṃgha* - and here the various communities may vary - puts at their disposal either subsidiary buildings of temples or *upāśrayas*, which are places where the *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* betake themselves for their spiritual exercises, or even dwellings belonging to the *śrāvakas* in the case of the *Terāpanthis* who have neither temples nor *upāśrayas*. Thus, as regards this matter of a lodgement, *aparigraha* consists in being *anagāri*, without a house; next, it means at each step of the way to ask permission from the local *śrāvakas* to lodge in an *upāśraya* or some other spot, to fix with their consent the number of days one will stay there and not to borrow books from the library of the local *saṃgha* except by permission. As one passes through villages where there is no Jain community it may involve requesting hospitality from the inhabitants.⁶⁷ The foregoing has to do with *vyavahāra* which may be valueless without *niscaya*, for the leading of a wandering life is not an end in itself; rather to be *anagāri* is to strive towards a state of total dis-possession and interior stripping. Ācārya Kundakunda with his penetrating insight expresses it thus: the *jīva* (*ātman*) is knowledge, in the sense of fullness of consciousness of being;⁶⁸ everything else, the body, objects etc., is foreign to it; the one and only 'possession' of the *jīva* (*ātman*) is the *jīva* (*ātman*) itself. *Aparigraha* is to have no desire for or attachment to anything that is not the *jīva* and thus it is even to have no desire for the *dharma* if *dharma* is understood in the sense of *punya* which, though belonging to those categories of activities that are meritorious and virtuous, does not form an integral part of the *jīva*. He who has knowledge knows

⁶⁶ Cf. Part III for the putting into practice of the doctrine in daily life.

⁶⁷ Cf. AS II, 7.

⁶⁸ ...*nānam aham ekko*...PSa II, 99.

the *dharma*, but he does not possess the *dharma*. In the same way the *jñānin* does not get attached to *adharma* (sin), he desires neither food nor drink nor anything whatever. He is altogether free, without attachment.⁶⁹

As a conclusion to this introduction to the *mahāvratas*,⁷⁰ we have yet to consider four *bhāvanās* and to define the true *vratin*, the one who adheres to his vows in all their implications. The four *bhāvanās* are the direct consequences of *ahimsā*, but are of such universal application, so concrete and so positive, that they reflect also all the *mahāvratas*, summing them up in a powerful manner, embodying and at the same time going beyond the doctrine, while presenting always a joyful, welcoming appearance. These are:

Maitrī: friendly benevolence towards all beings, along with the sincere desire that they should be purified from sin and freed from suffering and that they should reach Liberation.

Pramoda: the joy experienced from contact with those who are already well-advanced on the path. This consists both in rejoicing in their holiness and surrounding them with respect and affection, while putting oneself at their service.

Karuṇā: sympathy for the despised, the suffering, the hungry, those afflicted in any way and a desire to help towards the alleviation of their sufferings.

⁶⁹ Cf. SamSa 207-216.

⁷⁰ We may add that DS IV, 16 gives a 6th *mahāvratā*: *rātri-bhojana-viramāṇa*, abstention from food after dusk, which in fact comes under the heading of *ahimsā* and is an unquestioned duty for the *sādhvis*. One must in this regard go back in imagination to a time when electricity did not exist - and indeed to this day in many villages it is not yet available. When there is only a flickering lamp, insects congregate around it the more easily and can be destroyed or fall into the food; furthermore, in the near-darkness one may easily accept and consume impure food-stuffs. The *sādhvis* take their last light meal before sunset, while the *āryikās* in any case consume only one meal a day in the morning.

Mādhyaṣṭha: a calm and indifferent attitude towards the wicked, those who are insulting or scornful towards the *dharma*.⁷¹

And who is the *vratin*? It is he (or she) who is *niśśalya*, without thorns, or darts, such as deceitfulness, greed for pleasure, faulty vision.⁷² Great importance is attached to these *śalyas*, for how can the ascetic walk or make progress on the path while some thorn or other is buried in his flesh? He cannot go forward until he has removed these *śalyas*. Even after pronouncing the *mahāvratas*, one is an ascetic only in name so long as these thorns are still there.⁷³

We are now better positioned to understand the invisible link between the *mahāvratas* and the *āvaśyakas* and how, beginning with this binding commitment, one may set forth on the path, adhering to one's original vision, that of the Three Jewels.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Cf. TS VII, 11; YSas IV, 117-122; these *bhāvanās* are given in the section on *dhyāna*, where they are called "the elixir of *dhyāna*". Let us bear in mind that the *bhāvanās* are at one and the same time subjects for reflection and counsels to follow, the props, so to speak, of the *mahāvratas*.

⁷² Cf. TS VII, 18.

⁷³ This is of prime importance and as it is always possible to allow one thorn or another to penetrate the *ātman*, the rite of *pratīkramana* should play its part in their extraction. It contains a *śalya-sūtra* and one of the aims of *kāyotsarga* is to protect one from these thorns.

⁷⁴ N.B. 3 of the *mahāvratas*: *satya*, *brahmacarya*, *aparigraha* belong also to the 10 *śramana-dharmas* introduced in the following ch.

Chapter 5

Samvara* and *Nirjarā*: The stoppage and dissociation of *karman

saṁvara: āsravanirodha, the stoppage of the karmic flow
[is effected by means of]:
guṇti, control,
saṁti, vigilance,
dharma, virtuous conduct,
anupreksā, reflection,
pariśaha-jaya, victory over afflictions,
cāritra, right conduct,
and by means of *tapas*, austerity, [is also brought about]
nirjarā, the dissociation [of *karman*].¹

These three *sūtras* summarise succinctly the contents of this chapter. At this point we need to remind ourselves of the seven categories of *tattva*, essential for right vision. Up to this point we have studied *āsrava*, the penetration of the *jīva* by karmic matter, and *bandha*, the servitude of the *jīva* brought about by this matter. This impure substance, this dust must be both stopped and eliminated. The stoppage of any new flow of karmic matter is called *saṁvara* and the disintegration and dissolution of *karman* before it matures is called *nirjarā*.²

The process which ends in *mokṣa*, the complete Liberation of the *jīva* from all *karmas*, is in the final analysis only possible thanks to the

¹ āsravanirodhaḥ saṁvaraḥ.
sa guṇti-saṁti-dharma-anupreksā-pariśahajaya-cāritraiḥ.
tapasā nirjarā ca. TS IX, 1-3.

² Cf. ADh II, 41-43; SamSa 190-192.

conscious, willed, and persevering co-operation of the *jīva*. We know already that the *āvaśyakas* allow entrance to the path leading to Liberation and that the *mahāvratas* betoken a definitive commitment to this path. But this is only the starting-point. Now we must begin to advance. This advance takes place progressively by successive stages; the two most important stages are *saṁvara* and *nirjarā*, *nirjarā* being already the threshold of *mokṣa*.

A - *Saṁvara*: The stoppage of karmic flow

By what means is this *āsrava* restrained, what sort of bridle, powerful or less powerful, is applied, so that it is prevented from invading the *jīva*? *Saṁvara*, this stoppage, this blockage, comes about through a psychic modification, a change of consciousness. This is termed *bhāva-saṁvara* and is followed automatically by a modification in the karmic matter termed *dravya-saṁvara*.³ What are the potent factors that have the power to instigate *bhāva-saṁvara*? Those mentioned in the *sūtra*, viz. the *guptis*, *saṁitis*, etc. Before studying the different causes and aspects of *saṁvara*, we must note this point. *Tapas* (austerity, penitence) can give rise to *saṁvara* and is invariably the cause of *nirjarā*; for this reason we first study the various factors that bring about *saṁvara* and will go on to study *tapas* and its relation to *nirjarā*, knowing that *tapas* can also conduce towards *saṁvara*.

The different means conducive to *saṁvara* are generally put into six categories which are then subdivided according to the particular features of each.⁴

³ Cf. *DravSam* 34; *YSas* IV, 79-85.

⁴ Cf. *DravSam* 35, where *vratas* heads the list of *bhāva-saṁvaras*; as the *mahāvratas* are characterised as virtuous activities, the state that they together constitute, if they are faithfully observed, contributes towards *saṁvara*; cf. *SthS* 418b; 427c; 709c, where there are fewer subdivisions, but the same attitude.

a) The *guptis*: The three types of control

The word *gupti* means protection; the three *guptis* refer to perfect control of the three *yogas*, namely, the activities of the mind, of speech and of the body.⁵ This mastery of the *yogas* affords protection against the passions and their consequences.⁶ Granted that it is impossible totally to avoid all forms of activity, one must exercise constant care to avoid that which may, in one activity or another, be the cause of *hirṃsā*.

b) The *samitis*: The five forms of vigilance

The word *samiti* means: walk or correct movement. It describes more particularly the first *samiti*⁷ and, more generally, it means: extreme attentiveness, with reference always to *ahirṃsā*. The five *samitis* are:

i) *Īryā-samiti*: vigilance in one's comings and goings so as not to strike or crush living beings.⁸

ii) *Bhāṣā-samiti*: vigilance in one's speech with avoidance of pride, falsehood, anything that might indicate doubt as to the doctrine, lack of discernment.

iii) *Eṣāṇā-samiti*: vigilance in the manner in which one requests and accepts the gift of food, drink and other necessary objects, making oneself conform to numerous detailed rules in this regard.⁹

iv) *Ādāna-nikṣepa-samiti*: the care with which one handles necessary objects and the observance of *pratīlekhanā* i.e. the regular inspection

⁵ Cf. TS IX, 4 and also MA V, 134-137; SthS 126a; US XXIV, 19-26; YSas I, 41-44.

⁶ Cf. ADh IV, 154-161; *sāmāyika* (P 315).

⁷ Cf. ADh p. 351, *samiti*: *sam-iti* or *samyak-iti*: walk or correct movement.

⁸ Cf. *iryāpathika-sūtra*, P 706; 533.

⁹ Cf. AvaS 18; P 534 ff.

of these objects to remove from them dust and any trace of living beings.¹⁰

v) *Utsarga-samiti*: attention to the manner in which one disposes of that which the body rejects, i.e. excrements, urine, mucus etc., in an isolated place where there are no living beings.

One observes thus that the *guptis* and *samitis* serve as supports for *ahirñsā*. They have so great an importance in the life of the ascetics that tradition has called them "the eight mothers". It is they who give birth to the spiritual body, that of perfect conduct, and they nourish it, protect it and take care of its constant purification.¹¹

c) The *dharma*s: The ten duties of the ascetic

These consist in certain virtuous attitudes, formulated in detail, which together constitute what is usually called *śramaṇa-dharma*, for the *śramaṇas* and *śramaṇis* dedicate their lives to the *dharma*. The text says that each of these attitudes is *uttama*, lofty, superior, most excellent.¹² They are:

i) *Kṣamā*: patience, which upholds, endures, pardons.

ii) *Mārdava*: sweetness, kindness, availability, modesty.

iii) *Ārjava*: sincerity, candour, integrity.

¹⁰ Cf. P 487 ff.

¹¹ Cf. YSas I, 45; this, the usual interpretation is not unanimously accepted. Jacobi SBE XLV p. 129, n. 1 calls them "the eight articles of the creed"; Schubring, 1962, 173 "vessels (*mātrā*) of the teaching." This question should be studied. As the learned ascetics, both men and women, speak of "eight mothers" (cf., following Hemacandra, *Sādhvī Candanā*, US, p. 251) we follow their interpretation. On the subject of the *samitis*, cf. ADh IV, 162-169; MA I, 10-15; V, 105-110; 121-128; SthS 457; TS IX, 5; US XXIV, 1-18; YSas I, 35-40.

¹² Cf. TS IX, 6.

iv) *Śauca*: purity, generally understood in this context as absence of greed or covetousness.¹³

v) *Satya*: veracity of speech, which means in this context, the manner in which one is to address oneself to those who desire to follow or are already engaged in the way of the ascetics, those with whom one should converse freely of spiritual things.¹⁴

vi) *Saṁyama*: self-mastery, inner and outer discipline.¹⁵

vii) *Tapas*: austerity, self-mortification, penitence - which has vast importance, for it gives rise to both *saṁvara* and *nirjarā*.¹⁶

viii) *Tyāga*: this word generally means: relinquishment, renunciation, but it can also mean: gift, liberality; both meanings are included here, particularly the second. But what gift can an ascetic offer? In what will his liberality consist? The gift he imparts is the gift of *jñāna* and other spiritual treasures, for those who possess no earthly goods possess the infinite wealth of knowledge.¹⁷

ix) *Ākiñcanya*: the attitude which renounces all forms of possession, even that of one's own body; this stripping-off of the ego fills the ascetic with joy and, denuded of all things, he begins to experience the *jīva* (*ātman*) in a luminous fashion.¹⁸

¹³ Cf. ADh VI, 24.

¹⁴ Cf. ADh VI, 35-36, where the subtle distinction is made between *satya* the 2nd *mahāvratā*, *bhāṣā-samiti*, and *satya-dharma*.

¹⁵ Cf. SthS 428; 5 sorts of *saṁyama*.

¹⁶ "Tapas or penance is a means of *nirjarā* in as much as it is a means of *saṁvara*." TS Sukhlal, p. 321.

¹⁷ Cf. ADh VI, 52-53.

¹⁸ Cf. Ibid., VI, 54.

x) *Brahmacarya*: The state of life of the ascetic who, having made a vow of celibacy, lives with the guru or guruṇi and under obedience.¹⁹

The ten aspects of the *dharma* are implicit in the way of life of the *sādhvis*, but it goes without saying that perfection is not vouchsafed along with the *dikṣā* and that the observance of each necessitates a sustained personal effort, aided by the study of Scripture, performance of the daily rituals, the community-life and also by *anuprekṣā*, personal reflection, the fourth means to *saṁvara*.

d) *The anuprekṣās*: The twelve sorts of reflection

These are also called *bhāvanās* and refer to a solid body of themes, which together form the essentials of the doctrine. Reflection, or discursive meditation upon these themes, is an effective means of combatting the passions, of freeing oneself from their grip, and thus of contributing towards the stoppage of karmic matter. These *anuprekṣās* are:

i) *Anitya-anuprekṣā*: everything in the sphere of human relations and earthly goods is fleeting, transitory, subject to time.

ii) *Aśaraṇa-anuprekṣā*: in this world there is no refuge for the *jīva*, it is unprotected.

iii) *Samśāra-anuprekṣā*: the *jīva* is gripped in the ceaseless movement of the cycle of existence, an existence which is full of contradictions.

iv) *Ekatva-anuprekṣā*: solitude is a constituent part of the condition of the *jīva* who, alone, must rid itself of all forms of ignorance, and liberate itself.²⁰

¹⁹ Cf. *Ibid.*, VI, 55.

²⁰ A metaphysical solitude within a very close-knit community-life. Each *sādhvi* knows that she must by her own efforts work towards self-purification and Liberation, by imitating the *tirthaṅkaras* and following their teaching. These latter are certainly an inspiration – and a powerful one at that – but they offer no direct supernatural aid. Each evening, before going to sleep, the *sādhvis* remind themselves of their solitariness (P 526 ff.).

v) *Anyatva-anuprekṣā*: literally, this means reflection on difference, which implies a distinction, the existence of two elements. Here the difference is between *jīva* (*ātman*) and *puṅgava*, matter, the body.

vi) *Aśucitva-anuprekṣā*: the body is impure, ephemeral. ²¹

vii) *Āsrava-anuprekṣā*: the senses are the windows through which the passions penetrate and assault the *jīva*, thus causing the influx of karmic matter.

viii) *Saṁvara-anuprekṣā*: right conduct, along with all virtuous activities it involves, is a solid barrage against *āsrava*.

ix) *Nirjarā-anuprekṣā*: reflection on the nature of *karman*, on the required process leading to its disintegration and elimination, on the cause of this elimination, namely, *tapas*, the voluntary effort of mortification.

x) *Loka-anuprekṣā*: reflection on the structure of the universe and the three worlds which comprise it, on living and non-living substances.

xi) *Bodhidurlabhatva-anuprekṣā*: the extreme difficulty of reaching the state of *bodhi*, perfect knowledge. This reflection prevents an easy complacency, spiritual laziness, for the path is a narrow one.

xii) *Dharmasvākhyātva-anuprekṣā*: the grateful remembrance of the immense benefit accruing to one in the Jaina *dharma*:

[The *dharma* is] the kinsman of those who have no relatives,

[The *dharma* is] the friend of those who are companionless,

[The *dharma* is] the Lord of those who are unprotected; the sole

[and] tender [brother] of all: the *dharma*.²²

²¹ Cf. The speech of Mallinātha to her suitors; P 100 ff.

²² *abandhūnām asau bandhuḥ asakhinām asau sakhā
anāthānam asau nātho dharmo viśvaikavatsalāḥ*. YSas IV, 100.

The *anuprekṣās* help one not to be vague nor leave to one side the real. They offer a direction and a stimulant. When we examine them closely, we observe their very positive side, that of always leading the mind back to the essential.²³

e) *Parīṣaha-jaya*: Victory over the twenty-two afflictions

Before considering *tapas*, voluntary austerity, we must first take a look at the *parīṣahas*, the daily sufferings and trials common to all human beings, which, whether in an acute or less acute form, persist and must be borne with courage and in remembrance of the *jīnas* who won *jaya*, the victory, over them, never allowing themselves to be overcome by any of the following adversities:

- i) *Kṣudhā*: hunger.
- ii) *Tṛṣṇā* (*pīpāsā*): thirst.
- iii) *Śīta*: cold.
- iv) *Uṣṇa*: heat.
- v) *Darśamaśakas*: insect-bites.
- vi) *Nagnatva*: nakedness.²⁴
- vii) *Arati*: lack of comforts and resultant discontent.
- viii) *Stri*: woman (man, if the reference is to *sādhvis*) and the distractions occasioned by her.
- ix) *Caryā*: the itinerant life with its attendant hardships.
- x) *Niṣadyās*: certain seated postures, when maintained for a long time.

²³ Cf. on the subject of the *anuprekṣās*: ADh VI, 57-82; TS IX, 7; US XXIX, 22; YSas IV, 57-110.

²⁴ This in the case of the Digambara munis.

xi) *Śāyā*: the hard bed, which will vary in different cases and in accordance with the seasons, such as: matting, straw, mud floor, cement floor, hard wooden bed.

xii) *Ākroṣas*: injuries, insults, assaults, hard words.

xiii) *Vadhas*: blows, ill-treatment, wounds.

xiv) *Yācanā*: the quest for alms in the form of food, shelter, clothing, remedies, books and other necessary objects.

xv) *Alābha*: the refusal to give, which must sometimes be endured.

xvi) *Roga*: illness.

xvii) *Tṛṇasparśa*: literally, the touch of grass and thence more generally: the roughness or prickliness of thorns, brambles, gravel, straw or matting.²⁵

xviii) *Mala*: dirtiness due to perspiration or dust.

xix) *Satkāra-puraskāra*: the feeling of frustration due to absence of honours, esteem and reward.

xx) *Prajñā*: wisdom, knowledgeability; the ascetic must not win glory through exceptional knowledgeability, and thus become vain and arrogant.

xxi) *Ajñāna*: ignorance, which prevails so long as one does not have perfect knowledge.

xxii) *Adarśana*: unenlightened, wavering faith, such as demands proofs and tangible results.²⁶

²⁵ Cf. ADh VI, 105; the Digambara munis sleep on straw even in the winter.

²⁶ On the subject of the *pariśahas*, cf. ADh VI, 83-112; AS I, 8, 2, 7-10; 13-15; SkrS I, 3, 3; TS IX, 8-9; US II. Not all of these sufferings are undergone

By surmounting with serenity these difficulties and sufferings, by transcending them, by winning over each a victory, the ascetic contributes to the stoppage of karmic matter and also to its rejection, for *pariṣaha-jaya* constitutes a form of *tapas*, non-voluntary, it is true, but accepted. We arrive at the sixth and last cause of *saṁvara*.

f) The *cāritras*: The five kinds of right conduct

These five kinds of *cāritra* contribute to *saṁvara* and to *samyak-cāritra*, perfect conduct.

- i) *Sāmāyika-cāritra*: daily conduct, in which the vow of *sāmāyika* continually finds expression.
- ii) *Chedopasthāpana-cāritra*: either a very great purity of faith in which error finds no place or the state of the ascetic who, on account of some infidelity to the vows, has been initiated afresh.²⁷
- iii) *Parihāraṇiṣuddhi-cāritra*: the process of purification through certain mortifications.
- iv) *Sūkṣmasāmparāya-cāritra*: the state in which the passions are mastered; only the slightest tendency towards covetousness remains.
- v) *Yathākhyāta-cāritra*: the state in which there is a complete absence of the passions, called also: *vitarāga-cāritra*.²⁸

by the ascetics; it all depends on their degree of spiritual advancement corresponding to the *guṇasthānas*; cf. TS IX, 10-17.

²⁷ Cf. JSK II, pp. 307-309; TS Sukhlal, p. 338. Certain ones consider that the great *dikṣā* is closely related to this form of conduct; that is to say that, during the time-lapse between the 1st *dikṣā* and the great *dikṣā*, the new *sādhvi* may commit unavoidable faults due to her as yet little exercised attentiveness. From the great *dikṣā* onwards these faults are eliminated, she is definitely and finally established in the state of perfection; cf. Mahāsati Umarāvakuṁvara, 1962, p. 118.

²⁸ Cf. AnuS 144b; TS IX, 18; the *guṇasthānas* 10 and 11 (P 310 ff.).

B - Nirjarā: The dissociation of *karman*

Though the flow of karmic matter has been checked by a firm dyke that prevents it from penetrating, none the less the *jīva*'s faculties are still obscured by an accumulation of *karmas* that have not yet reached maturity. When it has come to the end of its own development, each element of *karman* ripens and falls, detaching itself from the *jīva* just as a ripe fruit detaches itself from a tree.²⁹ *Nirjarā* means the wearing out of something, exhaustion, destruction. The word in this context means disintegration, dissociation, elimination, the disappearance of the various sorts of *karman* at different moments and under the influence of sundry factors. This dissociation can be self-induced after a long process, the *karman* ripening slowly, or it can be hastened by an effort of will which, if it is intense and sustained, leads to Liberation.

Nirjarā gives rise to a considerable change in the *jīva*, who is no longer subject to the servitude imposed by the *bandha*; even if the said *jīva* perceives and registers impressions as they present themselves, it experiences no feeling of pleasure or hatred. It is in a state in which they no longer have a hold on it, and this constitutes *bhāva-nirjarā*.³⁰ The operation by means of which the *jīva* frees itself from karmic matter is the *dravya-nirjarā*.³¹

We reach now the next step in our study which takes in the different aspects of *tapas*, the chosen means of bringing about *nirjarā*. *Tapas* includes a certain number of forms of self-mortification and penance: six *bāhya-tapas* or external austerities and six *ābhyantara-tapas* or internal austerities.³²

²⁹ Cf. SamSa 168 (P 309 n. 95).

³⁰ Cf. SamSa 193-197; 218-219.

³¹ Cf. ADh II, 42-43; DravSam 36; YSas IV, 86.

³² Cf. ADh VII, 4; TS IX, 19-20; UX XXX. *Tapas* has sundry meanings: heat, fire, fervour, torment, penitence, mortification, austerity. In Vedic literature, in the most ancient texts, the idea of warmth, in the sense of

a) The *bāhya-tapas*: The six forms of external austerities

These are called external because they consist in various types of bodily mortifications, but they possess no purificatory value if they are not the expression of an interior attitude. These austerities are:

- i) *Anaśana*: temporary fast or one kept until the Great Departure.
- ii) *Avamaudarya*: restriction of the quantity of food consumed for a pre-determined period.³³
- iii) *Vṛttiparisamkhyānas*: certain restrictions in regard to *bhikṣā-caryā*, the rules concerning the quest for food.
- iv) *Rasaparityāga*: abstinence for a period from certain rich food stuffs, such as milk, clarified butter, curds.
- v) *Viviktaśayyāsana*: retreat to a solitary place, away from all that may disturb the mind and the senses.³⁴
- vi) *Kāyakleśa*: certain bodily mortifications, for example: exposure to the heat of the sun or to cold, and the adoption of certain painful postures.

creative fervour, is always inferred. The word later took on the meaning of purification, a purification achieved by some effort, where the element of pain is stressed, sometimes more and sometimes less. In the Jaina *dharma*, *apas* gathers together all these ideas and its role, whether it operates externally or internally, whether it is undertaken voluntarily or involuntarily, is always to hinder the penetration of karmic matter and, above all, to contribute towards its annihilation. The intense heat of *tapas* burns up *arman* (US XII, 44). We shall see how *tapas* can also refer to a ritual form of expiation and reparation for faults.

³ According to ADh VII, 22-25 and TS IX, 19 this type of *tapas* applies only to food; US XXX, 14-24 extends its application to other realms.

¹ Cf. *brahmacarya*, P 349 ff.

Each form of *tapas* mentioned above corresponds to a different type of mortification. The sādhis follow their own inclinations in the choice of such or such a form of austerity, taking into account their own physical resistance and with the approval of the guruṇi. When it is a question of a major fast, the ācārya is consulted and either grants permission or withholds it.³⁵

b) The *ābhyantara-tapas*: The six forms of internal austerities

These comprise certain forms of renunciation or inner mortification. We have now reached the final stage in the process of purification, which does not however mean that one abandons external forms of mortification which have a valuable function. These inner austerities are:

i) *Prāyaścitta*: expiation of, reparation for faults committed. This demands not only an inner attitude which recognises and is sorry for such faults, but also certain penances in conformity with the prescriptions of the *Cheda-sūtras*. These forms of expiation are:

1. *Ālocanā*: the confession of one's faults to the guruṇi or the ācārya, in accordance with the gravity of the offence.³⁶

2. *Pratikramaṇa*: the repentance which goes with confession and also with the *āvaśyaka* of the daily rite.

3. *Ālocanā* and *pratikramaṇa*: confession and repentance.

4. *Viveka*: discrimination, referring in this context to the particular case when, through inattention or forgetfulness, certain forbidden or

³⁵ Cf. P 609 ff. the case of Sādhvi Śrī Ratnavatī; re. *bāhya-tapas*, cf. ADh VII, 5-32; AS I, 4, 3; 8, 1, 21; SthS 511a; US XXVIII, 34-35; XXX, 8-29; YSas, 89. We recall to mind the first Terāpanthi sādhis who practised the mortification of endurance of cold, P 250 ff.

³⁶ If the ācārya is not available, it suffices to write to him and he replies by sending a message prescribing the penance to be performed; Cf. SthS 733a, where the 10 sorts of disingenuous confession are described.

impure food may have been accepted. Immediately the ascetic realises the fact, the food must be taken back.

5. *Vyutsarga* or *Kāyotsarga*.

6. *Tapas*: one form or another of external mortification.

7. *Cheda*: the reduction, in accordance with the gravity of the fault committed, of the length of ascetic life counted to the ascetic from the moment of *dikṣā*; for example, a *sādhvi* who has been initiated six years can have this period reduced by one year and be deemed to have a seniority of only five years.

8. *Upasthāpana*: a new consecration; after a serious offence the *dikṣā* is invalidated and the ascetic may be consecrated afresh.³⁷

ii) *Vinaya*: the attitude of veneration with regard to *jñāna*, *darśana*, and *cāritra* and of humble and respectful deference towards the *ācārya*, the *guruṇi*, one's seniors, both men and women.³⁸

iii) *Vaiyāvṛtya*: the sense of duty and spirit of service in regard to the *ācārya*, the *guruṇi*, and other members of the group, particularly the aged *sādhvis*.

iv) *Svādhyāya*: personal study of the *Āgamas*. This is of extreme importance and in the course of it one must take the following aspects into account.

1. *Vācanā*: the study of the meaning of words, singly and in their context.

³⁷ For the *prāyaścittas*, cf. ADh VII, 34-59; MA V, 164-166; SthS 733e; TS IX, 22; US XXX, 31 and P 506 ff.

³⁸ Cf. DS IX where this last point is developed at length. Cf. for ii and iii: ADh VII, 60-81; MA V, 167-195; SthS 397a, b; TS IX, 23-24; US XXX, 32-33.

2. *Pracchanā*: the questions which need to be addressed to competent persons, in order to assure oneself of the exact meaning of the text and clarify one's doubts.³⁹

3. *Anupreksā*: reflection on a text.

4. *Āmnāya*: repetition of the words of a text with due attention to correct pronunciation and to learning them by heart.⁴⁰

5. *Dharmopadeśa*: discourse on the doctrine, on tradition or the lives of especially holy and venerable ascetics.⁴¹

v) *Vyutsarga*: renunciation, both inner and outer, of all forms of the possession, including that of the body.⁴²

vi) *Dhyāna*: mental concentration. This is a major feature of the doctrine that concerns the loftiest of all spiritual activities, which, if perfectly practised, brings about *nirjarā* and thus leads to *mokṣa*.⁴³ On account of its importance and because *dhyāna* has often been neglected during these last centuries, no less as an object of study than as regards its practice, and also because of the growing interest in our own day in this type of activity and methods which enable it, we are going to try in the following chapter to indicate the characteristics of

³⁹ ADh stresses the importance of asking questions; cf. VII, 84-85.

⁴⁰ The *sādhvis*, usually from the moment of *dikṣā* onwards and sometimes before when the period of probation is long, learn certain *Āgamas* by heart, which, given their itinerant life, is extremely useful for them.

⁴¹ For *svādhyāya*, cf. ADh VII, 82-92; MA V, 196; SthS 465; TS IX, 25; US XXX, 34 and P 490 ff.

⁴² Cf. ADh VII, 93-102; TS IX, 26. SthS and US give *dhyāna* before *vyutsarga*. Note that *vyutsarga* (which is the same as *kāyotsarga*) is repeated twice: This is a form of inner asceticism which has also an expiatory function.

⁴³ Cf. DhyānSat 96.

dhyāna according to Jaina doctrine, making a synthesis of the essential points mentioned in several texts of different epochs.⁴⁴

However, before starting this attempt, we must add one further point concerning *saṁvara* and *nirjarā*. In their way of explaining these two aspects of the doctrine there are numerous repetitions in these ancient texts which are addressed to communities of ascetics whose one and only aim is self-purification. The sages throughout the ages have sought, first, to indicate with the most refined degree of perspicacity the whole range of possible subtle infiltrations of karmic matter, then to show concrete and no less subtle ways of getting freed from this karmic matter. What is absolutely certain - and is straightforwardly affirmed - is that in all these types of austerities what matters is the intention. No austerity is an end in itself, but is a means of progress towards *mokṣa*.

⁴⁴ In part III we shall see how all this is put into practice in the lives of contemporary *sādhvis*. For *ābhyaṅtara-tapas*, cf. ADh VII, 33-104; SthS 511b; TS IX, 20; US XXX, 30-37; YSas 90.

Chapter 6

The highest form of *tapas*: *Dhyāna*, mental concentration

*He who has purged the defilement of error¹
indifferent² to the pleasures of the senses,
all mental activity being suppressed,³
strengthened in his own nature,
that one becomes absorbed in the ātman.⁴*

Let us recollect from the start that the Three Jewels are experienced in the *ātman* and that therefore it is through the *ātman* that one reaches *mokṣa*.⁵ In the course of a long pilgrimage, through a constant and sustained effort of purification directed solely towards freeing the *ātman* of all that is foreign to its nature, one comes slowly but surely to a more and more keen and direct awareness of the *ātman*. According to *vyavahāra*, a method is necessary to arouse and direct this awareness; according to *nīścaya*, the *ātman* has an un-mediated self-awareness, in a movement of *enstasy*.

¹ Cf. *moha*: aberration, illusion, all that precludes right vision and right conduct.

² *Viratta* (*virakta*): alienated, distant from, disaffected.

³ *Mano ṇirumbhittā* (*mano nirudhya*): well-controlled mind or retention of thought; cf. *Yoga-sūtra* 2.

⁴ *jo khavidamohakaluso visaya viratto maṇo ṇirumbhittā
samavaṭṭhido mahāve so appāṇaṃ havadi jhādā*. PSa II, 104;
lit. he becomes one who concentrates on the *ātman*.

⁵ Cf. *DravSam* 39.

Dhyāna presents both these aspects: that of being a method and also a direct apprehension. We must study both, in accordance with what the texts of the doctrine impart to us. Without making a complete cleavage between the two and always keeping in sight the final goal, we shall see, first, the nature of *dhyāna*, next the different types thereof - dwelling more particularly on *dharma-dhyāna* - and finally some methods. As for the texts that we use as guides, these are: the *Tattvārtha-sūtra*, the *Dhyānaśataka* and the *Dravyasaṃgraha*, which treat this subject more particularly from the philosophical and doctrinal point of view; a treatise adhering to the same basic doctrine as the ones just named, but more practical in its approach and with a clear explanation of the existential aspect of *dhyāna*, namely, the *Tattvānuśāsana* or *Dhyānaśāstra*; lastly, the description of a method given in the *Yogaśāstra*.⁶ These texts together present a remarkable harmony and complement one another.

a) The nature of *dhyāna* and the conditions required for its practice

Dhyāna is defined as: *ekāgra-cintā-nirodha*. *Cintā*: thought, reflection; *ekāgra*: concentrated, fixed on one single object, exclusively directed towards this object. Therefore *dhyāna* is the retention of thought and its concentration upon a single object.

According to the doctrine, two additional elements must operate in this retention for it to be recognised as *dhyāna*: the physical make-up of the person concerned, which must be suitable for the practice of this exercise, and the duration of same.⁷ The physical constitution, which is bound up with *nāma-karman*, must be excellent and robust: *uttama-saṃhanana*.⁸ As for the duration, it cannot be longer than one

⁶ The *Dhyānaśataka* is attributed to Jinabhadra Gaṇi, a Śvetāmbara, of the end of the VIth c.; the *Tattvānuśāsana* to Ācārya Rāmasena, a Digambara of the end of the Xth c.

⁷ *uttama-saṃhananasya-ekāgracintānirodho dhyanam-āntarmuhūrtāt*. TS IX, 27.

⁸ The 3 types of excellent physical constitution are: *vajraṣṣabhanārāca*: thunderbolt, bull, arrow; *ardhavajraṣṣabhanārāca*: half-thunderbolt-bull-

muhūrta (48 minutes). After this period of time the mind is no longer able to continue concentrating on the same object, but it can remain in a state of recollectedness and concentrate itself afresh on a succession of other objects.⁹

b) The different types of *dhyāna*

The treatises are unanimous in recognising four types of *dhyāna*: *ārta*, painful; *raudra*, cruel, violent; *dharma*, that which takes its inspiration from the *dharma*; *śukla*, white, very pure. The two first types are productive of bad *karmas*, they defile the *ātman* and deflect it from the path leading to Liberation. The two other types are productive of meritorious *karmas* and aid towards *nirjāra*.¹⁰

Each of these types of *dhyāna* is subdivided into four different sorts. For our purposes it is sufficient to mention in brief the contents of the first two types; as for *dharma-dhyāna*, the one form of *dhyāna* that is of special interest to us just now, we must study it in detail. The two first stages of *śukla-dhyāna* demand a lofty degree of perfection and are therefore rarely attained, while the two last stages concern only the omniscient.

Ārta-dhyāna, a type of painful and agonised mental concentration, may spring from several sources. Affliction may be caused by the presence of some factor or disagreeable object of which one would like to rid oneself or by an absence, an unendurable separation, by a shooting physical pain with its psychical repercussions from which one longs to be free, by some unsatiated thirst for enjoyment. Ascetics who lack fervour or are negligent can fall prey to this type of *dhyāna*.¹¹

arrow; and *nārāca*: arrow; cf. TS Sukhlal, p. 345, where *saṁhanana* is translated by "bone structure"; cf. also P 641 ff.

⁹ Cf. DhyānSat 3-4.

¹⁰ Cf ADh VII, 103; DhyānSat 5; SthS 247; TS IX, 27-44; US XXX, 35.

¹¹ Cf. DhyānSat 6-10; TS IX, 30-34.

Raudra-dhyāna is provoked by all that engenders violence, the urge to strike, to hurt, to kill; by lies, deceit, infidelity; by theft or covetousness, by excessive attachment, causing torment of soul, or anxiety with regard to one's possessions. This type of *dhyāna* can be found among śrāvakas and śrāvikās who are still engrossed in attending to their possessions, but not among the ascetics, for each and every aspect of *raudra-dhyāna* is diametrically opposed to one of the four *mahāvratas*.¹²

c) *Dharma-dhyāna*: Concentration on important aspects of the doctrine

i) What is the *dhyeya*, the object upon which the mind is to fix its concentration?

It goes without saying that the *dhyeya* is some basic feature of the doctrine. Certain essential aspects of the *dharma* constitute the *dhyeya*: *ājñā*, *apāya*, *vipāka*, *saṁsthāna*.¹³

1. *Ājñā*: an order, commandment Here it is a question of the commandments given by the *tirthaṅkaras*; the concentration must be directed towards the nature of these commandments,¹⁴ and the reasons which make these injunctions difficult to grasp, of which one, for example, could well be the lack of masters.¹⁵

2. *Apāya*: misfortune, disaster, anything that engenders fear or destruction, which are the consequences of spiritual blindness. A salutary form of concentration, in that it serves to strengthen faith in the doctrine.¹⁶

¹² Cf. DhyānSat 19-27; TS IX, 35.

¹³ Cf. TS IX, 36.

¹⁴ Cf. DhyānSat 45-46.

¹⁵ Ibid., 47-48.

¹⁶ Ibid., 50.

3. *Vipāka*: the maturation, of the different *karmas* and its consequences. Concentration upon all aspects of both meritorious and destructive *karmas*, their nature, duration, etc. and upon their generative activities.¹⁷

4. *Saṁsthāna*: structure, state, characteristics, composition. In the present context this refers to concentration upon all that constitutes the structure of the universe and hence upon the teaching of the doctrine upon *dravya*, substance.¹⁸

ii) How is *dharma-dhyāna* to be achieved?

To the preceding abstract and general considerations must now be added more existential and practical ones which indicate the requisite mental dispositions, the state of being towards which one must strive, and also a simple method of attaining it.

Since *dhyāna* consists essentially of mental concentration, one must endeavour to promote anything that can help the mind to become peaceful and concentrated, to lay aside all distractions, causes of agitation or attachment. The supremely important and indispensable mental disposition is one of inner detachment, that creative passivity in which, thanks to self-mastery, one remains calm, troubled neither by what is alluring nor by what is repugnant.¹⁹ We may say, with greater precision, that the one who already practises certain *bhāvanās* is in a state favourable to sustained concentration. In this connection the recommended *bhāvanās* are: *jñāna*, *darśana*, *cāritra* and *vairāgya*, indifference or aversion towards the things of this world.²⁰ The

¹⁷ Ibid., 51.

¹⁸ Ibid., 52-54

¹⁹ Cf. *DravSam* 48; one recalls how Mahāvira stayed silent, recollected, concentrated in the midst of innumerable difficulties; cf. *AS* I, 8, 1, 4-6; 8, 2, 12; 8, 4, 3; 7; 14-15.

²⁰ Cf. *DhyānSat* 30-34; we know that *bhāvanā* can mean: reflection, or: an observance. It is possible that here both meanings are intended.

ālambas, or supports upon which one should rely, are *svādhyāya*, the serious study of Scripture, and *sāmāyika*.²¹ Among external conditions favourable to *dhyāna*, the most important is solitude.²² There is no rigid rule as regards specific time and place, what counts being mastery of the three realms: body, speech and mind.²³ No special posture is enjoined and one may practise *dhyāna* standing, seated or lying.²⁴

Attempts have been made, in connection with the classification of the *guṇasthānas*,²⁵ to pinpoint the states favourable to *dharma-dhyāna*. According to the Digambara tradition, ascetics who are between the fourth and seventh *guṇasthānas* are well-suited for *dharma-dhyāna*, while according to the Śvetāmbara tradition it is those who are en route between the seventh and twelfth stages.²⁶ Opinions upon this point may vary, but it is unanimously agreed that:

The *ātman* [which practises] *tapas*, mortification, lives out the *vratas*, the vows, [knows] the *śruta*, the Scripture, can harness the chariot of *dhyāna*. . .²⁷

²¹ Ibid., 42-43; Haribhadra insists on the importance of relying on the *Śāstras*; cf. YB 221-226.

²² DhyānSat 35.

²³ Ibid., 38; 41.

²⁴ Ibid., 39; it is understood that one's interior disposition is one of *kāyotsarga*; *dhyāna* and *kāyotsarga* always go together.

²⁵ Cf. P 310 ff.

²⁶ Cf. TS Sukhlāl, p. 352.

²⁷ *tavasudavadavaṃ cedā jhāṇaraha dhuraṃdharo have jamahā*. . .
DravSam 57.

It should be added that little by little, as one perseveres in the endeavour, concentration becomes more and more continuous, natural and spontaneous. One abides uninterruptedly in a state where one's inner mental dispositions are conducive to *dharma-dhyāna*.²⁸ and, once one is confirmed in this state, an effort of concentration is no longer necessary, the *ātman* is already awakened to its own self, and this is *nīścaya-dhyāna*.²⁹

iii) The method above all others

Repeat [the *mantra*] and concentrate upon [the *mantra* which] calls upon the *parameṣṭhins* in thirty-five, sixteen, six, five, four, two or one syllables, and other [*mantras*] in accordance with the guru's teaching.³⁰

Mental concentration, on the *Namaskāra-mantra* above all or on some other *mantra*, is by far the most ancient, simple and usual method, the *japa*, the repetition and mummuration of the syllables, and the *dhyāna* taking place simultaneously.³¹ In order to maintain the *dhyāna*, a progression is recommended, namely, that one should concentrate progressively on fewer and fewer syllables. The fewer the syllables, the more intense and unified the concentration. These syllables, whether put together to form a word or pronounced singly, are deeply meaningful; they symbolize the *parameṣṭhins*. One can combine these syllables in different ways, provided, of course, that the combination makes sense. Thus, the sixteen syllables could be: *arahaṃtā, siddhā, āyariyā, uvajjhāyā, sāhū, (arhat, siddha, ācārya,*

²⁸ Cf. DhyānSat 65; we shall see this in greater detail in the *Tattvanu*.

²⁹ Cf. DravSam 55 and comm.

³⁰ *paṇātisa sola chappaṇa cadu dugamegaṃ ca javaha jhācha parameṣṭhi vācayāṇaṃ aṇṇaṃ ca gurūvaesēṇa*. DravSam 49.

³¹ Cf. YB 382-385; P 478 ff.

upādhyāya, sādhu); the two syllables could be: *siddha*.³² Here we are on the threshold of *dharma-dhyāna*, the slow and attentive repetition of the names of the *parameṣṭhins*, accompanied by that deep devotion which enters into communion with all that each one represents.³³ One may also concentrate upon other *mantras* as taught by the guru, for without a master one runs the risk of remaining vague and hazy.

Whatever method is chosen, it will provide an *ālamba*, a useful or even indispensable prop, but for a limited time. The ultimate goal of the highest form of concentration of the realisation of the *ātman* by the *ātman*:

Make no effort, neither speak nor think, so that the *ātman*, imperturbable, may be absorbed in the *ātman*; this is without doubt the highest form of *dhyāna*.³⁴

Ontologically, the *ātman* is, and has always been, in the *ātman*, but the function of *dhyāna* is to conduce towards an awakening, a new consciousness of this truth. Concentration such as has been described, by conducing towards the cessation of all that is alien, facilitates the absorption of the *ātman* in itself.

³² This sequence is suggested in the comm. on DravSam 49; cf. YSas VIII, 32-42.

³³ Cf. DravSam 50-54. Iconography portrays each *parameṣṭhin* on a lotus-petal, with the *arhat* centrally placed, each one being given a symbolic colour, *arhat*: white; *siddha*: red; *ācārya*: yellow; *upādhyaya*: blue; *sādhu*: black. The portrayal of the *parameṣṭhins* on a lotus is common to both traditions, but it is only the Śvetāmbaras who accord them particular colours. Cf. U.P. Shah, 1975. pp. 63-64.

³⁴ *mā cīṭṭhaha mā jaṇpaha mā cīṇṭaha kimvi jeṇa hoi thiṇo
appā appammi rao ṇameva param have jhāṇam.* DravSam 56.

d) *Śukla-dhyāna*: Very pure concentration

Dharma-dhyāna, which is already a lofty form of *dhyāna*, is simply preparatory to *śukla-dhyāna*, the purest form of all.³⁵ Let us take a look at the first two stages of *śukla-dhyāna*. Both traditions agree that *śukla-dhyāna* is attainable by those ascetics who have reached one of the stages preceding *kevala-jñāna* and who possess perfect knowledge of the *Pūrvas*, the most ancient texts of Scripture.³⁶ These first two stages have this in common, but differ as follows:

At the first stage: the ascetic who is capable of practising this level still retains the three *yogas*; his mode of concentration is *prthaktvavitarka-savicāra*, which means that, with reference to a given text of Scripture, his concentration upon a substance or on a mode of the said substance will take into its purview several points of view and there may also occur a shift from one text to another.³⁷

At the second stage: the ascetic retains only one of the three *yogas*. His mode of concentration is *ekatvavitarka-nirvicāra*; now there is complete unity of being. His whole attention is fixed on one single mode of the substance and upon one single text. His being is unified, recollected in *dhyāna*.³⁸ As the ascetic has now only one activity, this means that he can easily practice *dhyāna* without the participation of *manas*, the mind, for mental activity is no longer necessary where one

³⁵ A purity which shines like the brightness of the moon; cf. SkrS I, 6, 6.

³⁶ Cf. DhyānSat 64; TS IX, 37. These texts, of course, except for a few fragments, have not been preserved (P 143); however, TS Sukhlal writes, p. 355: "Thus when a performer of *dhyāna* - in case he happens to be versed in the *Pūva*-texts, then on the basis of such a text, otherwise on the basis of whatever scriptural text he is conversant with - takes up for consideration. . ."

³⁷ Cf. DhyānSat 77-78; 83; TS IX, 39-40; 44.

³⁸ Cf. DhyānSat 79-80; 83; TS IX, 39-40; 42.

has reached a certain level of consciousness of being.³⁹ As for the last two stages, they appertain to the state of the *kevalin*.

The results and fruits of the first two stages of *śukla-dhyāna* are the same, but there is a progression as regards the intensity of these results, meritorious *karmas* bringing about *saṁvara* and *saṁvara nirjarā*.⁴⁰

The *Dhyānaśataka* gives some concrete and very vivid comparisons. *Dhyāna* is compared to the water which washes the stains out of garments, the fire which removes rust from iron, the sun which dries up mud from the earth. Stain, rust and mud are like karmic matter.⁴¹ Again, *dhyāna* is likened to some medical treatment which heals a sick person, to a fire which, fanned by the wind, burns wood, to wind which disperses clouds.⁴² The ascetic who practises *dhyāna* sincerely and regularly comes gradually to that purified state of being, that constant recollectedness in which he is no longer affected by any sort of affliction caused by the passions, not by external factors such as cold or heat.⁴³

e) The *Tattvānūśāsana* or *Dhyānaśāstra* of Ācārya Rāmasena

This work, of the Digambara tradition, is almost entirely devoted to *dhyāna*.⁴⁴ It is not, certainly, the only text, nor the most ancient on

³⁹ Strictly speaking, since we have defined *dhyāna* as mental concentration, we should add that from the 2nd stage of *śukla-dhyāna* onwards this definition is discarded

⁴⁰ Cf. *DhyānaSat* 93-94.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 97-98.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 100-102.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 103-104.

⁴⁴ Out of 259 *padhyas*, only the first 32 do not address themselves directly to *dhyāna*. This treatise probably dates from the end of the Xth c.; Ācārya

this subject, but it ranks as a *Śāstra*, is systematic in its approach and is a precious guide. As regards doctrine, it is in agreement with the *Tattvārtha-sūtra* and the *Dhyānaśataka*, while as regards method it advocates the same as the *Dravyasaṃgraha*, but it develops at some length - and herein resides its originality and its importance - what the *Dravyasaṃgraha* had indicated in brief, namely, the primordial foundation-stone undergirding *dhyāna* which is at the same time its final goal, namely the realisation of the *ātman* by means of the *ātman* in the *ātman*. Furthermore, it contributes fresh and valuable elements to the method, with which it is important to acquaint ourselves, for they have passed into general usage.

Without making a detailed analysis of this treatise, we can indicate in outline those aspects which are of interest to us as being complementary to the preceding section. To begin with, we notice that the author of the *Tattvānuśāsana* affirms that no-one in our day and age has the physical constitution necessary for the practice of *śukla-dhyāna*, and therefore he devotes himself primarily to *dharma-dhyāna*.⁴⁵

Dharma-dhyāna is here studied from the viewpoints of both *nīścaya* and *vyavahāra*. *Nīścaya-dhyāna* is *svārūpālambana*, from *ālambana* (the support) *svārūpa* (its own form), which is to say that the *ātman* in its essential purity is its own support. *Vyavahāra-dhyāna* is *parālambana*, here the support is other, and thus external.⁴⁶

Rāmasena was from Karmāṭaka, as was also Nemicaṇḍra, the author of the *DravSam*. Among those texts that have an affinity with the *Tattvanu*, Upadhye mentions two which are of interest to us: the *DravSam* and the *YSas* of Hemacandra; cf. *Tattvanu* Preface, pp. 13-14. Pt.J. Mukhṭāra, after making a profound study of this important and little known text, published in 1963 a critical ed. with trans. in Hindi and comm.

⁴⁵ Cf. *Tattvanu* 35-36 comm.; however, at the end of the treatise he does expound, though briefly, *śukla-dhyāna* and *mokṣa*, for, even if our epoch is not propitious for the realisation of either, every exposition of the doctrine must introduce them as being possible of realisation in some age to come; cf. P 75 ff. *utsarpiṇi-avasarpiṇi*.

⁴⁶ Cf. *Tattvanu* 96-97.

In *vyavahāra-dhyāna* the *dhyeyas* (that upon which one fixes one's concentration) are various: *nāma*, *sthāpanā*, *dravya*, *bhāva*.⁴⁷ We are going to give particular consideration to *nāma-dhyeya*, because of the new elements in the practice of *dhyāna* added here to those cited by the *Dravyasaṃgraha* and also because of its popularity. Of the other three *dhyeyas* we shall note simply the content.

i) *Nāma-dhyeya*

Nāma means name, noun; in this context, however, *nāma* means *mantra*. The text indicates several *mantras* and the new element is the mental image which is to accompany the recitation and concentration.⁴⁸ Here is an example taken from the *Namaskāra-mantra* where the *nāma* is of five syllables: *a*, *si*, *ā*, *u*, *sā*, standing respectively, for: *arhat*, *siddha*, *ācārya*, *upādhyāya*, *sādhu*. Simultaneously with the murmuration of the syllables, the mind becomes concentrated and the mental image forms. What is this image? The lotus of the heart possesses four petals; at the centre of the lotus the letter *a* (*arhat*) is to be seen and on the four petals *si*, *ā*, *u*, *sā*; all five syllables are luminous, and each one makes a *pradakṣiṇā* (circumambulation from left to right) as a sign of veneration for the *parameṣṭhin* it symbolises.⁴⁹

ii) *Sthāpanā-dhyeya*

This consists in concentration on the mental icon of a *jinendra*. This icon may be *kṛtīma*, non-natural, artificial, as, for example, an image or statue of Mahāvīra belonging to some well-known temple or *akṛtīma*, original, that is to say, a mental image conforming to a

47 Ibid., 100. These ideas have already been introduced among the *āvaśyakas*.

48 Ibid., 101-108; among the range of *mantras* a special place is reserved for *arham* (for *arhat*), for *hrim*, the *siddha-mantra* for the 24 *jinas*, and for *bijākṣara*, the first syllable of a *mantra*.

49 Ibid., 102.

description of Mahāvira given in one of the *Āgamas*.⁵⁰ This representation simply serves to fix the attention. One must then go beyond the external form and concentrate on what the *jinas* in reality are.⁵¹

iii) *Dravya-dhyeya*

This consists in concentration on the doctrine in general and, in particular, upon *dravya*, substance.⁵²

iv) *Bhāva-dhyeya*

This refers to the consideration of the more specific aspects of a given substance.⁵³

Till now the whole effort of concentration has been upheld by some support. Now we turn to a consideration of that *dharma-dhyāna* of which the content is already well-advanced, so that external supports are no longer required. This is *niścaya-dhyāna* or *sva-ātma-ālambana*, whose sole *ālambana* is the *ātman* of the one who concentrates.⁵⁴ The *Tattvānuśāsana* excels in describing this type of *dhyāna*. Here are some of the lines it follows:

- This form of *dhyāna* is based on the teaching of Scripture concerning the *ātman*; each aspect of this teaching is spotlighted, in order to strength *darśana* and *jñāna*.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ Ibid., 109.

⁵¹ Cf. SamSa 28-29; P 317 ff.

⁵² Cf. Tattvanu 110-115 (similar to DhyānSat 52-54).

⁵³ Ibid., 116.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 141; 118; 135-138.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 144-159.

- It conduces to an advance in *sva-saṁvedana*, the experience of the first degree of awakening of the *ātman* to itself, the inner vision of the *ātman* in which the knower and the known are one.⁵⁶

- The fruit of this experience is *ekāgratā*: attention, the concentration of the mind on a single point, and thence the unified, recollected being; invisible, hidden, indescribable joy; an acute awareness of the *ātman* in its essential unity,⁵⁷ and of its utter difference from everything else.⁵⁸ This rare experience, which is so difficult to fathom when one has not reached this stage, even if the sages endeavour to describe it, conduces towards *saṁvara* and *nirjarā*.⁵⁹

After the description of *miścaya-dhyāna*, a method is proposed to the ascetic as an aid on the journey towards the ultimate goal - an interesting method, for it presents new elements. It assists in the *siddhi* (perfecting) and *nirmalikaraṇa* (purification) of the *pīṇḍa* or *deha* (the body).⁶⁰ This perfecting and purification are brought about by successive *dhāraṇās*, i.e. the concentration of the mind on the cosmic elements one by one: *marutī* (the wind), *taijasi* (fire), *āpyā* (the waters), combined with the use of a *mantra*.⁶¹ Other texts teach

⁵⁶ *vedyatvaṁ vedakatvaṁ ca yatsvasya svena yoginaḥ
tatsva-saṁvedanaṁ prāhuḥ ātmano' nubhāvaṁ dṛśam.* Tattvanu 161;
cf. 162-169; PSa I, 27.

⁵⁷ *tamevānubhavaṁ cāyam ekāgryaṁ paramṛcchati
tathā"tmādhinam ānandam cū vācūm agocaram.* Tattvanu 170; the word *advaita* is used to express this unity, cf. 174.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 173; it is also mentioned that, as confirmation in direct knowledge of the *ātman* occurs, so and proportionately do extra-ordinary phenomena proper to *saṁādhi*, the final stage of concentration, manifest themselves, but they are not described; cf. 179

⁵⁹ Ibid., 181-182.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 183.

⁶¹ Ibid., 184-187.

the same method, which is called *piṇḍastha*, with five *dhāraṇās*; they add the earth to the list of cosmic elements and, as a fifth *dhāraṇā*, *tattvabhū*, the essential being, that is to say, the *ātman*.⁶²

f) The *Yogaśāstra* of Ācārya Hemacandra

Ācārya Hemacandra, in certain chapters of the *Yogaśāstra*, gives a clear, simple and complete account of *dhyāna*.⁶³ This text actually teaches us nothing new on the subject, but forms a synthesis of the preceding in an intelligible and concise language.⁶⁴ Since Hemacandra does not add anything new to the other treatises, can we rightly talk of his 'teaching'? Yes, indeed, in this sense that he himself, an Ācārya, has made this synthesis his own and has transmitted it in his *Yogaśāstra*. It is interesting to note that, on the one hand, Hemacandra has adopted the classifications of *dhyāna* given in the *Jñānārṇava* of Ācārya Śubhacandra,⁶⁵ and that, on the other, these classifications correspond basically and in their main divisions

⁶² *Piṇḍa* can have several meanings such as: mass, lump, ball; food, body. The aim of *piṇḍastha-dhyāna* is to purify the body by means of specific *dhāraṇās*. The description of *piṇḍastha* given in the *Tattvanu* is less elaborate and differs slightly from that given in other treatises, although the basic elements are the same. The question here arises from which earlier text has the *Tattvanu* borrowed? Can one perhaps discern the influence of the *Jñānārṇava* of Ācārya Śubhacandra who probably lived in the IXth c.? We must also take into the reckoning that Jainism must surely have been influenced, as regards certain methods of *dhyāna* and among them *piṇḍastha*, by the corresponding methods of tantric yoga; cf. Eliade, 1958, pp. 209-210. Without lingering longer upon these considerations, we may simply observe that these borrowings from other systems have been so well assimilated that they settle naturally into Jaina doctrine.

⁶³ Cf. *YSas* VII-XI.

⁶⁴ As regards the doctrine concerning *dhyāna*, *YSas* relies on the *TS*.

⁶⁵ Cf. the preface of Muni Amaraśāstra to the *YSas*, pp. 50-52. *Jñānamati*, 1976, pp. 57-59, has given in her introd. to *dhyāna* the classifications of the *Jñānārṇava*.

to those given in the *Tattvānuśāsana*, but they are given different designations.⁶⁶ This point must be emphasised: while the *Tattvānuśāsana* expatiates at length on *niścaya-dhyāna* - *dhyāna* in its mystical aspect - the *Yogaśāstra* concentrates more particularly on the practical utilisation of *mantras* and the mental image accompanying each type of *dhyāna*.

The following is a brief account of *piṇḍastha-dhyāna* according to the *Yogaśāstra*. This type of *dhyāna* involves five successive *dhāraṇās*. The word *dhāraṇā* is used to describe the thrust or beam, so to speak, of concentration directed towards a given object, that attention which grasps hold of the *dhyeya* and takes possession of it, while *dhyāna* denotes rather the state of concentrated attention and thus concentration itself. The *dhāraṇās* in this instance are the four cosmic elements: earth, fire, wind (air), water; the fifth is the *ātman*.⁶⁷

i) *Pārthiv.-dhāraṇā: dhāraṇā of the earth*

The ascetic imagines an ocean of milk, very calm, on which there is an immense lotus of a thousand petals, as vast as Jambūdvīpa, the island of the Jambū. The pericarp of this lotus is as tall as Mount Meru; at the centre of the pericarp is a luminous throne upon which the ascetic is seated, bent on the eradication of his *karmas*.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Thus we have here a similar classification of *dhyāna*, but one using different terms: *nāma-dhyeya* corresponds to *padastha-dhyāna* (Tattvanu 101-108; YSas VIII); *sthāpanā-dhyeya* to *rūpastha-dhyāna* (Tattvanu 109; YSas IX); *niścaya-dhyeya* to *rūpātita-dhyāna* (Tattvanu 141-187; YSas X). We may note that YSas X proposes to deal with *rūpātita-dhyāna*, i.e. *dhyāna* which is formless and *nirālamba*, without support, but although it defines it and stresses its importance (YSas X, 1-6), it scarcely develops its various aspects at all.

⁶⁷ Cf. YSas VII, 9.

⁶⁸ Ibid., VII, 10; cf. TS III, 7-39; *piṇḍastha-dhyāna* takes its inspiration from Jaina cosmography, Mt. Meru being at the centre of Jambūdvīpa, lit. its

ii) *Āgneyi-dhāraṇā: dhāraṇā of fire*

The ascetic imagines a lotus-flower of sixteen petals issuing from his navel. On the pericarp is inscribed the *mahāmantra*: *arham*, and on each of the petals the fourteen vowels of Sanskrit as well as the *anusvāra m̐* and the *visarga ḥ*. He then pictures to himself, over his heart, a lotus-flower of eight petals, inverted, with the under-surface exposed. Each petal has one of the names of the eight *karman*s inscribed upon it. From the letter *r* of the *mahāmantra* smoke is issuing forth, then sparks and then flames that burn and consume the eight-petalled lotus. Here the ascetic must concentrate his attention on the importance and power of the *mahāmantra* which annihilates each and every *karman*. Next, it is the body of the ascetic which is consumed, before the fire subsides.⁶⁹

iii) *Vāyavi-dhāraṇā: dhāraṇā of the wind, air*

One pictures to oneself a strong wind, which scatters the ashes of the lotus and of the charred body and then calms down.⁷⁰

iv) *Vāruṇi-dhāraṇā: dhāraṇā of water*

One pictures to oneself a sky covered with clouds, a great downpour, rain which washes away the accumulation of ashes.⁷¹

v) *Tattvabhū-dhāraṇā: dhāraṇā of essential being*

navel: *merunabhiḥ* (TS III, 9). The image of the lotus is one familiar to Jaina cosmography (TS III, 17-19); Cf. also P674ff.

⁶⁹ Cf. YSas VII, 13-18.

⁷⁰ Ibid., VII, 19-20.

⁷¹ Ibid., VII, 21-22.

The ascetic, whose seven constitutive elements and all *karmas* have been burned up, is now pure spirit, immaculate, shining like a full moon. Now he is capable of apprehending the omniscient *ātman* and of concentrating on the *ātman-nirākāra*, the formless *ātman*.⁷²

Pinḍastha-dhyāna helps the mind to centre and purify itself. Through the destruction in imagination of the body, it confronts the mind with the twofold reality: on the one hand, karmic matter and the body - that which must be eliminated and annihilated, that from which one must free oneself - and, on the other, the *ātman*, pure consciousness of being, which is totally disconnected from matter and which must be fully realised.

Dhyāna, the highest form of *tapas*, burns and annihilates karmic matter. It is based on a systematic method, which demands a sustained mental effort, an effort that is indispensable until the moment when a certain level of recollectedness, of awareness of the *ātman*, which corresponds always to the elimination of the karmic influx, is reached. At this higher level, *dhyāna* is spontaneous and goes beyond any form of mental effort. All the sages have had, to varying degrees, the experience of this awakening of consciousness. Some have tried to impart a glimpse of it, to give guidance to their fellow-ascetics. Kundakunda is in this too the master beyond all comparison, particularly in his *Samayasāra*; he was followed closely by other sages of later epochs. Certain major works should be mentioned:

- The *Samādhiśataka* or *Samādhitantra* on absorption in the *ātman*, by Pūjyapāda.⁷³
- The *Paramātmaprakāśa* or Light of the supreme *ātman*, that is to say, the knowledge of the *ātman* when it is purified by the fire of *dhyāna*.

⁷² Ibid., VII, 23-25.

⁷³ Cf. P 224.

This is an outburst of sustained mystical fervour, centred on the *ātman*, by Yogindu.⁷⁴

- The *Yogasāraprabhṛta*, a treatise of the middle of the Xth century on the essential nature of *yoga*, meaning here mental concentration, by Amitagati.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Cf. the long introd. by Upadhye.

⁷⁵ The authors of these 3 works belong to the Digambara tradition.

Chapter 7

The path on earth comes to an end and becomes a non-path

During the constellation uttarāphālgunī Mahāvira attained the state of omniscience [and] of the highest form of vision, infinite, supreme, direct, unveiled, all-embracing, total; during the constellation svāti he attained the plenitude of nirvāṇa.¹

The first two stages of *śukla-dhyāna* lead on to *kevala-jñāna*, *mokṣa* and *nirvāṇa*. So soon as a being enjoys perfect knowledge, there is no possibility open to him of a return back, he is confirmed on the path leading to Liberation with absolute certitude. When this final stage of perfection is reached, is there anything more to be said or any further efforts to be made? No, there is no further effort to be made, one is already on another plane. What remains still to be defined, however, is the nature of *kevala-jñāna* - as far as it is possible to express that of which one has no experience, but of which one can have some presentiment in accordance with the guidance of the Scriptures.

The long, arid road followed up to this point now comes to an end. The state characterised by the load of glutinous matter adhering to it,

¹ . . . *hatthuttarāhiṃ aṇaṇṭe aṇuttare nivvāghāe nirāvaraṇe kaṣiṇe paḍipunne kevalavaraṇāṇadaṃsaṇe samuppanne sāṇā parinivvūe bhayavaṇi*. KS 1; *uttarāphālgunī*: name of the constellation with which the moon is in conjunction during the latter fortnight of *vaiśākha* (April-May), when the moon is waxing (KS 120); *svāti*: the constellation with which the moon enters into conjunction during the 15th night of the dark fortnight of *kārttika* (Oct.-Nov.), when the moon is waning (KS 123). Here *kevala-jñāna-kevala-darśana* are named and described as one entity. The plenitude of *nirvāṇa*: *parinirvāṇa*.

by the persistent karmic dust which settles everywhere, now gives place to a state of lightness, of purity. All obscurity has disappeared, the thick veil has fallen. However, for the human being who still retains certain of his faculties, who still lives on this earth, there is still, even when he has reached the state of *kevala-jñāna*, one last purification necessary, but this is not, as in the case of the ascetic, the result of a series of personal efforts; it is of another sort. There comes then the moment supreme, that of the passing from the state of the *kevalin* to that of the *siddha*, a rapid and totally indescribable transition: this is *mokṣa* and, instantaneously, *mokṣa* leads to *nirvāṇa*. From *mokṣa* onwards there is no path. The *ātman* has finally left his mortal wrapping and this earth.

As we follow carefully this last stage and the state which follows we must bear in mind both the vision-beheld of the starting-point, *ratnatraya*, and the journey which leads by stages to total purification. Up here, from the vantage-point of this summit where the path ends, we can see more clearly, can grasp the meaning of this pilgrimage and can marvel at the consistence observable in the doctrine and in this explanatory *sūtra*, which binds closely together the stages of the journey. We must also recall that these stages are not covered in a single life. Since we are living in the era of misfortune called *avasarpinī* the descending phase during which, according to the doctrine, *kevala-jñāna* and thus also *mokṣa* cannot be attained,² why should we trouble ourselves, why try to understand a state which does not concern us, the more so since, for the understanding thereof, we have at our disposal only darkened minds and powers of seeing? The answer is simple: however unfavourable to right vision our circumstances may be, a little flame, a little light, still exists. The darkness is not total, desire for *mokṣa* and for *nirvāṇa* is certainly not extinguished, for ascetic life continues, the doctrine is studied. We are certainly able to grasp and to know according, that is, to the extent of our awakening, which is inseparable from *samyak-cāritra*; and this knowledge will carry us forward towards the next epoch, when asceticism will be lived in greater perfection thanks to a better physical constitution with its more refined faculties. We can and we must devote ourselves to a study of the doctrine in its entirety and to

² Cf. P 75 ff; we may recall that this notion is somewhat arbitrary.

that embodiment of it to which a person may finally attain, even if this attainment is not possible for ourselves. Furthermore, in our epoch, in the Videha-kṣetras of Jambūdvīpa, there are some *tirthaṅkaras* and *mokṣa* is always possible.³ Even if *mokṣa* occurs outside our *kṣetra*, it is good and helpful to make enquiries as to its meaning.⁴

Let us now enter into this new realm in a spirit of reverence and recollection, as one enters a sanctuary, where everything speaks to us of a state of transcending our own, a state in which there is no fissure, no cleavage; nevertheless, in order to grasp and apprehend it better, one must needs introduce some distinctions. These distinctions simply serve as necessary pointers for our mind, that we may endeavour to open ourselves to the experience of plenitude.

A - *Kevala-jñāna*: Omniscience

We know, on the one hand, that *kevala-jñāna* is the fifth, final and highest form of knowledge⁵ and, on the other, that each degree of *jñāna* depends on the greater or lesser degree of karmic dust that has accumulated.⁶ *Kevala-jñāna* corresponds with the disappearance of injurious karmic dust, thanks to *saṁvara* and *nirjarā*; in effect, by the stoppage of the karmic influx and by its elimination, the *jīva* is completely purified from all that which beclouded the *ananta-catuṣṭayas*, its capacities for infinity: infinite knowledge, infinite intuitive powers (or vision), infinite power and infinite bliss.⁷ The four types of destructive *karman* are annihilated: *mohaniya*, that of deceitfulness; *jñānāvaraṇa*, that of the obscuration of knowledge;

³ Cf. TS III, 10; 31; 37; P 76; 80 n.36; 676.

⁴ Leaving to one side the doctrinal interpretations put forward by the several traditions and the commentators, we give here simply what the doctrine teaches and the sādhis believe and live out.

⁵ Cf. NandīS 1; SthS 463; US XXVIII, 4; and TS I, 9.

⁶ Cf. SthS 464; TS VIII, 6.

⁷ *ṇaṭṭhacadughāikammo daṁsaṇa-suha-ṇāṇa-vīriyamaṇo*. . . DravSam 50.

darśanāvaraṇa, that of the obscuration of vision; *antarāya*, that which blocks and impedes generosity.⁸ Only the four other types of *karman* remain: *āyu*, which determines the span of life; *nāma*, which determines the name and milieu; *gotra*, which determines the social rank; *vedaniya*, which is the source of feelings of pleasure and pain.⁹ The *jīva*, now liberated from the four destructive *karman*s is a *kevalin*, an *arhat*. Within him, after a longer or shorter period of time, the four non-destructive forms of *karman* will mature and disappear, and this disappearance will signalise *mokṣa*.¹⁰ Let us attempt now to grasp in its essentials the nature of *kevala-jñāna* and of the characteristics of the *kevalin*.

a) The nature of *kevala-jñāna*

No word can fully express its infinitude, fulness and perfection. The word omniscience conveys only a very approximate idea of it, since we are here in a realm that defies the intellect. The word *kevala* has various connotations: alone, isolated, complete, total, unconditioned, absolute, pure. Now, *kevala-jñāna* is all that, but to a degree that is beyond the limits of the intelligible. Not only is it that knowledge which is all-embracing and untainted, direct, unthwarted by any obstacle, unsullied by any imperfection, but also - and on account of this plenitude and purity - alone, isolated, self-supportive. This mode of knowledge is always accompanied by *kevala-darśana*, clarity of vision, intuition, perfect perception, which belongs to the same transcendental plane. Many texts couple together the two,¹¹ and even when *kevala-darśana* is not explicitly named, it is implicit every time when *kevala-jñāna* is under consideration, the two together

⁸ Cf. P 307-308.

⁹ Cf. TS VIII, 4.

¹⁰ Cf. TS X, 2.

¹¹ Cf. DS IV, 23, 21; KS I; DravSam 44.

constituting *upayoga*, consciousness of being.¹² *Upayoga* is not differentiated from *jñāna*.¹³

Omniscience is all-embracing and total, that is to say, it knows in a single flash the substances and their attributes,¹⁴ in every place¹⁵ and at every moment of the three times, past, present, and future.¹⁶ It is totally disconnected from psychic states, which are dependent on the passions and result in *bandha*; in the case of the *kevalin*, the passions are non-existent. This state is achieved once for all, for the destructive forms of *karman*, like ripe fruits fallen to the ground, can never be re-attached to the *jīva*. Let us proceed to try and grasp, even with our limited understanding, what the state of the *kevalin* is.

b) The *kevalin*, *arhat* or *jīna*: The omniscient one

Since he is still clothed with a body and lives on this earth, the *kevalin* actualises in his own person the state called *kevala-jñāna*. Most of the qualities mentioned in his regard belong to the realm of the abstract; nevertheless they are attributes of a living being, the

¹² Cf. TS II, 8-9; cf. P 270 n.20.

¹³ Cf. YB 428. The fundamental twofold question in regard to omniscience, viz. Is a human being capable of omniscience? and how do we recognize the signs of omniscience? has been the subject of argument among the scholars of the different philosophical systems, certain ones rejecting all possibility of omniscience in human beings. Without entering into details and taking only the Jaina *dharma* as our subject of study in this regard, we must make clear that neither Kundakunda nor Umāsvāti and Pūjyapāda (the author and commentator of the TS) have sought to vindicate omniscience by a rational explanation. It was Samantabhadra who first endeavoured to prove the possibility of omniscience and, after him, Siddhasena; cf. Upadhye, PSa, Intro., p. 76 and n. 2. Later on, Haribhadra in YB 425-457 explained with clarity and force the Jaina position on the subject of *kevala-jñāna*.

¹⁴ *sarvadravya-paryāycau kevalasya*. TS I, 29.

¹⁵ Cf. DS IV, 23, 22.

¹⁶ Cf. PSa I, 51.

kevalin has made them his own. Without introducing divisions and sub-divisions or following a pre-established order, but rather bearing always in mind the essential unity which informs the state of the *kevalin*, we can, if not explain, at least indicate his characteristics.

In him sensory knowledge is entirely transcended; he retains all his sense-powers, but they are purified, impervious to any sort of attachment. Hence his plenitude of knowledge, of happiness, strength and vigour, a plenitude which is manifested in the palpable radiance of his person:

The destructive forms of *karman* having been reduced to nothingness, his sense-powers transcended, [he manifests] a strength that is unlimited and perfect, a plenitude of radiance and is transformed into [sheer] knowledge and happiness.¹⁷

He still experiences joy or pain, but they are no longer mediated through the imperfect senses, they are no longer felt.¹⁸ Those *karmas* that he has not yet eliminated follow the normal process leading to their maturations, but although he is aware of this, he does not experience it sensorially. He is as it were a passive spectator, detached from the process.¹⁹

He knows all in a direct way, he grasps in their entirety both the general and the particular; he passes beyond the limits of sensory

¹⁷ *pakkhiṇaghādikammo aṇaṁtavaravīrio ahiyatejo jādo aṇiṁdio so nāṇaṁ sokkhaṁ ca pariṇamadi.* PSa I, 19. SamSa X is devoted entirely to the subject of pure knowledge; cf. US XXIX, 71.

¹⁸ *sokkhaṁ vā puṇa dukkhaṁ kevalaṇāṇissa ṇatthi dehagadaṁ jamhā adiṁdiyattaṁ jādaṁ tamhā du taṁ peyaṁ.* PSa I, 20; *karman vedaniya*, which gives rise to sensations, continues, but in an extremely subtle way, devoid of all passion.

¹⁹ Cf. SamSa 315.

knowledge in its successive phases.²⁰ He knows all beings, all places, at every moment; nothing is hidden from him.²¹

Omniscience and happiness invariably co-exist, the latter being the expression of the harmony and plenitude of being enjoyed by the omniscient one.²² From among the *kevalins*, *arhats*, or *jinas tirthaṅkaras* appear at a given moment in the ascending cycle of time, being predestined to their mission as spiritual guides by their *nāma-karman*, a meritorious *karman* that they have gained thanks to certain conditions brought into being by their own inner attitudes of perfect adherence to the doctrine.²³ The *tirthaṅkara* is particularly well-endowed for guiding and instructing others, because, by virtue of his perfect knowledge, he is aware of everything, he penetrates the spirits and hearts of those whom he is addressing and his teaching is always efficacious.²⁴

The *kevalin* is a perfect man, a model that surpasses all others, shining forth with the radiance of what are called the ten *utkr̥ṣtas*, or excellences:

²⁰ Cf. PSa I, 21-22.

²¹ . . . *arahā arahassa bhāgi, taṃ taṃ kālaṃ maṇavayaṇakāyajoge vaṭṭamāṇāṇaṃ saṃvaloe savvajivāṇaṃ savvabhāve jāṇamāṇe pāsamāṇe viharati*. KS 121. This passage gives the remarkable description of the *arhat* Mahāvira; cf. SkrS I, 6.

²² Cf. PSa I, 59-60.

²³ Cf. TS VI 24; VIII, 11.

²⁴ Cf. YB 425-426; the other *kevalins* can continue teaching as long as any vocal activity remains in them. We have already observed how, according to the Digambara tradition, *kevalins* do not teach (only the *tirthaṅkaras* do so) nor do they take any nourishment; cf. P 140.

excellence of knowledge, of vision, of conduct, of asceticism, of courage, of forbearance, of non-covetousness, of simplicity, of goodness [and] sweetness, of lightness [and beauty].²⁵

Confronted by such perfection, the gods are amazed and offer their homage.²⁶

At this point we may well wonder: how does the *kevalin* practise *dhyāna*? The reply is no easy one, for we do not know this state from our own experience and therefore we can only make conjectures in accordance with the sequence of events taking place within the very process of Liberation. The best response is that of Ācārya Kundakunda: "He centres himself on the supreme happiness."²⁷ We must understand that in this context he means that the *kevalin* does not centre himself in any ordinary manner but that he experiences his own sublime state of being where knowledge is steeped in happiness.

Elsewhere explanations and systematic classifications have been advanced based on two considerations: on the one hand, on the fact that the destructive *karmas* no longer exist and therefore the sustained effort of asceticism, of which *dhyāna* is the highest form is not now necessary; on the other hand, one knows that the *kevalin*, so long as he dwells in his *audārika*, or organic body, is still *yogin*, in this sense that the three *yogas*, in their purest form still exist in him, or that at the least one of these activities continues right up till the moment of Liberation.²⁸ There occurs within him a gradual diminution of the three *yogas*, first that of the mind, then that of speech and finally that of the body. The doctrinal texts are in general agreement in recognising that for the *kevalin dhyāna* no longer means mental

²⁵ *aṇuttare nāṇe, aṇuttare dāṇsaṇe, aṇuttare caritte, aṇuttare tave, aṇuttare vire, aṇuttarā khamti, aṇuttarā mutti aṇuttare ajjave, aṇuttare maddave, aṇuttare lāghave.* SthS 763.

²⁶ Cf. YB 426.

²⁷ *...jhādi aṇakkho param sokkham.* PSa II, 106; *aṇakkha (anakṣa):* without sense organ.

²⁸ Cf. P 381.

concentration but, if one may express it so, bodily fixation.²⁹ Moreover, when his *āyu-karman*, which determines his life-span, arrives at its term, his earthly stage will come to an end. The last of the three *yogas* is by this time extremely rarefied and now the third level of *śukla-dhyāna* is reached, called: *sūkṣma-kriyā-apratipāti*, a state in which only very slight bodily activities such as the respiratory movement remain; return is no longer possible to a state of less than perfection.³⁰ Here we must pause, for we are already on the threshold of *mokṣa*.

B - Mokṣa: Liberation

When this stage has been reached, everything happens with lightning speed; the weight of matter is so slight that nothing impedes the flight of the *ātman* in its urgency to arrive at long last at this final, definitive state.

What is *mokṣa*? At one and the same time, a radical and for all time separation of the *jīva* from *karman*, and thus from the body, and also plenitude of being, these two aspects being interdependent.³¹

The rupture occurs on earth and with this rupture the path comes to an end. When we attempt to fathom the end of the process of Liberation in the *kevalin*, we find ourselves simultaneously in this world and beyond it, for it is impossible to isolate one from another the final moments of the transition.

a) The final break-through

The *kevalin* has already ceased all bodily activity, only the respiratory movement continuing within him. After a few moments

²⁹ Cf. YSas XI, 11.

³⁰ Cf. TS IX, 39-40; US XXIX, 72 says that this phenomenon lasts less than a *muhūrta*; cf. also DhyanSat 81.

³¹ Cf. DravSam 37; these two aspects correspond to *dravya-mokṣa* and *bhāva-mokṣa*.

even the respiration stops. Between the moment of this cessation and that in which the *kevalin* abandons both his body and this world, the time is so brief that it permits the utterance of just five syllables.³² At this same moment the last stage of *śukla-dhyāna* occurs, which is called *vyuparata-kriyā-anivartī*, the state of absolute, irreversible immobility.³³ The explanation of this rupture is not far to seek: it is due, at one and the same time, to the extinction of the four non-destructive *karmas* and to the complete cessation of the three *yogas*, the very slight remaining bodily activity being the last to disappear.³⁴ Simultaneously, leaving behind its *audārika*, *taijasa* and *kārmaṇa* bodies, the *ātman* springs upwards and reaches the loftiest heights of the universe.³⁵ This spontaneous leap upwards belongs, as we know, to its nature, so that, when nothing any longer impedes it, it discovers once again its own natural lightness and follows its own natural movement.³⁶

b) Full Realisation

In this same leap upwards, as the *ātman* ascends, all karmic dust and heaviness is shed, together with all forms of *yoga*, and the result is total purity; the *ātman* is realised in its plenitude. Now everything is of the utmost simplicity, for a unity of being has been achieved. We should of course recall to mind that, at the moment of *mokṣa* and in the immediately following eternal state of the *siddha*, there is no increase of *jñāna* or the other perfections, for from the moment when

³² Cf. DS IV, 23, 23-25; US XXIX, 72; YSas XI, 57; the syllables are: *a, i, u, r, l*.

³³ Cf. TS IX, 39-40; cf. also DhyānSat 82; 89.

³⁴ Cf. TS X, 2-4.

³⁵ Ibid., X, 5; US XXIX, 73; YSas XI, 58. Re. the different bodies, cf. TS II, 36 and P 300 n. 59.

³⁶ Cf. DravSam 2 (285); TS X, 6-8.

the ascetic attains the state of *kevalin*, since the four destructive *karmas* have now been annihilated, he possesses the four perfections in plenitude. *Mokṣa*, by delivering the *kevalin* from matter, the body and *karman*, separates him entirely and for ever from all that constitutes form and permits him to rest in that state of pure consciousness that is proper to him, a state that is form-less. *Ātman* is the cause of *mokṣa* and *mokṣa* is attained in and through *ātman*.³⁷ If one wished to express the essence of all asceticism, it could be summed up in one single word which embraces everything: *ātma-dhyāna*. Without *ātma-dhyāna*, the hope of reaching *mokṣa* will be in vain, but through *ātma-dhyāna* the *ātman* is transformed into *paramātman*.³⁸ The word *paramātman* simply designates the same *ātman*, but the *ātman* in its plenitude, freed from the body. Ācārya Kundakunda sheds a ray of light for us on the nature of this reality when he speaks of the realisation of the *śuddhātman*, the *ātman* in total purity of being. How is this realisation possible? By laying hold upon '*aham*', the 'I' in the core of its being, by means of *prajñā*, the faculty of knowing, of discernment. Just as through *prajñā* the rupture with matter is effected, so also through *prajñā* is the '*aham*' realised; in other words, *ceṭā*, pure consciousness of being, when grasped by *prajñā*, is in truth *aham*; *drṣṭā*, the seer, the one who has inner vision, when grasped by *prajñā*, is in truth *aham*; *jñātā*, the knower of inner reality, when grasped by *prajñā*, is in truth *aham*; *aham* and *aham* alone, identified here with the *ātman*, is. All the rest, all that constitutes the domain of the mental, of the affective, of thoughts, sentiments and impressions is other and does not belong to the essential *aham*.³⁹

³⁷ Cf. DravSam 39-40.

³⁸ Cf. ADh IX, 29; YSas XII, 12.

³⁹ *kaha so ghippai appā paṇṇāc so u ghippae appā jaha paṇṇāc vibhatto taha paṇṇā eva ghittavvo.* SamSa 296.
paṇṇāc ghittavvo jo ceda so aham tu nicchayado avasasā je bhāvā te majjha pare tti nāyavvā. SamSa 297.
paṇṇāc ghittavvo jo daṭṭhā so aham. . . SamSa 298.
paṇṇāc ghittavvo jo nādā so aham. . . SamSa 299.

Finally, as the road comes to an end and the journey is over, let us, before meeting the *siddha* in his eternal beatitude, pause an instant, cast a glance behind us, a glance that will take in this long, long pilgrimage, fraught with hardships. We shall descry clearly among the brambles, rocks and undergrowth, certain landmarks: *ratnatraya*, the *mahāvratas*, *tapas*, *dharma-dhyāna*, *śukla-dhyāna*. We understand more clearly now the import of these landmarks and the sure intuition, the fruit of inner harmony, that has guided the *arhats* and *ācāryas* of the past. Viewed from the place where it comes to an end, this road no longer seems so inaccessible, and all the hardships encountered on the way now seem slight, compared to the plenitude of being and eternal joy to which, once they have been surmounted, they lead.⁴⁰

C - *Nirvāṇa*: Eternal Bliss

At the moment of break-through, the *ātman* leaves the body, matter, this earth. *Mokṣa* lasts a few moments, after which the *ātman* is in a final and eternal state. *Nirvāṇa* is the state of the *paramātman*, once the break-through has occurred. Etymologically, *nirvāṇa* means: extinguished, in the same sense as the flame of a lamp is extinguished. Here the reference is to the complete extinction of all *karmas* and of all suffering and, since in the context of Jainism this extinction leads to plenitude of being, the word denotes that state over which time has no longer any hold, a state which is beyond all contingency and, hence, constitutes eternal happiness. *Nirvāṇa* has been the topic of scarcely any speculation: when these heights have been reached, what can be said or thought, for this state is beyond the range of any thought, word, imagination or description? One can only describe it as ineffable and venture a few stammering words. Let us simply go through what the *Āgamas* and the *ācāryas* of the past have said with great sobriety in its regard. When the ascetic Keśi, the disciple of Pārśvanātha, questioned the ascetic Gautama, the disciple of Mahāvira, about the *dharma* taught by his Master, the question of

⁴⁰ Cf. DS III, 14-15.

supreme bliss came, as we observe, at the end of the dialogue.⁴¹ Keśi asks Gautama:

"O Muni! For beings who are suffering in body and in spirit do you know some peaceful place, a place of well-being, without tribulations?"⁴²

Gautama replies:

"There exists, at the summit of the universe, an eternal place, difficult of access, where is neither old age, nor death, nor sickness.⁴³

Nirvāṇa [is this place] to which the great Sages attain; at the summit of the universe, [a place] without torments, without tribulations, [a place] of perfection, peace and well-being."⁴⁴

Nirvāṇa is the supreme goal. It is the quintessence of that towards which one is striving, once one has set forth on the way.⁴⁵ It is averred that without *mokṣa* one cannot reach *nirvāṇa*⁴⁶ and, if one wants to pursue the idea still further, one calls it: *paramanirvāṇa*, that which is reached by the one who abides rootedly in the *dharma*;⁴⁷ certain texts call it *parinirvāṇa*, the place reached by the perfect,

⁴¹ Cf. I 2. ff.

⁴² *sārira-māṇase dukkhe bajjhamāpāṇa pāṇiṇaṁ
khemam sivaṁ anābhāṁ thāṇaṁ kiṁ sannasī muni!* US XXIII, 80.

⁴³ *atthi egaṁ dhuvaṁ thāṇaṁ logaggammi durāruhaṁ
jattha natthi jarā maccū vāhiṇo veyyaṇā tahā.* US XIII, 81.

⁴⁴ *nivvāṇaṁ ti abāhaṁ ti siddhi logaggameva ya
khemam sivaṁ anābhāṁ jaṁ caraṇti mahesiṇo.* US XXIII, 83.

⁴⁵ Cf. PSa I, 5-6; 11; 82; II, 107; SamSa 151; 272; SkrS I, 1, 2, 27; 3, 4, 20; 6, 21; 24; US XIX, 98; XXI, 20.

⁴⁶ Cf. US XXVIII, 30.

⁴⁷ Ibid., III, 12.

liberated ascetic.⁴⁸ Sometimes it is not specifically named, but allusion to the boundless happiness of the *siddhas* allows it to be understood.⁴⁹ When a text ventures to describe the happiness which reigns in what is called *nirvāṇapura*, the city of *nirvāṇa*,⁵⁰ it uses once again words that impart the idea of the infinite, the unattainable, to indicate thus that these words are very inadequate and that one must "break the sense-barrier", if one is to have even a merely approximative notion of this incomprehensible happiness. It is said also that, like a merchant, the muni, on arrival in this city, exchanges the Three Jewels for this happiness which is "endless, untouched by affliction, natural to the state of the *siddha*, incomparable and imperishable."⁵¹

It is no easier to convey an idea of the *siddha* than of *nirvāṇa*, even if this word has been, is, and will be used continuously over the centuries, for the *siddha* is the *parameṣṭhin* par excellence, one whose perfection is always extolled to gain encouragement to persevere in imitation of him and, equally, because the utterance of the word has always a beneficial and salutary effect. *Siddha* means: perfect, accomplished and, thence, he who has reached the heights of perfection, the eternally blessed. The *Ācārāṅga-sūtra* has perhaps the most fitting approach, when it describes the ineffable reality of the *paramātmā* state by a negative approach, that of apophatism, affirming that the *siddha* is totally beyond anything that men know; he is:

neither long, nor small, nor round, nor triangular, nor quadrangular, nor circular; neither black, nor blue, nor red, nor yellow, nor white; nor sweet-smelling nor bad-smelling, nor

⁴⁸ Ibid., XXIX, 41; 58; 73; XXXV, 21.

⁴⁹ Ibid., XXIX, 38; XXXVI, 21.

⁵⁰ Cf. DhyānSat 60.

⁵¹ *tattha ya tirayaṇaviṇiogaṃ mayamegāṃtiyaṃ nirābāhaṃ
sābhāviyaṃ niruvamaṃ jaha sokkhaṃ akkhyāṃ uverāṃti.* DhyānSat 61.

bitter, nor sharp, nor astringent, nor acid, nor sweet, nor hard, nor soft nor heavy, nor light, nor cold, nor hot, nor smooth, nor rough; bodiless; he is not born over again; he [is] without contact [with matter]; neither woman nor man, nor neutral [without sex]; he has perfect knowledge, he [is] conscious, but there is no comparison [possible between him and anything else]; being without form, indescribable; he [is] neither sound nor form, nor odour, nor taste, nor touch, nor anything of this sort. Thus say I.⁵²

We have made an attempt to describe, or rather to imagine, the community of the *siddhas*⁵³ with the help of conjectures found in the doctrine. The place reserved for them at the summit of the universe is sometimes called *iṣat-prāgbhārā*, slightly inclined, which suggests the shape of an upturned umbrella, but it is better known under the name *siddha-loka*.⁵⁴ Eight characteristics are attributed to the *siddhas* and it is indicated that they possess the form of a man, without the meaning of this phrase being made clear.⁵⁵ An attempt is also made to differentiate them in accordance with twelve aspects related to their

⁵² *se ṇa dihe, ṇa hasse, ṇa vaṭṭe, ṇa taṃse, ṇa cauraṃse, ṇa parimaṃḍale. ṇa kiṇhe, ṇa ṇile, ṇa lohie, ṇa hālidde, ṇa sukkille. ṇa subbhigaṃdhe, ṇa durabhigaṃdhe. ṇa tūtṭe, ṇa kaḍue, ṇa kasāe, ṇa aṃbīle, ṇa mahure. ṇa kakkhaḍe, ṇa mauc, ṇa garue, ṇa lahuc, ṇa sie, ṇa uphe, ṇa ṇiddhe, ṇa lukkhe. ṇa kākū. ṇa ruhe. ṇa saṃge. ṇa itthi, ṇa purise, ṇa aṇṇahā pariṇṇe saṇṇe. uvamā ṇa vijjāe, arūvi saṭṭā, apayassa payaṃ ṇatthi. se ṇa sadde, ṇa rūve, ṇa gaṃdhe. ṇa rase, ṇa phāse, iccētāva. tū bemi.* AS I, 5, 6, 4.

⁵³ Cf. *Aupapātika-sūtra* 153-189; US XXXVI, 56-57; 64-68.

⁵⁴ For a description of this place, cf. US XXXVI, 58-63; JSK III, p. 334-335.

⁵⁵ Cf. *DravSam* 51. According to AS I, 5, 6, 4 and US XXXVI, 67 they are *arūpa*, formless, that is to say, immaterial beings and thus without visible form; US XXXVI, 65 says that the dimension of the *ātman* of any one of them is in accordance with that possessed by this same embodied *ātman* before Liberation.

place of origin and previous state of existence.⁵⁶ From these indications we may conclude that the doctrine recognises in each *siddha* an entity which keeps its own personality, while at the same time having attained the highest perfection. Since they possess *kevala-jñāna*, the *siddhas* certainly are known to one another. Furthermore, the degree of perfection being in each one absolute, all possess it in like manner and thus there is no difference between them in regard to the plenitude they enjoy, a plenitude of life, knowledge and vision.⁵⁷

Each *ātman* purified, detached, freed from all that was not proper to it, abides in that joy supreme which belongs to its true nature.⁵⁸ This is a bliss beyond compare.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Cf. TS X, 9.

⁵⁷ Cf. US XXXVI, 67.

⁵⁸ . . . *svabhāvajarṇ saukhyam*. . . YSas XI, 61.

⁵⁹ . . . *atulaṃ suhaṃ saripattā uvamā jassa natthi u*, US XXXVI, 67.

PART III

THE NEVER-ENDING PILGRIMAGE

*Through knowledge, faith, right conduct,
austerity, patience, freedom from cupidity,
mayst thou grow [in perfection]!*¹

The life of the *sādhvis* is a never-ending pilgrimage. They go on foot from place to place, they make a stop here or there, for some days or some weeks, and then take the road again. This *itinerant* life is a sign of their inner pilgrimage, of which the goal, the sole goal, is *nirvāṇa*, while the means of reaching *nirvāṇa* is constant vigilance in a sustained effort to purify the *ātman*. It is for the sake of this purification that the *sādhvis* are *anagārīs*, homeless ones, with no fixed abode. This ceaseless pilgrimage is intended to help them to be free of all attachment and at the same time it enables them to become apostles of the *dharma*. Throughout the duration of their *vihāras* (journeys from place to place) the *sādhvis* lead amongst themselves a very close community life and also always enter into relationship with the *saṃgha* of the place where they are staying; however, each pursues her own inner pilgrimage in the solitude of her own *ātman*. The *ācārya*, the *guruṇi* and the elder *sādhvis* act as guides and valued helps, but it is by personal effort that the lengthy and slow purificatory process is achieved. This effort is sustained by the example of the *tīrthaṅkaras*, above all by that of Mahāvira, and by the example of so many ascetics, both men and women.

¹ *nāṇeṇa dāṃsaṇeṇaṃ ca caritṭeṇa taveṇa ya
khamṭie mutṭie vaddhamāṇo bhavāhi ya.* US XXII, 26.
After the *dikṣā* of Neminātha, Vāsudeva or Kṛṣṇa, on leaving him,
addresses to him these words of blessing; cf. P 103.

1. The heritage of the past

The *sādhvis* of our own day and age are deeply-rooted in their tradition. Any approach, meeting or endeavour to know from the inside their manner of life presupposes that one has a knowledge of this religious tradition, which is based upon a solid groundwork of doctrine.² Here in brief are some preliminary pointers for a meeting with contemporary *sādhvis*.

In the foot steps of the *vītarāgas*, the passion-less, the desire-less

A *vītarāga* is that sage who, having renounced the world, is fully master of himself; he has subjugated all his passions, all desires, and pursues his earthly pilgrimage in perfect serenity. According to Jaina doctrine, a *vītarāga* is an *arhat*, an omniscient one whose *karmas* such as shroud the Three Jewels have been removed. One becomes a *vītarāga* only at the end of a long and painful journey. The *sādhvis* take their inspiration from Mahāvira, the supreme *vītarāga*.³ They are potential *vītarāgas*, whose whole striving is directed towards that detachment which amounts to a total self-dispossession, in order to reach a state of perfect equanimity.

The major *Sūtras*

These stem directly from the teaching of Mahāvira and were transmitted orally and then committed to writing for the ascetics of all future generations.⁴ They convey first and foremost a certain spirit, a spirit of renunciation and equanimity. It is impossible to insist too much on this foundation-stone, upon which rests the whole structure of Jaina asceticism. In tune with this orientation, rules have been drawn up. These are numerous, repetitive and highly detailed and it is

² Parts I and II form a preparation for this Part III.

³ One recalls the beautiful passages of AS I, 8 (117 ff.) with their sober descriptions of all that Mahāvira endured before becoming a *kevalin*, a *vītarāga*.

⁴ Cf. P 141 ff.

the sādhis' duty to observe them. These rules are simply guides for both personal and community life. Some discipline must surely be followed, because, for the ascetic, negligence and carelessness are major hindrances which drag her on the road to perdition. In the long run, however, as the ascetic is gradually confirmed in the way of the *vitāṛāgas*, so, correspondingly, the rules are left behind. The major *Sūtras* which all sādhis know by heart - not by a mechanical repetition of the words but by the putting of these same words into practice in their lives - are: the *Daśavaikālika* and the *Uttarādhyayana* and, in addition, the *Ācārāṅga* for those who are permitted to read and study the *Āgamas*.⁵ This Part, which presents the life of contemporary sādhis, relies chiefly on these three *Sūtras*, though it gives some references also to the *Sūtrakṛtāṅga*, the *Sthānāṅga* and the *Āvaśyaka* which is only concerned with the daily rite, not with the rules.⁶

Here we must say a few words on the subject of the *Cheda-Sūtras*; they contain highly repetitive lists of rules which follow no systematic order, exceptions to these rules and various sorts of penance to be performed in cases of their infringement. These *Sūtras* add nothing, as regards the path to be followed, to the *Daśavaikālika*, the *Uttarādhyayana* and the *Ācārāṅga*. As we are interested both in the basic principles of Jain asceticism and in the life-style of contemporary sādhis, we refer fairly frequently to the *Cheda-Sūtras*, at least in regard to what is still surviving vigorously in our day and we introduce them briefly in the section which deals with expiatory rites.⁷ We must add, for it is an important point, that the Tapāgaccha sādhis are forbidden to read these *Sūtras* and that the other sādhis, generally

⁵ Apart from the DS and the US, the Tapāgaccha sādhis, who make up more than half of the total number of sādhis, can, as a general rule, only study certain other *Sūtras* by special permission of the ācārya and in conjunction with certain forms of abstinence. The majority of them know personally only the DS and the US. With regard to the other *Sūtras*, what they do know of them they have learnt by listening to munis' *pravacanas* and also through literature in the local language.

⁶ Cf. P 313 ff. for the teaching on obligations and Part IV for the rite.

⁷ For these rules, exceptions and penances, of which quite a lot are not observed nowadays, cf. Deo, 1960.

do not attach much importance to the study of these *Sūtras*, for the rules to be observed are transmitted orally by the *guruṇi* from one generation to the next and it is the *ācārya* who assigns the penances for more serious offences. As regards the rules which apply to the *āryikās*, we shall use for the most part the book of *Āryikā Jñānamatī*, who drew from the *Mūlacāra*, the *Pravacanasāra*, the *Anagāradharmāṇṭa* and other Digambara texts.⁸

The various communities

In our study of the development of decline of the *saṃgha* in each region, we have seen that the form of radical asceticism peculiar to the *Jaina dharma* is extremely difficult to live out and that, exposed to the winds and currents of change in the various places and epochs, the original fervour sometimes considerably decreased. Compromises leading to a less rigorous ascetic practice have nearly always been related to some modification of the vow of *aparigraha*, which meant that certain ascetics abandoned, either completely or periodically, the itinerant life in favour of the stable life of the monastery. Stability was favourable towards the acquisition and possession of land, goods and money.⁹ This sort of material possession led in turn to more subtle, but no less disastrous, attachments such as the attribution of importance to reputation or honours, and once one is again embroiled in the affairs and intrigues of this world, it is more difficult, if not impossible, to adhere to the commitments made in one's vows with all their demands. This sort of relaxation of standards occurred among the *Digambaras* and *Śvetāmbaras*, and in the various regions from North to South.

After long periods of decadence due principally to this resort to stability, there always came to the fore, in successive epochs, certain ascetics and also certain *śrāvakas* of great fervour, to inspire return to the strict observance, to set in motion a movement of renewal, even sometimes of reform. In our own day, after several attempts to return

⁸ Cf. P 630 ff.

⁹ Cf. P 167 ff.

to the primitive ideal, the ascetics have, on the whole, returned to the itinerant life.

The sādhhvis and āryikās followed the example of the ācāryas and munis, both in regard to stability and in regard to reform. On account of the internal structure and prevailing outlook of the *saṃgha*, it was never feasible for a movement to be launched by any of their number; however certain ones, from the beginning of the last century, have been courageous pioneers within their own group.

Among the Śvetāmbaras the major differences revolve chiefly around worship. Thus there are two distinct groups: the Mūrtipūjakas who perform *pūjā* (temple-worship) and the Sthānakavāsis and Terāpanthis¹⁰ who offer *bhāva-pūjā* (inner worship) in buildings set aside for their spiritual exercises. The majority of Mūrtipūjaka sādhhvis belong to the Tapāgaccha, the remainder to the Kharataragaccha.¹¹ Apart from the question of *bhāva-pūjā* addressed to the *tirthaṅkaras*, for which the Mūrtipūjaka sādhhvis repair to the temple, while the Sthānakavāsis and Terāpanthis stay in their temporary lodging-place, there is not essential difference between them as to spirituality, doctrine, rules or rituals; there are simply particularities proper to each community. These which have a certain importance are indicated in the course of this Part.

Among the Digambaras, on account, probably, of the radical austerity of the munis' way of life and also on account of the decreasing number of members of the *saṃgha*, the laxity of life was for several centuries fairly general. It required all the ardent fervour and spiritual vigour of the great poet Banarasidasa, at the beginning of the XVIth century, to disturb the torpor of those who were comfortably installed in their monasteries and to set in motion a salutary awakening and renewal.¹² The munis and āryikās of today are a tiny minority, a minority which compels itself to live in

¹⁰ Cf. P 200; 247.

¹¹ Cf. P 177.

¹² P 171-172.

accordance with the ideal traced by the first sages of their tradition. The way of life of the āryikās and the basic doctrinal difference which distinguishes them from the sādhis, namely *strimukti-niṣedha*, denial of Liberation to womankind, are dealt with in the last chapter of this Part.

2. An existential approach

We now follow closely the major *Sūtras*, relating them to our own contemporary context and using the translations and commentaries of both munis and sādhis. In addition to these *Sūtras*, this Part has also drawn inspiration from sundry writings of sādhis and āryikās, but these texts and writings would alike remain very distant from us, if there had not been meetings with numerous sādhis and some āryikās.

Coolness and burning heat

This is the title of a journal kept over a period of twenty-four years, very condensed and lively and with a deeply thoughtful content, by Mahāsati Śrī Umarāvakumvara, when, with her group, she was making a lengthy *vihāra* of several years duration, walking on foot from the burning desert of Rājasthāna to the snow-clad heights of the Himālayas.¹³ The Mahāsati, in her preface, says that the ascetics are perpetual vagabonds. She compares the refreshing cool and beauty of certain regions and the heat, scorching wind and aridity of other regions to the spiritual climate of the ascetic's pilgrimage. She points out clearly that, in this pilgrimage, it is the burning heat, that of *tapas*, of that austerity which plays its part in the destruction of *karman*, that is predominant. This process of purification gives rise in those sādhis who are zealous to a gradually increasing coolness, the refreshing coolness which characterises that spirit which is disengaged from matter. Another element of coolness on this arid path is the maternal affection of the guruṇi.

The five chapters of this Part indicate the different stages occurring in the life of the *anagāris* (homeless ones) from the *dīkṣā*

¹³ Cf. Umarāvakumvara, 1962.

(consecration) until the *mahāprasthāna* (Great Departure) and the daily activities of the *śramaṇis*, those who labour for their own purification - contributing the while to that of others from before sunrise to after sunset. Although such an introduction to the life of the *sādhvis* is neither exhaustive nor very detailed, it may well give the impression that this life consists all day long in numerous observances, rites and varied practices. This is a feature common to all the monastic and ascetic traditions. One must, most certainly, have a knowledge of the observances, but it is above all necessary to grasp the spirit which inspires them and the goal towards which they tend. For, after all, what matters is *nīścaya-cāritra*, action which is inspired by purely spiritual motives, the interiorisation of all the observances.¹⁴

Fragrant blossoms on the way

Chapter six is based upon eleven biographical accounts of *sādhvis*, dating from the middle of the last century to our own day. On the rough road of asceticism each biography, which is at one and the same time personal and linked with the life of the *saṃgha*, is like a sweet-smelling flower, fragrant with the perfume of the often heroic virtues of the particular *sādhvi*. Certain of these flowers were of short duration and remained hidden up until their final days. Others had long lives and yet others held important positions in the *saṃgha*, sometimes, even, in society at large. This delicate fragrance has not evaporated with the disappearance of the flower; it persists, even after long years. It is the fragrance of authentic sanctity which inspires and sustains other *sādhvis*. Through these biographies we get to know the *sādhvis* and their way of life in an existential, concrete and direct fashion and we grasp too how necessary are at the first stage of the path, observances, even those that seem highly restrictive, and how at a later stage, when the spirit is awakened and matured in wisdom, only the essentials are maintained.

A unique collaboration

Sādhvis of the various *saṃpradāyas* collaborated personally, intelligently, actively and directly in the shaping of this Part. In the

¹⁴ Cf. SamSa 383-386.

course of my numerous and frequent *vihāras*, in Rājasthāna, Dillī, Gujarāta, Mahārāṣṭra, Mumbai and environs and Madras, I was always received amicably and with much kindness by the *sādhvis*, as also by those of their number who passed through Vārāṇasi when I was living there. Certain *sādhvis* in the course of our regular colloquia replied to my questions in person, while others have continued to instruct me from a distance by writing their replies to my fresh requests for explanations. Several have procured documents for me, biographies in particular, or have had books sent to me through the kindness of *śrāvakas*. To indicate more fully what this study owes to each *sādhvi*, each *guruṇi*, each community, many pages would be needed.¹⁵ This friendly collaboration is unique in this sense that each *sādhvi* is unique. Like their elders whose Names are engraved in stone or inscribed on parchment, or whose memory is recalled by *samādhi-mandiras*¹⁶ and images, so also each present-day *sādhvi* bears a Name, each strives to follow the spirit of the *dharma*, each is worthy of the deepest respect. Another aspect of this collaboration has been the active part played by the *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* of the local *saṃghas*. Several of them have helped me discover the whereabouts of the *sādhvis* or have offered me hospitality during my stay. A larger number of them have given me interesting pieces of information and, on occasion, documents. Moreover the few *munis* whom I have met have assisted me with wise advice. This whole study, and especially this Part, is the result of this collaboration on the part of the *sādhvis* and, with them, that of the *caturvidhaṣaṃgha*.

The whole of chapter seven, which is devoted to the *āryikās*, was written under the inspiration and guidance of *Āryikā Jñānamatī* Mātāji, who not only wrote a book in answer to my questions, but was kind enough to furnish me with explanations and further comments upon it during my stays in Hastināpura. There also the *brahmacārins* and *brahmacārīṇīs*, *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* all joined with Mātāji, each in his or her own way, to render me assistance.

¹⁵ In the ns. of the following chs. the names are given of the *sādhvis* who contributed in a very particular way to the clarification of certain ideas and certain aspects of their life as *sādhvis*.

¹⁶ Cf. P 254 ff.

3. The voice of the Sādhvis

In the course of one conversation, a learned *guruṇi* considered as liberal in her *gaccha* told me how grateful she was to *Ācārya Vinoba Bhaye* and his women disciples who, a few years back, launched a national movement, with local branches, called *striśakti* or the energy (power) of womankind. This movement is concerned with womankind who has for long centuries been relegated and confined to the house and permitted, except very exceptionally, no active part in social life.¹⁷ This movement sets out to help girls and women, especially in the rural areas, to become aware of their latent potential and then to help them take initiatives in their personal lives for the service of society at large, particularly in the struggle against the injustice to which so many women and children have been subjected. *Striśakti* is the sign of the start of a new era in which, little by little, women are beginning to assert themselves in all social spheres.

Just when this movement was taking birth, there was also coming into being among the *sādhvis*, thanks to certain *ācāryas* and *guruṇis* and to some enlightened *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās*, an awakening of consciousness of the necessity for more regular, deeper and broader studies both for the candidates for *dikṣā* and for the *sādhvis*. There had been, well before this period, certain heroic *guruṇis* and *sādhvis* who, having themselves blazed the trail, were followed by their own disciples, but these were isolated cases. Now, however, for the past several years, we are witnessing a common effort towards openness in certain *sampradāyas*, among the *Kharataragaccha*, *Sthānakavāsi* and *Terāpanthi* *sādhvis*. The initiatives vary: In certain groups some *sādhvis* pursue higher studies and then teach their young companions under the direction of the *guruṇi*; in other groups, the *vairāginis*, or candidates for *dikṣā*, and several *sādhvis* are sent to a college for *vairāginis* and *sādhvis*.¹⁸ Among the *Tapāgaccha* *sādhvis*, however,

¹⁷ Cf. P 87 ff.

¹⁸ Cf. P 466 ff. These initiatives are still very isolated ones. From an enquiry conducted among 100 *sādhvis*, most of them *Sthānakavāsi*, on the subject of the need for more advanced study the following replies may be noted: 60 were desirous of solid teaching and training; 17 also wanted to learn English well in order to be able to communicate with girls and women

the most important group, there is so far very little inclination towards advanced study, although some sādhvis have understood the necessity of pursuing further study and instructing their disciples.

Furthermore, it has been established from fairly recent statistics that there are fewer and fewer young widows and more and more girls who request dikṣā. In certain groupings a vairāgiṇī is usually permitted dikṣā after a long period of probation of which a large portion is spent in study.

A śrāvaka who helped found the first Sthānakavāsi college for sādhvis told me that he was deeply desirous that the sādhvis should be enabled to organise themselves into a sort of federation with certain ones of their number at its head. This initiative, however, could only be authorised by agreement between all four branches of the saṃgha. For such a development it will be necessary to wait until the sādhvis of the various sampradāyas enjoy a certain autonomy within the saṃgha. For the moment courageous and intelligent gurus are forging ahead, while still staying within the structures.

Will we ever see a sādhvi Upadhyāya or a sādhvi Ācārya? In the present situation such a thing would be unthinkable and yet the Vyavahāra-sūtra indicates it as a possibility. However, it is laid down that a sādhvi can be elevated to the rank of Upadhyāya thirty years after her dikṣā and a muni after three and that a sādhvi may be raised to the status of Ācārya sixty years after her dikṣā, a monk after five.¹⁹ What proof of overbearing masculine superiority! However, even if this superiority continues and even if one cannot change the text of certain Āgamas, we may have recourse to the evidence: at the present time the number of sādhvis is more than twice that of munis and the number of well-educated sādhvis is growing fairly rapidly. One day it might well come about that sādhvis were the initiators of a spiritual renewal. This is exactly what Āryikā Jñānamati Mātāji has already brought about in a restricted group, where the monks pay her an even greater reverence in that she is self-educated, thanks to being endowed

who speak it fluently; 20 were satisfied with the prevailing state of affairs; 3 did not reply; cf. Bordiya, 1975, p.273.

¹⁹ Cf. VS VII, 19-20.

with a lively and penetrating intelligence and an extraordinary capacity for concentration and perseverance.

The various communities ²⁰

The major *sampradāyas* (sects) since the beginning of the Christian era

A. Digambara

Āryikās (sometimes called sādhis) belonging to the *Sarasvatī gaccha* (group): temple-worship for the śrāvakas and śrāvikās, veneration of images by the ascetics; several Ācāryas.²¹

B. Śvetāmbara

Sādhis (sometimes called Āryas)

a) Mūrtipūjaka: temple-worship for the śrāvakas and śrāvikās, veneration of images by the ascetics. Divided (munis, sādhis, śrāvakas, śrāvikās) into two major *gacchas*:

i) The *Tapāgaccha*,²² very important, subdivided into smaller groups; several Ācāryas.

ii) The *Kharataragaccha* formerly very important, now a minority group; one or two (?) Ācāryas.

b) Sthānakavāsi; a *sampradāya* which was a reform out of the Mūrtipūjakas (Gujarāta, beginning of XVIII c.); no temples nor veneration of images; 13 texts of Scripture not recognised as *Āgamas*.

²⁰ This table refers to the communities of ascetics with which we deal in this study and which include the majority of the communities of sādhis and āryikās.

²¹ For the other Digambara *sampradāyas*, cf I P 172.

²² Tapāgaccha and Kharataragaccha are the titles of *gacchas*, but they are used in everyday speech to denote also the members of these same groups.

Further divided into:

i) One *Śramanasamgha* headed by one single Ācārya, assisted by munis; focus of unity for the ascetics of Rājasthāna and Panjāba.

ii) Some smaller local *gacchas*; several Ācāryas. Sādhvis also called *Mahāsatis*.

c) Terāpanthi: a *sampradāya* (*gaṇa*) which was a reform out of the Sthānakavāsīs (Rājasthāna, 2nd half of XVIII c).

- no *gaccha*,
- one single Ācārya with supreme authority
- one single Sādhvi Pramukhā under direct obedience to the Ācārya.

Chapter 1.

The *anagāris*: The home-less ones

Who are they, these perpetual pilgrims?
Whence do they come?
Where do they lodge during their halts?

*Having left the family roof, the renouncing muni
must recognise those bonds that hold men in thrall.¹*

A - They are recognised by these two signs:

the *śvetavastra*: a white clothing
the *rajoharaṇa*: a small broom made of white wool.

Who are they?

Among the ascetics that cross one's path, in the villages or in the towns, one notices sometimes women clothed in white, their heads and shoulders swathed in a light veil, while under the left arm they clasp a small broom made of white wool. There are several other signs also by which *sādhvis* are distinguished, but they differ according to the various communities, while the clothing is common to them all; as for the *rajoharaṇa*, it is an unfailing sign: they are never to be found without it.

¹ *gihavāsam pariccajja pavvajjāmāsio muṇi
ime saṅge viyāṇejjā jehim sajjamti māṇavā.* US XXXV, 2;
bonds; *saṅgas*, family bonds, links with society, all that which enchains.

The sādhis are *anagāri*: without a house, or home. This is radical in its simplicity.² To be home-less leaves it to be supposed that one must live somewhere and that one leads a very different sort of life from that of the majority of human beings, who for the most part do have a home.

Arising out of this fortuitous encounter, on the road or in a town, our curiosity and interest are aroused. We are told that these are Jaina sādhis. Their appearance and in particular the *rajoharaṇa* indicate that we are here in the presence of a tradition whose customs are far from ordinary. How do we know what a sādhi is? In the first place by these external signs which distinguish her from other ascetics; each is the outward manifestation of a state of life, a path.

i) The *śvetavastra* or *śvetāmbara*: The white clothing

This is made of cotton and consists of three separate items: the *sādā* or *calappaṭṭo*: a very long full skirt, gathered at the waist, the *kaṁcavo* or *kaṁcuka*: a long blouse, with short sleeves or sleeveless and the *pachedi*: a light veil which covers the head and shoulders and extends to the waist; this is often called a *cādara*.³ This clothing is worn by all the sādhis. As a general rule, each one possesses three skirts, three blouses and four veils, of which one is for the *upāśraya*, one for out of doors, a third for giving a *pravacana* (instruction) or being present at one. To these we must add a *kambala*, or white woolen shawl, in which they wrap themselves during winter. The Mūrtipūjaka sādhis, whatever the season, always take with them, when they go out, a shawl with a red border, folded lengthwise on the left shoulder. In certain groups, the sādhis wear white cotton pyjamas for the night, others simply change their clothing at night-time. In our day, all the items of clothing are of lighter-weight or heavier-weight cotton and the shawls of wool. In the *Āgamas* mention

² Cf. KS 114; 117; 155; 164; 195, where the *arhats*: Mahāvira, Neminātha, Pārśvanātha, Rṣabha are said to be 'anagāra'.

³ The names vary in the several communities, but the style of clothing is identical. In certain *gacchas* they wear undergarments also; cf. BrKS III, 12.

is made of the five materials originally permitted for the clothing of ascetics: wool, linen, hemp, cotton and the bark of trees.⁴ Four garments are designated for sādhis, with even their measurements, but no exact details are given of their shape or precise use.⁵ We know that at a later period the number of permitted garments rose to eleven.⁶ The *Ācārāṅga-sūtra* gives to the ascetics a formal injunction not to dye or bleach the garments which are given them;⁷ this would suggest that perhaps, at that epoch, white was not strictly enjoined.

ii) The *rajoharaṇa*: The small broom of white wool

The sādhis make this themselves by fixing long strands of very soft white wool in a special way round a stick of light-weight wood of which the end may be carved. In accordance with the differing customs of the communities, the handle is wrapped either in a fine white cloth or in a thicker material on which the *aṣṭamaṅgalas* are embroidered in bright colours.⁸ Although nowadays the *rajoharaṇa* is always made of sheepswool, other materials are in fact permitted and were probably used in days gone by. These are: camelshair, hemp and two sorts of grass, *balvaja* and *muñja*.⁹ These materials, like sheepswool, are soft and light and do not harbour living particles, these three characteristics being suitable for the *rajoharaṇa*, whose essential function is to permit the sādhis to practise *ahimsā* as

⁴ Ibid. II, 29; SthS 446a.

⁵ Cf. AS II, 5, 1, 1 where silk is also mentioned; SthS 246.

⁶ Cf. Deo, 1956, pp. 480-482 on *Bṛhatkalpa-bhāṣya* and *Ogha-niryukti*; Sen, 1975, pp. 165-167.

⁷ Cf. AS II, 5, 2, 5; cf. also P 534.

⁸ Cf. P 160 ff. the Mūrtipūjaka sādhis are the only ones to have the *rajoharaṇa* with a carved handle wrapped in the *aṣṭamaṅgalas*; sometimes the embroidered motifs are the 14 *svapanas*, the dreams of the Mother of one of the *tīrthaṅkaras*. They also have a little *rajoharaṇa* for the night.

⁹ Cf. BrKS II, 30; SthS 446b.

perfectly as possible. It is their faithful companion. They use it frequently and carefully to remove any insect. There is no need for an insect to be visible, for, with regularity and with a ritual gesture, they sweep the ground before seating themselves, in order to avoid striking or squashing any living being.¹⁰ The *rajoharaṇa* has been immortalised in stone, for example in certain of the Mathurā sculptures.¹¹ In iconography the *sādhvi* is generally depicted holding the *rajoharaṇa*.

iii) *Mukhavastrikā* or *mukhapattikā*: The small piece of cloth worn over the mouth

This is a rectangle of very fine cotton or of thin plastic material that the *Sthānakavāsi* and *Terāpanthi* *sādhvis* wear over their mouths. This is held in position by two strings tied behind the ears and they only remove it at mealtimes. It is usually called a *muḥapatti* and its function is to prevent the *sādhvi* swallowing insects while speaking or breathing. The *Mūrtipūjaka* *sādhvis* do not wear the *muḥapatti*, but when they are addressing a group or even conversing, they hold it before the mouth in their right hand. Its use dates from antiquity as it is mentioned in the *Āgamas* and represented in sculpture.¹²

iv) *Pātras*: Bowls

These are used for begging alms, for food and drink. They may be calabashes or made of very light wood or, again, of earthenware.¹³ These are the only materials to be both light, easy to preserve in good condition and of modest appearance. Each *sādhvi* possesses a certain number of bowls of different sizes; they fit one inside another and are

¹⁰ Cf. NS V, 66-76 where the wrong usages of the *rajoharaṇa* are mentioned with a matching penance.

¹¹ Cf. U.P. Shah, 1975, paper No 6; figs. 17; 18; 20; 28 and ns. pp. 70-72; cf. also U.P. Shah, 1955, p. 114.

¹² Cf. e.g. US XXVI, 23; U.P. Shah, 1975, paper No 6; fig. 28.

¹³ Cf. SthS 170.

thus easily transportable. The *pātras* kept for food are of extremely light wood, while for drinking gourds are often used. As a general rule, the *sādhvis* keep their water in jugs belonging to the *śrāvakas* of the place where they are sojourning. In order to preserve them properly and avoid any decomposition of foodstuffs, the *pātras* are varnished. The *Tapāgacha* *sādhvis* have *pātras* painted red on the outside with a black stripe and yellow on the inside.¹⁴ Among the *Kharataragaccha* it is the other way round; they are painted black with a red stripe. The *Sthānakavāsi* and *Terāpanthī* *sādhvis*, on the whole, varnish their bowls without painting them.

When they are about to set out for *gocari*, the begging of food, the two appointed *sādhvis* place several *pātras* of differing sizes in a light piece of cloth that they proceed to knot at the four corners, making thus a sort of bag that they carry in the hand; as for gourds, they carry two, one on top of the other and both held by an elastic which acts as a handle.

The *sādhvis* have other *pātras* of plastic or aluminium which are used for their excrements at the time of *śauca*, the evacuation of bodily wastes. To be faithful to the *utsarga-samiti*,¹⁵ they use these vessels at night and in the towns, where it is impossible to find a solitary spot in natural surroundings.

¹⁴ Having asked several *sādhvis* of sundry groups the reason for the red and black colouring, I was given 3 different and interesting replies: by one *sādhvi* at Ahmadābād: "The red symbolizes love, the black hatred; these two colours remind us that we must always control these passions." By a *sādhvi* in Rājasthāna: "Thanks to these bright colours we can always easily spot insects on the bowls." By a third at Mumbai: "The red symbolises the *siddhas*, the black the *sādhus* (allusion to the *Namaskāra-mantra*)".

¹⁵ Cf. P 359. The majority do not use a w.c.; cf. Dasas VIII, 69, where 3 *mātras* or *pātras* are said to be permitted for *utsarga-samiti* during the monsoon. Here is one example of *ahimsā* pushed to an extreme and of rules which, being inherited from a far-distant age when the country was covered with jungle, are obsolete in our own day.

v) The *daṇḍa*: The staff

The Mūrtipūjaka sādhis always carry a *daṇḍa* when they go out, a long staff of light wood, carved at the upper end, which they hold in their left hand.¹⁶ The Śthānakavāsī sādhis only use such a staff when they are on *vihāra*. This staff enables them to remove non-violently some obstacle on the road or dangerous reptile, in which latter case it is also a means of protection. The Terāpanthī sādhis, however, use no staff.

Among other objects which are not obligatory, but which the majority of sādhis use, we must make mention of the *mālā* and *pothis*. The *mālā* is a rosary of one hundred and eight small beads, of wood, or, oftentimes, of thread or cotton, the beads being then replaced by knots. The sādhis make their own and the *mālā* is used for *japa*, although it is not considered indispensable.¹⁷ A *pothi* is a book; each sādhi has several that she carries over her shoulder in a canvas bag, along with pencils, ball-point pen and note-books, when she goes on her journeys. Usually there is one alarm-clock for a group and, wherever they land, they are provided with any remedies required and necessary sewing-things. As their stops, at any rate those of a certain length of time, take place in the bosom of a *saṃgha*, the sādhis have at their disposal in the various places, if not good libraries, at least a certain number of *Sūtras*, doctrinal texts in the local language and sometimes other books also for their study. To conclude our description let us bear in mind that the sādhis always walk barefoot and that walking is their one method of locomotion. Sometimes a very sick or aged sādhi is transported for a short distance in a palanquin, but all other methods of transport are forbidden. To walk barefoot and move from place to place on foot is common practice for a great number of ascetics. What is peculiar to the sādhis is the reason underlying this mode of conduct, namely, *ahimsā*.

¹⁶ The carving here is of double significance, the five engraved lines representing the *mahāvratas*, and the slender point Mt Meru.

¹⁷ Cf. P 478.

Now we have acquainted ourselves thus far with the *sādhvis*, let us attempt to clarify the way in which the *sādhvis* fit into the *saṃgha*, of which they are an integral part.

B - *Caturvidhasaṃgha*: The fourfold community

This expression refers to the Jaina community or brotherhood which is composed of munis, *sādhvis*, *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās*. The term *caturvidhasaṃgha* is not found in the *Āgamas*.¹⁸ In all probability after the *nirvāṇa* of Mahāvira, the pressing need was felt of some stable organisation, both to preserve the heritage of the already existing tradition and to strengthen links between the various members, living as they were in a pluralist society where struggles between the religious sects and political groups were sometimes violent. Looking back over a long period of history, one sees what a great contribution the *caturvidhasaṃgha* has made to the maintenance of a certain unity. It has permitted the continuity of the tradition, at least to a small extent, all over the country, and that through numerous vicissitudes.

Because of their situation of being *anagāri*, the *sādhvis* form part of the local *saṃgha* wherever they find themselves in the course of their journeyings. This membership is temporary, no doubt, but operates in a very concrete fashion. The *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* of the localities where they stay welcome them, show them deference and expect much of them. They are there to help them and also, on occasion, to correct or criticise them. This interdependence has the disadvantage of taking away from the *sādhvis* a certain freedom, but it also has the immense advantage of forging links in a very spiritual fellowship which by no means overlooks practical questions as they arise. The *sādhvis* are the representatives of the living doctrine; being *anagāri* within the *saṃgha*, they, together with the munis, are called to be its spiritual yeast.

The *saṃgha* refers to the general community, but in the various regions, under the influence of sundry *ācāryas* and doctrinal emphases, a number of separate units have come into being within the Jaina

¹⁸ Cf. I P 157 ff.

caturvidhasaṁgha, each unit in turn constituting a mini-caturvidhasaṁgha. We may take a quick look at the two types of unit to which reference has already been made, both of which are of ancient foundation but still in existence today.

a) The *sampradāyas*: The sects

The word means "that which is transmitted by tradition"; thence it comes to denote different schools of doctrine, and is currently often used to denote a sect. It is a normal phenomenon that within a religious tradition different currents of thought should evidence themselves and that each such current should contribute some idea special to its own day and age, some interesting fresh interpretations, such as would enable the tradition to expand and adapt itself to new needs. Unfortunately, however, the *sampradāyas* have developed a sectarian spirit, each claiming to possess a monopoly of interpretation of the teaching and condemning, or at least attacking and criticising the beliefs of other sects; hence divisions have arisen and sometimes veiled or open animosity. These divisions are the more obvious because for the last several centuries the Jainas have become a small and scattered minority; this fragmentation only serves to reinforce sectarian tendencies, for each sect often lives closed in on itself in the midst of a large Hindu majority. It should be added that even if such animosity is not at all general, yet there is often deep misunderstanding, ignorance and indifference in regard to the other sects. We have mentioned already the two major *sampradāyas*, the Digambara and the Śvetāmbara¹⁹ and also the smaller *sampradāyas* among the śvetāmbaras, namely the Mūrtipūjakas, Sthānakavāsīs and Terāpanthis.

b) The *gacchas*: The major groupings

A *gaccha* constitutes, within a *sampradāya*, a religious Society under the obedience of one or several ācāryas. Originally, the *gacchas* consisted of a restricted number of ascetics only. Later on, not only did these *gacchas* increase in size, but also, probably on account of local circumstances, śrāvakas and śrāvikās, while maintaining their

¹⁹ Cf. P 138 ff.

own state of life, were incorporated into the various *gacchas*. At the present time the two major ancient *gacchas* of the Mūrtipūjaka tradition are the Tapāgaccha and the Kharataragaccha. The Tapāgaccha is by far the most important and has numerous local branches, while the Kharataragaccha, which was formerly very flourishing, is now very reduced in size. Among the minor *gacchas* we may make mention of the Añcalagaccha and the Pārśvacandragaccha.

The Sthānakavāsi sādhhvis belong either to the Śramaṇasaṃgha which gathers together all the ascetics of Rājasthāna and Panjāba under the authority of one single ācārya, at present Ācārya Ānanda Rṣi, or to one or other of the local *gacchas* of Gujārāta which are each headed by an ācārya.

Each *gaccha* is autonomous and independent.²⁰ For the most part they do not encounter each other unless there is a local or national meeting involving all Jains or on the occasion of a celebration in common, that of Mahāvira Jayanti, for example. Even within the membership of the Tapāgaccha where sub-groups have been formed, the sādhhvis of these different groups cannot, on the occasion of a meeting, partake of a meal together.

C - The Śramaṇisaṃgha: The community of Sādhhvis

The sādhhvis are members of the *caturvidhasaṃgha*, then, within that, of a *sampradāya* and, finally, of a *gaccha*, all of these being units of progressively smaller numbers to which belong also śrāvakas and śrāvikās under one common ācārya. However, they also form a separate group with an internal structure of its own. Generally, to whatever *sampradāya* and *gaccha* they belong, the sādhhvis are divided among themselves into little groups of at least three members, though the members may be as many as ten or more. A group is called a *maṇḍala*, *maṇḍali*, or sometimes *samūha*. At the head of the group is the *guruṇi* appointed for life. It is the most senior sādhhvi who, with the agreement of the ācārya, succeeds the deceased *guruṇi*. Among the Tapāgaccha sādhhvis, where some groups contain a large number of

²⁰ There is no important difference between the *gacchas* as regards interpretation of the doctrine or mode of life of the ascetics.

members, a *guruṇi* sometimes re-divides the *sādhvis* into distinct secondary groups and appoints a *sādhvi* to assume certain responsibilities as head of such a secondary group, which then takes its leave to go on *vihāra*, but still stays under obedience to the *guruṇi*.

At the head of several groups, each of which has its *guruṇi*, is to be found a *pravartini*. Among the *Mūrtipūjaka* *sādhvis*, at least, such an office still exists, but the *pravartini* does not appear to wield any well-defined authority; it is, rather, an honorific title.²¹ The *Sthānakavāsi* *sādhvis* have, for some years already, abolished the office of *pravartini*.²²

As for the *Terāpanthi* *sādhvis* their organisation is different: one single *sādhvi*, the *Sādhvi Pramukhā*, heads the entire group. She is neither a *pravartini* nor a *guruṇi*, for all authority is in the hands of the *ācārya*. Staying always in close proximity to this latter, accompanied by about ten *sādhvis* who may change from time to time, she follows the *ācārya* and his group of *munis* in all their *vihāras*. Thus she remains in contact with him, is knowledgeable as regards all decisions affecting the *gaṇa* and is consulted on all matters concerning the *sādhvis*, but she has no direct authority. As for the other *sādhvis*, they are divided into *siṅghādas* (small groups); the leading *sādhvis* in these groups, who are called *agraganyās* are not *guruṇis*, for, on the one hand, it is the *ācārya* who is the ultimate authority upon whom each *sādhvi* depends and, on the other, an *agraganyā* is not necessarily

²¹ In the *Cheda-sūtras* allusion is quite often made to the office of *pravartini*, but her role is not defined. A *nirgranthī* who knows the *Ācārakalpa* (the *Niśītha* and other *Āgamas* dealing with the rules of conduct and with punishments, cf. VS V, 16) is worthy of being nominated as *pravartini*. In the past there existed as well the post of *gaṇini*, the *sādhvi* at the head of a *gaṇa*, and one also comes across the title *mahattarā* which seems to correspond to the present-day *guruṇi*. Cf. VS V, 13-14, where it is stated that a *pravartini* can choose and name her own successor; however, if this latter shows herself incapable of performing this function, then the *sādhvis* may choose another.

²² Formerly, the *pravartini* had an important role, as is emphasised in several biographies.

appointed for life as head of the group. Each year, on the occasion of the great gathering which is held in the place where the *ācārya* at that moment is, numerous groups of *sādhvis* are present. Each group is required to meet the *ācārya* every two or three years at least, as circumstances dictate. On their arrival the *sādhvis* present themselves before the *ācārya* and perform the *gurvandana*; then, out of fidelity to the spirit of *aparigraha*, the *agraganyā* hands back charge of her group to the *ācārya*, along with the few books and other objects that the *sādhvis* have had at their disposal. Several days later, during an official gathering, the *ācārya* assigns to each group its location for the following *cāturmāsya* (rainy season). Generally he re-appoints the same *agraganyās* to the headship of their same groups; however, he may transfer some *sādhvis* from one group to another.

The *sādhvis* lead a sisterly community life around their *guruṇi* or *agraganyā*, relating to one another in a simple way. The *guruṇi* fulfils the role of a mother or elder sister, according to her age, taking care of every aspect of the *sādhvis'* life. These links are those of a spiritual family in which the *guruṇi* is venerated on account of her knowledge of the Scriptures and of the doctrine, her life of renunciation and her wisdom. Nowhere is this daughterly veneration better expressed than in the *gurvandana-sūtra*,²³ and the *laghu-gurvandana*. Sometimes, for a young or orphan *sādhvi*, the *guruṇi* is doubly mother and very deep and strong bonds unite them to one another. Mahāsati Śrī Hukamadevi has described very well this indissoluble unity in the biography of her *guruṇi*, Mahāsati Śrī Mohanadevi, who was a truly remarkable *pravartini*.²⁴

Over the *guruṇi* and, if there is one, the *pravartini*, there is a higher authority in the person of the *ācārya*, the *upadhyāyā* or a venerable and senior *muni* appointed by the *ācārya*. The *sādhvis* consider the *ācārya* as their *guru*, the spiritual master to whom they address themselves for confession in the case of serious offence, for matters concerning the study of Scripture and other studies, for decisions relating to *vihāras*

²³ Cf. P 320 ff.; 701.

²⁴ Cf. Mahāsati Hukamadevi (undated), pp. 151-156; cf. P 618 ff.

and location for the duration of the *cāturmāsyā*, the admission of candidates for *dikṣā* and all other questions concerning their life. Usually the *sādhvis* go on *vihāra* in one direction and the *ācārya* in another, so that it is possible for several years to pass without a chance of their paths crossing; however, for necessary decision-making and for the preservation of a direct line of communication, meetings do take place more or less regularly at the request of either the *sādhvis* or the *ācārya*.

Their way of life being essentially itinerant, the *sādhvis* are dependent upon local conditions and circumstances. No details of a situation can be foreseen. However, they can always make known their needs and intentions and the *ācārya* decides accordingly. For example, in matters related to the study of the *Āgamas* or the doctrine, of Sanskrit or Prākṛit or preparation for an examination, it is not necessarily the *ācārya* who himself teaches the *sādhvis*, but it is he who issues precise instructions as to place, teachers and subjects of study.²⁵

The *sādhvis* are under the direction of their *guruṇi*, who is herself under the authority of the *ācārya*. Thus they are subject to superior masculine authority. The type of authority exercised by the *ācārya* or his delegate varies from person to person and in accordance with the different traditions of the *sampradāyas* and *gacchas*. Taking into consideration the whole body of *sādhvis* and avoiding generalisation, we may say that the *Sthānakavāsī* *sādhvis* are liberal in outlook and more progressive in their approach to studies, as well as in an appreciation of the needs of our time and of the necessity of some response thereto; moreover, they enjoy a certain autonomy. The *Terāpānṭhī* *sādhvis*, within the framework of their strict discipline, are, if not very open, at least well on the way to becoming so. Among the *Mūrtipūjaka* *sādhvis*, those of the *Kharataragaccha*, on account of their limited number and also the strong and lasting influence of their *guruṇis* of the past, intelligent and zealous pioneers that they were,

²⁵ At Ahmadābād, for example, was to be found in 1977 a group of Tapāgaccha *sādhvis* from Panjāba, sent there by their *ācārya* for 2 years in order to study certain doctrinal texts in a *pāṭhaśālā*, school for *sādhvis*.

have a certain degree of autonomy and are open-minded.²⁶ As for the Tapāgaccha sādhis, a fair number are still under the tutelage of orthodox ācāryas and live in a society which is little favourable to the emancipation of women. However, from this *gaccha* have emerged certain remarkable sādhis who must have braved innumerable difficulties before managing to do some study and acquire a certain independence, while still remaining in the *gaccha*.²⁷ On the whole, the ācāryas śrāvikās and śrāvakas, once they have overcome their initial hesitation, admire them. However, it takes exceptional courage to free oneself from secular prejudices and this courage is given only to a few outstanding sādhis, who then inspire others with the same, so that little by little the number of liberal-minded ones increases.

A *vairāgini*, whether a grown woman or a girl, who feels herself called to the ascetic life, chooses the guruṇi whom she desires for guide. The candidate makes a longer or shorter probation in the group and, after being included in their number by the ācārya and the *saṃgha*, she is consecrated through the ceremony of *dikṣā*. Henceforward and for the remainder of her life she forms part of the *śramaṇisaṃgha* and the group which has received her. However, if there are valid reasons, the ācārya may permit her to change groups.²⁸ In the case of a serious offence, it can come about that a sādhi is expelled from the *gaccha*;²⁹ it is possible, then, for her to receive *dikṣā* anew, but she will have to recommence the stages of her life as an ascetic. In other cases, a sādhi can freely request to leave the

²⁶ Cf. P 571 ff.; 584 ff.

²⁷ Sādhi Mṛgavātī Śrī and Sādhi Nirmālā (P 557 ff.) are cases in point, to quote only 2 examples.

²⁸ Cf. BrKS IV, 20, which gives factors which might favour a change of *gaṇa*, which would correspond to the present-day *gaccha*; nowadays, changes, which are rather rare, take place within the same *gaccha*.

²⁹ Cf. P 515; 519 ff.

community after several years, if she reckons that she is not suited to the ascetic life.³⁰

It is difficult to assess the total number of sādhis, except in the case of the Terāpanthis with their highly structured organisation and the Kharataragacchas whose number is very limited. Here are the findings of recent censuses:

- Mūtipūjaka sādhis 3590
- Sthānakavāsi Sādhis 1757³¹
- Terāpanthi sādhis 532³²

Thus the total number of sādhis comes to 5879.³³

Whence do they come?

D - Region and family background

The sādhis, albeit *anagārī*, have deep roots in the soil of one province or another; they speak its language and know its traditions and social set-up. They do not break with their family and friends, but they are now in a state of life different from theirs. They can see them, meet them, stay in their own native village or town, but they do not stay into the family house and their meetings are always of a spiritual character. The sādhis are consecrated to a life of asceticism, self-purification and growth in knowledge, and their relatives and friends constitute a part of all those beings to whom they must teach the way of Liberation. In the biography of Sādhi Vicakṣaṇa, there is a description of the warm and enthusiastic reception she received and

³⁰ Up to date there have been few sādhis who have asked to leave their *saṃgha*; there are more munis who have done so, these latter being, moreover, considerable fewer in total number than the sādhis.

³¹ The above figures for Mūtipūjaka and Sthānakavāsi sādhis were furnished by Pt. Malvania (L.D. Institute, Ahmedabad) from an article by A. Nāhāta in *Vijayānanda*, July 1982.

³² According to the census taken in *cāturmāsya* 1981.

³³ The Digambara āryikās are not included here; cf. P 636 ff.

the transports of joy shown by the inhabitants of Amaraṇyati in Mahārāṣṭra where she had spent her childhood, when, yielding to their pressing and repeated invitation, she came to spend the months of *cāturmāsya* in their midst after long years of absence. Moreover, at their earnest request, she was obliged to sojourn there for a second *cāturmāsya*³⁴ and, with her accustomed simplicity, even gave her consent to their celebrating her birthday which fell during the period, thus giving her compatriots a chance to make merry in a spiritual atmosphere.³⁵

The *sampradāyas*, being of considerable size, usually contain *sādhvis* of several regions,³⁶ while the *gacchas*, being more restricted in size, contain a majority of *sādhvis* from one single region. It must be added that the *śvetāmbara* Jains in particular belong for the most part to a commercial community; moreover villagers tend to migrate to the often distant towns, but they retain strong links with those who stay in the village where they were born and return there regularly to take a part in family ceremonies.³⁷

The *sampradāyas* and *gacchas*, with regard to the various regions, are made up thus:

³⁴ The very lively chapter which describes this sojourn is entitled: "In the native country", cf. Rāmapuriyā, 1966, pp. 339-348.

³⁵ Ibid., chs. 89-92.

³⁶ With the exception of the Terāpanthī *sādhvis*, who come exclusively from Rājasthāna.

³⁷ Because of the extreme importance given to *ahimsā*, many professions were formerly forbidden to Jains, and hence their choice was limited to: cloth and other businesses, the cotton industry, banking, work as jewellers, goldsmiths, booksellers. In our day, the younger generation no longer attach much importance to these restrictions and Jains are to be found in a number of previously forbidden professions, e.g. doctors, engineers, etc.

- The Tapāgaccha sādhis come for the most part from Gujarāta, especially Saurāstra and Kaccha, though they also have several groups in Panjāba, in the districts of Ambala, Ludhiyānā and Amṛtasara, most of these being sādhis from refugee families from Pakistan, from the district of Lāhora.
- The Kharataragaccha sādhis are for the most part from Rājasthāna.
- The Sthānakavāsi sādhis are of more diverse origin: Gujarāta, Rājasthāna, Madhya Pradesh, Mahārāstra, Panjāba.
- The Terāpanthi sādhis are all from Rājasthāna and in particular from Māravāda.

As for their social background, a fair number of the sādhis come from villages and from the artisan or trading communities. A much smaller number of them come from towns, from a background of business, small industries and, more rarely, from the liberal professions. Their families are often part of a group of fervent Jainas, among whom the religious tradition is preserved, spiritual exercises are practised, particularly *pratikramaṇa* and fasting and by whom the munis and sādhis are revered and given an attentive hearing. Vocations to the state of *vairāgini* thus come into being and are nurtured for the most part in a propitious soil and favourable atmosphere.

E - Family circumstances

At this point we need to go back in imagination to the end of the last century in order to get a more precise idea of the various conditions within family life that were conducive to an urge towards *vairāgya*, indifference towards the things of this world, and to an attraction for renunciation. Not infrequently the sole refuge in a girl's or young woman's life was to adopt the state of *vairāgini*. These conditions, complex as they were on account of both historical and social factors, prevailed up to these last years and still do so in certain villages of Rājasthāna and Gujarāta.³⁸ What is of particular interest to

³⁸ Cf. P 87 ff. The sādhis in the various biographies explain these factors very clearly.

us here are the family and personal reasons which have prompted a girl or young woman or a woman of maturer age to embrace this state, despite the evident fact that in the village context family bonds are very close and there is little inclination for change and novelty.

It was customary in respectable families - and indeed this custom has not yet altogether disappeared - to promise in marriage a young girl of less than marriageable age to a somewhat older boy of a family of the same caste.³⁹ The two families used to put a seal on this bond by the exchange of gifts and even by a marriage-ceremony, the bridal pair being still children; after which, for the most part, they each lived in their own family until the girl reached puberty and the boy had started work. On account of the high level of mortality in the villages, mostly due to great epidemics of cholera or smallpox or to malaria, many young girls became widows before they had embarked on the conjugal state. In accordance with the contract drawn up with the family-in-law, the young girl had to go and live a dull and apparently useless and unproductive existences in the house of her parents-in-law, where sometimes she simply fulfilled the role of a servant. This being the case, one can readily understand, particularly if she came from a devout family, that the young widow often felt a lively urge towards *vairāgya* and considered the *vairāgiṇī* state ideal, for it would give her the chance, within a close knit community life, to journey towards a self-defined spiritual goal and to study. Such is the classic and quite usual case. In many cases the family by marriage objected, but had to give in face of the young widow's determination.

In the past another type of case was also current, that of a young widow with a small girl; the young woman would join a group of *sādhvis* and, not wishing to abandon her little girl, would take her along too. Thus the child grew up among the *sādhvis*, who thus became her new family, and often she stayed and received *dikṣā* in her turn. In our own day also one meets a certain number of *sādhvis* who have followed in the footsteps of their young widowed mothers.

Certain widows, with the assistance of their families, reared their children and subsequently received *dikṣā*. Sometimes the mother and

³⁹ The Jains have their own caste-system.

the last of the children, still quite a young man, conceived the same desire and then mother and son adopted the ascetic state together, she among the *sādhvis* and he among the *mūnis*.⁴⁰

Sometimes *dikṣā* took place in fulfilment of a vow, as when, to give one example, a young widow had two children, out of which the boy was carried off by a virulent disease and the girl fell ill in her turn. The mother made a vow to receive *dikṣā* along with her daughter, if this latter were restored to health, which in fact happened.⁴¹

Sometimes also it happens - and such cases are not rare - that, of a young couple, one or other partner, often the young wife, feels herself attracted to the way of asceticism after some years of married life. If there are no children it is simpler, though the husband and his family often oppose the young woman's desire and seek to deflect her from the course she has chosen.⁴² Frequently the young husband marries again.⁴³ If one asks a *sādhī* why she did not choose this path before

⁴⁰ For example, *Sādhvī Bālū* was initiated at the age of 43 with her son, *Muni Nāthamāla*, who was 10 years old. She had brought up the three other children and was waiting to depart till the youngest should have no further need of her; as it turned out, he too felt called; cf. *Surāṇā*, 1972, pp. 8-15. At *Pāṭitāṇā*, in June 1973, a widow received *dikṣā* along with her son and her daughter, both adolescents; cf. *Kuśāla Nirdeśa*, July 1973, pp. 44-46. *Mahāsati Umarāvakumvara*, a young widow of 15 years, received *dikṣā* with her recently widowed father. After the ceremony the new muni blessed the young *sādhvī*; cf. *Umarāvakumvara*, 1962, pp.5-6.

⁴¹ This was the case with *Mahāsati Śrī Kailāśakumvara* and her daughter *Mahāsati Śrī Kusumavati*, who is now a guruṇī.

⁴² Biographies of the *sādhvis* relate examples of this sort, one of the most characteristic being that of *Sādhvī Śrī Ratnavati* (P 609 ff.).

⁴³ In instances like this, it is not always easy to decide the fate of the children; I met one *sādhvī* who had brought her little girl with her, when she joined the *sādhvis*. Her husband remarried and came to look for the girl when she was old enough to do without her mother's attentions, for he did not fancy a second *sādhvī*.

marriage, in most cases the reply is simple and straightforward: married very young as she was, it was only after attaining a certain maturity, often also after having listened to homilies given by a muni or a sādhi, that she was literally seized irresistibly by an attraction towards *vairāgya*. Sometimes it is the young husband who hears this call; the young wife follows suit and asks for admission to the community of sādhis.⁴⁴ One also meets some sādhis, whether widows or not, who receive *dikṣā* at a ripe age, followed by one or several of their adolescent daughters who regard the state of renunciation as the loftiest of ideals.⁴⁵

There are also most certainly, and increasingly frequently, vocations among girls who, in the course of their studies and for various reasons, feel themselves attracted to the ascetic life.

It would certainly be incorrect to think that all the young widow sādhis or widow's daughter sādhis of earlier generations were lacking in fervour; very much to the contrary. However, social conditions do change and nowadays we are witnessing instances of more personal choice at a more mature age, independently of family circumstances.

To make the preceding more concrete we may take note of three sets of interesting and revealing statistics. The first concerns the Terāpanthi sādhis. Under their founder and first Ācārya between the years 1764 and 1802, so one observes in the records, out of fifty-six sādhis, all had been married very young, forty-nine were widows and seven had left their husbands to join the sādhis. Under the second

⁴⁴ Cf. the biography of Sādhi Śrī Lāḍām. She was already desirous of following her husband on the ascetic path, when the latter was speedily carried off by a disease. She persevered and received *dikṣā* (P 625 ff.). Rājimati also here comes to mind (P 103 ff.). I met in Mumbai a young couple from a very well-to-do background. They were both preparing for *dikṣā*, leaving their little 4 year old girl in the hands of her grandparents.

⁴⁵ At Ahmadābād in 1977 two sādhi sisters (siblings) spoke to me of their sādhi mother and muni father.

Ācārya, out of forty-four sādhis, only one had not been married and three received *dikṣā* with their husbands.⁴⁶

The second set of figures is contained in the oldest of the biographies relating to the sādhis of our own day. It concerns a Kharataragaccha sādhi, Sādhvi Puṇya, an intrepid pioneer in an age and social background characterised by obscurantism.⁴⁷ She lived from 1858 to 1916. From a perusal of this life one can grasp the social conditions prevalent in that period and all the difficulties that she and her disciples had to surmount. The table of statistics resembles a genealogical tree, covering the years 1870 to 1960, where Sādhvi Puṇya is, as it were, the trunk of the tree and the disciples its numerous branches. Of each sādhi the name taken at the time of her *dikṣā* is given, the name before *dikṣā*, the name of her father, the name of her husband, if any, her status before *dikṣā* (girl, widow, married), place and date of birth, place and date of *dikṣā*, the name of her guruṇi and whether the said sādhi is alive or deceased (in which case the location of her Great Departure is also supplied).

From all this information one glean the following facts:

- All these young sādhis belonged, or belong, for some are still alive, to families of Rājasthāna, even if one or another was born elsewhere.
- Out of 193 sādhis recorded, 140 were young widows, 29 unmarried girls, 17 left their husbands to join the sādhis. In the case of 7, their status before *dikṣā* proved unverifiable.
- The average age of the majority, at the time of *dikṣā*, was between eighteen and twenty-five years. A small number were between twelve and eighteen years or, in the case of others, between twenty-five and fifty years.

Only from 1952 onwards, and thus fairly recently, does one note that there is a majority of unmarried girls and very few widows and one young woman who broke the marriage-bond. The age of the girls

⁴⁶ Cf. Muni Navaratnamala, op. cit., cf. P 247 ff.

⁴⁷ P 575 ff.

is between fourteen and twenty-one years, with just one being ten years old at the time of her *dikṣā*.

The third set of figures comprises some recent statistics taken of the *Sthānakavāsi* *sādhvis*. Out of 100 *sādhvis* encountered, their status before *dikṣā* was found to be as follows:

- 53 ~~were~~ unmarried girls, 16 married women. One had been abandoned by her husband and 30 were widows.⁴⁸
- The average age at the time of *dikṣā*: between ten and twenty years.⁴⁹

Where do they stay during their halts?

F - The *upāśraya*: The refuge

Where do these *sādhvis* encountered on the road, with whom we have now a certain acquaintance, stay during their stop-overs? Their life may be itinerant, but it presupposes, between journeys, if not a stable dwelling, at least some form of shelter. This shelter is called an *upāśraya*, literally, a refuge, a shelter, and indeed an *upāśraya* is in very truth a place of refuge for the *sādhvis*. Taking into account local circumstances, the routes they intend to follow and the seasons, they stay in an *upāśraya* for periods which vary between a few days and a few weeks and in addition, every year, for the *cāturmāsyā*. The word *upāśraya* is found in the *Āgamas*, which proves that this name has a long history.⁵⁰ The *Bṛhatkalpa-sūtra* expatiates on the type of modest

⁴⁸ Cf. Bordiya, 1975, pp. 262-264; out of those who were married, the initiative to receive *dikṣā* had come, in the case of six, from the husband and they had followed his example.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 261.

⁵⁰ Cf. AS II, 1, 2, 7; 1, 10, 6; DS VII, 29; SthS 417a.

shelter suitable for the *sādhvis* and on the necessity of having at least a *cilimilikā*, a curtain, where there is no door to the room.⁵¹

An *upāśraya* belongs to the local *saṁgha* and is maintained by the *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās*. The *Mūrtipūjakas* and *Sthānakavāsīs* have *upāśrayas*, while the *Terāpanthis* do not. These refuges present a certain variety of features, in accordance with the locality where they are situated and the importance numerically of the *saṁgha*. In certain large *Jaina* centres such as *Ahmadābād* there are *upāśrayas* exclusively for *sādhvis*, while in other localities there is one *upāśraya* only for all comers and, if a group of *munis* passes by when the *sādhvis* are in residence, the *śrāvakas* offer another dwelling to the *munis*. Quite frequently, the same building includes at least one room on the ground floor for *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās*, which is used for meetings and as a place of retreat for spiritual purposes and in which *munis* and *sādhvis* give their courses of instruction. On the first or second floor rooms are reserved for *munis* or *sādhvis* in transit, if these do not have their own separate *upāśrayas*.

Among the *Mūrtipūjakas*, the *upāśraya* is often one of the appendages of the temple; sometimes, also, it forms part of a larger complex along with a *dharmasālā* for the reception of travelling *śrāvakas*. The proximity of the temple, the place of worship, fosters spiritual endeavour. The whole compound constitutes a small and autonomous religious city. A local committee deals with the administration of it, while a secretary has there a permanent office and a watchman patrols the place night and day.

The *Sthānakavāsīs* have a similar administrative system, but as they do not have temples the buildings are less imposing.

To return, however, to the *upāśraya*, the refuge or shelter of *sādhvis* on pilgrimage; whatever its outer appearance, whether it is a simple building or part of the out-houses of a temple, its function and organisation are always the same. An *upāśraya* usually consists of several rooms, though it is not always in sufficiently secluded spot.

⁵¹ Cf. BrkS I, 14-15; 19; P 534 ff. for the various rules relating to *upāśrayas*.

There is no furniture except beds of wood like low tables, arranged neatly against the four walls of the room. Sometimes, however, the sādhvis sleep on the floor. There are a few books and often some book-rests for use in reading and study. In a corner the pātras are carefully arranged, along with one or more jugs of water and some buckets for the washing of clothes. In the winter there are some folded blankets for use at night. The sādhvis sit on the floor-level upon āsanās, small mats which are used by their visitors also. All these accessories belong to the upāśraya. In this same room or in an adjacent one, if two or three rooms are at their disposal, the sādhvis receive visitors. There are often men or women servants attached to the upāśraya, who sweep and wash the floor regularly. Everything is kept meticulously clean out of regard for ahimsā.

The Terāpanthis have no upāśrayas, for they aspire to the strict observance and urge a return to the original ideal, which adjoined both temples and organised upāśrayas as being sources of worldly concerns, of a spirit of possessiveness and thus of greed and disputes. However, in a certain way this community is, thanks to its centralisation, excellently organised, in the first place by the ācārya and then at the provincial and local levels; furthermore, on account of this organisation, the munis and sādhvis are by no means left to their own devices on their journeyings. With them it works out like this: the anuvrata-samitis or societies of lesser vows for śrāvakas and śrāvikās possess premises where travelling munis and sādhvis can lodge. During the monsoon months śrāvakas who own large properties place a house, an apartment or an annexe at the disposition of the sādhvis. The upāśraya in this case is not a permanent place belonging to the samīgha.

Sometimes it happens in the course of a long pilgrimage that at one stop or another, in a village, or town, there is no Jaina samīgha. In this case the sādhvis look for some suitable shelter where they may request hospitality. According to what is available, they may stay in a women's āśrama, a dharmaśālā, a school or a private house, even if the owners are not Jainas, provided that they are vegetarian, of good

reputation and that they offer a suitable lodgement.⁵² Whatever lodging is given, the sādhis must always preserve a certain aloofness from the family who provides the shelter and from the local inhabitants. Quite frequently, their route being determined in advance, śrāvakas of the region give them the names of hospitable persons; however, unforeseen events may always occur.

On occasion sādhis may ask for hospitality at the *upāśraya* of another *sampradāya* or *gaccha* than their own, even for the duration of the *cāturmāsya*. As a general rule, the local Jainas are very happy to receive sādhis, to whatever grouping they belong.⁵³

In addition, there are some study-centres, but these are *upāśrayas* with a special function.⁵⁴

As we come to the end of this chapter, let us look back for a moment: *anagāri*, *śvetavastra*, *rajocharaṇa*, *upāśraya*. This notion and these elements conjures up a vocation, a particular way of life incorporated into the Jaina *saṅgha* and thus into human society. With a view to understanding all the implications of this manner of life, we are now going to try to follow the sādhis during all the stages of their spiritual pilgrimage, from *dikṣā* to *mahāprasthāna* (Great Departure). Then we will follow them in their daily round from before sunrise until nightfall.

⁵² It has happened before now, in an isolated village, that Muslims, seeing the sādhis in difficulties, have shown them a place to lodge in a dilapidated house; cf. Umarāvakuṇvara, 1962, p. 11.

⁵³ I met in the suburbs of Mumbai some Mūrtipūjaka sādhis who were passing their *cāturmāsya* in an *upāśraya* belonging to Sthānakavāsis and others in Dilli who were making a halt in a Sthānakavāsi *upāśraya*. On occasion, though rarely, Terāpanthī sādhis stop with Sthānakavāsis. Sometimes sādhis are received by Digambaras in the outhouses of a temple or in a *dharmaśālā*; cf. Umarāvakuṇvara, 1962, pp. 121; 130-132. Nevertheless it sometimes also happens that they are refused hospitality; cf. *ibid.*, pp. 132-133.

⁵⁴ Cf. P 466 ff.

Chapter 2.

Dikṣā: Consecration

The choice once for all of *vairāgya*
and entrance into the *śramaṇisaṅgha*

*The sage, having taken upon himself the five great vows of
ahiṃsā, satya, asteya, brahmacarya and aparigraha must
follow the dharma taught by the Jina.¹*

A - Vairāgya: Indifference towards worldly life

This is a word very often used by the sādhis in their conversations, homilies, biographies and other writings.² It expresses the foundation-stone, with its implications and consequences, upon which their life is built. *Vairāgya* has both a highly negative and a highly positive aspect. When viewed negatively, *vairāgya* means complete indifference towards all the pleasures of life, towards honours, money, ease, family ties, bonds of friendship. Other synonymous words, such as *virakti*, *nirveda*, are also frequently employed to indicate this characteristic of being *asakta*, non-attached. When viewed positively, this stripping off of all possessions, all attachments, all that comprises worldly life - that life which, according to the doctrine, is engulfed in matter - leads to the one thing needful, namely, knowledge of and realisation of the *ātman*. *Vairāgya*, in its essence, is the end-product of an impulse which gives rise to an unshakeable conviction that this radical life-option in the steps of the *arhats* is the best of all possible lives. It imparts indomitable courage, first to affirm this choice before family and society in the face of

1 *ahiṃsā saccam ca atceyayam ca tatto ya bāṇbham apariggaham ca
paḍivajjiyā paṇca mahavvayāim carejja dhammam jīṇadesiyam vidū.*
US XXI, 12.

² Cf. e.g. the observations of Mahāsati Saralā, 1970, Part II, pp. 83-85.

opposition and contradiction of various sorts and, once the commitment has been made, to persevere in spite of the harsh conditions involved in the ascetic life.

Though *vairāgya* is the word used in common speech and in literature written in any one of the local languages, the Scriptures for the most part employ the word *pravrajyā*, which denotes the state proper to the itinerant ascetic, that is, renunciation.

In order to investigate more deeply the meaning of this choice, let us study briefly the motives that may conduce towards renunciation and, once the choice has been made, the conditions that are required for a *vairāgīni* to be accepted by the *śramaṇisaṃgha* and the local *saṃgha*.

a) The motives

As far as one can trace back in the tradition, one finds an underlying notion of *vairāgya* present everywhere and the state of *pravrajyā* invariably presented as the loftiest of ideals. Examples of it abound and this much-venerated tradition passed down in a devout family, is not without influence on young spirits. Just to quote a few examples from among the more remarkable: Mallinātha demonstrated unequivocally the meaning of *vairāgya* in her encounter with the princes.³ Neminātha, struck forcibly by the deep meaningfulness of *ahimsā* and of the vision he caught of another life, decided to renounce everything and was followed in this by his betrothed, Rājimatī⁴ Mahāvira waited till his parents were deceased before following the intuition that had already come to him.⁵ Prince Balaśri-also, known by the name of Mrgāputra, son of Queen Mrgāvatī, having received the vision of a different life, explained eloquently to his parents the

³ Cf. P 115 ff.

⁴ Cf. US XXII, 8-20; 29; P 103 ff.

⁵ Cf. AS II, 15, 17; KS 111.

reasons for his choice.⁶ He listened to his parents objections and refuted them with a veritable apologia for *vairāgya*.⁷

The *Sthānāṅga-sūtra*, which is addressed to the world at large, lists ten of the more normal, even prosaic, motives which may determine someone to embrace *vairāgya*: of his or her own choice, on an impulse of anger, on account of poor family circumstances, on the prompting of a dream, by reason of a promise recollected from a previous life (a recollection that may be provoked by one event or another), on account of an illness, after receiving an insult, on inspiration from the gods, out of affection for a son who is a muni⁸. Certain ones of these ten motives may, assuredly, give rise to renunciation or they may at least contribute towards an understanding of the futility of riches and of certain relationships, thus promoting an advance in the spiritual life.

In another passage, the same *Sūtra* gives four reasons for the adoption of this state: to have some security in life, to obtain heavenly pleasures, both these motives at once or for a disinterested motive only.⁹

If we take into account family circumstances and the prevailing social conditions, we may say that for girls reared in the Jain tradition there is no need to look for a secondary or accidental cause. *Vairāgya*, which is basically inherent in this tradition, exerts its own imperious, absolute appeal. It is like a seed, we might say, implanted in every

⁶ Cf. US XIX, 9-23.

⁷ Ibid., 44-85.

⁸ *dasavihā pavvajjā paṇṇattā taṃ jahā-gāhā chaṃdā rosā pariṇṇā suviṇā paḍissuyā ceva. sāriṇiyā roṇiṇiyā, anāḍhiyā devasaṇṇatti vocchāṇubamūhiyā.* SthS 712a; cf. JSBSam III, pp. 251-252, where one example drawn from tradition is given of each case.

⁹ *cauvviliā pavvajjā paṇṇattā taṃ jahā-ihaloga-paḍibaddhā, paraloga-paḍibaddhā, duhaho logapaḍibaddhā, apaḍibaddhā.* SthS 355a; another motive might be the desire to be at the service of the guru; cf. SthS 157.

fervent and enlightened Jaina. Its roots are embedded in a faith in the *dharma* that is both stable and unshakeable; however, the degrees of awareness of this deep impulse vary and only a small number responds fully to this calling.¹⁰

It is not easy to analyse the different motives that may inspire a candidate. The young widows, who, even quite recently, tended to decide in favour of the state of *vairāgiṇī* found themselves already, because of their widowhood, in a state of renunciation, but in one which lacked a goal, while the renunciation practised in the ascetic life, though humanly speaking far more radical, offered them an ideal to pursue. Certain of their number say that their widowed state helped them to realise the frailty of human relationships, that it freed them from family bonds. For them a veil was lifted and they are now embarked on a sure path.

Frequently, whether in the case of girls, widows or young married women, the presence in the neighborhood of a group of *sādhvīs* and their teachings provided the incentive to join them. Sometimes it was the words of some muni which struck them. For others, it was a *sādhvī* relative whom they admired and followed or perhaps a brother or cousin muni who fired their imagination. These meetings, examples or words became the determining factors, helping them to awake to the fact that the life of this world is full of suffering, struggles and anguish and that its joys are transitory. As a result, the state of renunciation appeared the loftier, because it disengages the soul from worldly attachments and is advancing towards final Liberation.

At the beginning, the motives are not always purely spiritual. For example, certain girls choose this state because, for family or financial reasons, they have scarcely any chance of getting married. Others are attracted because they desire to study. This does not mean that their intention is dishonourable and that they will not in the course of their training discover the more purely spiritual motives.

¹⁰ A study of several biographies is revealing in this regard.

Finally, it is readily understandable, given the custom which still persists today in certain circles to promise in marriage a young girl to a young man whom she does not know and to a family in which a sometimes very hard life awaits her, particularly in the village setting, that certain ones prefer the ascetic life to marriage. Here again, this preference does not, in itself, manifest a lack of integrity. In making this choice they are conditioned by society.¹¹

Once the decision has been taken, the next necessity in the case of a certain number, as in that of Mrgaputra, is to explain it to their parents and convince them, which is sometimes a laborious, painful, storm-provoking task and demands veritable heroism on the part of the *vairāgiṇi*.¹²

b) The implications

To set foot on the path of *vairāgya* means to leave everything, renounce all and embrace *pravrajyā*, the state of life of an ascetic which is also called: *niṣkramaṇa*, a word which denotes the act of

¹¹ Recent statistics give the following data: i) *Concerning the origin of an attraction to vairāgya* in the cases of 100 sādhis interviewed: 21 attracted personally; 14 influenced by the prevailing atmosphere of the *saṃgha*; 19 attracted by a guruṇi; 19 attracted by a sādhi (most of them being at a distance from their families); 17 orphans who preferred the ascetic state to family life as they observed it; 5 attracted by its outward features, in particular by the pomp and ceremony of the *dikṣā*. ii) *Concerning the determining motives for receiving dikṣā*: 59 from purely spiritual motives; 11 from desire for growth in knowledge directed to a spiritual end; 10 from desire to be at the service of the *saṃgha*; 3 to free themselves from the bonds of marriage; 17 to find a refuge in society. iii) *Concerning freedom of choice*: 60 decided by personal choice (several having been obliged to overcome family opposition, 12 families being non-consenting and 19 definitely opposed); in the case of 24 the decision was taken by the parents, in the case of 10 by the family-in-law, in the case of 3 by a Court of Justice; for 3 the decision was due to various influences. Cf. Bordiyā, 1975, pp. 265-269; 275-277; 279-280.

¹² Cf. the extraordinary case of Sādhi Vicakṣaṇa (P 584 ff.)

leaving, parting, going forth, disappearing.¹³ This point is well-conveyed in regard to Mṛgaputra: when he had convinced his parents of the absolute necessity of *vairāgya* and when they had given their consent, "...as a serpent [sheds] its skin, so he abandoned [every form of] possessiveness."¹⁴

The first and very radical implication of this "stripping" is precisely the fact of being *anagāri*. This is just the outward, observable sign of an inner state which removes all *karmic* dust in order to reach at one and the same time both nudity of being and plenitude.¹⁵

c) Conditions for admission into the *saṁgha*

The personal decision constitutes a beginning. Having received parental permission, which is obligatory, the candidate still has to be accepted by the local *saṁgha*. In this context *saṁgha* means the guruṇi who is in direct contact with the *vairāgiṇi*, the *sādhvis* who belong to the same group, next the *pravartini* if there is one, the *ācārya* to whom the *guruṇi* is responsible and the committee of the *saṁgha* of the candidate's native-place. This last-named must refer to one of the more important committees which administer the *gaccha* or *sampradāya*. The *saṁgha* of the place where the *dikṣā* will take place is also consulted, for the committee of this *saṁgha* will be made responsible for the organisation of the order of service, the receptions, the preparation in general, the decoration, etc.¹⁶ Without going into

¹³ Cf. KS 111; US XXII, 21; 23

¹⁴ ...*mamattaṁ chimdai tāhe mahānāgo vva kaṁcuyarṁ*. US XIX, 86.

¹⁵ This process is described in Part II.

¹⁶ Before her *dikṣā* at Mulun (a suburb of Mumbai) on March 25th, 1976, a *vairāgiṇi* belonging to Saurāṣṭra had to obtain the written permission of her parents. Next, the following were consulted by turn: the committee of the *saṁgha* to which the family belonged, and the *mahāsaṁgha* of Mumbai. This latter, consisting of the president and 2 *śrāvakas* appointed for the purpose, examined the *vairāgiṇi* with care, asking her numerous questions. Not only is investigation made as to the freedom of choice and sincerity of

questions of procedure, which in any case vary according to different *sampradāyas* and localities, we shall proceed to consider the conditions a *vairāgiṇī* must fulfill in order to be accepted. She must be at least eight years old¹⁷ and less than seventy and must be in good health; persons suffering from chronic maladies, the blind, crippled or enfeebled are not admitted. She must be of sound mind and have a certain capacity at least for study, must give evidence of a sociable nature and of being in good standing, that is, of having no outstanding debts nor being bound by a work-contract or any other liability.¹⁸ These conditions follow the norms of society and of good sense; they are necessary for a life that will be austere, lived in community and yet in contact with society, all these three being characteristics of the style of life that these *vairāgiṇīs* are preparing to adopt. In theory there is no restriction as regards caste or family background.¹⁹ However, the *sampradāyas* and *gacchas* do have a tendency, more pronounced or less according to the various regions, to recruit their ascetics from within certain milieus.

the candidate but also as to her aptitudes, such as her intelligence, capacity for study, health, physical resistance, sociability. Finally the committee of Mulun was also consulted.

¹⁷ Cf. VS X, 20-21. But recently, in the concluding day (May 13, 1987) of the plenary session of the Śramaṇa Saṃgha (branch of the Sīhānakvāsīs) meeting, at Pune, presided by Ācārya Ānanda Rīṣi and attended by numerous munis and sādhus, it has been announced that the young candidates will not be given *dikṣā* before a five years period of studies in Jain doctrine. This step will considerably restrict "*bālā-dikṣā*" (*dikṣā* to children). As for the adults they will have to study the Jain doctrine for a period of three years before receiving *dikṣā*.

¹⁸ Cf. JSBSam V, pp. 406-409 (*Pravacanasāroddhāra* 108; 792) where more unusual cases are also proscribed: eunuchs, homosexuals and those still breast-feeding a child. Certain cases date back to an age gone by. Persons who are enemies of the king are rejected, as also those who may have been placed under constraint in the *śramaṇisaṃgha* without their parents' knowledge

¹⁹ US XII gives the ex. of Harikeśin Bala, a muni and sage, who came from a family of *cāṇḍālas* (untouchables).

The sādhis who receive the request of a *vairāgiṇī* show considerable prudence, neither encouraging her in a facile way nor minimising the difficulties of the ascetic life. They are aware that, in certain cases, they must avoid giving the parents any occasion to suspect them of luring their daughter away. At the same time they know how to speak convincingly, how to show that theirs is the best of all lives and to inspire the young with enthusiasm for a high ideal.²⁰ Except in cases where it is clear that the candidate does not possess the needed temperamental qualities or where the family is strongly opposed, the sādhis permit a candidate to come and live for a while with them, after which a final decision will be taken.

B - The *Vairāgiṇī*: The renunciate

A *vairāgiṇī* is a candidate permitted to share the life of the sādhis. These latter call her by her name, but she has already abandoned this world, she has entered into a state which is admittedly still an intermediate one, but which is oriented towards a definitive commitment; she has left all in order to listen, learn, take a first step, prepare herself. At the same time, she has not pledged herself, she can retire when she wishes. She follows the sādhis' rules except for the quest for food and she takes her meals with the local śrāvakas.

This stage is a very important one, being that of preparation for *dikṣā*, and is characterised by a combination of two types of teaching, that of the guruṇī and that of the *Daśavaikālika-sūtra*.

a) The teaching of the guruṇī

At every moment the guruṇī is at hand to guide, instruct and train the *vairāgiṇī* with maternal care. There is no prescribed time or limit for this period, which may last anything from several months to several years. Everything depends on the age, character, level of education - certain ones pursue courses of study or prepare for official examinations - and, above all, on the inner disposition of the *vairāgiṇī* and on the guruṇī, on her method of training and teaching. She refers

²⁰ The biographies relate several interesting dialogues between a guruṇī and a *vairāgiṇī*.

these matters to the ācārya but it is she, finally, upon whom this preparation and its duration depends.²¹

Nothing very specific remains to be added, for we have here a personal, stable, deep relationship which, though it touches all aspects of life, belongs to a higher sphere. Furthermore, in everything that appertains to the *anagāri* state, all practical details must be in conformity with a higher goal. Their underlying purpose and the manner in which each action is performed is all with a view to *ahimsā*. From this period onwards the *guruṇi* may initiate her new disciple into the study of Prākṛit, of which a certain basis is necessary for an understanding of the rite of the *āvaśyakas* and of the *Āgamas*; she may also start her on the study of Sanskrit. It is not necessary that she does so herself, she may delegate the task to one of the *sādhvis* of the group, but all is done under her direction. If the *vairāgiṇi* perseveres and joins the other disciples, the relationship will deepen after her *dikṣā* and will continue for as long as the *guruṇi* lives.²²

b) The study of the *Daśavaikālika-sūtra*²³

This is the *Sūtra* that the *vairāgiṇi* is required to study, at least in part, before her *dikṣā*. It is a sure guide, which will initiate her into the life, demands and spirituality of the *śramaṇis*. Here is a brief outline of this *Sūtra* that a *sādhvi* must learn by heart and constantly recall by repetition, for it teaches *samyak-cāritra*.

✓ 21 Among the *Terāpanthi* *sādhvis*, it is the ācārya who decides the duration of the probationary period.

22 Cf. the account of such a relationship in the biography of Mahāsati Śrī Pannādevī written by Mahāsati Saralā, her disciple, in which she expresses deep filial devotion towards her *guruṇi* (P 620 ff.; Appendix I).

23 Strictly speaking, a *vairāgiṇi* is required to study chs. I-IV and to continue after *dikṣā*; however, nowadays many *vairāgiṇis* study the whole *Sūtra* and others also during their probation.

The *Daśavaikālika-sūtra* which, in common with all the *Sūtras* for ascetics, is addressed equally to *sādhvis* and to *munis*, is entirely composed of rules inspired by the doctrine and set in the very concrete context of daily life.²⁴ In this *Sūtra* all the foundations are set forth in a readily accessible way. There are here no philosophical considerations nor stories inserted among the rules, as is the case in certain other *Sūtras*. It is comprehensive, brief, precise, exactly what is needed for gaining familiarity with the doctrine and also a knowledge of the conduct and attitudes, both inner and outer, that are in conformity with it. It is not a systematic treatise and one finds in it many repetitions, but often, in these repetitions, one observes differing nuances of meaning.

It is made up of ten chapters and concludes with two *cūlikās* (appendices). Each of the chapters enlarges on different subjects:

- Chapter I introduces us straightaway to the *dharmā* which is: *ahiṃsā*, *saṃyama*, *tapas*.
- Chapter II indicates the necessary basic dispositions: self-control, which is gained by transcending, mastering and sublimating desires.
- Chapter III gives an introduction to right conduct, to the exact rules which conduce towards self-mastery. We have here a practical application of II.
- Chapter IV deals with the ten sorts of *jīva*,²⁵ then it proceeds to a consideration of the chief *mahāvratā*, *ahiṃsā*, followed by the other *mahāvratas* and corresponding rules of conduct.
- Chapter V indicates the proper behaviour and rules to be observed in regard to *gocari*, the quest for food. One must imitate the cow who

²⁴ Although generally the masculine gender is used in the text, we give references in the feminine, for each of these *sūtras* is addressed without distinction both to *munis* and their *guru* and to *sādhvis* and their *guruṇi*.

²⁵ Cf. P 284 ff.

browses here and there or the bee who buzzes from flower to flower. We have here a direct application of *ahimsā*, hence the length of the chapter which is divided into two parts, the one containing one hundred and the other fifty *sūtras*. All conceivable circumstances and the requisite corresponding attitudes are set forth. These rules must be well studied from the start, in order to know how to re-act in different situations.²⁶

- Chapter VI explicates further what is meant by perfect conduct. This chapter is complementary to Chapters III, IV and V and leaves nothing open to doubt.

- Chapter VII deals with purity of speech. It consists of counsel in regard to *satya*, an important aspect of *ahimsā*, in the context throughout of both community life and of daily contacts with the outside world.

- Chapter VIII stresses once more right conduct, completing and at times repeating the preceding chapters.

- Chapter IX is entitled *vinaya-samādhi* and, on account of its importance, is divided into four sections. It deals with the respectful, well-disciplined and obedient attitude one should have towards one's guruṇi, ācārya and elders, whatever, it is added, their omissions, failings, and weaknesses, for they are the depositaries of the doctrine as it is lived out in practice.²⁷ These spiritual attitudes are indispensable to a capacity for learning, self-correction and self-purification. *Vinaya*, respectful submission, the acceptance of discipline, is the taproot of the *dharma*.²⁸ This is so important that the

²⁶ Cf. P 496 ff.

²⁷ Cf. DS IX, 1, 3. *Samādhi*, of which the meaning carries different inflections according to context, denotes that which is unified, gathered together, absorption. Here it refers to the sustained attention and diligence with which one must express one's respect for authority or for the seniors, and faithfulness to the rules upon this subject; US I or *vinaya-śruti* which is addressed to novices; SkrS I, 13; 11-17.

²⁸ Cf. DS IX, 2, 2.

impudent disciple who has no respect for his guru is issued a warning: he is like a man who flings himself in the fire, or teases a venomous snake or swallows some poison; without doubt, in all three cases, his life is in danger. The text pursues the comparison by saying that the danger is indeed so great for the arrogant disciple that he has no chance of being saved, for:

It may happen that the fire does not burn,
it may happen that the serpent does not bite,
it may happen that the mortal poison does not kill,
[but] after an insult to the guru [there is] no *mokṣa*.²⁹ ✓

By way of contrast, it is said of those who are obedient disciples that their knowledge "grows like a well-watered tree,"³⁰ *Vinaya* is the attitude with which the *vairāgiṇi* listens respectfully to the guruṇi's instruction, learns and knows the doctrine and thus remains on the right path.³¹ She is urged to be attentive to the words and gestures of the guruṇi, to be prompt in her service and to treat with respect the members of the *saṃgha* who are senior to herself, even when they are younger in years.³² This chapter gives evidence of a delicate knowledge of psychology on its author's part; it is expressed with a certain charm that lightens, as it were, the austerity of its contents and renders them almost agreeable. It is of prime importance that the *vairāgiṇis* and young *sādhvis* should assimilate the teaching of this

²⁹ *siyā hu se pāvaya no ḍahejjā āsiviso vā kuvio na bhakkhe
siyā viṣaṃ hālahalaṃ na māre na yāvi mokkho guruhilaṇṇe.* DS IX, 1, 7.
This appears excessive and could lead, in certain circumstances, to an abuse of authority, but there is here chiefly a question of imagery in language, which belongs in this case to another age than our own and is aiming at inculcating a sense of discipline.

³⁰ ... *tesim sikkhā pavaḍḍhamti jalasittā iva pāvavā.* DS IX, 2, 12. Cf. US I, 2; XI, 10-13 which speaks of the ascetic as being *vinīta* and *suvinīta*: modest, humble, having good manners.

³¹ Cf. DS IX, 1, 12-13; 2, 16; US XI, 4-5.

³² Seniority is reckoned from the date of *dikṣā*. Cf. DS IX, 3, 1-3, where the 33 infringements of the rules of propriety, politeness and respect which the young muni must observe towards the ācārya are listed.

Sūtra, that they should have from the start an attitude and disposition of flexibility and receptivity. Poetic images are not lacking: the guru (guruṇi) is compared to the rising sun that sheds its rays on the country of Bhārata,³³ stubborn disciples to wild horses or elephants or to a recalcitrant ox who can only be induced to pull forward the cart by lashes of the whip.³⁴ *Vinaya* is described as the well-spring which gives rise to *vaiyāvṛtya*, service to the guruṇi and elders. Now we know already that *vaiyāvṛtya* is one of the forms of interior *tapas*.³⁵

- Chapter X is entitled: *sa bhikkhū*, which means a true *bhikṣu* (or true *bhikṣuṇi*). It presents a synthesis of the other chapters. All the aspects of right conduct are reviewed in a type of litany in which, at the end of each verse, the word "*sa bhikkhū*" is repeated, recalling to mind the qualities of the true ascetic.³⁶ Stress is laid upon equanimity, self-control, respect for all beings, thoughtfulness, concentration, courage, the primacy of the spiritual; upon the subject of modesty it is said that the true ascetic is not conceited and takes no pride in his or her knowledge of the Scripture.

- *Cūlikā* 1 offers eighteen subjects of consideration to those ascetics who are tempted to return home. Here is material to cause them to think deeply before coming to a decision!

- *Cūlikā* 2 re-affirms the importance of one's behaviour in contacts with the outer world and in one's comings and goings; the necessity of self-examination on one's deeds and of *svādhyāya*.³⁷ It concludes by

³³ Cf. DS IX, 1, 14.

³⁴ Ibid., 2, 5; 2, 19; cf. US I 3; XI, 6-9 for the *avinita*, impertinent, ascetic.

³⁵ Cf. P 369 ff. ; also US XXIX, 4; 49; XXX, 33; YSa XII, 15-17.

³⁶ Cf. US XV also called: *sa bhikkhū*, which is shorter but similar to DS X; and in the opposite sense, cf. US XVII entitled: *pāvasamañijjam* (*pāpaśramaṇīyam*), the sinful *śramaṇa*.

³⁷ Cf. DS *cūlikā* 2, 7.

saying that "the *ātman* must always be protected by perfect control of the senses."³⁸

The *Daśavaikālika-sūtra* is not intended for study at the outset, only afterwards to be left to one side. It is the *Sūtra* which, more than any other, must be ceaselessly pondered, in order to live in the spirit thereof and to follow its rules.

At this point we are no more than on the threshold of *vairāgya*, a threshold which the *vairāgiṇi* is now going to cross through *dikṣā*.

C - *Dikṣā-vidhi*: The rite of consecration

Dikṣā, consecration, is for the *vairāgiṇi* a new birth. She abandons totally all that binds her to this world in order to enter, once and for all, upon the state of life of an *anagāri*, home-less one, of a *nirgranthi*, one freed from attachments, of a *śramaṇi*, one who works ceaselessly at her own purification. This state transcends the human realm called *saṃsāra*, which is vulnerable to the clutches of time and temporal factors. Through her *dikṣā*, the *vairāgiṇi* transcends the temporal, contingent, and perishable; she is consecrated to a spiritual quest. There are no secondary goals or occupations of one sort or another to which she may devote herself within the framework of an ascetic life. No, there is absolutely no other commitment than the formal one to advance on the path that leads to the transtemporal, namely, *mokṣa* and *nirvāṇa*.

However, even though this consecration involves a radical separation it by no means leaves the new *sādhvi* isolated. Although all depends on her own personal effort, it is within a community-life that she is guided and sustained, that she struggles both to purify and train herself and also to guide others in her turn as gradually her faith in the doctrine is strengthened and her knowledge deepened. Each and every *sādhvi* must not only attend to her own spiritual progress, but must also act as yeast for the *saṃgha* - and thus for the other *sādhvis*, the

³⁸ *appā khalu sayayaṃ rakkhiyavvo savvimādiehiṃ susamāhiehīṃ*. DS cūlikā 2, 16.

śrāvakas and śrāvikās - and be capable, in accordance with her capacities, of imparting some teaching.³⁹

Dikṣā is always both a personal and a community event. The profound joy experienced at *dikṣā* is certainly that of the *vairāgīni*, but it is also that of the *saṃgha*, for it now counts one more member dedicated to this highest of all states, to those transcendent values that each and every one is endeavouring to live by in accordance with their own state of life and with the means at their disposal. The *dikṣā*, or consecration of a person who is already a member of the community, takes place in a rite that is very exact, sober, simple and meaningful, in the presence of numerous members. There are two *dikṣās* in succession marking two distinct stages, with an interval between them that may vary from several days to several months. These are the *bhagavatīdikṣā* and the *mahādikṣā*.

a) The *bhagavatīdikṣā*: The Blessed Consecration

This is the ceremony of definitive consecration to the *anagāri* state, which seals membership of the *śramaṇisaṃgha* and separation from everything else. It constitutes a very solemn moment; the *mahādikṣā* only confirms and consolidates it. Hence the great importance attached to this first celebration.

The *vidhi* or rite of *dikṣā* is essentially the same in all the *saṃpradāyas*, but the celebration may be invested, in different *saṃpradāyas* and localities, with having degrees of both solemnity and pageantry. The order of events in the rite, as here presented, is that found among the *Sthānakavāsi sādhis*.⁴⁰

Preparation

³⁹ Cf. P 548 ff.

⁴⁰ The description which follows is that of a *dikṣā* which took place at Mulun on March 25th 1976; owing to the extreme kindness of Śrī D.K. Khetani, Mahāsati Tarulatā and sādhis of the group concerned, I was able to follow the ceremony very closely. Subsequently Mahāsati Tarulatā was kind enough to reply in writing to my supplementary questions.

The place varies according to circumstances, all depending on the region where the group of *sādhvis* happens to be. A place in the area is chosen where the committee of the local *saṃgha* is willing to offer hospitality and which the *ācārya* can reach easily. Usually an astrologist is consulted and a *śubha-muhūrta* or propitious moment - in this instance the date and the day - is selected. Often invitations are sent out, on which there is a photograph of the *vairāgiṇī* accompanied by an elaborately or more simply worded notification; an announcement with photo is also inserted in the local paper.⁴¹ The *vairāgiṇī* is permitted to spend several days with her family and to do the round of her relatives and friends.

The evening before the occasion arrives and the *vairāgiṇī* prepares herself by a total fast until after the ceremony. While the *guruṇī*, the *sādhvis* of the group and those who have come from neighbouring places busy themselves with preparations for the rite, the parents and committee-members of the local *saṃgha* see to the general preparations. Quite frequently, on the evening of the day before the *dikṣā*, there takes place an *abhinandana*, or welcome-gathering, to congratulate the *vairāgiṇī*. This is an opportunity, especially in a city, for the members of the *saṃgha* to meet each other. Certain *śrāvikās* and *śrāvakas* make speeches in turn and then the *vairāgiṇī* speaks to the assembly.

Often members of the *saṃgha*, whether they live near or far, arrive the previous day or in the morning of the day itself.⁴² A *dikṣā* is a great family festival. We read, for example, that in a town of Panjāba "the brothers and sisters (that is, of the spiritual family) numbered about ten thousand."⁴³ Sometimes, the *ācārya* who is going to preside comes from the neighbourhood along with other monks; he can,

⁴¹ This is not obligatory and depends on the preference of the local *saṃgha*.

⁴² In February 1971, for the *dikṣā* of Bhārati, a disciple of Sādhvi Mṛgavati, at Byculla, a district of Mumbai, an impressive number of *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* came all the way from Panjāba, where Sādhvi Mṛgavati is a well-known personality, to be present at the ceremony.

⁴³ Cf. Mahendrakumāri, 1954, p. 59.

however, delegate a muni or a sādhi to replace him.⁴⁴ No ācārya has the right to accept a candidate for *dikṣā* without the permission of her parents or without having consulted the *saṁgha* at various levels. However, the validity of the *dikṣā* depends on the ācārya's approval, he being the highest religious authority.

Procession ⁴⁵

It is nine o'clock in the morning and the girl, wearing a magnificent silk *sāḍī* (*sāri*), her long hair falling loose, her neck adorned with a gold chain and her arms covered with bracelets, is to be seen standing in a horse-drawn vehicle, a slowly-advancing open carriage. With a majestic gesture she flings grains of rice to right and to left.⁴⁶ In the same carriage three young women from among her relatives, clothed in red, stand beside her. One holds a large brass jar decorated with a *śvastika* and filled with pure water that will be used for the tonsure, while of the other two one carries the *vastras* carefully wrapped and the other the *rajoḥaraṇa* and the *pātras*. A dense throng, quiet for the most part, follows the carriage and, on all floors of the houses bordering the route, spectators are to be seen, watching the procession go by. Perfect orderliness is ensured through the good offices of men, young people, women and girls wearing a green badge. They direct the people walking in the procession in such a way that at the entrance to the *maṇḍapa*⁴⁷ men take up their positions on one side and women on the other.

⁴⁴ Cf. Hukarnadevi, p. 103 where the guruṇi is mentioned as presiding over a *dikṣā*.

⁴⁵ *Samyama-yātrā*.

⁴⁶ The grain of rice used for religious ceremonies, e.g. for *pūjā* in the temple, is called *akṣata*, lit. whole, undivided. It is a substance of good omen which does not disintegrate and its whiteness is a sign of purity.

⁴⁷ *Maṇḍapa*: a huge rectangular-shaped tent which serves to accommodate a crowd and shield it from sun, rain or cold. The *maṇḍapa* is also used for receiving wedding-guests, for meetings, political gatherings and conferences. The Sthānakavāsīs and Terāpanthis celebrate *dikṣās* under a *maṇḍapa*, the Mūrtipūjakas at a temple.

Entrance into the *maṇḍapa* and commencement of the rite

The ground is covered with large cotton rugs and the crowd sits down. At the far end, facing the main entrance and near the side entrance, there is a wide wooden platform, in the middle of which is seated the ācārya and several munis, while to the right of the ācārya on the same platform are about twenty sādhis, these latter also seated.⁴⁸ The *vairāgiṇī* takes up her station standing on a small raised platform, facing the ācārya and flanked by the guruṇī and two sādhis, there is a loud-speaker close by.⁴⁹ The ceremony begins.

- The *vairāgiṇī*, to atone for any faults committed during her journey to the *maṇḍapa*, recites the *iryāpathika-sūtra*, followed by the *kāyotsarga*;⁵⁰

- next, she recites the three *maṅgala-sūtras*;⁵¹

- she makes the *gurvandana* to the ācārya;

- she addresses her parents and the whole assembled company in the words of the *kṣamā-yācanā*, the request for pardon;

⁴⁸ During ceremonies, meetings and conferences the ācārya, munis and sādhis are always on a platform, if it is a sizeable gathering, and on a low rectangular table, if it is an ordinary smaller meeting, this to mark the difference of status between themselves and the śrāvakas and śrāvikās. This is the only external sign of honour that they accept, all the rest, such as garlands and offerings of any kind, being forbidden.

⁴⁹ The *vairāgiṇī* uses a loud-speaker before donning the habit. Afterwards, a śrāvaka helps the audience to follow by explaining briefly the meaning of each part. Out of regard for *ahiṃsā*, munis and sādhis do not on principle use a loud-speaker; however, this is not a hard and fast rule and certain ones do make use of it.

⁵⁰ Cf. P 706; 708.

⁵¹ These are: *maṅgala-sūtra*; *uttama-sūtra*; *śaraṇa-sūtra*; cf. P 703-704.

- and then addresses a brief speech to the congregation.⁵²

The tonsure and clothing ceremony

This part of the rite happens outside the *maṇḍapa*. The *vairāgiṇī*, accompanied by the three young women and followed by several *sādhvis*, leaves the *maṇḍapa* by the side-entrance and repairs to a room in a neighbouring house. Here the dis-possession starts: behind a curtain, the *vairāgiṇī*, with the aid of a *sādhvi*, takes off her beautiful clothes in order to put on a simple green *sādi*. They then place around her neck a large square of green material stamped with the *svastika*.⁵³ The barber arrives with all his equipment and one of the *sādhvis* proceeds to trace with *kumkum* a *tilaka* on his forehead.⁵⁴ The rite of *muṇḍa*, that is, complete tonsure except for one small tuft, is begun, the barber utilising the water contained in the jar marked with a *svastika*. As the beautiful locks fall on to the green cloth, the young women dressed in red shed tears, but the future *sādhvi* is smiling. The hair is punctiliously gathered up. When the tonsure is completed, one of the *sādhvis* outlines on the bare head a large *svastika* with the *kumkum*. Then follows the rite of *pañcamuṣṭi-luñcana*, the plucking-out of five locks of hair by the *guruṇi* and some *sādhvis*.⁵⁵ Next, behind the curtain, the *vairāgiṇī* puts on the clothing of the *śramaṇis* and the *muhapatti* is fixed in place. During the clothing she recites the *Namaskāra-mantra*. The little procession then sets off again, this time from the room round to the main entrance of the *maṇḍapa*, a guard of honour lining the path on either side.

⁵² This is entirely optional.

⁵³ The green colour is not essential; like red, it is a propitious colour.

⁵⁴ *Kumkum*: red powder; *tilaka*: a mark on the forehead with religious or decorative signification.

⁵⁵ To imitate the *tirthaṅkaras* and Rājimati, and as sign of austerity. Usually at the time of *dikṣā* the head is shaved and only 5 locks are plucked out; among the Terāpantis there is no tonsure during the *dikṣā*, but there is *keśa-luñcana*, the plucking-out of the hair. Cf. AS II, 15, 23; US XXII, 24; 30; P 547.

The vow of perpetual *sāmāyika* and the presentation of the insignia

The *vairāgiṇī* returns to her place, accompanied by the *guruṇi* and *sādhvis* and the rite continues with:

- the performance of *guruvandana* to the *ācārya*;
- the *kṣetra-viśuddhi*, interior purification:⁵⁶ The recitation of a certain number of *sūtras* belonging to the rite of *sāmāyika*,⁵⁷ followed by *kāyotsarga*;
- she asks permission from her parents for the last time to receive *dikṣā*. Her mother, before the *ācārya* and the whole *saṃgha*, replies in the affirmative;
- the *ācārya* bids her pronounce the vow. He pronounces slowly: "*kareha, sāmāyaṃ savvaṃ sāvajjaṃ jogaṃ paccakkheha*" (Make [the vow] of *sāmāyika* and to renounce all blameworthy action);
- she recites slowly word by word, after the *ācārya*: "*karemi bharāte! sāmāyaṃ, savvaṃ sāvajjaṃ jogaṃ paccakkhāmi jāvajivāe . . .*" (Master, I make [the vow of] *sāmāyika*, I renounce for life all blameworthy activity. . .);⁵⁸
- the *ācārya* recites the *praṇipāta-sūtra*, a hymn of praise to the *arhats*;

⁵⁶ As *kṣetra* means field, place, it is possible to understand this as referring also to the purification of the spot where the *vairāgiṇī* is standing.

⁵⁷ Up to this moment the *vairāgiṇī* is still a *śrāvikā* and thus recites the *sūtras* which belong to the rite of *sāmāyika* as performed by *śrāvikās*. Among the *sādhvis*, however, the *sāmāyika-sūtra* is included in the rite of the *āvaśyakas*.

⁵⁸ Cf. P 315 ff.; 700. This is the section of the *sūtra* which consecrates and formally binds the *sādhvi* and she repeats the words of the *sūtra* after the *ācārya* to its conclusion.

- the new sādhi turns towards the assembly and recites the three *maṅgala-sūtras*; this is her first blessing, as it were, of the śrāvakas and śrāvikās;
- next, the ācārya presents her with the *rajoharaṇa*, reminding her of its meaning and use, and the other objects:
- the *pātras*, a copy of the *Āvaśyaka-sūtra*,⁵⁹ the woolen shawl;
- at this point in the ceremony the ācārya may also give a new name to the sādhi. Among the Sthānakavāsīs this is not a regular practice, but the Mūrtipūjaka sādhis all take new names.

The rite concludes about midday and the happy crowd disperses. At the entrance to the *maṇḍapa* small delicacies are distributed to all. The new sādhi follows her group to the *upāśraya*.⁶⁰ After several days they will take the road, for the *dikṣā* is followed by *vihāra*, which is the normal condition of life of the *anagāris*. Up to the time of her *mahādikṣā* no difference is made between her and the other sādhis, except in regard to meals, which she does not take in their company. She eats in the same room, but a little to one side.⁶¹

For a Terāpanthi *vairāgiṇī* the rite is the same, but the ceremony is simpler and reduced to essentials.⁶²

⁵⁹ It is not necessarily a copy of the *Avaś*; another *Āgama* may be presented.

⁶⁰ It is possible that, while remaining under obedience to the guruṇī, she may become henceforward the disciple of another sādhi of the group and if, later on, the group is divided into 2 or 3 smaller units, she will follow the one who is her guruṇī.

⁶¹ She eats whatever she has acquired during the *gocari*, the quest for food. She is not permitted to offer any of this food or any water to the other sādhis until her Great *dikṣā* has taken place.

⁶² According to a short essay written by Sādhi Śrī Candanābālā in 1975, the written permission of the parents, countersigned by leading members of the *saṃgha*, is read out during the *dikṣā* and the parents repeat their consent

The *dikṣā* of a Mūrtipūjaka *vairāgiṇi* takes place in the temple, often amid great pomp and ceremony.⁶³ An image of Mahāvira, made of precious metal, is carried in procession and erected in the place where the *dikṣā* is taking place, as a symbol of fidelity to the tradition. The young *sādhvi* receives also the *danḍa*.

b) The *mahādikṣā*: The Great Consecration

This may take place, according to the needs of each case, at an interval of either seven days or four months or six months after the *dikṣā*.⁶⁴ Among the Sthānakavāsī *sādhvis* this is a ceremony that takes place withing the intimacy of the group in the *upāśraya* of the place where the group happens to be. The *ācārya* presides. The important parts of this rite are:

- the *kṣetra-viśuddhi*, preparatory purification;⁶⁵

orally. Before the pronouncing of the vow, the *ācārya* invites the *vairāgiṇi* to reflect once again, to consider the austere life that awaits her and not to hesitate to withdraw, if she feels herself not strong enough for this type of life.

⁶³ The *dikṣā* is preceded by *pūjās* offered in the temple during the days just prior to the event; cf. Sajjana, 1960, pp. 70-76. I was able to be present in February 1971 in Mumbai at the *dikṣā* of Bhārati, a disciple of Sādhvi Mṛgavati, but the very dense throng did not permit me to follow the ceremony throughout.

⁶⁴ During the period of time between the two *dikṣās* the Mūrtipūjaka *sādhvis* are required each day to observe certain abstinences and to recite a certain number of rosaries and of *caturvīmśatistavas* followed by the *kāyotsarga*; cf. Sajjana, 1960, pp. 79-80.

⁶⁵ Cf. P 710 ff. The Great *dikṣā* confirms the *sādhvi* in the state of renunciation through the pronouncing of the Great Vows.

- the pronouncing of the five *mahāvratas* in accordance with the text of the *Daśavaikālika-sūtra*, the words being repeated one by one after the *ācārya*.⁶⁶

After the Great *dikṣā* the new *sādhvi* is a full member of the *śramanisaṃgha*. She starts her long pilgrimage in the steps of the *arhats* and all the sages.

D - *Śikṣā-kendras*: Study-centres

The *śikṣā-kendras* are centres of study, the word study being here understood almost entirely in the sense of the Scriptures, the doctrine and philosophy along with related subjects, such as the study of *Prākṛit* and *Sanskrit*. In order to practise *svādhyāya* and be capable of instructing others in the doctrine, the *sādhvis* must necessarily study; this is not an optional extra. The young *sādhvis* are taught by the *guruṇi* with the assistance, as and when required, of other *sādhvis* and under the close, or less close, supervision of the *ācārya*. This remains the normal practice, which is faithful to the tradition and still current today. Moreover, the *guruṇis* endeavour to organise in such a way that the *sādhvis* can profit by the *cāturmāsya*, the months of remaining stationary, to study under one or other *ācārya* or *muni* who is on the spot or to have the benefit of lessons from a *pandit*. There are some isolated cases of a *sādhvi* studying and preparing for examinations privately, but initiatives of this sort are few and far between. For many years already the necessity has been felt for some organised centres where the *sādhvis* may receive regular instruction.⁶⁷ These centres for *anagāris* contain features and ways of operating peculiar to themselves.

a) *Pāṭhaśālās*: Schools

⁶⁶ Cf. DS IV, 11-15; P 337 ff.

⁶⁷ Out of 100 *sādhvis* questioned about their level of education before *dikṣā*: 4 had a college education; 7 had studied Sanskrit; 14 had a High school education; 56 (of village origin) up to the middle-school level; 19 (of whom several were of mature years) had scarcely been to school at all, having been prevented by family or social conditions, cf. Bordiyā, 1975, pp. 272-273.

Pāṭhaśālās, schools for *sādhvis*, are to be found chiefly among the *Tapāgaccha sādhvis*, in Gujarāta, the principal ones being at Ahmadābād and Pālitāṇā. The *sādhvis* who follow the regular courses stay throughout in the town, but they can move from one *upāśraya* to another. At the *upāśraya* they continue to perform all their observances and go at fixed hours to follow their courses. Certain ones prepare for examinations, while others do not.⁶⁸ Sometimes *sādhvis* come specially from distance to study in a *pāṭhaśālā* and, when their courses are over, return to their own areas.

b) *Śramaṇi Vidyāpiṭha*: College for *sādhvis*

A *Vidyāpiṭha* is a "seat of knowledge", of study, a type of college; the *vidyāpiṭha* of *śramaṇis* is for *sādhvis* only. The initiative for this came from some *Śihānakavāsi śrāvakas* of Mumbai and environs who, after consulting some highly competent *pandits*, drew up with their help a programme of courses for a five-year period.⁶⁹ The *vidyāpiṭha* started in 1970 at Ghātākopar, an industrial quarter of Mumbai with a high percentage of *Śihānakavāsis* among the population. *Sādhvis* belonging to various *gacchās* of this *sampradāya* are sent there by their *guruṇis* with the consent of the *ācārya*. The *Vidyāpiṭha* is at one and the same time an *upāśraya* and a study-centre, the courses taking place on the premises. The *sādhvis* observe all their rules, except that they are temporarily stationary, and sally forth daily in quest of food. Some *vairāginis* who are candidates for *dikṣā* follow the same courses as the *sādhvis*. They live in another part of the same building, where they have their canteen. The *sādhvis* are of various ages, while the *vairāginis* for the most part are young. All belong to Gujarāta and their courses are in the Gujarāti language. All are required to follow the complete 5-year course and take the annual examinations.

⁶⁸ At Ahmadābād, e.g., *sādhvis* attend regular classes on the 9 categories and on the *Karmagrantha*.

⁶⁹ Śrī D.K. Khetani, one of the founders of the *Vidyāpiṭha*, gave me all this information during my stay in his home in February 1971, and during a brief visit in March 1976. In 1971 I was able to follow certain courses and talk daily with some of the *sādhvis* of the *Vidyāpiṭha*, and in 1976 with the two *pandits*.

The aim of the programme is to give a thorough knowledge of the Āgamas and of the doctrine, some grounding in Prākṛit, Sanskrit and Hindi and some knowledge of culture in general. There are five hours of classes per day, with individual study taking place in the evenings. During the two months' summer-vacation the sādhis depart on vihāra; thus, even during a period of sedentary life, they resume each year their itinerant existence. Two pandits reside in Ghātkopar and devote themselves to this teaching, aided by a lady professor.⁷⁰

The Principal of the Vidyāpīṭha is a sādhi and it is she who acts as guruṇī. When their courses are finished, some sādhis prolong their stay for a certain period and themselves give courses of instruction, while others work on translations.

We may note three particular features of the Śramaṇi Vidyāpīṭha, this new institution for the anagāris:

- the five years of stability with a set programme to follow and examinations to take;
- the great number of vairāgiṇis among the students, already during these recent years, more than half the total number;⁷¹
- the study of several Āgamas by all the sādhis and vairāgiṇis, whereas, according to tradition, the ascetics used to study the Āgamas only gradually, in a certain order and after dikṣā.⁷²

All this testifies to a great openness of spirit on the part of the founders, to a clear vision on their part of both present and future

⁷⁰ The salaries of the professors, as well as the costs of the canteen for the vairāgiṇis and the general expenditures, are undertaken by the central saṃgha of Mumbai. This has as constituent members 20 regional saṃghas, who contribute regular sums to cover expenses. Here we have a concrete example of interdependence within the caturvidhasaṃgha.

⁷¹ In 1976 there were 46 students of which 18 were sādhis and 28 vairāgiṇis

⁷² Cf. VS X, 24-38.

needs and of a determination to contribute to the education and emancipation of women in all walks of life. The guruṇis who have allowed their disciples to take part in this venture, especially at its beginning when all was in an embryonic state, have certainly given evidence of great courage. This bold initiative has encountered many obstacles in a very conservative environment, in which woman have often been kept in a position of inferiority. Now after some years and with the evidence before their eyes of clear and very positive results, even the previously reticent are beginning to admit the necessity and benefits of this enterprise. At the beginning of 1980 a second Śramaṇi Vidyāpiṭha was opened in the province of Kaccha.

This much, however, must be added: in accordance with the spirit of its founders, this Vidyāpiṭha is open to all Śvetāmbara sādhis, all of whom do in fact follow the same Āgamas, the same doctrine and the same rules. However, after long years of loss of contact between the autonomous sampradāyas and gacchas, it is undeniable that a number of secondary rules have brought about divergences in their manner of life. Above all, as regards nearly all the Tapāgaccha sādhis, it is the ācāryas who still hesitate to allow them to study the majority of the Āgamas.⁷³ Therefore, an inter-sampradāya-gaccha Śramaṇi Vidyāpiṭha is unlikely in the immediate future.⁷⁴

c) Śrī Pāramārthika Śikṣaṇa Saṁsthā:
Institute for spiritual training

The Terāpanthis have a very similar institution, with, however its own special character. In 1948 the ācārya, with the agreement of the members of the saṁgha, decided that the vairāginis, who were to constitute a separate group, an itinerant group attached to that of the ācārya, should be given a training lasting a longer or shorter period. In 1971, when a project for a whole complex was coming into being to

⁷³ Another difficulty would arise over the question of meals, for even within the Tapāgaccha the sādhis of different groupings cannot take a meal together.

⁷⁴ Up till now, over the ten-year period, only one Mūrtipūjaka sādhi has followed courses at the Vidyāpiṭha.

include a centre of study and research, a centre of *sādhana* and a girls' college to be situated in the country just outside the little town of Lādanūm in Rājasthāna, the Samsthā for *vairāginis* acquired an adjacent property and became one of the organisms of this complex, independent as regards the group's manner of life, but affiliated for certain courses to the Brāhmi Vidyāpitha, the college for girls.

In the course of the years, the programme has been modified and broadened; at the present time the whole course lasts seven years, though the *vairāginis* do not all complete the entire course. Each year the *ācārya* decides that certain ones, though still studying, should be admitted to *dikṣā* and that certain others should be sent away. As regards its academic side, the curriculum and the syllabus of courses, and its library this institution has functioned since July 1977 under the direction of the Jaina Viśva Bhārati (research institute). The specific courses at the Samsthā are given by munis and pandits.

The Samsthā is intended for *vairāginis* only, but a few *sādhvis* living in their *śikṣā-kendra* follow the same courses and prepare for the same examinations under the direction of one of their number appointed by the *ācārya*.

In one of these well-built and spacious dwellings of *Māravāda*, the *vairāginis* lead their own community-life, which is neither that of a girls' boarding-school nor that of a *sādhvis'* study-centre. All is thought-out, foreseen and organised with a view to their future life as ascetics: character-formation, stress being laid on humility, self-control, recollectedness, renunciation. Thus, as regards clothing, food and type of bed, there is a sobriety that is intentional, chosen and yet not excessive. A relaxed atmosphere is maintained, favourable to serious study in which an attempt is made to promote a harmonious blend of deep knowledge of the Scriptures and doctrine and an atmosphere of general culture, literary activity and openness to broad horizons. For example, the *vairāginis* go on a conducted tour each year to visit certain sites of historical, archaeological or geographical interest. The study of English is promoted and is obligatory, simply in order that the students should have access to certain works, in view of higher studies or further research. The *vairāginis* are organised into small groups, each with a leader who attends to practical matters, to their general activities and the maintenance of good co-ordination

within the community. In the choice of group-leaders the matter of seniority or age is not taken into account; for example, a newcomer may be appointed. This is in order to help the *vairāginis* gradually to become detached from all questions of precedence or honours and to progress towards modesty and self-forgetfulness.

This institution is always in process of becoming and aims at being open to the needs of our age. The *vairāginis* must prepare themselves to be confronted by new situations, unknown to their elders. Several new directions have been envisaged, such as, for example, the designation of certain of their number to study medicine, in order later on after their *dikṣā*, to be at the service of the *śramanisaṅgha* or, again, the sending of some of the *vairāginis*, once their studies are completed, to other countries for a while, in order to make known the message of Mahāvira. These would return later to receive *dikṣā* and would be replaced by others.

At the Saṁsthā, the days begin at four o'clock in the morning with spiritual exercises: *āsanas* (of *yoga*), *dhyāna*, then the *gurvandana* to the *sādhvis* of the Seva Kendra⁷⁵ and to the munis. The greatest part of the day, except for household tasks, is devoted to study. In the evenings the *vairāginis* organise among themselves literary and cultural activities, group meetings and discussions. They keep up to date the community chronicle. After individual study and a time for reflection and *dhyāna*, the day ends at ten o'clock.

It goes without saying that they keep in contact constantly with the Ācārya and Sādhvi Pramukhā and visit them as frequently as is feasible.

In 1977 the annual bulletin, which carries articles by the *vairāginis* and which is, for the *saṅgha*, a means of gaining information (about various activities, results of examinations et cetera) gave the following statistics: since 1948, 334 *vairāginis* had been admitted to the Saṁsthā; out of this number:

- 215 had received *dikṣā*;
- 74 were continuing their studies there;

⁷⁵ Cf. P 565.

- 44 had returned home;
- 1 had departed this life.⁷⁶

The *śikṣā-kendras* number only a few and serve only a small minority of *sādhvis* and *vairāginis*. This section is placed after the section upon *dikṣā* for, on the one hand, preparation for *dikṣā* takes place, in the majority of cases, within the group under the direction of the *guruṇi* and elder *sādhvis*; moreover, the *sādhvis* who do follow courses in these centres go there ordinarily some years after their *dikṣā*. However, their stays in these centres are of limited duration. The factor of real importance upon which the fabric of the *sādhvis'* life is, as it were, woven, is *svādhyāya*, one of the most important observances, performed daily.⁷⁷ These centres perform a very useful service in giving solid foundations for a knowledge of the Scriptures and doctrine. They play their part in helping the *sādhvis* who attend them to acquire a certain discipline and method of study, in awakening within them a taste for *svādhyāya*, which may in turn lead them to an awakening to spiritual realities such as transcends all intellectual knowledge. However, these centres remain means only. One encounters *sādhvis* who have not attended these institutions, but who have a profound knowledge of the Scriptures and have attained a certain depth of spiritual experience simply by adhering intelligently to their rule of life, to the practice of *svādhyāya* and to reflection, neglecting no opportunity of gaining instruction from masters, sages or their elders. In some very big groups which contains *sādhvis* capable of teaching, the *guruṇi* prefers the studies to take place within the group. This is still the ideal and certain groups testify to its efficacy.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ These facts were given to me during my meetings in November 1978 with Muni Śrī Mahendrakumāra and Śrī N. Jaina ('Jiñāsu'), professors at that time at the Saṁsthā to instruct the *vairāginis*; cf. also Śrī Pāramārthika Śikṣaṇa Saṁsthā, Lāḍanūm, bulletins 1974; 1976; 1977.

⁷⁷ Cf. P 490 ff.

⁷⁸ E.g. that of Mahāsati Śrī Pramodasudhā.

Chapter 3.

The *śramaṇī*: The worker

She strives for purification from before sunrise till after sunset

With senses perfectly controlled, the ascetic, compassionate towards all living beings, patient, master of himself, chaste, must observe [the dharma], having renounced all blameworthy action.¹

Once she has received *dikṣā*, the *sādhvī* starts a new existence in which each moment of the day, even each gesture, belongs to one uninterrupted whole, a whole which is inspired by an internal vitality. Each specific aspect of this life is linked with every other by the thread of the *dharma*. The word *anagāri* denotes a life-style that is in decisive contrast to that of society as a whole. The *anagāris* are, moreover, *śramaṇis*. *Śrama* means toil, hard work, the trouble one takes in order to accomplish a task. The *śramaṇis* work without respite at a task that is supremely difficult, at a unique task, that of their own purification. This daily labour starts well before dawn and only ceases well after sunset. We consider now the type of work that a *śramaṇī* must perform in the course of a day, work, indeed, that demands relentless effort.

A - *Sāmācārī*: Right conduct

We recall that *samyak-cāritra*, right conduct, is one of the Three Jewels;² we know also that, by the vow of *sāmāyika* and the *mahāvratas*, a *sādhvī* is already engaged on the path of perfection

¹ *savvehiṃ bhūchiṃ dayāṇukampi khamātikkhame saṃjaya baṃbhayāri sāvajja jogam parivajjayaṃto carejja bhikkhū susamāhi imdīe.* US XXI, 13.

² Cf. P 275 ff.

since she has renounced all blameworthy activity. Let us now see how these promises find concrete expression in her daily life.

a) The teaching of the *Uttarādhyayana-sūtra*

i) The ten *sāmācāris*, rules of right conduct:³

1. *āvaśyaki*: before leaving the *upāśraya* to go out and after the *vandana* to the *guruṇi*, a *sādhvi* repeats: "*āvassiyā, āvassiyā, āvassiyā*," indicating thus that she is going to fulfil a duty;

2. *naiṣedhiki*: on her return to the *upāśraya*, she says: "*nisihiyā, nisihiyā, nisihiyā*", indicating that, the duty having been done, she has now nothing more to do with the outside world with all that that may represent in the way of attachments and faults;

3. *āpṛcchanā*: she asks permission from the *guruṇi* or a senior *sādhvi* before undertaking any task whatever;

4. *pratipṛcchanā*: she asks permission concerning the duties others are to undertake;

5. *chandanā*: she invite the *guruṇi* and other *sādhvis* to share the food she has been given or to use objects that she has at her disposal;

6. *icchākāra*: she offers spontaneously to do the task of another *sādhvi* or respectfully requests another *sādhvi* to replace her in some task that has been assigned to her;⁴

³ US XXVI, 1-7. It is not possible to render each of these words by a single English equivalent nor to limit oneself to the scarcely formulated explanation of the US; we must take into account the context and the practice as transmitted by tradition. The brief explanations given here are based on Mahāsati Candanā's translation of the text into Hindi. We must also take note that, after the DS, the US is the *Sūtra* that the new *sādhvi* must study and assimilate. This *Sūtra* will be our guide in this Part.

⁴ *icchākāra* refers to either one of these two intentions.

7. *mithyākāra*: she blames herself for her faults;

8. *tathākāra*: she accepts the instruction of the guruṇi and of the ācārya;

9. *abhyutthāna*: she rises to her feet to salute and render service to the guruṇi or any other person in authority;

10. *upasampadā*: for a special reason, generally in order to be able to study with a competent guide, she leaves her own *gaccha* and lives in obedience to another guruṇi or ācārya.⁵

ii) The activities of the four *pauruṣis* of the day

A *Pauruṣi* (*prahara*) is a period of three hours.⁶ The activities of the four *pauruṣis* of the day are distributed thus: *svādhyāya* - *dhyāna* - *bhikṣā* - *svādhyāya* (the study of Scripture - mental concentration - the quest for food - the study of Scripture); each of these activities takes three hours.⁷ It is furthermore stated that *pratīlekhanā*, the inspection of clothes and utensils, must take place after sunrise, during the first part of the first *pauruṣi*, and again at the end of the last *pauruṣi*.⁸

iii) The activities of the four *pauruṣis* of the night

These are: *svādhyāya* - *dhyāna* - *nidrā* - *svādhyāya* (the study of Scripture - mental concentration - sleep - the study of Scripture).⁹ It is

⁵ These cases are very rare. Cf. BrkS IV, 20-23; 26; SthS 749, where the 10 *sāmācāris* are simply enumerated; the order differs and instead of *abhyutthāna* the SthS gives *nimantraṇa*.

⁶ On the origing of the use of the term *pauruṣi*, cf. Candanā US, pp. 444-445.

⁷ Cf. US XXVI, 11-12.

⁸ Ibid., 8 (21); 38.

⁹ Ibid., 17-18.

very obvious that first place is accorded to *svādhyāya*, for to it are devoted twelve hours; next comes *dhyāna* with six hours, while *bhikṣā* or *gocari* (and the meal) is given three hours, as also is *nidrā*.¹⁰ We recall that these activities do not take place automatically, but that at the beginning of the day, after the *guruvandana*, one enquires forthwith whether there is any service one can render or whether one should devote oneself to *svādhyāya*.¹¹ We have here a straightforward and austere rule of life, in which stress is laid upon the essentials; probably the *śramanas* and *śramaṇis* of times past have lived it more or less to the letter.

b) Is the tradition still alive today?

Now let us observe how contemporary *sādhvis* adhere, at least in spirit, to the *pauruṣī* timetable. In practice their day includes more activities than those mentioned and... could they manage, we wonder, with just three hours of sleep? However, they do adhere to the same outlook and pattern, as the following outline will show:

1. From before dawn until sunrise: *japa* - *dhyāna* - *āvaśyaka* (*vidhī*) (repetition of the *Namaskāra*-*mantra* or some other *mantra*.¹² mental concentration - the rite of duties).¹³

2. From sunrise till just before noon: *pratīkhanā* - *bhāva* - *pūjā* - *jalapāna* - *svādhyāya* - *adhyayana* or *vihāra* or *pravacana* (inspection

¹⁰ The *āvaśyakas*, duties, and the *vihāra*, regular removal from one place to the next, are not mentioned.

¹¹ Cf. US XXVI, 9-10.

¹² *Japa* may be practised at any hour of the day and night.

¹³ Cf. Part IV.

of clothing - inner *pūjā* - tea (milk) - the study of Scripture - study or onward march or public instruction).¹⁴

3. From the latter half of the morning till the beginning of the afternoon: *gocari* - *bhojana* - *viśrama* (quest for food - meal - rest).¹⁵

4. From the beginning of the afternoon till sunset: *adhyayana* - *svādhyāya* - *adhyapana* - *jana-samparka* or *vihāra* - *pratilekhanā* - *gocari* - *bhojana* (study - the study of Scripture - instruction given in private to the śrāvakas and śrāvikās -¹⁶ reception of visitors (if any) or onward march - inspection of clothing - quest for food - light meal).

5. From sunset till well into the night: *āvaśyakas* (*vidhi*) - *svādhyāya* or *adhyayana* - *dhyāna* or *japa* - *saṁstāra-pauruṣi* (rite of duties - study of Scripture or other study - mental concentration or the repetition of *mantras* - the hour of rest in which certain *sūtras* are recited).

The activities here enumerated are not all obligatory; those that are strictly obligatory are the rite of the *āvaśyakas*, *pratilekhanā*, *svādhyāya*, *gocari* and *bhojana*, while *vihāra* which takes place regularly, though at intervals which depend upon circumstances, is not only obligatory but constitutes the specific actualisation of the *anagāri* state.¹⁷

We will now attempt quite simply to follow a day's life as its hours unfold for a group of *sādhvis* in an *upāśraya*, while they are staying

¹⁴ One *sādhvi* gives a teaching on the *dharma* and the other *sādhvis*, the śrāvakas and śrāvikās listen, or all the *sādhvi* go to listen to the homily of a muni.

¹⁵ The siesta is not obligatory.

¹⁶ This, as also the receiving of visitors, depends upon where they are making a halt.

¹⁷ These facts were given to me by several *sādhvis* belonging to different *sampradāyas* and *gacchas* and were later checked with *Sādhvi Rājimati*.

there for a short while. Then we will follow them on *vihāra*, then during the *cāturmāsya*, the four months of stability during the monsoon.

B - *Japa*: The repetition of *Mantras*

The daily work of the *śramaṇis* begins at about four in the morning, in the dark, since they do not use any form of light. Nowhere is it expressly stated that *japa* must be the first spiritual activity of the day nor that it is the most important; however, very often the day does start with *japa*, to which an important place is given. *Japa* is the threshold of *dhyāna*.¹⁸ Whereas *japa* should be a threshold that one crosses in order to penetrate further in *dhyāna*, it happens not infrequently that one lingers on the threshold without proceeding further and this may continue one's whole life long. *Japa* is the most commonly practised form of spiritual activity among the *sādhvis* of today.¹⁹

i) What is *japa*?

It is the repetition of certain syllables, usually those composing *mantras* well-known to tradition. The *mantra* or *mantras* may be either pronounced in a low voice or spoken in the mind. Linked with the utterance of the syllables is a corresponding mental concentration upon these same syllables. One may count the number of repetitions of the *mantra* upon one's fingers or with the help of a *mālā*. One must

¹⁸ *Japa* belongs, in fact, to the type of *dhyāna* called: *padastha-dhyāna*; but this latter is, as one might say, preliminary to *dhyāna*; cf. P 388 n. 66.

¹⁹ One hears it said sometimes that in our day and age of misfortune (P 76) the physical resistance requisite for concentration is lacking! What should above all else be emphasised and what, furthermore, a great number of *sādhvis* suffer from is the lack of training in regard to spiritual disciplines. Too often there has been a tendency to consider that it is sufficient that they should be resigned and docile. This is a fundamental error, for not only does one thus fail to help them to fulfil their vocation, but one deprives of the light of spiritual instruction those men and women who have a right to receive from the *sādhvis* counsels and teaching.

select a silent, retired spot, and adopt a seated posture, generally that called *śukhāsana*,²⁰ facing either East or North. To facilitate concentration, one may co-ordinate the pronouncing of the *mantra* with the respiratory movements.²¹ The most highly recommended and the most often chosen and repeated *mantra* is the *Namaskāra-mantra*, either the whole or in part.²² However, other *mantras* also are used, the essential function of *japa* is to promote concentration, this last-named being promoted by the utterance of the syllables which possess, through their resonance and content, a purificatory power. It goes without saying that one must be in the right frame of mind, not only as regards recollectedness but also as regards a deep faith. One may also repeat, with the aid of a *mālā* or *navakaravālī*, the one hundred and eight *guṇas*, the virtues, characteristics and merits of the *parameṣṭhins*. The one hundred and eight *guṇas* are apportioned in this way: twelve for the *arhats*, eight for the *siddhas*, thirty-six for the *ācāryas*; twenty-five for the *upādhyāyas* twenty-seven for the *sādhus*. One *mālā* is made up of one hundred and eight beads, each symbolising a *guṇa*.

The Terāpanthi *sādhvis* also use as a *mantra* the name of their founder *ācārya* or of his successors.²³

When the repetition of a *mantra* or the *guṇas* takes place with a *mālā*, this latter must be held between the fingers of the right hand, at the level of the heart, the eyes being closed or half-closed. As one proceeds in the repetition of the *guṇas* or the *mantra*, one slides the beads of the rosary one by one between the third finger and the

²⁰ Cf. P 328 & ns. for the different postures.

²¹ This same practice may be performed during *kāyotsarga*; P 329.

²² Cf. P 379 ff. on the method par excellence. *Sādhvi Rājimati* in her study *Namaskāra mahāmantra*, 1977, develops the theme: *japa, yoga, sādhanā* in connection with this *mantra* and explains in detail how to practise the *mahāmantra-japa*; cf. Appendix I.

²³ This was the assiduous practice of *Sādhvi Bālū*; cf. *Surānā*, 1972, pp. 17; 24.

thumb.²⁴ *Japa* may last a longer or shorter time; there is no exact ruling as to its duration, which depends on the activities or rituals which are to follow. For zealous *sādhvis*, *japa* is not confined to one particular moment during the day, but becomes as natural as breathing. Quite frequently, at the visiting-hour in the *upāśraya*, one observes one or other of the *sādhvis* seated a little to one side, recollected, her rosary gliding between her fingers, her lips imperceptibly moving.

ii) *Mauna*: Silence

At this point it is fitting to speak of *mauna*, before the dawn of a new day, when all is still wrapped in the silence of the night. *Mauna* is one of the indispensable conditions for all forms of mental concentration. *Mauna* does not simply refer to an absence of words; it is a form of *śuddhi*, of purification. Its effect permeates the whole being. It includes: *kāya-mauna*, *vāñi-mauna*, *manas-mauna*, that is, silence of the body, silence of the voice and silence of the mind.²⁵ It invades little by little each of these areas, penetrates and purifies them and, through *citta-mauna*, the silence of the conscience, unifies the whole person.²⁶ *Mauna* is one form of interior *tapas*. By means of *mauna*, *ekāgratā* and thus *dhyāna* become possible. We recall that *kāyotsarga* not only depends upon *mauna*, but is in fact its most radical form.

It goes without saying that an *upāśraya* must be silent, not only in the early hours and at night-time, but all day long, except during visiting hours, which are usually in the early afternoon. An important portion of the day must be devoted to *svādhyāya*, which demands silence. However, one cannot claim that the *upāśrayas* are always completely silent. On occasion the location is scarcely propitious, if it

²⁴ I owe this information to Mahāsati Śrī Ujjvalakumāri.

²⁵ Cf. Rājimati, 1974, pp. 117-119.

²⁶ *Citta*, in the performance of ascetic disciplines, denotes conscience, a term which includes all parts of the psyche. The ascetic must endeavour to control her impressions, her imagination, her desires, etc.

is situated in a noisy quarter of the town, and sometimes there is a certain lack of discipline among the sādhis themselves, which is due precisely to the fact that there is no definite rule concerning *mauna*. In theory this lack of a ruling is justified, for *mauna* should be penetrating the whole of life, but some form of discipline is necessary and it is only when one has reached a certain spiritual maturity that one realises its importance and that it becomes a natural part of one's personality.

Certain sādhis, attracted by this indispensable form of *śuddhi*, remain in silence for long periods or even years, with the permission of their guruṇi or the ācārya. They use writing in order to communicate with the group. However, this remains exceptional. On the other hand, it quite often happens that sādhis select certain hours of the day in which to remain silent.

iii) *Sthāpanācārya*: The symbol of the ācārya

This symbol only exists among the Mūrtipūjaka sādhis and the aim in its regard is to recall in a concrete way the existing bond with the five *parameṣṭhins*, the present ācārya being in the same line. It consists of a small tripod made of light wood, usually of sandalwood. In the centre of the tripod, wrapped in a fine cloth, are five shells representing the five *parameṣṭhins*. The tripod itself is covered by a beautiful white cloth, often embroidered, of the size of a handkerchief.²⁷ The *sthāpanācārya* is the sign of the presence of the ācārya, through whom the tradition of the *arhats* is transmitted. During the rite of the *āvaśyakas* and other spiritual activities, the *sthāpanācārya* is present among the sādhis as a sign and a witness; it is always placed in front of the muni or sādhi who is giving a *pravacana*.

²⁷ Cf. U.P. Shah, 1955, pp. 113-114.

C - *Dhyāna*: Mental concentration

It is not laid down by any rule that *dhyāna* should necessarily follow *japa*; for one thing, *japa* is a part of *dhyāna*. All depends on the *sādhvis* themselves and on their *guruṇi* and also on the *ācārya* who can emphasise one point or another. One may well start the day with one of the forms of *dharma-dhyāna* and practise *japa* at other moments, for *japa*, like *svādhyāya*, is woven into the life of the *sādhvis*.

Dhyāna presupposes that one has a solid and comprehensive knowledge of the general doctrine, of the teaching upon *dhyāna* in particular and the methods conducive to it. *Dhyāna* is not an *āvaśyaka*, although, even if then practised for a very limited period, it does constitute an inherent part of *kāyotsarga*, an important place is given to it in the *sāmācāris* and the ancient *Āgamas* make mention of it.²⁸ *Dhyāna* requires a calm and silent spot, for which reason the best moments for it are most often the early morning hours or late at night.

Few *sādhvis*, on the whole, have received a methodical training in this regard. The majority know the teaching of the *Tattvārtha-sūtra*, certain ones have studied the *Dhyānaśataka*, the *Dravyasaṃgraha*, the *Yogaśāstra* and even the *Yoga-sūtra* of Patañjali. However, relatively few practise *dhyāna* regularly, during specified periods of the day. Although so essential, it seems that during the course of the centuries the assiduous practice of *dhyāna* was almost lost. When one tries to analyse the reasons for this state of affairs, one comes across several factors.

The *sādhvis*, on account of their continual *vihāras*, are dispersed into small groups. The *guruṇi* has not always been trained in this regard herself and is thus not capable of giving such a training to others. In the periods of *cāturmāsya*, the *sādhvis* do not necessarily stay within easy reach of an *ācārya* or of a *muni* who can guide them. It must also be recognised that the *ācāryas* have often neglected to

²⁸ Cf. e.g. AS I, 8, 4, 14-15.

initiate the sādhis into this practice.²⁹ In the course of the centuries what might be called a slippery path has led to the attachment of very great importance to *mantras*; now, although *japa* is at one and the same time both a preparation for and a constituent part of *dhyāna*, it can also deflect one from it.³⁰ In a similar way great importance has been attached to all the external forms of *tapas* without much attention being given to interior *tapas* and to its most perfect expression, which is *dhyāna*.

Furthermore, the jungle and countryside of past centuries, favourable as they were to the state of recollectedness, have gradually given way to noisy towns and since the Jaina *saṃgha* is for the most part a trading community, certain *upāśrayas* for a number of practical reasons have been located right within the bazar area, which is scarcely conducive to the practice of spiritual exercises.

It cannot but be noted, also, that among those sādhis who are very well instructed in their doctrine certain ones are scarcely aware of this lack; they themselves do not always feel the necessity of the practice of *dhyāna*.³¹ Up till now few have shown determination or interest in returning to the sources in this regard. However, there are some exceptions.³²

²⁹ It is this lack which the Śramaṇi Vidyāpiṭha and the Saṃsthā aim at remedying.

³⁰ Cf. Rājimati, 1977, pp. 23-24.

³¹ One scholarly sādhi, who had done advanced literary study, told me that she had no experience of *dhyāna*.

³² An interesting contribution in this area has been made by Sādhi Rājimati, who, on the basis of some serious study and her own personal experience, has written a treatise for the use of śrāvakas and śrāvikās, comprising a practical introduction to the disciplines of classical *yoga* from the Jaina perspective: *Yoga ki prathama kirāṇa*, (1975), 1st vol. of a series she is envisaging. We must also mention the excellent initiative taken by Mahāsati Umarāvakumvara ('Arcana'), who collaborated with a muni and a pandit in producing an edition in Hindi of the *Yogasāstra*.

Among the Terāpanthis, there has been for several years a very real effort in this direction. In May 1972 a group of sādhis and munis, together with some śrāvakas and śrāvikās, took part in a *sādhana* camp of a month's duration under the direction of Ācārya Tulasi and Muni Nathamala.³³ *Sādhana* implies the notion of fulfilment, particularly when used in reference to the spiritual realm. It is more exact to say, at least in this context, that *sādhana* comprises a number of spiritual and bodily disciplines which, if practised regularly and seriously, bring in their train a fulfilment of personhood and the harmonisation of all the faculties in a process which leads towards the goal peculiar to the *dharma*. This camp was organised in order to embark upon a practical training, an existential initiation, with the goal in mind of awakening a consciousness of being and of indicating a direction to follow. In this, *dhyāna* was given pride of place. At the end of this session, there was a free interchange between the participants and the thirty-six sādhis present gave their impressions and made their own comments.³⁴ It is extremely interesting to peruse the sincerely expressed reflections of each at a moment when their minds had been newly awakened. On the whole, *dhyāna* was for them a discovery; they now realised that a dimension had been lacking in their lives and felt themselves new beings. They understood that *ekāgratā*, concentration, must be practised for limited periods just in order that it may become a constant attitude underlying everything and may lead to a deeper and deeper awareness of being.³⁵ The Terāpanthis always act in accordance with directives given by their ācārya and obeyed unitedly by all members; besides, once given the initial impetus, the

³³ Cf. Muni Śricandra, 1973.

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 189-196.

³⁵ Several times thereafter some Terāpanthi sādhis have been participants in sessions of *vipassanā*, a method of concentration propounded by the Theravāda school of Buddhism, organised by Śri Goenka, a master in this discipline. Some Kharataragaccha sādhis have also participated in these sessions. We may make a careful note of this recent initiative, through which the essential values of one particular tradition are being re-discovered through a master of another, albeit closely-related, one.

sādhvis, certainly those who followed the camp, continued in their efforts.

There are also, in the other *sampradāyas*, sādhvis who are awake to the same reality and who both make the initial effort and also persist in it, but these are isolated cases, such as that of Sādhvi Ratnaprabhā Śrī. For the last several years she has remained in meditation nightly from midnight to four in the morning, murmuring the *Namaskāra-mantra* and fasting three days out of four, a strict fast in which she only takes water. She explains in this regard that the choice of *vairāgya* implies the total purification of the *ātman*, which is brought about through *dhyāna* and *tapas*; that the simplest and most efficacious form of *dhyāna* is the repetition of the *Namaskāra-mantra* in recollectendess and silence, and that this concentration, if sustained, brings about in the heart, the mind and the body a gradual purification. When she is asked how, in this state of continuous fast, she can observe all the rules and walk throughout the *vihāras*, she replies smilingly: "In the strength of the *ātman*." ³⁶

In the biographies the word *dhyāna* is used, but with no explanation. In collections of *pravacanas* given by sādhvis, *dhyāna* is mentioned quite frequently and brief explanations are given, though these latter indicate a certain lack of training and experience.

Some sādhvis have taken an interest in classical *yoga* and practise the recommended *āsanas*.³⁷

What is quite certain is that many of the sādhvis would like to receive a grounding in this discipline of *dhyāna*, which is basic to the ideal to which they aspire. It is to be hoped that some of the ācāryas and gurunīs will launch an initiative towards renewal.

³⁶ Met at Yeola in Mahārāṣṭra in March, 1975.

³⁷ Although BrkS V, 23-33 forbids the practice by sādhvis of a number of *āsanas*, certain ones of them have, in our day, disregarded these prohibitions, which are in any case unjustified.

D- Āvaśyaka-vidhi: The rite of daily duties

Before dawn, or just when the day begins to break, all is still wrapped in a great silence at the *upāśraya*; the *sādhvis* are performing, either singly or together, the *vidhi* or rite of the *āvaśyakas* by reciting the *sūtras* mentally, by heart, and by making the appropriate gestures.³⁸

In the evening, after sunset, the same *vidhi* takes place; the *sūtras*, apart from a few words, are exactly the same, the difference between the *vidhi* of the dawn and that of the evening being the outward, community aspect of the second.³⁹ This time the *sādhvis* are grouped around their *guruṇi* and they take it in turn to repeat the *sūtras* aloud, by heart and in Prākṛit. The gestures are performed together and vary among the *sampradāyas*.

Certain *doṣas*, or faults, may be committed during the observance of the *āvaśyakas*, arising out of inattention, negligence or other more serious causes.⁴⁰ In connection with the *vandana*, the causes of such *doṣas* may be deep-seated, such as lack of respect towards the *guruṇi* and *ācārya*, haughtiness of manner, lack of faith which prevents one perceiving the value of the *vandana*, contemptuousness which issues in an attitude of disrespect, and disingenuousness that drives one to curry favour with the *guruṇi*. There are also less weighty faults that reveal a certain carelessness very disastrous to the ascetic life. These

³⁸ The Mūrtipūjaka *sādhvis* perform this rite separately, the *Sthānakavāsīs* together; cf. P 313 ff. for the meaning of the *āvaśyakas* and Part IV for the *sūtras* composing the rite and for its structure.

³⁹ During the dawn-time *vidhi*, the *sūtras* can also be recited aloud, but silence is favourable to recollectedness.

⁴⁰ SramanS gives a list of 32 *doṣas* in regard to the *vandana* and 19 *doṣas* in regard to *kāyotsarga*.

latter evidence themselves through a slovenly appearance and inattentiveness in the performance of this *vidhi*.⁴¹

With regard to *kāyotsarga*, the *doṣas* all come from a certain non-chalance, like leaning against the wall, turning the head or eyes, all proof of a lack of basic courage, which has repercussions on bodily posture and prevents true *utsarga* (detachment) from the *kāya* (body).⁴² It goes without saying that one must confess these *doṣas* to the *guruṇi*, at least when one is conscious of them, by simply telling her during the day the fault committed - there is no special formula used for *ālocanā* (confession) - after which the *guruṇi* indicates the *prāyaścitta*, the specific penance to be performed.

E - *Pratīlekhanā-vidhi*: The inspection of clothing and utensils

Now the sun is up and light is flooding into the *upāśraya*. It is now and only now that the *sādhvis* can perform the *pratīlekhanā-vidhi*. Of course, when we consider the etymology of this word, it appears obvious that the act that it denotes requires light and that, since the *sādhvis*, except exceptionally (as, example, for study), do not use electricity or any other artificial light, it is necessary in the morning to await the sunrise before undertaking the *pratīlekhanā-vidhi*, which is performed again at the end of the afternoon before sunset. *Pratīlekhanā* or *pratīlekhā* means: inspection, search, observation, viewing, investigation.⁴³ On account of their vow of *ahimsā*, the *sādhvis*, twice a day, carry out a minute inspection of their *vastras*, *muhapatti*, *rajoharaṇa*, *pātras*, *granthas* (books), *śayyā* (bedding) and anything else that they use.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Cf. *SramaṇS*, pp. 426-431. We must bear in mind that the lesser *vandana* is performed often during the day and not solely during the rite of the *āvaśyakas*.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 416-418.

⁴³ *Nirikṣaṇa* (inspection, look), *avaloka* (observation, glance), *nirūpana* (investigation, examination) are all words which express each of them, one particular aspect of the *pratīlekhanā*; cf. AS I, 8, 1, 12.

⁴⁴ Cf. US XXVI, 22-23.

The *pratīlekhanā* applies also to places, that is to say, to the spot one occupies in the *upāśraya* and to the one where one deposits one's excrements.⁴⁵ The purpose of this *pratīlekhanā* is to detect any living being that is in the clothing and elsewhere, to place them carefully to one side, avoiding thus hurting or squashing them. This *vidhi* must be performed with very great attentiveness; one must proceed in an orderly manner, without haste, avoiding abrupt movements, casualness, absent-mindedness.⁴⁶ Each *sādhvi* undertakes it at a moment suitable to herself, there are no fixed times for it. All this is in view of *ahimsā* and its practice requires *ekāgratā*, concentration solely upon the matter in hand, by dint of following certain rules as to the folding of garments and the way one holds them while shaking out the dust;⁴⁷ one must not converse at the same time, give a *pratyākhyānā* (to a *sādhvi*) or, still less, teach or study.⁴⁸

When one *muhūrta* (48-minute period) has passed since sunrise, then the *sādhvis*, having recited the *Namaskāra-mantra*, may drink some water. They are bound by two *pratyākhyānas* not to take food or drink, even water, from before sunset until after this *muhūrta*.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Cf. DS VIII, 17-18.

⁴⁶ Cf. SthS 503, where a list is given of 6 sorts of *pratīlekhanā-pramāda* (negligences in the performance of *pratīlekhanā*) and 6 sorts of *pratīlekhanā-apramāda* (conscientious performances of the same).

⁴⁷ Cf. US XXVI, 24-28; 30-31.

⁴⁸ *paḍilehaṇaṃ kuṇarito mihokahaṃ kuṇai jaṇavakahaṃ vā
dei va paccakkhāṇaṃ vāci sayāṃ paḍicchai vā.* US XXVI, 29.

⁴⁹ Cf. SramS pp. 302-303 (P 331 ff.; 708 ff). Even in the event of serious illness, a *sādhvi* may not drink at night; certain ones, though not all, are allowed to receive injections (at night).

F - Bhāva-pūjā: Inner pūjā

This, an expression of pure *bhakti*, is to be distinguished from *dravya-pūjā*, in which the *bhakti*, although primarily interior, expresses itself by the offering and use of *dravya*, pure substances: flowers, fruit, incense, grains of rice, sandalwood paste. *Dravya-pūjā* is offered in the temple and is of concern only to the *mūrtipūjaka śrāvakas* and *śrāvikā*. From their *dikṣā* onwards the *sādhvis*, being now consecrated totally to a life of interiority, have renounced the use of material substances, even for a *pūjā*. The expression *bhāva-pūjā* as such is not found in the *Āgamas*; however, praise to the *arhats* is mentioned in very clear terms as being conducive to a realisation of the Three Jewels and thus to attainment of *mokṣa* or, at the least, of the *kalpas* or *vimānas*, the dwellings of the celestial beings.⁵⁰ We know, moreover, that praise is one of the *āvaśyakas*, an obligation performed through the recitation of the *caturviṃśatistava*.⁵¹ Among the *Mūrtipūjaka sādhvis*, *bhāva-pūjā* means interior silent worship offered in the temple in front of the *mūrtis*, the images of the *tīrthaṅkaras*, early in the morning and often, also, at the end of the afternoon. This is not obligatory, but all do in fact repair to the temple, singly or as a group, at the most favourable hours, that is to say, when the temple is in silence. *Bhāva-pūjā*, in contrast to *japa*, follows no special technique; it is an outpouring of spontaneous personal devotion.⁵² The fact of being in a temple, in a sanctuary where everything is conducive to worship of the *tīrthaṅkaras*, is a help towards recollection and the upsurge of sentiments of praise from the innermost soul, of admiration and respect for those who through their life and words have taught the *dharma*. This inner *pūjā* is not only an

⁵⁰ Cf. US XXIX, 14; for *kalpa* and *vimāna* cf. TS IV, 16-17.

⁵¹ Cf. IP 69 ff.; 317 ff.; 701.

⁵² Furthermore, the one does not prevent the other. It is quite possible to spend this moment in the temple telling one's rosary-beads. As regards certain gestures and bodily postures enjoined upon the *Mūrtipūjaka sādhvis* when they go to the temple for *bhāva-pūjā*, these are in fact very similar to those of the *āryikās* when they recite the *sāmāyika* in the temple; 662 ff.

aid to perseverance but also excites a desire to imitate them. Also its effect is purificatory.

The Sthānakavāsi and Terāpanthi sādhis perform *bhāva-pūjā* at the *upāśraya* or wherever they are; the absence of a sanctuary does not in any way diminish the fervour of their *bhakti*.

Even if *bhāva-pūjā* takes place in inner silence its *bhakti*-elements is for all that not checked. This is not an exercise imposed from without, nor is there any limit to the expression of praise. It can also be expressed audibly at any time of the day, through song, poetry or improvisation. Quite a number of sādhis come from villages where the local tradition, both religious and popular, is still very much alive. In their own homes, since childhood, they have heard hymns of praise sung or recited, and they spontaneously use them.⁵³

G - *Svādhyāya*: Meditative study of Scripture

Starting at daybreak and thereafter for a large part of the day, the sādhis, principal activity is *svādhyāya*, which is the means through which they stay faithful to their tradition.⁵⁴

a) *Svādhyāya*: Meditative study of Scripture

Sva-adhyāya, the study and repetition to oneself of the *śruta* that has been transmitted and preserved in Scripture, constitutes one of the forms of inner *tapas* and thus brings about *nirjarā*.⁵⁵ In those who practise *svādhyāya*, the *karman jñānāvaraṇa* which obscures

⁵³ Cf. e.g. the *Bhaktāmara-stotram* (P 98 n. 16), also the wonderful poems of Muni Ānandaghana of Gujārāta (XVIII c.). The majority of sādhis possess a large repertory of poems, almost always ones expressing devotion to the *arhats* or to the *dharma* under its multiplicity of forms.

⁵⁴ We may recall that the US proposes 12 hours out of 24 for *svādhyāya*.

⁵⁵ Cf. P 369 ff. In its practical outworking, *svādhyāya* involves the use of doctrinal works interpreting the *Āgamas*, of which the authority is recognised by tradition.

knowledge is destroyed and they advance towards *samyak-jñāna*.⁵⁶ This is the final effect of *svādhyāya* within the person who studies, repeats and inwardly assimilates the *Āgamas* and, since such a one is a member of the *saṅgha*, *svādhyāya* has also a salutary effect on the community. It is thanks to *svādhyāya* that the munis and *sādhvis* are able to teach their juniors and also the *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās*.⁵⁷ A further benefit accruing from *svādhyāya* is that it permits the preservation of the *Sūtras* without alteration and interruption from one age to the next.⁵⁸

Svādhyāya requires interior calm and a certain disposition of the mind; it necessitates a sustained and systematic effort, due cognizance being taken of the five features proper to it.⁵⁹ Here the importance of the memory cannot be over-emphasised. Through the repetition, often aloud, of the *Āgamas*, not only do the *sādhvis* assimilate their contents, but are themselves penetrated by the sound, so that little by little, according to the capacity of each, they become themselves as it were living *Āgamas*, preserving and transmitting the message of the Scripture.⁶⁰

On account of the quietness and effort it demands, certain moments of the day and of the night are not propitious for *svādhyāya*. The practice of it is also forbidden during cosmic phenomena. The following are not propitious:

⁵⁶ *sajjhācetaṃ bharāte! jīve kiṃ jaṇayai? sajjhācetaṃ nāṇāvaraṇijjaṃ kammaṃ khavei*. US XXIX, 18; cf. also DS VIII, 41; 62; *cūlikā* 2, 7.

⁵⁷ Cf. P 551 ff.

⁵⁸ Cf. SthS 468, where the reasons are given for which the *Sūtras* must be studied.

⁵⁹ For these 5 features: *vācanā*; *pracchanā*; *anuprekṣā*; *āmnāya*; *dharmopadeśa*, cf. P 371.

⁶⁰ Mahāsati Tarulātā wrote to me that often *sādhvis* (Sthānakavāsi) know by heart 17 or 18 *Śāstras*. *Śāstras* in this context means the *Āgamas* and other later texts dealing with the doctrine.

- The four *saṁdhyās*: dawn, midday, twilight, midnight.⁶¹
- The four *mahotsavas* (great festivals), in this connection the *pūrṇimās*, full-moon periods: *āṣāḍha-pūrṇimā* (June-July), *āśvina-pūrṇimā* (September-October), *kārttika-pūrṇimā* (October-November), *caitra-pūrṇimā* (March-April).⁶²
- The four *mahāpratipadās*, the day following each of these *pūrṇimās*.⁶³
- Atmospheric phenomena of a disturbing variety, which take place in the *āntarikṣa* (the sky), such as thunder, lightnings, mist, dust-storm et cetera.⁶⁴

All that is connected with the *audārika*, that is, the human body in general and other bodies. This obstructs *svādhyāya*, at least within a given radius, for example, in the proximity of a *śmaśāna*, a cremation-ground.⁶⁵ Eclipses of moon and sun are included in the *audārika*.⁶⁶

⁶¹ Cf. SthS 285b; *saṁdhyā* means union, a joining, particularly referring to light. *Svādhyāya* is not permitted during the hours immediately preceding or following each of the *saṁdhyas*. The *sādhvis* affirm that this cosmic phenomenon has a repercussion upon human beings, being vaguely disturbing and thus hindering the concentration demanded by *svādhyāya*. It would be interesting to study this question. It must also be added that during the *ṛtu-kāla*, the menstrual period, the *sādhvis*, on account of the impurity associated with this biological phenomenon, must not touch the texts of Scripture, but they may recall them by repetition. Other reading is, however, permitted.

⁶² Cf. SramanS p. 425.

⁶³ Cf. SthS 285a.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 714a.

⁶⁵ Cf. SthS 714b; SramanS pp. 424-425.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

Svādhyāya has the same importance for all the various *sampradāyas* and *gacchas*. The sole reason for the existence of the study-centres mentioned in the preceding chapter is to give an intelligent knowledge of the Scriptures. This is their foremost goal. The *Sihānakavāsi* and *Terāpanthī* *sādhvis* are permitted to study all the *Āgamas* in turn.⁶⁷ Among the *Mūrtipūjākas*, the *Kharataragaccha* *sādhvis* have permission to study the *Āgamas* so long as they observe the *yoga-udvāhana* the while, which is to say that during the period of study of an *Āgama* they must daily observe a form of *pratyākhyāna*⁶⁸ and be guided by an *ācārya* or an *upādhyāya*, or, in their absence, by a well-qualified muni who has at least twenty years of ascetic life to his credit.⁶⁹ As for the *Cheḍa-sūtras*, they normally do not study them, except for some special reason. Among the *Tapāgaccha* *sādhvis*, only the study of a limited number of *Āgamas* is allowed, from among those dealing with the ascetic life. All the rest are forbidden to them. In the *pāṭhaśālās* they often study texts that are important and indispensable for a knowledge of the doctrine. Nevertheless, these are not *Āgamas*. To elucidate the situation, the *sādhvis* proffer the following explanation: to study the *Āgamas*, for example the *Kalpa-sūtra* which narrates the life of Mahāvira and the other *tirthaṅkaras*, one must be capable of observing certain severe and lengthy forms of *tapas*; so, "We" they say, "have not the necessary physical resistance. It is only the munis who can study all the *Sūtras*."⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Some of these, though only a very small number, study in addition some of the commentaries on the *Āgamas*: *bhāṣyas*, *niryuktis*, *cuṇṇis*, *vṛttis* (P 144); the others quite often know the stories contained in these commentaries for they belong to oral tradition in the local languages.

⁶⁸ These *pratyākhyānas* are: either the *ācāmla* (*āyambila*), a form of fast or abstinence, comprising one single meal a day in which no form of fat is present; this normally consists of boiled rice or an other boiled cereal (AvaS 101); or *nirvikṛtika* (*nivviiya*), abstinence from the 10 *vikṛtis*, rich foodstuffs, namely, milk, curds, fresh butter, clarified butter, oil, raw sugar-cane, fried food (as regards the other *vikṛtis* i.e. alcohol, meat, honey, the *sādhvis* always abstain from them).

⁶⁹ This information was given me by *Sādhvi Hemaprabhā*.

⁷⁰ I was told this by several *Tapāgaccha* *sādhvis*.

In actual fact this prohibition and the rigid outlook it illustrates are scarcely justifiable and emanate chiefly from the *ācāryas*. It is enough, they think, that the *sādhvis* should have renounced all and should be acquainted with the principal rules of conduct. As for the *Cheda-sūtras* which deal in detail with the possible infringements of these rules and with the *prāyaścittas*, forms of expiation and reparation, the Tapāgaccha *sādhvis* are strictly forbidden to read them, for, as one muni said: "That would give them bad thoughts, along with a notion of possible faults of which at present they are ignorant and that would do them harm." This opinion cannot be said to be well-founded, for the *Sihānakavāsi* and *Terāpanthi* *sādhvis* who read and study with discernment these same *Sūtras* are quite as fervent as the Tapāgaccha *sādhvis*.⁷¹ To say, as one *sādhvi* did: "As the *ācāryas* know the *Cheda-sūtras*, that is sufficient" is not a convincing reply; at the most this subservience imparts to them a certain security. It is laid down, moreover, that the ascetics must always be in the company of someone who knows the *Āgamas*.⁷² Does this mean, however, that it is reckoned to suffice for the *sādhvis* to be in the proximity of an *ācārya* or a muni?

b) *Adhyayana*: General studies

The question here is of study, or reading, in a more general sense. For the *sādhvis*, study of this kind has usually a bearing upon what can contribute to *svādhyāya*, namely, study of the doctrine, of Jaina philosophy and that of other systems,⁷³ study of Sanskrit and Prākṛit, and literary studies. In many of the groups *sādhvis* study for examinations in these subjects, certain ones receiving help from a

⁷¹ It must be emphasised that the *sādhvis* need to have reached a certain maturity and also to be guided in this type of reading, which is in fact precisely the role of the *guruṇi* and senior *sādhvis*.

⁷² Cf. VS VI, 12-14.

⁷³ Mahāsatī Mohanadevi studied *jyotiṣa-śāstra*, astrology; cf. Hukamadevi, p. 86.

competent senior sādhu and others from a paṇḍit.⁷⁴ Some sādhus take a wider range of studies and prepare for examinations of Hindi literary societies or for college or university examinations. They study at the *upāśraya* and present themselves as private students. In this case they refrain from frequent *vihāras*, but move often from one *upāśraya* to another within some large city. Certain ones, just a few, pursue higher studies and prepare doctoral theses on doctrinal, philosophical or literary subjects.⁷⁵

Scanning the whole scene and bearing in mind the average sādhu from the point of view of her personal development and fulfilment, vocation and well-defined role within the *saṃgha*, we may put forward this remark: it seems desirable that the *vairāginīs* should receive a solid, general education before *dikṣā*; then, that as sādhus they should devote themselves as much as possible, in their own setting, to study of the *Āgamas*, of the doctrine, of Jaina history, literature and iconography. Those who have done advanced study in

⁷⁴ Certain paṇḍits receive remuneration from the śrāvakas, others are unpaid.

⁷⁵ In March 1977, 5 Sthānakavāsī sādhus were working upon the following theses:

- Mahāsatī Tarulatā: "A comparative study of Kabir and Ānandaghana, Banārasidāsa and Śrīmad Rājacandra", a literary and spiritual treatise in Hindi.
- Mahāsatī Dharmasīlā: "Navatattva", Jaina philosophy, in Marāṭhī
- Mahāsatī Muktīprabhā: "A comparative study on yoga according to Patañjali and Jaina doctrine", doctrine, in Hindi.
- Mahāsatī Divyaprabhā: "Arihanta", doctrine, in Hindi.
- Mahāsatī Anupamā: "A study on Hindi Jaina literature", literature and history, in Hindi. (Information concerning these theses given to me by Mahāsatī Tarulatā). In January 1980, at Pune, 3 sādhus were working upon the following theses in Hindi:
- Mahāsatī Jñānaprabhā: "Jiva tattva", doctrine.
- Mahāsatī Priyadarśanā: "Dhyāna in the Jaina tradition", doctrine.
- Mahāsatī Kirānaprabhā: "A study on the doctrine of *karman*", doctrine.

Prākṛit or Sanskrit would render a very great service to all by translating numerous valuable works into local languages.⁷⁶

Centres such as the Śramaṇi Vidyāpīṭha and the Saṁsthā are very useful for the laying of foundations. Later on, as *svādhyāya* continues, there is a vast unexplored field which should be of interest to the sādhis. In a world that is becoming increasingly pluralistic, it would be good to encourage at least certain ones of them to get to know and to study other religious and monastic cultures and traditions.

H - Gocari: The quest for food

Gocari denotes the way in which the go, the cow, browses quietly in the meadows; she browses tufts of grass here and there without hawking or destroying the pasture. Thus also do the sādhis when they go in search of food. Although other words are also employed for this action, *gocari* has remained the most commonly used.⁷⁷ It is said of Mahāvira: "Once entered into a village or town, he solicited food prepared for another".⁷⁸ This is of great importance and is a characteristic of *gocari*: just as the cow as she goes along browses upon the grass that presents itself in front of her, so also the sādhis, presenting themselves at the door of several houses accept in

⁷⁶ As example to be followed we may cite: the trans. into Hindi of the Prākṛit grammar of Pt. B.J. Doṣi: *Prākṛitamārgopadeśikā* by Sādhvi Suvratā, 1968; the trans. into Hindi of the *Uttarādhyayana-sūtra* by Sādhvi Candanā, 1972; more recently, the scholarly and excellent work of Sādhvi Saṅghamitrā: *Jaina dharmā ke prabhāvaka ācārya*, 1979. We must also take note of the collaboration of some sādhis in the ongoing preparation of a Jaina encyclopedia at the Jaina Viśva Bhārati.

⁷⁷ The other words in current usage are: *gocara-caryā*; *bhikṣā-caryā*; *bhikṣā*, which means the act of asking for alms, which does not refer only to food but to everything else as well; however, food being a daily necessity, *bhikṣā-caryā* has very often the same meaning as *gocari*.

⁷⁸ *gāmaṇi pavise ṇayaram vā, ghāsamese kaḍaṇi paraṭṭhāe...* AS I, 8, 4, 9. By this it is to be understood that he used to accept only a little of this food; cf. *ibid.*, 10-13; 8, 1, 18-19.

simplicity, from each, a small quantity of the meal prepared for the family, without incurring harm to anybody.

Why *gocari*? The main reason is *ahiṃsā*.⁷⁹ As, however, human beings must needs nourish themselves, *bhaktapāna-gaveṣaṇā*, the quest for food and drink, is justified for sundry reasons as follows:

To [alleviate] the pain [caused by hunger], to serve [the guruṇi and the elders], to be capable of due attentiveness in one's comings and goings, [to attain] self-mastery, to retain oneself in life, to reflect on the *dharma*.⁸⁰

These reasons are founded upon good sense and are directed towards the ideal being pursued. One must make the effort to ask for food and drink out of faithfulness to the state of life one has embraced; otherwise, weakness will engender negligence, an incapacity to concentrate and may also cause embarrassment to others. However, there are cases and circumstances in which one can dispense with food without committing a fault. These dispensations, of course, will have received the approval of the guruṇi or ācārya. One may abstain from food:

In case of illness, calamity, to preserve one's chastity, out of compassion for living beings, as an act of penitence (a fast) or with a view to abandoning the body.⁸¹

The rules concerning *gocari* are extremely elaborate. A whole series of facts and possible circumstances are mentioned, with an indication of the correct attitude to be adopted in each such case or a similar one. It is not necessary to cite all these rules, which are in any case not set out in an orderly fashion and are often repetitive. Our task

⁷⁹ Cf. DS VIII, 8; US XXXV, 10-11.

⁸⁰ *veyaṇa veyāvacce iriyaṭṭhae ya saṃjamaṭṭhāe taḥa pāṇavattiyāe chaṭṭhaṃ puṇa dhammacintāe*. US XXVI, 33.

⁸¹ *āyamaṅke uvasagge titikkhayā baṃbhaceraguttisu pāṇidayā-tavaheum sarira voccheyanaṭṭhāe*. US XXVI, 35; The final abandonment of the body is a religious action that takes place in accordance with a prescribed ritual; of. P 566 ff.

is to disengage the motivation behind these rules and to get to know the concrete areas in which they apply.⁸²

i) **Mādhukārī**, the activity of the bee:

Just as the bee gathers the nectar from the tree's blossoms and imbibes sufficient without exhausting the flower,⁸³ so, free in this world, these holy Śramaṇas content themselves with seeking their food and necessities like [bees] flitting among the flowers.⁸⁴

"We provide for our subsistence and no-one suffers harm" [they say]. Like the bees among the flowers, so they go [among the houses, accepting] from what is available.⁸⁵

Enlightened, they go, free, as is the bee, from all bonds of attachment, contenting themselves with various sorts of food, masters of themselves; they are called Saints.⁸⁶

ii) **Piṇḍaiśaṇā**: *eṣaṇā* (the quest) for *piṇḍa* (food). The cow which browses peaceably in the meadows and the bee which gathers the nectar from the flowers are living examples that the sādhuṣ must

⁸² Cf. DS V, which goes into great detail upon this subject.

⁸³ *jahā dumassa pupphesu bhamaro āviyaī rasaṁ
na ya pupphaṁ kilāmeī so ya piṇḍe appayaṁ.* DS I, 2.

⁸⁴ *emec samapā muttā je loc saṁti sāhuṇo
vihanigamā va pupphesu dāpa-bhaṭṭesaṇe rayā* DS I, 3.

⁸⁵ *vayaṁ ca vīṭiṁ labbhāmo na ya koi uvahammai
ahāgaḍesu riyānte pupphesu bhamarā jahā.* DS I, 4.

⁸⁶ *maḥukārasamā buddhā je bhavaṁti aṇissiyā
nāpāpiṇḍarayaṁ daṁṭa teṇa vuccarṁti sāhuṇo.* DS I, 5; enlightened: *buddhā*, wise. Just as the bee gathers nectar from one flower after another, so they accept a small quantity of the family's prepared food in different houses, collecting in this way a variety of foodstuffs.

imitate. But life lived in constant contact with the society of humankind presents not a few complexities and, in order to attempt to preserve the freedom of the cow and the bee, it is necessary to follow certain rules laid down by the ācāryas, rules that are aimed above all else at teaching the practical application of *ahiṃsā*, which demands good sense, sound judgement, discretion and wisdom.

a) Setting out and deportment on the way

Fairly early in the morning, the sādhis set out in search of tea or milk; then, at about eleven o'clock, they go out again in quest of their principal meal and towards five o'clock or later, according to the season, in quest of a light meal which must be consumed before sundown.⁸⁷ If it is raining or hailing at the hour of *gocari*, one abandons the attempt.⁸⁸ For a medium-sized group, two sādhis set out together, while for a small-sized group one sādhi of mature years may sally forth alone.⁸⁹ The sādhis who are going out on quest divide between them the bowls and gourds and, before leaving the *upāśraya*, they approach the guruṇi to perform the *vandana* and then repeat the words: "āvassiyā, āvassiyā, āvassiyā." They depart in silence and, except in case of necessity, they do not converse on their way.

Both on the outward and return journey they must:

- oblige themselves to maintain calm and inner detachment (this being the supremely important basic attitude.);⁹⁰

⁸⁷ It is important to set out on time in order to avoid disturbing the mistresses of the houses at inconvenient hours; cf. DS V, 2, 4-5. It is strictly forbidden to take a meal after sunset; cf. BrkS V, 6-10.

⁸⁸ Cf. DS V, 1, 8.

⁸⁹ In theory and according to BrkS V, 16 a sādhi must never go out alone, even for *gocari*.

⁹⁰ Cf. DS V, 1, 1-2.

- walk with a measured, controlled step; keep the eyes fixed on the ground in order to avoid any roughnesses or muddy patches on the path; avoid striking anything with the foot or walking on living plants;⁹¹
- shun streets and districts of ill repute;⁹² avoid passing too close to anything that might agitate or stir the passions: a dog, a cow suckling her calf, a bull, a horse, an elephant, children at play, places where quarrels are rife;⁹³
- attend carefully to maintaining discretion, glance neither to right or left when passing near houses;⁹⁴
- if they have prior knowledge of the local population, they must avoid presenting themselves at the door of houses where they would tend to evoke malevolence;⁹⁵
- on arrival on the threshold of a house, they must go straight to the kitchen, not displease the inhabitants by making a tour of the whole dwelling for no good reason, nor traverse the rooms; have good sense, good manners, respect the local customs, act with discretion;⁹⁶

⁹¹ Ibid., 1, 3-7.

⁹² Ibid., 1, 9-11, where the munis are cautioned against districts harbouring prostitutes; even if the danger is less for sādhis, they too must abstain from passing through these areas.

⁹³ Ibid., 1, 12.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 1, 15.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 1, 17.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 1, 24-26.

- have an energetic bearing, neither stopping, sitting down or leaning against anything; not chat with one or an other;⁹⁷
- if they have relatives or family members in the place, they may by all means go to their house, so long as they do not make any exception in regard to them or warn them in advance of their coming;⁹⁸
- if other ascetics or beggars are repairing to the same house, they must not hasten to overtake them and be served before them, but must stand to one side and present themselves after their departure.⁹⁹ They must:
- make no difference between the dwellings of the rich and those of the less fortunate, what matters being that the food should be pure;¹⁰⁰
- above all, pay attention to the spirit of detachment, not worrying about the food, what it is like, whether in such or such a house it is appetising, etc.;¹⁰¹
- respond to everyone with equanimity, whatever reception they receive, and show no displeasure if they are refused alms.¹⁰²

The Mūrtipūjaka sādhuṣṭi utter the words: "*dharma-lābha*" ("Flourish in the *dharma*!")¹⁰³ at the entrance to a house as a blessing upon their hosts.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 2, 8-9.

⁹⁸ Cf. AS II, 1, 4, 4.

⁹⁹ DS V, 2, 10-13.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 2, 25.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 2, 26-27.

¹⁰² Ibid., 2, 28.

¹⁰³ Or "May the *dharma* bring you gain!"

b) What food is to be refused and when

The rules prescribing the refusal of certain types of food, in certain circumstances, are numerous and somewhat unintelligible if taken out of context. Here are certain ones which seem important from the point of view of *ahimsā*. We need to remember that the *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* are committed to the same observances as the ascetics, but to a lesser degree. *Gocari* demands attentiveness on both sides: on the part of the mistress of the house or another family member who is presenting the alms and on that of the *sādhvis* who are receiving this offering. The *sādhvis* are not bound by any formal obligation to accept food exclusively from the hands of Jains. They are permitted, and this happens in the course of a *vihāra* in isolated villages, to accept food offered by anyone, provided that that food is pure - according to the standards set by the doctrine - and that the family in question is vegetarian.¹⁰⁴ One must refuse food in the following cases:

- when the mistress of the house, through clumsiness, lets fall to the ground part of what she is offering; the rest of the same plate is then rendered unacceptable;¹⁰⁵
- if the afore-mentioned walks on plants, seeds or insects, the *sādhvis* must withdraw and go elsewhere, for this heedless manner proves the state of inner being of the person;¹⁰⁶
- if she washes her hands or the serving-spoon or the dish in which she is placing the food with unboiled water, water being a living substance, the food must be refused;¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Cf. AS II, 1, 2, 2.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. DS V, 1, 28.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 1, 29; cf. also 30-31, where numerous subtle points are mentioned in connection with the manner of giving.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 1, 32.

- if her hands, the serving-spoon or the dish are dirty or contaminated by any substance which is raw, living and thus not classified as pure food, it must be refused;¹⁰⁸
- if the food contains particles of flowers, seeds, plants, it is to be refused; nor are vegetables such as onion or edible tubers such as potatoes to be accepted. Sugar-cane, cereals, raw vegetables and certain fresh fruits and fruit-juices must be refused;¹⁰⁹
- if one discovers that the food in question has been prepared for beggars or the poor, one must decline it, as one would be taking a portion that belongs to them;¹¹⁰
- in the same way, if the food has been prepared or specially purchased for those who are coming in quest of it, it must be categorically refused;¹¹¹
- during *vihāras* one must on no account accept food in the house of the host who is providing hospitality nor eat from his dishes;¹¹²
- if the mistress of the house is busy putting wood on the fire, or if the food she offers is in a pan on the fire, it must be refused.¹¹³

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 33-35.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 1, 70; 2, 18-24; AS II, 1, 8, 1.

¹¹⁰ Cf. DS V, 1, 51-52.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 1, 53-55; VI, 48-49.

¹¹² Cf. AS II, 2, 3, 4; DS VI, 50-52.

¹¹³ Cf. DS V, 1, 63-64; fire being both itself a living substance and also destructive of beings, it is to be avoided.

- lastly, great importance is attached to the purity of water and of one's fluid intake.¹¹⁴ The *sādhvis* drink only boiled water, of which Jaina families always keep a good supply, as they observe the same rules as the ascetics; apart from water, they may drink boiled milk, tea, coffee, rice-water and other non-alcoholic drinks such as contain no living substance.

Moreover, if they are offered no food at all, the *sādhvis* must accept the fact with serenity.¹¹⁵

Those who go in quest of food must take into account the fasts and abstinences being observed by their companions. Certain ones, for example, have renounced for life all *vikṛtis*: milk, curds, fresh butter, etc.¹¹⁶

c) The return to the *upāśraya* and the meal

On returning from *gocari* to the *upāśraya*, the *sādhvis* wipe their feet and say "*nisihiyā, nisihiyā, nisihiyā*"; after performing the *vandana* to the *guruṇi*, they show her what they have collected, deposit the *pātras* and then recite the *iryāpathika-sūtra*, in order to purify themselves from all the faults they may have committed in their goings and comings, followed by the *gocaracaryā-sūtra* recited during *kāyotsarga*, and by *ālocanā*, confession of the faults committed during the *gocari*; the *guruṇi* then prescribes a *prāyaścitta*, penance.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁴ Cf. AS II, 1, 7, 7; 6, 2, 1-2. DS V, I, 75-81.

¹¹⁵ Cf. DS V, 2, 6.

¹¹⁶ Cf. P 493; 544.

¹¹⁷ Cf. DS V, 1, 87-92; the *gocaracaryā-sūtra* is also part of the *pratikramaṇa*; recitation of it can expunge faults, both voluntary and involuntary, committed during the *gocari*. The *doṣas*, possible errors in this domain, number 47; they are catalogued in this way: i) in connection with *gaveṣaṇā* the quest for food: 16 *udgama-doṣas* on the part of the *śrāvikā*, 16 *utpādana-doṣas* on the part of the *sādhvis*; ii) in connection with *grahaṇaiṣaṇā*, the acceptance of food: 10 *doṣas* on the part of the *sādhvis* and *śrāvikā*, committed in common; iii) in connection with *paribhogaiṣaṇā*: 5

Next the sādhis assemble in a circle, seated on the ground with their guruṇi in the centre, each with her *pātras*; the guruṇi helps herself and shares the food out among the members of the group. The sādhis are permitted to converse during the meal. This terminated, each one washes her *pātras* and wipes them carefully.

Scripture exhorts the ascetics not to dwell in thought or in speech on the quality of the food, whether it is appetising or not, savoury or tasteless, salty or sugary, etc.; the essential thing is that it should be pure.¹¹⁸ One must abstain from highly-spiced and stimulating foods;¹¹⁹ and if one has harvested nothing today, one must not be sad, for perhaps one will receive something tomorrow.¹²⁰ All that has been brought back must be consumed, because no food is kept in the *upāśraya*.

We must comprehend what it means when, all one's life long, one never eats a dish of one's own choosing and to one's own taste, when one is faced sometimes with a very peculiar mixture and when one always consumes it cold;¹²¹ when one depends entirely upon others, on their benevolence, and must make the daily effort of *gocari*. However, when a sādhi has acquired sufficient experience to know exactly how to behave, what she can accept and what she must refuse, when the right attitude becomes spontaneous and her judgement has become sound, then the practice of *gocari* can unquestionably

doṣas on the part of the sādhis in the taking of their meal; cf. SramaS pp. 431-435; US XXIV, 12.

¹¹⁸ Cf. DS V, 1, 97-99; 2, 1; US XXXV, 17.

¹¹⁹ Cf. US XXXII, 10-11.

¹²⁰ Cf. AS I, 2, 5, 3; US II, 28-31.

¹²¹ When a sick sādhi needs to have a warm drink, one of the sādhis designated for *gocari* brings it back to her immediately and then sets out again.

contribute greatly to acquiring freedom of spirit and detachment. Moreover, the deep reason underlying it being *ahimsā*, it is not enough to have renounce for oneself the preparation of food. One must still be concerned for other people and, like the bee, gather from here and there without harming anyone.

I - *Prāyaścittas*: Expiations

Prāyaścittas are one of the principal forms of inner *tapas*; they contribute towards *saṃvara* and *nirjarā*.¹²² They correspond to the violation, whether conscious or less conscious, serious or less serious, of numerous rules such as are only understandable in the context of an ascetic life lived in daily contact with society. These very precise rules of life, dating from another day and age, set forth meticulously not only the observances which must be performed, but also all possible forms of infringements, as well as exceptions dictated by good sense in accordance with circumstances.

All the exigences of the ascetic life are, in fact, examined, and examined in detail, in the *Sūtras*: *Ācārāṅga*, *Sūtrakṛtāṅga*, *Daśavaikālika* and *Uttarādhyayana*. These *Āgamas* transmit a spirit and indicate a path. However, community-life and relations with society at large necessitate precise details and, as one might say, a certain casuistry.¹²³ This is the function performed by the *Cheda-sūtras*, which deal with both the many and multifarious rules and with the expiations or penances attached to breaches of these rules.¹²⁴

¹²² Cf. P 369 ff.

¹²³ Cf. Dixit, 1978, pp. 8-9: "Monastic Jurisprudence: not yet formulated."

¹²⁴ Here we shall only give a brief introduction to the *Cheda-sūtras* and an outline of their contents, particularly that portion which is still observed in contemporary practice. References to these *Sūtras* are given in the other section, of this ch. There are some good studies on this vast subject; cf. Caillat, 1975; Deo, 1960; Dixit, 1978: "The four Old Chedasūtras", pp. 42-53; JSBI "Chedasūtra", pp. 215-298.

The majority of the rules are formulated with a view to the common life, decency and polite conduct, while at the same time they are directed towards fidelity to the *mahāvratas*. On the whole, the fact that strikes one during an attentive study of these rules is their constant concern that the vows of *ahiṃsā*, *aparigraha* and *brahmacarya* in all their ramifications should not be infringed. For example, great attention is given to all that concerns food and the respect due to superiors and elders. There is a cautioning against disputes - between *sādhvis* or between *sādhvis* and people outside - and an insistence upon the correction of difficult characters such as sow disunion in the group. In the same way, the importance is stressed of sincerity, especially during the *ālocanā*.

These rules, no doubt, are the work of the *ācāryas* of different epochs, which explains the repetitions and the disorderly presentation of them. These *ācāryas* have attempted to give guide-lines for the harmonious organisation of a community whose goal is Liberation, in accordance with a specified doctrine and by means of a rigorous asceticism. This asceticism requires strong discipline operating within a solid structure, a discipline maintained by guardians appointed for the task and by a hierarchy competent to give guidance for the way.

Everything in these rules conduces to the full development of each member of the group: the weak, the lazy, those with evil tendencies, all have the possibility of self-correction and reform, without impeding the progress of the more virtuous. The *ācāryas*, without weakening the demands of asceticism, show themselves to be both understanding and moderate. In these rules there is nothing harsh, inhuman or excessive.

The *Cheda-sūtras*, on account of their antiquity, provide a certain historical and social interest, but the lack of method in the way they are strung together and the oftentimes obsolete character of their contents render them somewhat impractical for our day. For this reason a great number of contemporary *ācāryas* have recourse to the *Jitakalpa* for penances to prescribe for their penitents.¹²⁵

¹²⁵ The *guruṇis* have a basic knowledge of the more important rules contained in the DS and in the US. With regard to the minor rules deriving from them and the punishments to be assigned when these rules are

So far as the *sādhvis* are concerned, they speak only of what they personally know and observe: the *ālocanā* and the two *prāyaścittas* which form part of the *āvaśyakas*, that is, the *pratikramaṇa* and the *kāyotsarga*, and the various forms of *tapas*, particularly fasting. As for the three last penalties which are reserved for serious cases and even go so far as to decree a *sādhvi*'s dismissal, these remain very exceptional and probably only a very few *sādhvis* have had occasion to know of such cases.

a) The *Cheda-sūtras*: Codes of rules and punishments

i) The *Daśāśrutaskanda*

This *Sūtra* makes no mention of the *prāyaścittas*.

- The first three chapters deal with reprehensible conduct, with vices and faults, with infringements of the *mahāvratas* and with the whole gamut of improprieties in behaviour, such as insolence, arrogance, disrespect towards authority.
- Chapter IV, *gaṇi-sampadā*, enumerates the qualities that are indispensable for the spiritual master, head of a *gaṇa*, in order to maintain harmony, discipline and faithfulness to the ideal.
- Chapter VII deals with the various rules of conduct.
- Chapter VIII gives the rules to be observed during the rainy season.¹²⁶

This *Sūtra* refers more frequently to the doctrine than the other *Cheda-sūtras*; it is not made up of rules alone, but speaks also of the progress which should take place in the practice of asceticism, both by describing possible obstacles to advance and by giving a brief account of the successive stages leading to Liberation.

contravened, they have a certain notion transmitted through oral tradition from guruṇi to disciples. For graver misdemeanours, they refer to the *ācārya*.

¹²⁶ It corresponds to the last part of the KS; cf. P 541 ff.

- Chapter IX gives thirty concrete examples of the factors producing *mohaniya-karman*, the *karman* of delusion which obscures *darśana* and *cāritra*.

- Chapter V, *cittasamādhisthāna*, sets forth the different levels of knowledge to which the ascetic must aspire. The śrāvakas are also included in this advance towards perfection. One whole chapter, *upāsaka-pratimā*, is consecrated to them.

Except in regard to the rules for the *cātummāsya*, the *nirgranthis* are not explicitly mentioned after the *nirgranthas*. However, it is implicitly understood that these rules apply to them.

ii) The *Bṛhatkalpa-sūtra* and the *Vyavahāra-sūtra*

These complement each other, though they are by no means systematic. They give rules of conduct and, on occasion, the *prāyaścittas* which correspond to lapses in regard to these rules or their infringement to a greater or lesser degree.¹²⁷

In these two treatises the *nirgranthis* are frequently mentioned after the *nirgranthas* in connection with rules common to both or when the nature of the relationship between the two groups is being defined. Certain passages describe rules proper to the *nirgranthis*.¹²⁸ In actual fact, they are very similar to those which apply to the *nirgranthas*. They add nothing of special note on the subject of discipline, but are concerned primarily with questions related to their life in society, laying down strict rules for the protection of *nirgranthis* and always placing them in the final resort under the protection of an *ācārya* or some other ascetic.

These *Cheda-sūtras* revert frequently to the practical implications of *samiti*, vigilance,¹²⁹ laying particular stress upon: *iryā-samiti*, vigilance in the way one moves and proceeds from place to place;¹³⁰ *eṣaṇā-samiti*, vigilance in the way in which one solicits and receives

¹²⁷ "Thus Kalpa mostly takes up problems that a monk faces in connection with his dealing with society at large - that is to say, problems arising in connection with his moving about, his begging for alms, and the like; on the other hand, *Vyavahāra* mostly takes up problems that a monk faces in connection with settling the question of status within the church authority, those arising in connection with the award of punishment of an erring monk, and the like." Dixit, 1978, p. 45; cf. Sādhvi Yaśodharā, 1981, article on the *Vyavahāra*.

¹²⁸ Cf. BrkS I, 4; 12; 14; 23; 30; 50; II, 11; III, 2-3; IV, 14; V, 2; 4; 13-42; VS V.

¹²⁹ Cf. P 359.

¹³⁰ Cf. BrkS I, 37; 46-52; IV, 34-35; P 533.

alms, that is, food¹³¹ and other things of which one has need.¹³² *Bhaṣā-samiti*, vigilance in regard to language, is also of great importance; one must avoid, for example, addressing oneself to disreputable persons who might arouse the passions, whereas it is appropriate to converse with those who are circumspect and peaceable.¹³³

In addition to those concerning *samiti* in its various forms, a heterogeneous collection of other rules is given:

- On the type of candidate suitable for *dikṣā* and those who should be refused.¹³⁴
- On the avoidance and pacification of quarrels.¹³⁵
- On correct conduct towards ascetics who are in quarantine, expiating a fault.¹³⁶ If one such is ill, one must look after him; no-one should be dismissed while suffering from an illness.¹³⁷

¹³¹ *Ahāra-eṣaṇā* (BrkS I, 1-5; II, 8-10; 14-18; IV, 16-17; 19; V, 6-12; 52).

¹³² *Vastra-eṣaṇā*, quest for clothing (ibid., I, 45; II, 29; III, 13; 16-17). *Vastra-pātra-rajoharaṇa-eṣaṇā*, quest for clothing, bowls, *rajoharaṇa* (ibid., I 40-43). *Śayyā-eṣaṇā*, quest for bedding (ibid., III, 24-27). *Upāśraya-eṣaṇā*, quest for lodging (ibid., I, 12-13; 21-35; II, 11-12; IV, 36-38). *Sthāna-eṣaṇā*, all that appertains to the stopping-place and the duration of time to be spent there (ibid., III, 28-32; i, 6-10); cf. P 534 ff.

¹³³ BrkS IV, 10-11; VI, 1.

¹³⁴ Ibid., IV, 4; VS X, 22-23

¹³⁵ Cf. BrkS I, 36.

¹³⁶ Cf. VS I, 19-22; II, 27-30.

¹³⁷ Ibid., II, 5-17.

- On the correct observance of the rules of precedence.¹³⁸
- On favourable and unfavourable conditions for *svādhyāya*.¹³⁹
- How to dispose of the body of an ascetic whose death takes place unexpectedly at night or in the course of a *vihāra*.¹⁴⁰
- A number of organisational rules: for example, the procedure to be followed in the case of a change of *gaṇa*¹⁴¹ conditions to be met when one takes up office,¹⁴² or when one is re-admitted to the *gaṇa* after having left it.¹⁴³
- Detailed directives concerning certain very severe types of austerity,¹⁴⁴ on the study of the *Āgamas* by progressive stages.¹⁴⁵

Such rules as apply specifically to the *nirgranthis* are concerned for the most part with the vow of *brahmacarya*; they enjoin prudent precautions, good sense that sees to it that they are not placed in dangerous or difficult situations, their daily contacts with local society being a constant factor.¹⁴⁶ It is also carefully stipulated what type of

¹³⁸ Ibid., IV, 24-32.

¹³⁹ Ibid., VII, 14-18.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. BrkS IV, 29; VS VII, 21.

¹⁴¹ Cf. BrkS IV, 20-28.

¹⁴² Cf. VS III, 1-10.

¹⁴³ Ibid., I, 23-32.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., X, 1.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., X, 24-38.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. BrkS V, 13-44.

relationship is to exist between the *nirgranthis* and the *nirgranthas*.¹⁴⁷ Other rules deal with official positions and responsibilities: it is stated that *sādhvis* may be raised to the rank of *Upādhyāya* or *Ācārya*,¹⁴⁸ that a *nirgranthi* may in a particular case, when a muni is not available, give *dikṣā* to a candidate and that this latter then becomes, not her disciple, but the disciple of an *ācārya*.¹⁴⁹

iii) The *Niśītha-sūtra*

This voluminous treatise of twenty chapters, containing between them one thousand four hundred and five verses, constitutes a great conglomeration of rules, some important and the rest secondary. The *Niśītha*, unlike the *Bṛhatkalpa* and the *Vyavahāra*, gives for each infringement of the rules a corresponding *prāyaścitta*.¹⁵⁰ More precisely, the infringements of the rules are arranged in groups in order of gravity. Each group is allocated one separate chapter and for each group thus formed one particular *prāyaścitta* is prescribed. As all these infringements are haphazardly presented, one finds in each chapter a great variety of breaches of rules of most varied types, but the *prāyaścitta* is in each case the same.

iv) The *Mahāniśītha-sūtra*

This Sūtra, as we possess it, is certainly of late composition and can hardly be classified as an *Āgama*. It deals primarily with *ālocanā*, certain *prāyaścittas*, *karman* and various other subjects.¹⁵¹

v) The *Jitakalpa-sūtra*

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., III, 1-2; VI 3-6.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. VS VII, 19-20.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., VII, 9.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. Dixit, 1978, pp. 44-47.

¹⁵¹ Cf. JSBI, pp. 291-292.

This does not belong to the group made up of the four ancient *Cheda-sūtras*. It is composed by Jinabhadra Gaṇi.¹⁵² Brief and systematic, it deals solely with the ten *prāyaścittas*. Not only is it considered with the same respect as a *Cheda-sūtra*, but it also constitutes a sure and useful guide which contemporary ācāryas frequently consult.

b) The *prāyaścittas*: The ten types of expiation

The ten *prāyaścittas* listed in the *Jitakalpa-sūtra* had been formulated at a much earlier period. The *Sthānāṅga-sūtra* enumerates, successively, three, then six, then eight and finally ten *prāyaścittas*.¹⁵³ These ten *prāyaścittas* are:

ālocanā, confession; *pratīkramaṇa*, repentance; *ubhaya*, confession and repentance; *viveka*, discernment; *vyutsarga*, renunciation of ownership of the body; *tapas*, austerities; *cheda*, partial removal of seniority; *mūla*, loss of seniority of rank; *anavasthāpya*, temporary expulsion; *pārāñcika*, expulsion.¹⁵⁴ The first seven have already been mentioned in connection with inner *tapas*.¹⁵⁵ *Parihāra*, the temporary isolation of the guilty party, which has an important place in the ancient *Cheda-sūtras*, is not mentioned in the *Jitakalpa*. As all these texts were composed in differing epochs, a certain overlapping has come about and sometimes a certain confusion in regard to the nature of each of the *prāyaścittas*, their practical application and their number. Nevertheless, one can extract from the whole certain essential features of the ascetic life.

¹⁵² The author of the *Viśeṣaśāsyaka-bhāṣya* and the *Dhyānaśataka* (P 374 ff), probably of the VIth c.

¹⁵³ Cf. SthS 196; 489; 605; 733c.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. *Jitakalpa* 4.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. P 369 ff.; TS IX, 22 mentions 9 *prāyaścittas* and, in the place of *mūla* and *anavasthāpya*, gives *parihāra* and *upasthāpana*; cf. US XXX, 31.

- *Alocanā*, *pratikramaṇa* and *ubhaya* are concerned above all with an inner attitude and are vital elements in any proper expiation of guilt.
- *Viveka* is simply a faculty of discernment operating in a particular situation: when through lack of attention one has accepted impure food, one must return it as soon as one is aware of the fact.
- *Vyutsarga* (*kāyotsarga*) and *tapas* form part of the ascetic discipline, while at the same time acting as *prāyaścittas*.
- *Parihāra*, *cheda*, *mūla*, *anavasthāpya*, *pārāñcika*, involve either temporary isolation from the group, or partial or complete curtailment of seniority in the ascetic life, or even expulsion, temporary or permanent, from the community. They are, specifically and exclusively, types of penalty for specified faults, committed in given circumstances. These five *prāyaścittas*, except *mūla*, are frequently mentioned in the *Cheda-sūtras*. *Mūla* does not seem to have been often used; it is a comprehensive form of *cheda*, in which the ascetic not only loses his rank within the *saṃgha*, but must be consecrated by a new *dikṣā*. This *prāyaścitta* is in fact very similar to the *anavasthāpya*, at least in regard to the 'recommencement' of the ascetic life, with this difference that the *mūla* does not banish the ascetic from his or her group, whereas the *anavasthāpya* decrees temporary banishment.¹⁵⁶

The following will serve as a short introduction which seeks to pick out at least some landmarks in a vast landscape of texts on this subject. We must start by saying that these penalties concern different persons and situations and the prescriptions laid down in the texts cannot be applied strictly to the letter. Taking into consideration the circumstances and the resistance, both physical and psychic, of their disciples, the *ācārya* and the *guruṇi* must, while following the directives of the *Sūtras*, give evidence of a good understanding of the persons in their charge, as each case requires. Except in cases of very

¹⁵⁶ The reasons justifying the imposition of *mūla* seem only to have been precisely formulated at a late date and relate primarily to serious infringements of one of the *mahāvratas*; cf. Deo, 1956, p. 377.

serious faults which call for the expulsion of the offender, the ācārya can temper the harshness of the *prāyaścittas*.

i) The *prāyaścittas*, as properly defined, are always preceded by *ālocanā* and *pratikramaṇa*

1. The act of *ālocanā* is distasteful and difficult to perform. It demands faith in the *dharma*, sincerity towards oneself and others, courage to confess one's fault and accept the penance given.¹⁵⁷ Great importance is very properly attached to the qualities which the one who has the authority to hear confessions must possess. Not only must this person be capable of helping the disciples and of assigning the *prāyaścittas* wisely, but she must also be discreet and not gossip.¹⁵⁸

As an aid towards sincere and straightforward confession and to avoid slipping, even unconsciously, into subtle tendencies that camouflage the truth, one is cautioned against affectation and a whole range of deceitful arts, the principal ones being:

- exciting the compassion of the one hearing the confession or to select a less severe person from among the ascetics who are entitled to hear confessions;
- confessing only those faults which have been noticed by the ācārya or guruṇi;
- confessing only one's more serious faults or, on the other hand, one's less serious;
- whispering one's faults in such a way that they are unintelligible to the person listening;
- or uttering them in a very loud voice;
- confessing the same fault on successive occasions to several ācāryas or other munis appointed for the task;

¹⁵⁷ Cf. SthS 604b where the necessary conditions for a truly sincere confession are indicated.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 604a.

- making one's confession to an ācārya whom one knows to have committed the same fault, hoping thus to be given a lighter penalty.¹⁵⁹

Ālocanā must not be a routine and merely formal act. It must be accompanied by *nindā*, an inner attitude of self-reproach and of loathing for the faults committed, and also by *garhā*, the naming and condemnation of one's own faults in front of the ācārya, the guruṇi or the members of the community; in short, one must acknowledge one's culpability before others.¹⁶⁰ Now, this is certainly not easy and one can only come to it by stages. It is necessary to unmask complications, ruses which involve insincerity. As an example to be shunned, the hypocritical ascetic is described, who out of vanity and lack of fervour finds many good reasons for not making his confession. The opposite case is also cited, of the one who thinks up reasons for making a confession and giving an appearance of *nindā* and *garhā*, while in fact this is all dissimulation, for his intentions are not upright; in the depths of his heart he is refusing *viśuddhi*, purification.¹⁶¹

The *Vyavahāra-sūtra* affirms that the *nirgranthis* may make their confession to one of their own number who is adjudged worthy of the responsibility.¹⁶² The *sādhvis* of today say that they confess spontaneously to the guruṇi when necessary, without using any particular formula. For serious offences the *sādhvis* communicate with the ācārya. If he is at a distance, they write to him and he stipulates the *prāyaścitta* in his reply.

2. *Pratikramaṇa* denotes the inner attitude of sincere regret for faults committed, their condemnation, along with a determination to

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 733b.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. US XXIX, 5-7.

¹⁶¹ Cf. StbS 168.

¹⁶² Cf. VS V, 19; this must be a *sādhvi* of high moral stature who knows the rules concerning the expiation of faults. This applies in an exceptional case, when the person authorised to hear confessions is absent.

revert to one's previous state, before the occurrence of the fault.¹⁶³ It constitutes at one and the same time an *āvaśyaka* and a preparation for the *prāyaścitta*. *Pratikramaṇa* as an inner attitude is indispensable to all sincere confession; in reality, the acknowledgement of a fault, the condemnation of it and the spontaneous accompanying desire to expiate it is already in itself a form of expiation.

As for *ubhaya* (which includes both confession and repentance), this is listed as a *prāyaścitta*, but it is simply a confirmation of the truth that *ālocanā-pratikramaṇā* go hand in hand.¹⁶⁴

ii) *Vyutsarga* and *tapas*, both of which are constituent parts of the ascetic life, are also *prāyaścittas*

1. *Vyutsarga* or *kāyotsarga*, the fifth *āvaśyaka*, is an expression of the attitude of inner radical detachment that goes as far as to renounce all bodily activity in a gesture of disavowal of ownership for a limited period, an attitude which is also essential for *dhyāna*. On account of the value accruing from this detachment as practised in immobility, *vyutsarga* is performed several times during the rite of the *āvaśyakas* and in the course of important activities such as, for example, on return from *gocari*. Its intrinsic value makes it, furthermore, an ideal *prāyaścitta*.

2. *Tapas* under its two forms, *upavāsa* (fasting) and *avamodarikā* (abstinence), is a concrete and efficacious means of purification. Fasting and abstinence are the *prāyaścittas* par excellence and are by far the most commonly employed.¹⁶⁵ Their role is of great

¹⁶³ Cf. P 324 ff.; 705.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. P 370. also for *viveka*.

¹⁶⁵ *Upavāsa*, on account of its purificatory function, is presented in its various forms, each carefully elaborated. Thus the types of *upavāsa* have greatly multiplied in number; cf. Deo, 1956, pp. 189-198, for a description of different sorts of fast according to the *Aṅgas* and the *Mūla-sūtra*; p. 251 ditto according to the *Cheda-sūtras* and *niryuktis*; pp. 375 and 419 for the later period; cf. also SthS 511a US XXX, 9-24.

importance, for they contribute to *saṁvara* and to *nirjarā*; hence the obligation to practise *pratyākhyāna* as a form of *tapas*. However, no *sādhvi* who is fervent and well-instructed in the doctrine confines herself to what is obligatory; rather, she chooses voluntarily, for periods of longer or shorter time and of more frequency or less, to observe certain fasts or abstinences, with the permission of the *guruṇi*, or in the case of a longer and more comprehensive fast, of the *ācārya*.¹⁶⁶

iii) The *prāyaścittas* in the *Bṛhatkalpasūtra* and the *Vyavahāra-sūtra*

They are four in number: *parihāra*; *cheda*; *anavasthāpya*; *pārāñcika*.

1. *Parihāra* is the relegation or isolation of an ascetic within the community for a pre-determined period. This measure aims at giving the culprit, cut off from his group, an opportunity for salutary reflection, repentance and restoration. It will also make an impression on the other members, stimulate their zeal, encourage them to guard against all forms of carelessness and remind them that their life is subject to a certain type of discipline.¹⁶⁷ This *parihāra* can last one four or six months.¹⁶⁸ Generally it is said to be either *anudghātika* or *udghātika*, which commentators later on termed *guru* (heavy) or *laghu* (light). *Laghu* refers to an alleviation of the penalty, that is to say, that its duration may be shortened by a certain number of days and also that the number of fasts to be observed may be reduced by decision of the *ācārya*. *Guru* implies that the penalty must be paid without remission, thus for the whole period prescribed. Serious offences, such as infringements of the vow of *brahmacharya* or the taking of food at night must be expiated by a *guru-prāyaścitta*.¹⁶⁹ The isolation of the

¹⁶⁶ Cf. P 597 ff.; 609 ff. the examples of *Sādhvis Candrayasā* and *Ratnavati*.

¹⁶⁷ SthS 428 defines *parihāra* as: *viśuddhi-saṁyama*.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. Deo, 1960, p. 44.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. BrkS IV, 1; SthS 201; VS VI, 16-17.

culprit is total and the other members are pledged to respect the rules concerning the sort of relationship they are to have with a *parihārika*. This latter, in addition to the silent retreat to which he has been sentenced, must also undergo a severe fast. However the *ācārya* or his delegate remains in contact with him and sees to his needs, if his suffering requires it.¹⁷⁰ A *laghu-parihāra* of four months is decreed for the expiation of serious faults in connection with food.¹⁷¹

2. *Cheda* means a cutting-off. It means the retrenchment of a certain number of days' seniority in the ascetic life, which dates from the Great *dikṣā*. The minimum number of days is five. It is assigned for lesser faults and is rarely mentioned.¹⁷²

3. *Anavasthāpya* is a form of *prāyaścitta* only used when the ascetic has committed a serious offence. He is reduced to the state of *śrāvaka*, which means that his commitment dating from the time of *dikṣā* is rendered invalid and his connection with the community is completely severed until such time as he has expiated his offence and been re-instated by a new *dikṣā*.¹⁷³ Grave infringements of the vows of *asteya* and *ahimsā* - more precisely, stealing from one's own companions or from those of another sect, resorting to blows, striking another with the fist, a staff or by any other means - must be expiated by *anavasthāpya*.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁰ Cf. BrkS IV, 31-33.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., IV, 16-17.

¹⁷² Ibid. V, 5 : a *cheda* of 5 days and 5 nights is inflicted upon the ascetic who changes *gaṇa* before expiating a fault; VS III, 2 : similarly, a *cheda* or a *parihāra* upon the one who decides to start a new *gaṇa* without the necessary permission; VS V, 11-12: a *cheda* or *parihāra* is decreed for *sādhvis* who, after the Great Departure of their *guruṇī*, while on *vihāra*, have not nominated someone to replace her.

¹⁷³ Deo, 1956, p.237 defines *anavasthāpya* as "temporary excommunication".

¹⁷⁴ Cf. BrkS IV, 3; SthS 201.

4. *Pārāñcika* means expulsion, once and for all, from the *saṃgha*. This is the penalty, not simply for one or several serious offences of some specific sort, but - and above all - for something far deeper: dispositions of heart and mind that are incompatible with the ascetic state and diametrically opposed to the spirit which should invest this state.¹⁷⁵ It is stated that characters whose basic dispositions have an inclination towards evil or perversity, those who are negligent, temperamentally lazy and lacking in zeal for their duties and those who have homosexual tendencies cannot continue as members of the community.¹⁷⁶ However, the final decision is left to the ācārya's discretion. Theoretically, the guilty party can, after expiating his or her fault, request re-admission. It is clearly laid down, however, that the expiatory measures *anavasthāpya* and *pārāñcika* are only valid and that the culprit may only be permitted a new *dikṣā* if he has abandoned the clothing of an ascetic and adopted once again ordinary garments.¹⁷⁷

iv) *Prāyaścittas* in the *Niśītha-sūtra*

This *Sūtra* speaks of four degrees of *parihāra* in accordance with the gravity of the offence: *guru-parihāra*, consisting of one month; *laghu-parihāra*, also of one month; *guru-parihāra* of four months; *laghu-parihāra*, also of four months. *Parihāra* is the only type of penance mentioned in this *Sūtra*.

¹⁷⁵ We recall the severity of the first Ācārya of the Terāpanthis and the reasons considered worthy of the penalty of dismissal; cf. P 247 ff.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. BrkS IV, 2; SthS 201; carelessness is an insidious evil, which corrodes the life of the ascetic and leads to downfall; cf. US XXXII. SthS 398b gives five reasons justifying *pārāñcika*: a tendency to sow seeds of discord in the *kula* or *gaṇa*; a tendency to violent confrontation with the other members of the group; a habit of picking upon the omissions and carelessnesses of others in order to attack them; the asking of questions at random without discernment and discretion.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. VS II, 18-23.

Here are a few examples taken from each of the groups of *parihāras*:

- *Guru-parihāra* of one month; for having smelt flowers or other plants; this act, though appearing innocuous, can give rise to a slight form of *himsā*.¹⁷⁸

- *Laghu-parihāra* of one month; for having made, kept and used a *rajoharaṇa*-stick of green wood, of bamboo or a type of reed, for having decorated, painted, kept and used a *rajoharaṇa*-stick of green wood. . .;¹⁷⁹ for having thrown away *vastras*, *pātras*, *daṇḍas* or other objects before they were completely useless;¹⁸⁰ for having used a *rajoharaṇa* of which the stick was too long or too short or for having failed to use the *rajoharaṇa* properly;¹⁸¹ for having made use of the living root of a tree in the practice of *kāyotsarga*, *svādhyāya* or any other activity.¹⁸² All these infringements involve a subtle element of *himsā*. These examples show to what degree of exactitude the slightest violation of *ahimsā* is foreseen, how the gravity of each act is evaluated according to a scale, so that for having climbed a tree that is alive the penalty is more severe: *laghu-parihāra* of four months.¹⁸³

- *Guru-parihāra* of four months: from among the various violations of the *mahāvratas* particular importance is attached to all forms of violation of *brahmacarya*. All possible and subtle forms of

¹⁷⁸ Cf. NS I, 10.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., V, 25-33.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., V, 63-65.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., V, 66-76.

¹⁸² Ibid., V, 1-11.

¹⁸³ Ibid., XII, 10. These texts very often make mention of the ascetic man (or woman) who commits a reprehensible deed or approves it (*sātijjati*); this latter through passivity or complicity encourages a blameworthy action and must therefore be punished in the same way as the culprit.

extravagant imagination that can come to the surface in the course of a relationship between a *nirgrantha* and a *nirgranthi* are described realistically and in detail, as are also examples of weaknesses of the flesh and wrongdoings provoked by an attraction for the opposite sex, all of these being misdemeanours that must be punished with no remission.¹⁸⁴ It was probably with the intention of preventing sensual proclivities that prohibitions with regard to all that concerns care of the body have proliferated. Every slip down this slippery slope is punished by the *laghu-parihāra* of one month only for minor offences or by the *guru-parihāra* for offences such as those against *brahmacārya*, when the offender has succumbed in a serious way.¹⁸⁵ Among the list of other infringements to which the same *guru-parihāra* is to be meted out, one notices: anything that may affect the harmony of the community-life, such as lack of docility in one's attitude to the guru (*guruṇi*);¹⁸⁶ careless behaviour, lack of proper attentiveness to sick members.¹⁸⁷

- *Laghu-parihāra* of four months: for subtle forms of deceit or vanity, for example, for causing others to attend to one's needs when one is in good health;¹⁸⁸ for asserting that one is capable of being an *ācārya*;¹⁸⁹ or for arrogance of spirit, which evidences itself in showing lack of respect for the doctrine, belittling the *dharma* and praising *adharma*.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., VI; VII; VIII, 11.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., III, 16-67; XI, 11-63.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., X, 1-4.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., X, 40-43.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., XIII, 39-42.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., XVII, 135

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., XI, 9-10.

v) *Prāyaścittas* in the *Jitakalpa-sūtra*

This text introduces little that is new. Its virtue is to present in a systematic and concrete manner what was present already elsewhere in a very unorganised way. This *Sūtra* enumerates the ten *prāyaścittas* and then, taking each in turn, gives a list of the type of faults that are to be expiated by each *prāyaścitta*.¹⁹¹ It is noteworthy that the section on *tapas* is by far the most detailed. This is on account of the intrinsic importance of *tapas*, the frequency of the choice of this *prāyaścitta* in practice and the great variety of occasions on which it is assigned. In the section devoted to *tapas*, mention is made of the *aticāras*, offences committed in respect to *jīṇāna* and *darśana* as well as in respect to each of the *mahāvratas*. Nowadays, the most commonly assigned *prāyaścittas* are different forms of *tapas* and *kāyotsarga*.¹⁹²

J - *Vividhā caryās*: Various occupations

During the course of the day the *sādhvis* have various occupations, appropriate to their particular group, to their geographical location and to the season of the year; these occupations, which may be either personal or community ones, are not strictly speaking spiritual or intellectual, but practical or artistic.¹⁹³ Even these activities, including the most ordinary, have a special meaning for the *sādhvis*. They all bear the mark of *ahiṃsā*.

The washing of linen

¹⁹¹ Thus *ālocanā*: *Jitakalpa* 5-8; *pratīkramaṇa*: 9-12; *ubhaya*: 13-15; *viveka*: 16-17; *vyutsarga*: 18-22; *tapas*: 23-79; *cheda*: 80-82; *mūla*: 83-86; *anavasthāpya*: 87-93; *pārāñcika*: 94-102.

¹⁹² Most of the refs. given in this section I have checked with *Sādhvi Hemaprabhā* and *Mahāsati Tarulatā*.

¹⁹³ *Caryā*, in contemporary parlance, denotes that which must be done, work; and also the performance of rites and observances. Thanks to their consecration, the *sādhvis* regard each act as having a spiritual connotation and as being part of the ongoing world-wide purificatory process. Cf. P 524 ff. for certain more specialised spiritual and intellectual activities.

The frequency with which the linen is washed varies with the *sampradāyas* and with the seasons. In certain groups it is washed twice a month, in others only once; there is no strict ruling. They all use boiled water and soap for the task and must select a place to spread out the linen where it will not be soiled by dust or mud.¹⁹⁴

Sowing and mending

Although these activities are reduced to a minimum, given the simplicity of their clothing, they are done when necessity arises. The Terāpanthi sādhis also undertake the mending of the munis' clothing.

The making of the *rajoharaṇa*

When the *rajoharaṇa* is worn out, the sādhis abandon this indispensable companion for a new one. They make it themselves out of the purest of white wools. The Mūrtipūjakas embroider on theirs the *aṣṭamaṅgalas*.¹⁹⁵

The making of *mālās*

These are made with white cotton or with wooden beads.

The varnishing of the *pātras*

During the dry season the *pātras* are coated regularly with a layer of special very light varnish. This operation is very necessary, because the *pātras*, being made of wood, may deteriorate, may rot through much contact with food or may get covered with mould. The regular upkeep serves to keep them in good condition, clean and unstained, without danger of spoiling.

¹⁹⁴ Cf. AS II, 5, 1, 19-23.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. P 164 ff. This embroidery they very often do during the *ṛtu-kāla*, the menstrual period when they are not allowed to touch the *Āgamas*; during this same period they may sew, mend and wash.

Arts and crafts

Up till the present such activities have been undertaken almost exclusively by the Terāpanthī sādhis and it would be a very happy new turn of events if the other sādhis were similarly inspired. These occupations must, of course, respect *ahimsā* and serve a useful purpose. The most common are: the copying of manuscripts, the illustration in colour on loose sheets of certain passages of the *Sūtras*, which help bring home in a concrete way the teaching given to the śrāvakas and śrāvikās, especially in the villages; the making of spectacle-frames and of small painted wooden bowls used at meal-time, of which the inner surfaces are delicately inscribed with passages from the *Sūtras*. It is unquestionable that these types of work, done as they are with exquisite finesse, help the sādhis to develop their talents, to exercise concentration and to be useful to the *saṃgha*. As for the primary materials involved, wool, cotton, paint, paper, etc., this is supplied by the śrāvakas of the place where the sādhis are temporarily lodging.

K - *saṃstāra-pauruṣi*: The period of rest

About one hour before sundown the sādhis perform the *pratīlekhanā* as in the morning. Next, two of them set out on *gocari*; when these two have returned, the whole group takes a light meal, followed by *pratyākhyāna*, the promise to take no more food or drink till sunrise the next morning.¹⁹⁶ A little later the rite of the *āvaśyaka* takes place, which is performed jointly and aloud and lasts for one full hour.¹⁹⁷

After this rite, the sādhis still have a long moment for *dhyāna*, *svādhyāya* or *adhyayana*. Towards ten o'clock they reach rest-time, *saṃstāra-pauruṣi*; *saṃstāra* denotes the couch or pallet of dry grass,

¹⁹⁶ Cf. P 709.

¹⁹⁷ Cf. P 710 ff.

straw or wood.¹⁹⁸ Before settling down to sleep, which they sometimes do together and sometimes separately, for certain ones stay awake, the Mūrtipūjaka sādhis, after performing the *laghu-vandana* and reciting the *sāmāyika-sūtra*, recite the *saṁstāra-pauruṣi-sūtras*.¹⁹⁹ These are sixteen short, deeply meaningful *sūtras*; a sort of profession of faith through re-affirmation of belief in the doctrine. In this way, during the hours of repose, the sādhis remain in this same spirit of devotion to those essential values which will most surely lead them onwards towards Liberation.

Sleep is a temporary departure from the scene which might well turn into the Great Departure, for who knows whether she will wake up the next morning? Each evening the sādhis must be in the right frame of mind for departure, that of *aparigraha*, seeking refuge and protection in the *dharma*.

The sixteen *sūtras* form a remarkable synthesis:

- permission is requested from the guruṇi to perform this rite before going to sleep;
- this latter indicates the posture in which the body should take repose;
- and proceeds to exhort the ascetics to reflect deeply;
- then follows praise to the *arhats*, the *siddhas*, the *sādhus*, and to the *dharma* taught by the *kevalins* - these comprising the four refuges;
- the sādhis then make an act of mental renunciation of the body and all its activities;
- they renounce the eighteen *pāpasthānas*, activities which produce bad *karmas*;

¹⁹⁸ The term *saṁstāra* is also used, by an extension of meaning, for the period of complete fast which precedes the Great Departure, when a sādhi has chosen, of her own free will, to terminate this earthly existence; *saṁstāra* still denotes a bed or couch, but now no longer that of temporal sleep but that of the final sleep of this present bodily sheath; cf. P 566 ff.

¹⁹⁹ In the *sampradāyas* where these *sūtras* are not recited, one must go to rest in the frame of mind that they express.

- they recall *ekatva* and *anitya-bhāvanā*. A *sādhvi* is well aware that she is alone, dependent on no-one; the eternal Reality is the *ātman*, all the rest is *anitya*, transient and perishable;²⁰⁰
- they ask pardon from all living beings, harbouring hate towards no-one, and they grant pardon to all;
- there follows a very short *pratikramaṇa* for faults committed through the three *yogas*, and, finally, the *Namaskāra-mantra*.²⁰¹

These *sūtras* express in brief the sum total of a *sādhvi*'s belief, the goal towards which day after day she courageously journeys. She falls asleep free from attachments, at peace with all living beings, still praising the *parameṣṭhins*, the invisible links uniting the members of the *saṃgha*, who have taught and transmitted the *dharma* and whose message is addressed to all living beings.

²⁰⁰ Cf. AS I, 3, 3, 4; 7, 6, 1; SkRS I, 13, 18; P 362 ff.

²⁰¹ Cf. SramanS, pp. 342-349; *Pañcapratikramaṇa-sūtra*, pp. 257-272, where the *sūtras* are the same, though arranged in a slightly different order.

Chapter 4.

Pravrajyā: The itinerant life

The eight-month continuous pilgrimage and the pause during the monsoon

The ascetic must pursue his path, unaffected [by any adversity]; he must endure everything both the agreeable and the disagreeable, manifesting no desire for anything [in any way], taking notice of neither honours nor blame.¹

A - Vihāra: Continual journeying from place to place

The sādhis remain in an *upāśraya* for a period which may last from a few days to several weeks and sometimes even some months.² For the *anagāris*, the shift or change of place is a spiritual activity the same as any other. *Vihāra* is the expression of the pilgrim life: walking for several or more hours, staying somewhere for a limited

¹ *uvehamāno u parivvaejjā piyamappiyaṃ savva tītikkhaejjā
na savva savvaṭṭh'abhiroyaejjā na yāvi pūyaṃ garaḥaṃ ca saṃjāe.*
US XXI, 15.

² Cf. BrkS I, 8-9 where it is said that the *nirgranthis* may stay for 2 months of winter or 2 months of summer in a city or market-town, surrounded by some form of enclosure (walls or a natural enclosure, such as a river or mountains), so that all the dwellings are on the inside of this enclosure. They may stay in a city or market-town of which some of the houses are within the enclosure and others outside it. The *nirgranthis* may stay 2 months within the enclosure of such a city or market-town and 2 months outside it. A stay may be prolonged for reasons of study or illness. If one is obliged to stay in the same town, one changes *upāśraya*. Sādhvi Vicakṣaṇa, for example, was obliged to remain in Dilli for several years, her mother, Sādhvi Vijñāna Śrī, being paralysed. They regularly changed *upāśraya*, along with her whole group, and stayed in different districts of the city; cf. P 561 ff.

time, starting off afresh, a pilgrim life whose deepest meaning is to be found in the state of *aparigraha* which it embodies. Scripture gives a wonderful description of Mahāvīrā on unceasing pilgrimage, lodging in very ordinary places or even under a tree.³ He endured storms, insect bites, meeting with animals, contumely, injuries, mockery, misunderstandings. He let himself be taken for a ne'er-do-well, a vagabond, a parasite. Silent and recollected, he pursued his path..⁴

Vihāra is the outward sign of an inner pilgrimage. The numerous rules in its regard, highly detailed and often wearisome as they are, have a validity and justification of their own, both for each individual *śramaṇi* and also for the preservation of harmony in the common life with regard to the sought goal: *nirvāṇa*.

The *sādhvis* participate also in pilgrimages: to Śatruñjaya, to Holy Mount Abū to Pāvāpurī, the place where Mahāvīra attained *nirvāṇa*, to Sammedaśikhara where Pārśvanātha and other *tirthaṅkaras* are said to have attained *nirvāṇa*, to Hastināpura. They may either go on their own initiative or in response to the invitation of an important group of pilgrims.⁵ Whatever their destination, whether they are passing through countryside, villages or towns, it is their attitude, both interior

³ Cf. AS I, 8, 2, 1-3 (P 117 ff.).

⁴ Ibid., I, 8, 2, 4-16; I, 8, 3, 3-4.

⁵ In March 1972, a group of about 400 pilgrims arrived in Vārāṇasi, having started out from Sikamdrābād (Andhra Pradesh) at the beginning of November. They were on their way to Sammedaśikhara (Bihāra), where, according to tradition, Pārśvanātha and numerous *tirthaṅkaras* attained *nirvāṇa*, and were hoping to arrive at the beginning of May. They had invited some munis and *sādhvis* to accompany them as guides. There were 3 *ācāryas*, about 30 munis and about 40 *sādhvis* with Sadhvi Sarvodaya Śrī at their head. Other *sādhvis* were to join them en route. The majority of the pilgrims were walking on foot, though a bus was conveying those who were too tired or too elderly. A small booklet, the pilgrim's guide, indicated the spirit and goal of the pilgrimage, the vows to be observed, e.g., a single meal a day (if possible), and the spiritual exercises to be performed, such as a daily instruction-session on the *Bhagavati-sūtra*.

and exterior, that matters, an attitude which must express fidelity to the vows they have undertaken.

It is assuredly not easy for *śramaṇis* consecrated to a purely spiritual quest to go out every day for *gocari*, to move regularly from one place to the next, to find themselves in the intervening period on the roads among the crowds. No doubt the activities of *gocari* and *vihāra* give them the opportunity to live out *ahimsā*, *aparigraha* and *saṁnyama*; but the *śramaṇas* and *śramaṇis* of ancient times used to lead a more solitary and retired life. The *Sūtras* were not written for the modern age with its large industrial, overpopulated and noisy cities. Many of the rules need and would profit by some form of adaptation. However, when we consider them in their totality, we find that the majority are characterised by wisdom and good sense. Even nowadays they can act as a strength and stay, if one does not lose sight of the spirit that invests them. The *vihāra* is always a group-activity, performed with the *guruni*.⁶ If the *sādhvis* are numerous, they form several groups with one of their number in each group placed in charge.⁷ No *vihāra* takes place without a certain amount of organisation and forethought. One must act with due consideration for the various localities and circumstances, needs and requests of the *saṁgha*. If they are to traverse a region, the *sādhvis* must foresee several months in advance where, by mutual agreement with the *ācārya* and the local *saṁgha*, they will go to spend the *cāturmāsya*. Often, the *sādhvis* are invited to a particular place and sometimes must choose between several invitations; generally, certain *śrāvakas* are given the task of conveying the official invitation of their *saṁgha*,

⁶ A *sādhvi* may not stay alone either during the *vihāra* or at the *upāśraya*, nor may she go out alone at night; cf. BrkS V, 15-18; VS V, 2; 5. This is, chiefly, a matter of prudence, for within society there is a widespread belief that a woman is by no means insured against disrespect or assaults upon her modesty, far from it. Therefore it is necessary to avoid exposing the *sādhvis* to possible dangers.

⁷ At Mumbai, in March 1975, I met a group of *sādhvis*, detached from the large-sized group of Pune. They had come to Mumbai for an operation upon one of their number who, though already out of hospital, still needed nursing and medical care. When these were no longer necessary, they were to return to Pune.

after which the *sādhvis'* itinerary and its successive stages will be settled with a view to the place chosen for the *cāturmāsya*, consideration being given to the place where there are local *saṁghas*, which would render possible a halt in an *upāśraya* or elsewhere and meetings with *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās*. These latter are delighted at the arrival of *sādhvis* in their midst. The news spreads very quickly, the more so because the great majority of the Jaina community is engaged in commerce and as a religious community is very well organised. The *śrāvakas* telephone one another to announce the news. Very often, when *sādhvis* arrive in a town where the *saṁgha* is of considerable size, many *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* come out to welcome them and escort them in procession as far as the *upāśraya*.⁸ In the same way, when they leave the town for their next stage, they accompany them for a certain distance. When they have a long journey to make before they reach the place where they are to sojourn during the *cāturmāsya*, a *śrāvaka* of that district very often comes to meet them and gives them exact instructions as to the road to take and the *upāśrayas* or lodging-places at the various stages on the way.⁹ When at certain halting-places, the local *saṁgha* belongs to a different *sampradāya* from that of the *sādhvis*, they are nearly always received hospitably. If, as does happen on occasion, there is no Jaina family at one of their halts, the *sādhvis* have recommended to them in advance an *āśrama*, house or school where they will find hospitality.¹⁰

⁸ Cf. in ch.6 the arrival of *Sādhvi Puṇya* at *Gvāliyara* (*Sajjana*, 1960, pp. 367-371); of *Mahāsati Mohanadevi* at *Jammū*; at *Rāvalapiṇḍi* (*Hukamadevi*, pp. 120; 123); of *Sādhvi Vicakṣaṇa* at *Amarāvati* (*Rāmapuriyā*, 1966, pp. 339-348).

⁹ A guide for munis and *sādhvis* has recently been published: *vihāra mārga darśana*, giving exact details about possible routes, the distances between towns, with names of villages, the number of houses, *upāśrayas* and refuges. This very useful guide goes so far as to supply commonly used phrases in the principal regional-languages.

¹⁰ Cf. P 440 ff.

On a long journey en route for the place where they will spend the *cāturmāsya*, when they may be faced by all possible sorts of unforeseen circumstances, such as sickness, epidemic, floods, cyclones, uprisings, riots, strikes, or famine, it is impossible always to anticipate. One must stop here longer, change route, take quick decisions there, re-act to sudden crises.¹¹ When there is a risk of some variety, śrāvakas escort the sādhuvis for part of their journey.¹²

These, then, are the most important aspects of *vihāra*. Even if certain stipulations in its regard are not now fulfilled to the letter because, in the course of this tradition's long history, the cosmic and human framework within which it operates has greatly changed, nevertheless one can discern the spirit of it running through like a thread, a master-*sūtra* which ensures continuity.

a) *Īryā*: The ascetic on the road

This walk is under the banner of *ahimsā*.¹³ As one walks, one must pay the utmost attention not to crush or strike the foot against any living being. In the first place, *vihāra* only takes place by day, precisely so that one may see where one is walking.¹⁴ Generally the sādhuvis set out after sunrise and walk until about ten o'clock in the

¹¹ Sometimes it is necessary to change routes at the last minute; e.g. in 1935 Mahāsati Cānda was getting ready to leave with her disciples for Malera Kotlā in Panjāba when 2 members of that district came to ask her to go elsewhere. The tension between Hindus and Muslims having worsened, the frequent riots were presenting a very real danger. Mahāsati simultaneously received the directive and invitation of an *Upādhyāya* to proceed to Ludhiyānā and stay there for the *cāturmāsya*; cf. Mahendrakumari, 1954, p. 63.

¹² Cf. e.g. the vivid description of the *vihāras* of Mahāsati Umarāvakuṇvara and her companions in the Himālaya, in Jammū and Kāśmīra, where difficulties abounded; Umarāvakuṇvara, 1962, pp. 53-111.

¹³ Cf. *īrya-samiti* (P 359); AS I, 8, 1, 20.

¹⁴ Cf. BrkS I, 46.

morning in order to avoid the scorching heat. Just as in *gocari*, *vihāra* takes place in silence, with no stopping by the way out of curiosity or to chat with passers-by.¹⁵ Sometimes, in order to reach their destination in a single day, the *sādhvis* halt for *gocari* and continue immediately. If it rains they look for some shelter, if one can be found; if not, they go on walking. If they reach the bank of a river which must be crossed by boat or a place which is flooded on every side, they may take a boat. They must stay calm, not get excited or berate the boatman if his craft is in poor condition.¹⁶ Whatever the dangers and circumstances may be, they must do their utmost to maintain self-control, to act prudently, to hurt no-one through speech or deeds. On arrival at the *upāśraya* or other lodging-place, they recite the *iryāpathika-sūtra* to purify themselves from any taint of *himsā* incurred during the walk.¹⁷

b) *Eṣaṇā*: The search for a lodging, clothing, bowls

In days gone by, on arriving in a village or town, the *munis* and *sādhvi* had to set about finding shelter, a temporary dwelling. The *Āgamas* sometimes use the word *upāśraya*, sometimes the word *śayyā* (couch, bed) to denote a lodging-place, meaning thereby a place of rest for the night and, indicating thus the transitory aspect of the stay. They simply requested permission to lie down and sleep between two *vihāras*. Once the *upāśraya* was found, they had still, in addition to the *gocari*, to procure whatever *vastras* (clothing) they needed and also *pātras* (bowls). *Eṣaṇā*, the search for a lodging, clothing and bowls has been made the subject of numerous rules. In our own day, the *saṃghas* being well-organised, there is almost always at least one *upāśraya* in a local *saṃgha* and the *sādhvis* scarcely have the need to search for a refuge. However, there are some villages or mountain-places without *upāśrayas*; and sometimes the only *upāśraya* is already occupied by passing *munis*. In both these cases the *sādhvis* must

¹⁵ Cf. US XXVII, 17.

¹⁶ Cf. AS II, 3, 1, 13-21; 2, 1-13, where the river-crossings of *śramaṇas* or *śramaṇis* are graphically described.

¹⁷ Cf. P 706.

request hospitality elsewhere, bearing in mind the rules on the subject. As for *vastras* and *pātras*, it is easier than in the past to procure them, but one is in no way absolved from observing the rules.

i) Śayyā: The dwelling and the place to sleep

The *Ācārāṅga-sūtra* lists in a precise, detailed and judicious manner all the factors and circumstances to consider before deciding upon a dwelling and asking the proprietor for permission to occupy it on a temporary basis. One must not accept:

- a dwelling which, on account of its location, would involve one in committing acts of *himsā*, if, for example, there were stocks there of vegetables, fruits or grains or if access to the house were difficult, entailing climbing up a ladder or using other perilous means to reach it, or if the room available were to contain a large amount of water or be used for making a fire;
- a room which may have been carefully prepared in advance, and whitewashed to receive the *sādhvis*;
- a centrally situated room, in the middle of the comings and goings of those living there, too little to one side, where in spite of oneself one would be entangled in family intrigues and would have no independence or possibility of withdrawal.¹⁸

The *Bṛhatkalpa-sūtra* gives both similar and complementary directives to guide the *sādhvis*:

¹⁸ Cf. AS II, 2, 1; II, 2, 3, 1-17. Even if the *sādhvis* are on their own in a house, they must see to it that they are sheltered from the eyes of the inquisitive. At Yeola, a small market-town in Mahārāṣṭra, I met in March 1975 a group of *sādhvis* who had been unable to lodge in an *upāśraya* where some munis were already in residence. The *śrāvakas* had put at their disposal a small one-roomed house with a verandah facing the street. At meal-times - when the *sādhvis* never accept outsiders - they would pull across a large curtain which divided the room in two.

- one may not lodge in a house situated in the middle of the bazar area;¹⁹
- in a house located at the entrance to a crowded and noisy lane; or near the crossroads of several such lanes;
- in a house where there is a shop;²⁰
- in a room without a door, unless it is feasible to arrange a curtain;²¹
- also to be avoided are rooms adorned with mural paintings;²²
- all dwellings where there is a continuous to-ing and fro-ing day and night, places containing many passages and a mixed population, such as shelters for pilgrims, inns; equally to be shunned are rooms open to the four winds or giving upon a corridor or, again, a shelter constructed on a tree-trunk or open to the sky.²³ The aim of all these directives is to protect the *sādhvis*.

The *śayyā* properly so-called, that is, the bed or couch, may be made of hard wood, dried grass, hay, peacock feathers or straw.²⁴ In the *upāśrayas* the *sādhvis* sleep upon narrow bed-tables of wood,

¹⁹ Of the *upāśrayas* of today, certain ones, in Dilli for example, are right in the middle of a bazar. These *upāśrayas* are often very ancient and date back to an epoch when cities were less populous. They none the less provide, in accordance with the rules, a safe lodging, but it is true that their surroundings are noisy and thus scarcely favourable to concentration.

²⁰ Cf. BrkS I, 12.

²¹ Ibid., I, 14.

²² Ibid., I, 21; the themes painted may give rise to distractions or awaken memories.

²³ Ibid., II, 11.

²⁴ Cf. AS II, 2, 3, 18.

which they use to write on during the day, unless they have been provided with small low writing-desks.

ii) *Vastras*: Garments

The *sādhvis* may, with the permission of the *guruni* acquire new garments when their own are worn out, except during the *cāturnāśya*.²⁵ These garments are outward signs of the ascetic state:

- they may be made only of certain materials, preferably cotton;²⁶
- all that is luxurious, elegant, embroidered, dyed, trimmed with fur or brocade, is inadmissible;²⁷
- a *sādhvi* may not accept a garment that has been bought or made specially for her;²⁸
- she must not, while passing through a house on *gocari*, expressly request the mistress of the house for a garment, but if she needs one she may ask for some material, referring the matter to the *guruni* saying that she will hand it over to her, that this latter shall decide whether to give it to her or to another *sādhvi* or to return it.²⁹ These rules endorse an attitude of non-possession, of renunciation of one's own will and personal preferences.

²⁵ Cf. BrkS III, 16-17; this rule obtains also for *pātras* and other objects.

²⁶ Cf. AS II, 5, 1, 16.

²⁷ Ibid., II, 5, 1, 4-5.

²⁸ Ibid., II, 5, 1, 3.

²⁹ Cf. BrkS III, 13.

iii) The *pātras*: The bowls

In the same way as garments wear out, so bowls too need to be replaced.³⁰ These *pātras* may be:

- of light wood or of earthenware, or gourds;
- the *sādhvis* may not accept *pātras* of metal, iron pewter, lead, brass, silver, gold, mother-of-pearl, ivory, horn, stone, leather; all these are costly and impure;³¹
- before accepting or requesting a *pātra*, which must not have been either bought or made for her, a *sādhvi* must examine it carefully to assure herself that it contains no living particles;
- she may request and accept a *pātra* that is not new, provided that it is clean;
- if the *śrāvikā* who is presenting the *pātra* wants to offer it containing food or drink, the *sādhvi* must decline it.³²

c) *Jana-samparka*: Relationships with those around

These day-to-day relationships, which are simple and unaffected, possess a two-fold character: in the first place, they are of a spiritual sort, for, from her *dikṣā* onwards, a *sādhvi* is *nirgranthi*, un-attached. She has renounced definitively the concerns, works, way of life and diversions of the majority of humanity. At the same time and on account of their being *anagāri*, the *sādhvis* must also speak of practical matters, address themselves to people, request from them hospitality, food and what is strictly necessary.

³⁰ Cf. P 525.

³¹ Cf. AS II, 6, 1, 1-2.

³² Ibid., II, 6, 1, 4-12.

Persons in close relatedness to the sādhis include: the ācārya and the munis, the śrāvakas and śrāvikās. The bond with the ācārya and the munis is close, even if, due to their itinerant life, they scarcely ever see them; these are links of spiritual paternity and fraternity. The śrāvakas and śrāvikās possess this same bond with the sādhis, but to a lesser degree.

Relationship with the munis

There are certain basic rules of conduct in this regard, starting from which each *sampradāya* and *gaccha* treat these relationships with varying degrees of strictness or flexibility. These main rules are:

- munis are forbidden to stay in an *upāśraya* where sādhis are in residence, and vice-versa;³³
- a sādhi and a muni are forbidden to be alone in one another's company, and this applies to the ācārya and even on the occasion of *ālocanā*; however, there are exceptions;
- in extreme situations and for the duration of such a situation, munis and sādhis are permitted to stay in the same dwelling. Such cases are set forth in a detailed way: if, travelling in the same district both parties arrive near a forest which they do not have time to traverse before nightfall; or if they arrive simultaneously in an isolated place where they are unable to find two separate shelters; or, again, if they are endangered because of the presence of brigands in the neighbourhood so that the sādhis have need of protection;³⁴
- the ācārya may visit the *upāśraya* of the sādhis for spiritual purposes and also for settling practical concerns.³⁵

³³ Cf. BrkS III, 1-2. In case of necessity, a brief visit may be paid from either side, just long enough to deliver a message, without the messenger sitting down in the *upāśraya*.

³⁴ Cf. SthS 417.

³⁵ Deo. 1956, pp. 380-381, where 20 reasons that justify these visits are listed.

Here, too, is an example which shows that the sages of old who drew up these rules knew how to be both humane and flexible in their approach: if a muni gets a thorn in his foot that he does not manage to extract nor do his companions, if such exist, succeed in doing so and if a passing sādḥvi offers to assist, then he may accept her help;³⁶ so too if a muni has an insect in his eye;³⁷ and, reciprocally, a muni may offer assistance to a sādḥvi in similar circumstances.³⁸

As regards the norms of behaviour and customs enjoined by the *sampradāyas* and *ācāryas* in connection with these relationships, it can be said that generally at any rate the Tapāgacchas are particularly strict; the sādḥvis are allowed only to be present at the munis' *pravacanas* and just to perform the *vandana* when they meet. Relations are more fraternal among the Terāpanthis. For example, munis may give courses of instruction to sādḥvis. By virtue of the fact that this sect is very centralised and well-organised at every level, news is communicated regularly and the sādḥvis know where such or such a muni is to be found and the tasks upon which they are severally engaged, and the same applies in the opposite direction.

Relationships with the śrāvakas and śrāvikās

Once the fact is recognised that the sādḥvis are not only *nirgranthis* but also *śramaṇis* who have at heart the spiritual welfare of the members of the *saṃgha*, relationships can be straightforward and profound.³⁹ However, in a community one must take into account the possibilities of each and the degree of maturity of the average member. One cannot expect perfect and immediate comprehension between the two sides. The sādḥvis need a certain period of training

³⁶ Cf. BrkS VI, 3.

³⁷ Ibid., VI, 4.

³⁸ Ibid., VI 5-6.

³⁹ Cf. P 548 ff. and ch.6 for the part played by the sādḥvis in the *saṃgha*; here it is primarily relationships in the course of *viḥāras* that are being envisaged.

before they can acquire good judgement, wisdom and discernment, qualities that are of the utmost importance in a *guruṇi*. The *sādhvis* learn little by little to assimilate and live out in practice the teaching of the Scriptures on speech and the way one should speak, a teaching that they must apply at the time of *gocari* and in other daily contacts with the *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās*.⁴⁰ During their halts in the *upāśrayas*, the *sādhvi* must avoid all that would excite quarrels.⁴¹ Rather, their presence, words or actions must pacify the quarrelsome. As they go from one place to another, they must avoid being the retailers of idle tales and gossip.

It must be added that, from *diksā* onwards, the *sādhvis* consider their relatives and friends as *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās*, well-known ones of course, and this gives them the possibility, if they are receptive, to help them on the spiritual path.⁴²

B - *Paryuṣaṇā*: The place of retreat

When the monsoon is just starting, the groups of *sādhvis*, scattered throughout the various regions, make their way towards the place which they have chosen for their *paryuṣaṇā*,⁴³ their place of retreat during the *cāturmāsya* (the four months). Each year this period marks a new stage in their life. In the first place it is a time of stability, favoring *svādhyāya*, *dhyāna*, *adhyayana*, stress being laid throughout on *upavāsa* (fasting), while simultaneously they are readily available to *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* for personal talks, regular courses of teaching, public or private, in accordance with the customs of the

⁴⁰ Cf. AS II, 4, 1; DS VII (P 344 ff.).

⁴¹ Cf. DS *culikā* 2, 5.

⁴² One *sādhvi* told me that she had gone to spend several days in the village of her birth in order to help her mother prepare herself for the Great Departure.

⁴³ Nowadays called *varṣā-vāsa*: the monsoon-dwelling.

different *gacchas*.⁴⁴ For the members of the *saṃgha cāturmāsya* is the peak-period of the year, the period of spiritual renewal. It starts one month and twenty days after the beginning of the monsoon; it is the period which lasts from *āṣāḍha-pūrṇimā* to *kārttika-pūrṇimā* (from the full moon which appears in mid-July to that of about mid-November). The period of the *paryuṣaṇā* was established, so tradition maintains, by Mahāvira himself. Why did he choose *āṣāḍha-pūrṇimā*? Because at that time of year house-holders have finished their tasks of house-maintenance and have taken in hand all necessary precautions for the rainy season, the thorough cleaning of every corner of the house, whitewashing, renewal of thatch or tiles, clearance of gutters to carry off the water, etc.⁴⁵ The *śramaṇis* are thus able to stay in clean and renovated houses.⁴⁶

Two important factors have had considerable influence on the rules of conduct drawn up for the *paryuṣaṇā*: the question of stability and the wetness of the season. Without entering into all the details, we shall try to pick out the most essential of the rules and discern their implications, taking the *paryuṣaṇākālpa* as our guide.⁴⁷

44 The *śrāvakas* customarily call the period of 8 to 10 days preceding the *saṃvatsarī*, the 1st day of the Jaina New Year, *paryuṣaṇā*. This period extends from the 13th day of the dark fortnight of *bhādra* (August-September) to the 4th day of the bright fortnight of the same month - days of fervent devotion, of attending readings of the *Sūtras*, especially the *Kālpa-sūtra*. The day of the *saṃvatsarī* after *pratikramaṇa*, the members of the *saṃgha* ask pardon from one another and also send cards with the traditional words of pardon printed on them to their friends and acquaintances, even to those who are not Jains.

45 Cf. DasasS VIII, 1.

46 Nowadays most of the *upāśrayas* are solid buildings made of stone, in which the repair-work consists simply of cleaning and whitewashing.

47 Chapter VIII of the DasasS which corresponds to the last part of the KS; Mahāvira probably imparted this rule of life at Rājagrha, when surrounded by a throng of *śramaṇas*, *śramaṇis*, *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās*; cf. DasasS VIII, 77.

a) *Avagraha-kṣetra*: Spatial limits of the area of residence

In this context the expression refers to the boundary-lines within which the *sādhvis* may move about during the *cāturmāsya*:

- they are permitted, in the neighbourhood of the *upāśraya*, to cover a distance of five *kośas* (about sixteen kilometres), but no further;⁴⁸

- within these boundary-lines they are free to come and go for *gocari*;

- they may change from one *upāśraya* to another, if necessary; in fact, they are permitted to have three *upāśrayas*, three refuges, in which by turns they may sojourn;⁴⁹

- for some weighty reason, in a case of illness, for example, when a remedy for a *sādhvi* must be procured, two or three of her companions may travel a distance not exceeding four or five *yojanas* (about fifty kilometres) and may spend a night on the way. However, their errand once accomplished, they must return the selfsame day to the *upāśraya* of the *paryuṣaṇā*.⁵⁰

b) *Bhikṣā-caryā*: The search for food

The highly detailed rules concerning *gocari* are modified during this time of retreat, when the stationary life is favourable to *tapas* as a whole and in particular to *upavāsa* (fasting) and when movement is rendered more difficult on account of the rains.

⁴⁸ Cf. Dasas VIII, 8-11; if there is a river within the *avagraha-kṣetra* and no bridge by which to cross it, then the area is more restricted.

⁴⁹ Ibid., VIII, 73; this is simply a precautionary measure of particular relevance to villages where in the monsoon there is a proliferation of insects and every sort of vegetation. The *sādhvis* therefore are given the possibility of changing residence, if that which they are occupying does not permit them to carry out the vow of *ahimsā* as perfectly as possible during this season.

⁵⁰ Ibid., VIII, 75.

Upavāsa has a purificatory effect which is conducive to enhanced spiritual perception: the *ātman* frees itself from matter and the effort of concentration required for *svādhyāya* and *dhyāna* is facilitated.

The rain, falling plentifully or less plentifully depending upon the various regions, awakens life everywhere. After the scorching summer there is new birth everywhere, rapid growth everywhere. The monsoon is also destructive: rivers overflow their channels, floods cause terrible havoc, the roads are muddy and impassable. All these changes brought about by the rain have a considerable impact on the life of the *sādhvis*. They must redouble their attention every time that they go out. Here are the principal rules concerning the food prescribed for them and the special features of *gocari* during the *paryuṣaṇā*.

- Those *sādhvis* who are in good health must abstain from the five *vikṛtis*: milk, curds, clarified butter, oil and raw sugar-cane.⁵¹

- Weak or sick *sādhvis* may take the *vikṛtis*; those who go out in search of food must take instructions from the patient and from the *guruṇi*.⁵²

- During these four months the *sādhvis* take, in principle, only one meal per day, but, if there are valid reasons, supplementary *gocaris* are permitted.⁵³

- Certain *sādhvis* only take a meal every second day, others every third day. Certain ones fast for a longer period. In these cases there are special rules to be observed when the fast is broken. Those who go out on *gocari* must take everything into consideration and accept only

⁵¹ Ibid., VIII, 16: *khira, dahi, sappi, tilla, guḍa*; KS 237 adds: *navañiya, mahu, majja, masa*, i.e. fresh butter, honey, liquor, meat; these foodstuffs are considered impure, for they are the product of a *vikṛti*, an internal alteration of substance.

⁵² Ibid., VIII, 17.

⁵³ Ibid., VIII, 19-24.

what it is suitable to consume after a prolonged abstinence from food.⁵⁴

- To avoid over-familiarity with the families of śrāvakas, a sādhvī must refrain, at the time of *gocari*, from asking for any object that she does not see in the house, for, to give her pleasure, the śrāvaka might contrive to obtain it or might even steal it.⁵⁵

- For the same reason, the houses close to the *upāśraya* must not be visited too often; it is even laid down that one should not present oneself for *gocari* at any house closer to the *upāśraya* than the seventh.⁵⁶

- When the rain is very heavy and continuous, the sādhis must avoid going out for *gocari*. When caught in a downpour on their outward or homeward journey, they may take refuge in a house or in a shelter of some sort or even at the foot of a tree. If they are in a house and are offered something to eat, they may accept, provided that the dish has been prepared before their arrival. If the rain continues, they may take food in their place of refuge, but return before sunset.⁵⁷

- In a locality where there are munis close by, it can happen that a muni and a sādhi, caught in a storm of rain, look for shelter. In this case, then, it is stated that one muni and one sādhi must not stay alone together in the refuge they have chanced to find, nor one muni and two sādhis or vice versa, nor even two munis and two sādhis, nor, again, śrāvakas and sādhis; but if there is a fifth person or if all the doors of the shelter are open, then they may remain together.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Ibid., VIII, 25-34.

⁵⁵ Ibid., VIII, 18.

⁵⁶ Ibid., VIII, 36.

⁵⁷ Ibid., VIII, 39-44.

⁵⁸ Ibid., VIII, 45-47; nowadays these cases are very rare, except in very remote villages or on the occasion of a flood.

c) The *aṣṭasūkṣmas*: The eight categories of minute beings

Sūkṣma means: the infinitely small. According to the doctrine, there are eight categories of beings that are so minute as to be impeceivable; these are: minute living beings with two sense organs; fungus of three types, namely, lichen, mildew, moss; grains; sprouts and seeds; flowers; eggs of insects or reptiles; habitats of insects, such as anthecaps or wasps' nests; particles of humidity such as morning-dew, hoar-frost, mist, hailstones.⁵⁹

The *sādhvis* must know the existence of these eight categories of minute living beings and be very attentive, in the course of their journeying, not to damage any of them. It is true that the *īryāpathika-sūtra*, that they recite after they have been out of doors and during the two daily *pratikramāṇas*, purifies them from faults committed against these infinitesimally small beings. The *pratīckhanā* in this season when the atmosphere is humid demands greater attention than during the rest of the year.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Ibid. VIII, 50-58; the 8 categories of *sūkṣma* are: *pāṇa*, *paṇaga*, *bia*, *hariya*, *puppha*, *aṃḍa*, *leṇa*, *siṇḍha*; within the categories: lichens, grains, seeds, minute-sized flowers, there are, in each category, 5 different species colour-wise: black, blue, red, yellow, white. We read in the biography of Mahāsati Mohanadevi that during a *vihāra* she paused with her group underneath a tree on account of the mist. A young man happened to pass that way. He was the son of a Jaina father and Musulman mother. Conversation began between him and the Mahāsati, who started by explaining to him the living properties of mist and went on to encourage the young man, who felt himself drawn to the Jaina *dharma*, though the *saṃgha* of Syālakota was not willing to receive him. The large-hearted Mahāsati restored his confidence and told him of a muni who would receive him with open arms. When she arrived at the town, she sent for two śrāvakas, requesting them as true disciples of Mahāvira to welcome this young man; cf. Hukamadevi pp. 135-141.

⁶⁰ Cf. *Dasas* VIII, 67-68.

d) *Keśa-luñcana*: The pulling out of the hair

Luñcana (the pulling out) of the *keśa* (hair) must always be done at the beginning of the *paryuṣaṇā*. In theory this is a literal pulling out of the hair; however, the possibility of using scissors or a razor is not excluded, though it appears that this is exceptional and applies only to sick ascetics.⁶¹ The second *keśa-luñcana* takes place usually in the spring and is not strictly obligatory.

e) *Kṣamā-yācanā*: The request for pardon

During this period of retreat, devotion and fasting, special attention must be directed towards peace and good relations within the group. This is essential so that each may, without agitation, be a *śramaṇi* working for her own purification. For this it is necessary to maintain oneself in the attitude inspired by *ahiṃsā*. The *sādhvis* are exhorted, at the beginning of the *paryuṣaṇā*, to avoid vexatious behaviour, disputes, quarrels and all that might engender *bhāva-hiṃsā*, inner violence. It is even said that if, after being warned, a *sādhvi* shows herself to be refractory in the maintenance of a good atmosphere, she must be expelled from the group.⁶²

Kṣamā-yācanā is the humble request for mutual pardon. If during the course of the *cāturmāsya* dissensions do take place, then let the one side and the other request and grant pardon. Let all be both givers and receivers of peace; it is only in calm and in peace that one can proceed on the true path.⁶³

It is the attitude of submission to the *guruṇi*, of *aparigraha* of one's own will, that pre-disposes towards tranquillity. One does nothing without first asking permission, whether it is a question of *vikṛti*

⁶¹ Cf. Dasas VIII, 70, and comm. pp. 128-129.

⁶² Ibid., VIII, 71; cf. also DS X, 10; 18; US XVII, 12.

⁶³ Ibid., VIII, 72.

foodstuffs of which one feels the need or of some medical treatment or of very severe forms of penance or total fast till the last breath.⁶⁴

It is affirmed that ascetics who follow these rules of conduct and teach them to others reach perfection, true wisdom, Liberation, *nirvāṇa*, some of them in this life and others after several lives.⁶⁵

After these four months one must take to the road again, unless the conditions do not permit, for example, if the area is still affected by a late monsoon, in which case offences against *ahiṃsā* would be unavoidable.⁶⁶

C - Viśvamitrās: Friends to all

By taking life-long vows of *ahiṃsā* and *aparigraha* a *sādhvi* pledges herself to regard all *jīvas* with infinite respect, to possess nothing, to be without attachment of any sort. It is precisely because she is a *nirgranthi* that her vow of *ahiṃsā* is considerably re-inforced. In her daily contacts with the *jīvas*, she must not be influenced by any egotistical intention, any selfish interest, any desire to possess or dominate. *Ahiṃsā* does not derive simply from a negative attitude: abstention from violence, hatred, anger, desire. It is also a positive orientation towards respectfulness, towards a disinterested and sincere friendship bent on the welfare of others. In the sphere of right vision and right conduct, the sole intention of a *nirgranthi* in her contact with all beings is the desire for their final Liberation.

⁶⁴ Ibid. VIII, 62-65.

⁶⁵ Ibid., VIII, 76.

⁶⁶ Cf. AS II, 3, 1, 4; similarly, *dikṣā* can only be received after the *cāturmāsya*.

Viśvamiitrās means, literally, universal friends. At first sight this expression may appear to involve a contradiction, for to be a *miitrā*, friend, presupposes a bond, an attachment. Have we not seen in fact that their incessant effort is directed towards freeing themselves from every *bandha*?⁶⁷ Does not this study impress upon us at every moment that the ideal of a *sādhvi* is to be *nirgranthi*?

Here we must in imagination take up our stance alongside one who, through *dikṣā*, a voluntary act undertaken in full knowledge of its meaning, has renounced all connections and repudiated the grip of the temporal; she still lives, however, in a perishable body, though she is already in a state of life that transcends *saṃsāra*. Now, it is for this very reason that she is truly and authentically *viśvamiitrā*, a universal friend. For the *nirgranthi*s, the whole world is their family, each *jīva* is a *bandhu*, a friend. The desire that all *jīvas* should be freed and should reach *nirvāṇa* must not stay in the realm of intention, but must be manifested in a concrete way. To be a *śramaṇi* involves in the first place a work of personal purification, but also an effort to help others, to give support to their own efforts, a help which will be the more efficacious just because it is more disinterested. How can the *sādhvis*, without losing sight of the Three Jewels, help the *śrāvakas*, *śrāvikas* and all *jīvas*? Through their teaching, in public or in private, a teaching which concentrates on Scripture and the doctrine as transmitted by tradition. Through this activity, which in itself, being a prolongation of *svādhyāya*, earns them merit, they contribute to an awakening, or to a keener degree of awakening, in the minds of those who listen attentively to them, of *upayoga*, the faculty of understanding and awareness, an understanding that must always be accompanied by right vision and perfect conduct.⁶⁸

The most effective teaching of the *sādhvis* is that which they give through the testimony of their life. They incarnate the ideal in which

⁶⁷ Cf. P 306 ff.

⁶⁸ Cf. P 268 ff. No doubt the more directly doctrinal teaching has been given during the course of the centuries, and is still more usually given by the munis. However, the *sādhvis* have in the past and still do supplement this same teaching in their own way, which should not be belittled and which has more impact than one might believe from the outside.

every Jaina believes and towards which he strives. In the midst of a world dominated by power, money and the passions, they are a constant reminder of spiritual values. In the course of meetings, during *vihāras* and the *pariyuṣaṇā*, they are called upon without prior preparation to give direct teaching of a very varied sort, adapted to the requirements of different persons, places and circumstances. We know already that at the *upāśraya*, generally in the early afternoon, they are available to receive callers. They are consulted on many subjects, ranging from questions concerning the practice of spiritual exercises or some vow to be made to matters concerning confession, some family problem or some decision that must be taken. They are there to listen, to give advice, and their counsel, if not always followed, is at least held in high regard. It goes without saying that the suggestions they make are in line with *samyak-cāritra*. It is naturally mothers of families and girls who consult them the most, but many fathers and young people in general also seek counsel from them.⁶⁹

It can be said that in the course of the centuries the *sādhvis*, together with the *munis* but in a less obvious way, have been the pillars of the *saṃgha*. If their role has been overshadowed - and that on account of the secondary place officially assigned to women in society - it has been none the less an effective one and remains so.

Side by side with this type of personal instruction, they give also a broader and more public type of instruction in various ways, sometimes through gatherings and homilies, sometimes through their writings or, again, through the holiday-camps that they organise. Whichever of these forms the teaching takes, if the initiative comes from a *śādhvī* or group of *śādhvis*, the practical realisation of the project happens with both the assent and the collaboration of the *saṃgha*: it is always, to a greater or lesser extent, according to each case, a community undertaking.

⁶⁹ I know one *śrāvaka* who owes his vocation as a *brahmacārin* to the wise counsel of a *śādhvī* who continues as his spiritual guide.

a) *Pravacanas*: Teaching on the *dharma*

This word so familiar to all Jains denotes all that is expressed through speech, and thus: lecture, homily, or address, that explains or comments upon the Scriptures or the doctrine, basing itself always upon tradition. There is a very great variety of *pravacanas* to be found in the different *sampradāyas* and among different *śādhvis* and audiences. Generally, the Tapāgaccha *śādhvis*, particularly in Gujarāta, do not give instruction in public; they must confine themselves to talks in the *upāśraya* and to groups of *śrāvikās*. The Kharataragaccha, Sthānakavāsi and Terāpanthi *śādhvis* give instruction in the form of public lectures addressed to all: men, women, Jains and members of other religious traditions.⁷⁰

Pravacanas must have a well-defined aim. Eight categories of subjects to be treated are distinguished, within which a great latitude is possible; these subjects are concerned with:

- everything that is related to peace, to *ahiṃsā*;
- to renunciation of sin;
- victory over the passions;
- inner peace;
- purity of intention;
- simplicity; the struggle against pride and vanity;
- goodness, forbearance;
- non-possession, freedom of spirit in regard to goods and wealth of every kind.⁷¹

⁷⁰ Cf. P 591 ff. on the appeal of *śādhvi* Vicakṣaṇa, a remarkable example of ecumenism. *Śādhvi* Sajjana (1960, p. 88) writes that: "the munis and *śādhvis* give to the teaching upon the doctrine the importance of an obligation". During the sojourn in their midst of a learned *śādhvi* well-known for her oratorical gifts, the *śrāvakas* of the place sometimes get printed and circulated invitation-cards to the *pravacanas*.

⁷¹ . . . *saṃtīṃ, viratīṃ, uvasamaṃ, nīvvāṇaṃ, soyaviyaṃ, ajjaviyaṃ, maddhaviyaṃ, lāghaviyaṃ*. . . AS I, 6, 5, 3 and Nathamala comm. pp. 261-262; SramanS, pp. 412-413.

The sādhis do not confine themselves to the abstract, preaching a very lofty ideal far removed from daily life. They speak in very concrete terms, attacking evil at its roots and in all its forms. They are remarkable for their forthright denunciation of abuses, injustices, corruption, fraud, greed, covetousness, love of money, evils all of them that can corrode any society and, more particularly, a community that is composed for the great part of business-men, industrialists and bankers. They have all the more freedom to speak and to speak in no uncertain terms because they themselves are *anagāri*, perpetually on *vihāra*, possessing nothing. They endeavour to pull out the tares and sow good seed. Then they depart, time scarcely permitting them either to incur hostility or arouse lasting attachments.⁷² They are particularly set on unmasking all forms of hypocrisy, for they know well that in this world many dishonest people pass themselves off as being sincere.⁷³ At the same time, they must preach without harshness, without wounding.⁷⁴ It is very difficult to keep a happy mean. However, when the sādhis live out their ideal, their attitude and their words are attuned to the essentials of the *dharma* and there is not so much need for them to reflect in advance on how they should express themselves. During the *paryuṣaṇā*, when the *pravacanas* happen daily, they sometimes choose to comment on a *Sūtra*. In this way the oral tradition is carried on, through which one learns to know the doctrine by listening to the wise, those men and women who, within the *saṃgha*, have the mission of transmitting it to others.⁷⁵

⁷² Several biographies give evidence of changes of heart among the audience; cf. e.g. Hukamadevi, p. 266. One observes that the gurus were always reluctant to stay too long in one place, even if the śrāvakas were eager to retain them.

⁷³ Cf. DS VII, 48.

⁷⁴ Ibid., VII, 11.

⁷⁵ In well-organised centres the śrāvakas or śrāvikas have collected the *pravacanas* of certain sādhis and published them, with the aim of preserving them, deepening their own understanding of them and leaving them to posterity; cf. e.g. the collected *pravacanas* of Mahāsatis Ujjvalakumāri; Umarāvakumvara; Sādhvi Vicakṣaṇa. At Bikānera, during the *cāturmāsya* of 1975, at a camp on the *dharma*, Sādhvi Hemaprabhā, a disciple of Sādhvi

Here a question arises. Since the *sādhvis* are natives of different areas and travel from North to South and from East to West, in what language do they address their audience? The *Śvetāmbaras* are established chiefly in Gujarāta, Rājasthāna, Madhya Pradeśa and Panjāba, and they are to be found in other regions also, though coming originally from these afore-mentioned States. All speak their own mother tongue and Hindi. Many of the *sādhvis* know Hindi and, except in Gujarāta, they generally address their hearers in Hindi. Certain ones of them, if they stay long enough in the same area, study its language and, if it seems more appropriate for those present, they give their *pravacanas* in the local language.

b) *Dharma-granthas*: Religious works

The *pravacana* may be by far the most common way of passing on the teaching, but the written word is also used and is beginning to be frequently used in certain *gacchas*. Moreover, writing, for those *sādhvis* who possess literary or poetic gifts, is a continuation of *svādhyāya*. They pass on to others their knowledge, their own insights and reflections, prompted by an eager desire to enlighten, guide and encourage those men and women who will read their writings. These works are of four different types:

Dharma-granthas: Doctrinal works

These are books and writings on the subject of spirituality and doctrine, the two being inseparable. These writings are as yet few in number and up to this present time the Tapāgaccha *sādhvis*, just as in regard to publicly delivered *pravacanas*, have received little encouragement to write. By way of contrast, the other *sādhvis* do so gladly, so far as their own possibilities permit. The writing of a

Vicakṣaṇa, gave during her course of regular *pravacanas* a systematic exposition of the doctrine, subsequently published in book form: *Śrī jaina dharma praveśikā*, a *dharma-grantha* of 168 pp. of which 4,400 copies were printed; cf. Appendix I.

In certain *sampradāyas* the *sādhvi* who is giving the *pravacana* is seated on a long low table with the other *sādhvis* on either side. In others, only the *sādhvi* who is speaking sits on the low table. The *pravacanas* are not necessarily given by the *guruṇi*.

grantha is the task of the *sādhvi* author; all the selling of the book, is the affair of the *saṁgha*. It is of small importance in what place or successive places the *sādhvi* does her writing; when the moment comes, a *śrāvaka* or a *śrāvikā* or a group of them takes charge of all the practical questions. For a *saṁgha* it is accounted a joy and an honour when a *sādhvi* writes a worthwhile book.⁷⁶ In this category of *dharma-granthas* are also included articles and contributions of *sādhvis*, regular or less regular, to a montly revue, the mouthpiece of their *gaccha*, and also collections of *pravacanas*.

Unquestionably, the itinerant life does not lend itself to authorship.⁷⁷ The period of the *paryuṣaṇā* is more favourable, but then there are *pravacanas* to give and visitors to receive, to each of which one must be readily available. Furthermore, fasting, even though it refines the spirit and is instrumental in its awakening, can also lessen a person's physical resistance. Finally, this period is very short. Moreover, it is necessary to be able to consult documents and have access to libraries.

Jivana-caritras: Biographies

We are referring here to biographies of *sādhvis*. These are as yet rare and it takes a long time to discover them.⁷⁸ Most of them narrate the life of a *pravartini* or *guruṇi* and are written by a *sādhvi* disciple or by a *śrāvikā*. Others describe the extraordinary spiritual achievement of some *sādhvi*. The majority of these biographies are written after their heroine's Departure, though a few are still alive. These biographies, written as they are unaffectedly and with great devotion

⁷⁶ It is impossible here to go fully into the content, structure, and style of some of the *dharma-granthas*, this being the task of a critical and thus specialised study; cf. Appendix I.

⁷⁷ *Sādhvi Rājimati* told me it took her several years to produce her book: *Yoga ki prathama kiraṇa*, the 1st vol. of a series on *Yoga*; she possesses the documents for the other vols., but would need several months of stability to complete the task; cf. Appendix I.

⁷⁸ Cf. ch.6.

and coming out of the actual milieu of the *śramaṇis*, are most interesting and, indeed, are highly valuable documents. The authors are not seeking either renown or honours, they are not writing for a larger public. They are simply performing with fervour an act of devotion and desire to present to their contemporaries and to posterity examples to imitate. Through these lives, we know many true to life characteristics and events observed on the spot, which reveal not only the arduous life of the *sādhvis* and the incredible difficulties they encounter, but also the different circles in which they move, from that of the simple village in the arid desert to that of the princely family of a large city.

Kāvyas: Poetic compositions

The *sādhvis*, especially those from Rājasthāna, have a vast repertoire of poetry. They embellish their *pravacanas* with passages from poems and songs that they know by heart. This natural faculty prompts certain ones of them to compose their own poems. Up till now these poetic compositions have scarcely been known at all outside the group where they originated; however, a few collections have now been published.⁷⁹ These poems speak of the *dharma* and only the *dharma*, but, as their mode of expression comes from a poetic inspiration, they are able to touch the heart and to convince more easily than the *dharma-granthas* or in a different way.

Anuvādas: Translations

Translation is another intellectual activity of contemporary *sādhvis*, translation of the *Āgamas* or doctrinal texts from Prākṛit or Sanskrit into the vernaculars. This very specialised task, hitherto undertaken only by scholarly monks, is beginning to be of interest to a few able *sādhvis*. This is an important work, firstly for the *sādhvis* who can greatly profit from these translations and also for the *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās*.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Cf. e.g. *Saragama* of Sādhvi Kanakaprabhā; *Jalati maśāla* of Sādhvi Mañjulā.

⁸⁰ This subject has been already introduced P 494 ff.

c) *Mahilāsamghas*: Women's associations

Enlightened gurus of all *sampradāyas* have always been concerned for the development and emancipation of women.⁸¹ In spite of their itinerant life, several of them have taken part in the establishment of permanent organisations which have contributed, and still do, to the religious and general education of women and girls:

Mahilā Satsaṅgas: Women's spiritual associations

These are groups for śrāvikās whose aim, a purely spiritual one, is directed towards knowledge of the *dharma*, meditation upon it, the performance of the rites, the singing of *bhājanas* (hymns of praise), the organisation of conferences, the publication of books and other activities of the local *saṁgha*. This type of association which takes place in small groups encourages friendly relations, maintains fervour and stimulates a desire for knowledge. The sādhis' part is to awaken interest in these societies, to help in establishing them during the *cāturmāsya* and to provide fresh momentum during their halts. We read, for example, in the life of Sādhvi Vicakṣaṇa how, while sojourning in Madrās during the *cāturmāsya* of 1967, she helped with the formation of such groups in the different quarters of the town.⁸²

Kanyā Vidyālayas: Schools for girls

The pioneers have always been conscious of the fact that sound and enlightened teaching is necessary for young and adolescent girls. In our own day, many prejudices have melted away and, at least in the towns, more and more girls are attending schools and colleges. In

⁸¹ This is very striking in the biographies.

⁸² Cf. Rāmapuriyā, 1966, pp. 414-422. Her influence was so powerful that, when I was meeting with some śrāvakas in Madrās in 1972, they were often speaking with enthusiasm of the solid foundations laid by Sādhvi Vicakṣaṇa. Mahāsatī Mohanadevi did likewise in Panjāba and in Dilli; cf. Hukamadevi, pp. 187; 256-258; cf. also Umarāvakuṇḍvara, 1962, pp. 52-53, where it is said that during her sojourn at Mukeriyān in Panjāba, a Mahilā Maṇḍala for women and a Svādhyāya Maṇḍala for men were organised.

1927, when Mahāsati Mohanadevi, in reply to some śrāvakas of Dillī who were wishing to commemorate the *cāturmāsya* that she had spent among them by a concrete gift and one that would last, replied that the most precious gift of all was *vidyā-dāna*, the gift of knowledge, understanding and science, and that her request was that they should found a girls' school where not only would various ordinary subjects be taught but where the pupils would also be given a training in their own culture and Jaina tradition, this was an extremely novel proposal! She insisted greatly on the necessity of such institutions for the development of womankind and that of society at large.⁸³ The śrāvakas applied themselves to the task, the school was founded and still exists today⁸⁴.

***Kanyā Śiviras* : Camps for young and older girls**

Here we have an innovation of our own day. *Śivira* means a camp or a tent used in a camp, the word, until these last years, being used only in connection originally with the king's army and then, simply, with the army. Fairly recently, however, youth camps or camps for students or other groupings, have begun to take place frequently. Sādhvi Nirmalā,⁸⁵ struck by the prevailing lopsidedness in favour of far-ranging and all-absorbing profane studies in contrast to a poor range of religious studies, especially those of a tradition whose adherents are a tiny minority - this state of affairs being aggravated by

⁸³ Cf. Hukamadevi, pp. 149-150.

⁸⁴ Mahāsati was very concerned to alert the śrāvakas to the crying needs of the day, particularly as regards education, culture and religion. Later on, in Jammū, she inspired a śrāvaka who was at that time a minister of the king to found a Jaina Vidyālaya, where, as in Dillī, general instruction was combined with the teaching of the Jaina *dharma*; *ibid.*, pp. 222-223. Similarly, mention is made (cf. Umarāvakumvara, 1962, pp. 25-26) of the founding, in the same spirit and with the same intention, in Rājasthāna and Jammū, of Brāhmi Mahilā Maṇḍalas, associations of young women and girls for the study of literature with preparation for a series of examinations; the name Brāhmi was chosen in memory of the erudite daughter of Ādinātha.

⁸⁵ She belongs to the Tapāgaccha of Gujārāta; cf. P 255.

the surrounding climate of the modern 'secularised' age - had the idea, with the co-operation of the sādhis of her group and the śrāvakas of the local *saṃghas*, of organising some *śiviras* for one month of the summer vacation. In these camps they endeavour to impart to young and older Jaina girls the basic tenets of the doctrine in an atmosphere of study, retreat and discipline, though leisure pursuits are not excluded.

Between 1966 and 1979 Sādhvi Nirmalā has organised thirteen such camps, the first ones in Gujarāta and subsequently in Rājasthāna.⁸⁶ Well before these camps came into being, some sādhis had become interested, especially during the *cāturmāsya*, in the spiritual training of children.⁸⁷ The Kanyā Śiviras are the continuation of this tradition. The participants often number more than a hundred, of all ages, from the primary school level to that of college. All live in. Sādhvi Nirmalā is firm in this regard, in order to avoid comings and goings and distractions of any sort. The programme is a harmonious blend of study of the *dharma*, an initiation into reflective thought, mental concentration and the practice of the chief rites, *sāmāyika* and *pratīkramana*, in an atmosphere of devotion, musical accompaniment and singing. The camp ends with an examination. Quite a few girls attend the camp several years in succession.

Sādhvi Nirmalā aims at giving a solid well-thought-out training suitable for our day and age and at arousing in the girls thereby a sense of belonging to a well-defined, rich and lively tradition. She transmits to them the essentials of the doctrine, a synthesis of the vast culture from which it springs. Later on, on return to their families, they are able to build on these foundations, continue to study and live in this same spirit, go beyond the routine of family observances and affirm their own identity in the world of the school.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ From 1966 to 1970 at Ahmadābād and Bhāvanagara, then in the chief cities of Rājasthāna: Jayapura, Jodhapura, Udayapura and other places

⁸⁷ Mahāsati Mohanadevi, e.g., had started some Bāla Satsaṅgas, devotional classes for children; cf. Hukamadevi, pp. 179-180; 187.

⁸⁸ I have not had the opportunity of visiting one of these Kanyā Śiviras, but in February 1975 Sādhvi Nirmalā convened at Jodhapura, where she then was, a follow-up meeting of 3 days for those girls who had taken part in the

These camps are very dependent upon the material resources of the local *sarīgha* and upon its collaboration in the practical matters of organisation. After each camp, a fairly voluminous commemorative brochure with numerous photos is published.⁸⁹ Certain of the participants write articles and this brochure is an effective means of publicizing the Kanyā Śiviras, their aim and its fulfilment in practice, among the members, both near and far, of the Tapāgaccha.

Other sādhis, among the Kharataragacchas, have also organised camps, in particular sādhi Maniprabha Śrī.

The making known of the *dharma* to all beings with an infinite respect for each one does not happen by itself. One must have had time to root oneself firmly in the tradition, to assimilate the message of the *arhats*, to have matured through *dhyāna* and *svādhyāya*, to have been purified through the practice of *tapas*:

The ascetic, possessing right vision, knowing the *Āgamas*, having compassion for all beings, must preach, propagate and proclaim the *dharma* in all directions.⁹⁰

The ascetic, preaching the *dharma* after much reflection, [must do so] without prejudice either towards himself, or towards anyone at all or towards the categories of beings. . . [And when he is empty of self, in friendship with all,] . . . the great ascetic, like an island never submerged by the waters, becomes the place

summer camp in that city. I was able to attend the day-long meetings. The difference between this and the summer camp, in addition to the shorter duration, was that the participants returned to their own homes in the evenings.

⁸⁹ Cf. *Kanyā-Śivira*: Jodhapura 1974; Sirohi 1975; Udayapura 1976; Jodhapura 1979.

⁹⁰ *oe samiyadamsaṇe. dayam logassa jānittā pāṇam paṇṇam dāhiṇam udinam āikkhe vibhāe kiṭṭe veyavi.* AS I, 6, 5, 2; cf. SKrS I, 13, 19.

of refuge for all living things carried along by the waves [of *saṃsāra*].⁹¹

⁹¹ *aṇuvii bhikkū dhammamāikkhamāṇe-ṇo attañāṃ āsāejjā.*
ṇo param āsāejjā, ṇo aṇṇāim pānāim bhūyāim jivāim sattāim āsāejjā. . . .
vujhamāṇāṇaṃ pāṇānaṃ bhūyāṇaṃ jivāṇaṃ sattānaṃ jahā se dīve
asamdiṇe, evaṃ se bhavai saraṇaṃ mahāmuṇi AS I, 6, 5, 4.

Chapter 5.

Antimā Śuddhi: The final purification

An unavoidable halt by the way:
The *ātman* withdraws from the bodily sheath

*As long as he[the ascetic] is not weighed down by old age,
as long as sickness does not increase,
as long as his senses do not lose their keenness,
he must follow the dharma.¹*

One of the conditions for receiving *dikṣā* is good health, a well-balanced physique, the physical resistance necessary if one is to lead a hard ascetic life, void of all comforts, in which fasts are frequent, and which demands constant interior discipline. The *sādhvis*, in the same way as all human beings, must face illness, old age, the decline of strength and powers of endurance, until finally they leave this world.

Given their type of itinerant life and the rules that derive from it, the *sādhvis* find themselves impelled by sickness and old age to adopt certain modifications and adaptations which vary according to the requirements of the case and the decision of each *sampradāya*. At the same time they make every endeavour to safeguard fidelity to the spirit of the *mahāvratas*.

A - Roga: Illness

The *Āgamas* contain little that is explicit on this subject. The few references, gleaned from here and there, indicate briefly that physical ills and pains are in all likelihood due to excesses - too lengthy vigils, too much sleep, too long distances covered - to failures in attention

¹ *jarā jāva na pilei vāhi jāva na viḍḍhai
jāvimḍiyā na hāyaṁti tāva dhammaṁ samāyare.* DS VIII,35.

and carelessness in regards to food, or again to a lack of control over the passions.²

Ascetic discipline demands that one should not pay too much attention to one's maladies; however, it is stipulated that one must treat the sufferers kindly, put oneself at their service, procure for them such food as is suitable.³ Massage and the use of various ointments, balms, liniments, powders and medicinal herbs are permitted to the sick.⁴

Generally, the concern is to preserve a proper balance between *ahiṃsā* and *kāyotsarga*: on the one hand, one must avoid for oneself and for others anything that is violent or causes suffering, and neglect an illness or a wound may be a form of *hiṃsā*; on the other hand, is it not necessary to proceed towards *kāyotsarga*, the abandonment of the body? At this point the wisdom and spirit of discernment and long experience of the *ācārya* or *guruṇi* or the senior *sādhvis* have a decisive importance. No *sādhvi* may take an initiative alone, but she may certainly express, with daughterly respect, her feelings in the matter and the *guruṇi*, with maternal care, having regard both to the physical strength of her disciple and to the question of the purification of the *ātman*, must decide over the advisability or not of following some treatment or consulting a doctor. There are no strict rules, common to all; all depends on the cases in question.⁵

Reading the biographies of *sādhvis*, one notices that the attitude regarding the care of the sick was different at the beginning of this century from what it is today. In this, as in many other matters, the

² Cf. *SthS* 667.

³ *Vaiyāvṛtya*: service or nursing-care for those who are undergoing severe penances and the suffering. The first-named may become very enfeebled and the second are handicapped by their illness; cf. *SkrS* I, 3, 3, 20.

⁴ Cf. *BrkS* V, 48-49.

⁵ A *sādhvi* may, in the case of a serious or chronic illness, such as prevents her being faithful to her vows, request permission to end her life by *saṃlekhanā*; cf. P 566 ff.

sādhvis who are in constant contact with society at large, tend to follow the customs of the day, while at the same time pursuing their ascetic life. In olden days the sādhvis were inclined to put up with suffering and illness without paying much heed to it and to walk in a heroic manner to the end, without complaint. They sought relief hardly at all, the illness was all part of the process of purification and, though not ill-treating the body, they let it disintegrate little by little and fulfil its course as a bodily sheath, which is material and thus perishable in kind. In our own day, for the most part, the sādhvis are not only cared for and visit the doctor, but they may also enter hospital, follow a course of treatment there and even undergo an operation.⁶ After a stay in hospital or an operation, they must expiate by the appropriate *prāyaścittas* all the faults against *ahiṃsā* that they have incurred.⁷

Going on from these few general considerations, let us see how things work out during the *vihāras*. If a sādhvi is ill for a short while, the group prolongs its stay, waiting for her to be well again. If the illness requires a lengthy treatment in some given place, then there are several possibilities from which to choose as the particular case suggests: in a sizeable group the sādhvis divide up, the greater number depart on *vihāra* with the *guruṇi*, while several sādhvis remain behind with the invalid. This smaller group often remains on the spot, changing, if possible, their *upāśraya* from time to time to another in the same locality; or again, the sick sādhvi is left in the care of some *śrāvikā* till her recovery. Sometimes there are cases of some chronic illness which prevents a sādhvi moving from place to place.

⁶ One notices, e.g., a difference in this regard between the biography of Sādhvi Puṇya (1858-1916) and that of our contemporary, Sādhvi Vicakṣaṇa. Now, both belonged to the same *gaccha* and both were zealous sādhvis, but the epoch was different; cf. P 575 ff.; 584 ff.

⁷ The Terāpanthis are on the whole strict and little in favour of surgical operations; in certain cases a sādhvi may, after an operation, receive a new *dikṣā*.

Usually in this case the sādhi remains in an *upāśraya* and members of the group take turns in staying at her side.⁸

A sādhi who is temporarily indisposed or is suffering from some chronic ailment leads a sedentary life; no *vihāra*, no *gocari*. If she is unable to walk, then, when the time comes to move on, she is transported in a sedan-chair or palanquin. She must oftentimes atone by means of *prāyaścittas* for the infringements of the rules occasioned by her sickness. If her condition permits, she can devote more time to *svādhyāya*.

As for the expenses incurred to pay for treatments, these are left to the goodwill and generosity of the doctors, śrāvakas and śrāvikās. Here again, all depends on places and circumstances. It may happen that a sādhi falls seriously ill in an area where there is no Jain *saṃgha*, the guruṇi is then obliged with all speed to consult the doctor of the local hospital and afterwards she will take steps to inform the ācārya and the nearest śrāvakas.

B - *Vṛddhāvasthā*: Old age

There is little to be said as regards the practical arrangements for this state, for old age is a form of chronic ailment. When vigour has diminished and resistance become less, the physical faculties experience a slowing-down, a sort of loss of momentum. *Vihāra* and *gocari* are only possible occasionally or are not now possible at all. An aged sādhi stays in an *upāśraya* and several sādhis take turns in remaining at her side. She is now the highly-respected senior and the sādhis are glad to put themselves at her service and alleviate her infirmities. This diminishment of her physical potential and some lessening of keenness in the senses are not necessarily accompanied by a spiritual regression, indeed to the contrary. A sādhi who has reached a great age stays among her companions as a living testimony to that pilgrimage which is ever directed towards the ideal that all are seeking. She is an encouragement and a stimulant for the young. Even if she can no longer read, even if her memory is failing, she can

⁸ At Ahmadnagara Mahāsati Ujjvalakumārī, suffering from a severe eye-disease stayed for several years in the *upāśraya*.

always and ceaselessly repeat with conviction the *Namaskāra-mantra*, give counsel to the others, a counsel that bears the mark of a maturity acquired in the course of her long experience. She lives already in that final simplicity which is unifying, peaceful, serene, the culmination of the ascetic life.⁹

The Terāpanthī sādhis have at Lāḍanūm, ever since their foundation, a Seva Kendra, or service-centre, for aged and sick sādhis, an institution that is unique among the *śramaṇīs*. Each year, turn and turn about, a group of sādhi volunteers is attached to this centre.

The Seva Kendra is a large house in the middle of a vast courtyard, in a quiet part of this small town. On the ground floor there is a large hall for *pravacanas*, with spacious verandas where the rite of the *āvaśyakas* takes place at the end of the day. The *vairāgiṇīs* of the Saṁsthā come for the *vandana*. The sādhis reside on the first floor. In 1978, they numbered twenty-two sādhis, the majority of them aged and one blind. The sādhis who waited upon them numbered ten. All had been taken into consideration ahead of time by the ācārya, so that the aged sādhis might have healthy and manageable living conditions, without abandoning their ascetic practice. Each has a place of her own in which to take rest, where she can also keep a few objects on a shelf; certain ones have a small cell, others share a larger one. They take their meals on a large veranda. In accordance with their physical possibilities and capacities they keep themselves occupied. The volunteer sādhis spend their days with them, and go on *gocari* for them, but sleep in separate rooms.

As the Seva Kendra is, since the beginning of the *gaṇa*, the one and only permanent centre and since the Terāpanthis keep up to date without fail a sort of chronicle, their precious archives are kept in that place. They are conserved in metal cupboards and are carefully

⁹ Mention must be made at this point of Mahāsati Śrī Pannādevi, who has been residing for the last several years in a Dillī *upāśraya*. She is an example of a *śramaṇī* who, at more than 90 years, is nearing the end of a long life in great serenity of spirit, which radiates to all, in the midst of a few of her disciples who hold her in reverence and respect; cf. P 620 ff.

wrapped in cloth. Despite the scorching dust-storms of summer, these archives are in a perfect state of preservation. From time to time, sādhvī volunteers come for the *pratīlekhanā* of the manuscripts and inspect and dust them carefully. They constitute a great treasure-house of historic documents going back over more than two hundred years!¹⁰

C - *Mahāprasthāna*: The Great Departure

It may happen at any age, at any time, at any place.¹¹ However, unless struck down, as if by lightning, by some grave illness or accident, one may usually foresee the approach of this Departure. The śrāvakas and śrāvikās spare no pains in their efforts to prolong the life that is precious to the *saṅgha*. They summon one or more doctors and procure the remedies.¹² If the sick or aged sādhvī is no longer fully conscious, the other sādhvīs are at her side to aid and uphold her. The *śramaṇi*, who all her life has been exerting herself, working at her own purification, must continue this effort up to the very end. She can, if she has the strength, choose certain forms of *pratyākhyāna*, but what matters most of all is the inner cleansing from every trace of fault, so as to depart in rectitude of heart and intention. She makes a final *ālocanā* and recites the *pratīkramaṇa-sūtra* and other *sūtras*. She may renew her commitment by repeating the formula of the *mahāvratas*, re-affirm her faith in the *dharma* taught by the *arhats* by saying once again the *Namaskāra-mantra*. When the sādhvī, already on the threshold of departure, is too weak to pronounce these *sūtras* distinctly, another sādhvī utters them in an audible voice so that she may unite herself to the act or perhaps murmur them under her breath.

¹⁰ Cf. P 246 ff.

¹¹ Tradition distinguishes 2 types of death: *bāla-marāṇa*, that of those who have no reasoning-powers, are puerile, ignorant; and: *pañḍita-marāṇa*, that of the sages; cf. US V, 2-3.

¹² Cf. e.g. Hukamadevi, pp. 319-321.

Every effort is made to help her to stay alert, conscious of the ideal she has taken for her own, right up to the last breath.¹³

Once the sādhi has breathed her last, then it is the śrāvakas and śrāvikās who, duly forewarned, attend forthwith to the mortal remains. The body, clothed in the garb of a sādhi, is generally placed in a seated position within a niche-shaped structure made of fine wood; only the back part is enclosed, the three other sides being open so that the crowd can see the body. This "niche" is shaped like a cupola resting on decorated arches and pillars, which in turn are mounted on wooden supports carried by four men on the shoulder.¹⁴ The body may also be in a lying position.¹⁵ During the procession, the crowd, manifesting both grief and reverence, is close-packed right up to the place where the rite of cremation is to take place. The biographers of Sādhi Ratnavati call this final procession '*nirvāṇa-yātrā*'.¹⁶ It is an important day for the local *saṃgha*, a special festival-day, that of the performance of the last rites in honour of a 'Śramaṇi', 'Nirgranthi', 'Sādhi' 'Mahāsati'.

This type of *mahāprasthāna* is by far the most usual and is the normal way of concluding earthly existence, simply waiting for the vital breath to cease. However, it is not the only way. If there are weighty reasons, a sādhi may, with the consent of the ācārya and her

¹³ I have not personally been present on such an occasion. These details were given me by Mahāsati Ujjavalakumārī. In the biography of Sādhi Puṇya we read how she expressed the desire that someone should read her the US; weak and breathless but still clear in her mind, she mentioned to the śrāvakas, who were asking her who would take her place, the name of the one who should succeed her as *pravartini*; cf. Sajjana, 1960, pp. 405-406

¹⁴ Cf. the photos in the biographies of Sādhvis Ratnavati, Bālū and Candrayasā.

¹⁵ Cf. the photos in the biography of Mahāsati Cānda.

¹⁶ The procession of *nirvāṇa*; cf. Śricandra, 1966, the 2 photos following pp. 96-97. The sādhis do not take part in the procession. When the body leaves the *upāśraya*, they say: "O worshipper of the Three Jewels, abandon this illusory body!" (This among the Sthānakavāsīs).

guruṇi, decide herself to advance the moment of the Great Departure by a total and absolute fast. Such cases, though very rare, constitute a continuation of a very ancient tradition. The motives differ: an illness, perhaps, or some infirmity that is a permanent hindrance to the life of an *anagāri*.¹⁷ In the most frequent cases, when the end is approaching and it is clear that illness or old age are not likely to allow longer time to live, the *sādhvis* elect to pass their last days in a supreme act of self-purification, knowing full well what will be the final issue.¹⁸ Finally, there are cases when, without having specifically chosen to do so, a *sādhvi* fades away as a consequence of lengthy, repeated fasts. She had not envisaged a long, terminal fast, nor in this case is the *mahāprasthāna* due to sickness or old age, but rather to a burning zeal for self-purification.¹⁹

This type of total purification by a fast which leads inevitably to the Great Departure is usually called by tradition *saṁlekhanā*. *Saṁlekhanā* means, literally, emaciation, both of the body, in this context, and the passions. The essential features of *saṁlekhanā* are:

- *dravya-saṁlekhanā* or *anaśana*, fasting; the abstinence from all food and drink, including water, is called: *bhakta-pratyākhyāna-maraṇa* (the *pratyākhyāna* from food up to death) or *caturvidhānaśana* (life-long quadruple fast);

- *bhāva-saṁlekhanā*, total renunciation, that is, freedom from the clutches of the passions and self-mastery with consequent interior peace;

¹⁷ In extreme cases, where there are only two alternatives, the serious infringement of a vow or death, death is to be chosen; cf. AS I, 7, 4, 2; and Nathamala, *Āyāro*, p. 314.

¹⁸ Cf. AS I, 7, 6, 3; US XXXV, 20.

¹⁹ For these last two instances, we have the example of 2 young *sādhvis*, *Sādhvis Ratnavati* and *Candrayasā*; cf. P 609 ff.; 597 ff.

- *śarīra-sthirikaraṇa*, control of the body and the maintenance of it in a posture conducive to concentration.²⁰

The rite of *saṃlekhanā* begins with confession; this must take place in a calm, sequestered spot, free from plants and other beings that could provoke *himsā*. Pilgrimage-places are always advocated.²¹ If the *sādhvī* in question has sufficient strength, she seats herself on the ground itself or on a *saṃstāra* (stone platform) in one of the correct postures for concentration. If she is too weak, she may sit or lie down on a *saṃstāra* of straw or dry grass, facing the East or the North. She then recites the *pranipāta-sūtra*, praise to the *siddhas* and *arhats* and a short salutation to her *ācārya*. Then follows the promise of total *pratyākhyāna*, that is to say, of final renunciation for ever of all activity contrary to the Three Jewels, to the *mahāvratas*, etc. Finally, renunciation of all food, all drink, and finally of the body itself. This is ultimate *kāyotsarga*.²²

Saṃlekhanā, according to certain texts, is the conclusion of a period of twelve years' or of one year's or of six months' partial fasts, observed systematically and ending in *mahāprasthāna*.²³

Whatever may be the motivation for *saṃlekhanā* and the minor differences in the observance of this rite, the important point is this: we have here a religious act of the highest significance for the *sādhvī* who undertakes it.²⁴ This final fast, which is accompanied by a

²⁰ Cf. Nathamāla, *Āyāro*, ns. 17 and 20; pp. 314-316; AS I, 7, 8 where *saṃlekhanā* is described under slightly differing forms.

²¹ Cf. YSas III, 149. There comes to mind the large number of *saṃlekhanās* on the part of munis and *āryikās* performed at Śravaṇa Belgola between the VIIth and XIIth c.; cf. P 216 ff.

²² Cf. Amolaka Rṣi, 1968, pp. 683-688; also *Prakīrṇaka* VI "saṃstāraka"; X "marāṇasamādhi" (JSBI, pp. 355; 361-362).

²³ Cf. US XXXVI, 249-254.

²⁴ It is permitted not only to ascetics, but also to *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* to opt for *saṃlekhanā*; cf. TS VII, 22; YSas III, 148-154.

corresponding inner state of mind and which is the outcome of a free choice and unflagging effort, is an ultimate form of purification which helps the spirit concentrate upon the sole Reality, the *ātman*, casting aside the body, attachments and passions, affirming the while an unshakeable conviction that the *kāya* is nothing more than a material and perishable vehicle, which, through its association with the *ātman*, has obscured right vision because of all the *karmas* it has collected. In a supreme act, the *sādhvi* must strive to reach the highest possible level of *upayoga* (awareness of being), a level which she will inherit in her next life and which will thrust her forward, if she perseveres in the path of the *dharma* and of asceticism, towards the goal of final Liberation from all *karmas*, towards her real *ātman*, towards *nirvāṇa*.

Chapter 6.

Sugandha: Sweet fragrance

*The ascetic who is fervent in the practice of austerity,
whose spirit is directed towards mokṣā¹
who is well-established in patience and self-mastery,
victorious over afflictions, will readily attain the happy state
[which leads to mokṣa].²*

After following a long trail that has permitted us by successive stages to gain insight into how the doctrine is put into practice in the life of the *śramaṇis*, we find ourselves offered at the end of this *viḥāra* a gift, one that represents the quintessence of all that we have discovered up till now. A *sugandha*, a fragrant, delicate, light perfume is emitted from a bunch of flowers of varied hue, flowers of the desert, of the fields, of the countryside or of the towns. These flowers are the authentic biographies of contemporary *sādhvis* who, though often concealed from the eyes of the world and of the learned, charm with their pleasing fragrance those who approach them with the same faith and simplicity as inspired the *sādhvis* who lived them and those who wrote them. It is precisely because these biographies make no pretensions, aiming only to edify, and because they were composed spontaneously as a token of daughterly or sisterly affection that they are most precious documents and "pearls of great price". Their value is also due to the fact that each of them was written within the bosom of a *sampradāya* or *gaccha* for the members of these same communities. The language and verbal expressions used are those of a given milieu. It was in this same milieu that one of the group stood head and shoulders above the rest, inspired thought and reflection, kindled hearts, aroused enthusiasm, reawakened dormant faith, re-

¹ *Ujjumai* (*ṛjmate*) can be interpreted in 2 ways: a spirit inclined towards *mokṣā*; or straight, honest; cf. *Ātmārama*, DS, pp. 137-138.

² *tavogunapahāṇassa ujjumai-khamti-samjamarayassa
parisahe jīṇamṭassa sulahā soggai tārisagassa*. DS IV, 23, 27.

activated a rigid formalism, caused secular prejudices to disappear, in short, brought about an awakening or a revival. It is testimony to events such as these that the biographies seek to pass on. As in all hagiography within all the religions and monastic traditions, there is no doubt a certain idealisation, to a greater or lesser degree, which mainly consists in extolling only the virtues and remaining silent concerning their opposites, but that may be taken for granted, for is one not writing in praise of a heroine, to set her up as an example? Sometimes there is an element of the miraculous, but that also has its own authentic value, for the sādhi authoress is sincere, she is expressing her devotion, her daughterly love, and she is enthralled by her model.

We refrain from giving in these pages an appreciation of these biographies as literature. The following pages attempt to convey accurately each of these lives, by means in each instance of a synthesis, for certain of these biographies are voluminous, highly detailed and even repetitive. Each flower is unique: its shape, colour and scent. It is this unique character of each one within her own group, among her peers and in her own day and age, that must be revealed. In this way it is possible to encounter each one in a personal, direct and enchanting way.

Through these different testimonies we can discern certain tendencies and characteristics common to all, which show us clearly the foundation upon which their lives were built as well as their impact upon the society in which they were living. We know already that the importance given to *tapas* has always been predominant in all the communities, although it may have been regarded only as means to an end. For this reason the general opinion has been - and this is observable even in our own day - that the sādhis must above all else be *tapasvinis*, renunciates, with perfect self-mastery, all the rest, *adhyāna*, *svādhyāya*, *dhyāna*, only concerning them to a certain extent as decreed by the ācārya. However, already at the end of the last century, starting with the least recent of the biographies, that of Sādhvi Puṇya, we can see taking place among the sādhis slowly but surely an awakening, both to their own specific ideal and to the role which they should perform in the *saṅgha* and in society. These texts introduce us to the very heart of their daily life and we can see for ourselves how much all that they have read and studied in the *Sūtras*

demands from them of wisdom, good sense and discernment as to how it must be applied when they are confronted with difficult and unforeseen situations in a particular historical, sociological and geographical context.³ We realise the more clearly how many sādhis have lived and live today a heroic existence, usually without knowing it, and how they have been and still are true disciples of Mahāvira.

Another remarkable element in these writings is that of *bhakti*. Saints of all ages and traditions attract a following, each in his or her own way and in accordance with his or her special charism, but within the Jaina *dharma* there are ontological and doctrinal reasons which gives ground for a veneration of holy men and women in their own lifetime. On the one hand, fervent sādhis represent that ideal towards which all śrāvakas and śrāvikās must strive and, on the other, the fact that belief in a God, Lord, loving Father and Saviour, does not exist coupled with the fact that one must journey alone on an arid path, naturally inclines towards a profound devotion for those who, having shed their 'me', are already in communion with all living beings, welcome them, love them, instruct them and, as one might put it, help them to save themselves.⁴ Nothing is more revealing or more touching than the eulogistic poems composed in honour of or to the memory of a sādhi by different members of the *saṅgha*. This veneration is always expressed with great sobriety in this sense that it is attuned to the life of ascetic discipline, for even if sādhis have been a focus of attention and inspiration for multitudes of people, these same multitudes can offer them in return absolutely nothing of a tangible sort, neither flowers, nor incense, nor money, nothing whatsoever.⁵

³ In the sections which follow no cross-references, on the whole, have been made to those chapters of this Part that deal with daily activities, because these are presumed to be known already and we thus avoid overloading these testimonies.

⁴ Here we have an example in Sādhi Vicakṣa to whom during her lifetime an image was erected in a temple in Dilli. This, of course, does not detract at all from the devotion accorded to the *tirthankaras*, but they have already attained *nirvāṇa*, while the sādhis are living and are still engaged in the struggle.

⁵ The sādhis accept no gift for themselves personally, apart from what is strictly necessary and in accordance with the rules concerning *eṣaṇā*.

Those who are attracted by their example or touched by their words can respond only by promising them to fast, to purify their life and their intentions, to be honest, give to the poor and to be faithful to the *aṇuvratas* and to the practice of *pratikramaṇa*. This veneration for a holy person involves, if it is to be sincere, a look within, a desire for purification, some practical resolutions concerning one's own life.

The following selection presents a certain variety as regards the historical setting, place of origin, social milieu, *gacchas* and *sampradāyas* to which these sādhis belonged. As regards their dates of birth, the period which is of interest to us goes from 1858 up to our own day.⁶ The majority of them are natives of Rājasthāna, the rest are from Gūjarāta, Madhya Pradeśa and Dillī. They belong to all the *sampradāyas* of the Śvetāmbaras and to their two principal *gacchas*. As to their family background, we may note that out of eleven sādhis:

- three were young childless widows;
- one was a widow of mature years who reared her children before embracing the ascetic life;
- two left their husbands in order to receive *dikṣā*;
- two were the daughters of widows who followed their mother and received *dikṣā* with her;
- two received *dikṣā* as young girls and were neither widows nor orphans;
- one received *dikṣā* as an adolescent;
- three of them, originally of Hindu families, embraced the Jaina *dharma*.

The first three sections and the fifth each give a resumé of a particular biography.⁷ The fourth section is not based on a biography

However, they do suggest to the śrāvakas institutions and other beneficiaries suitable for their offerings.

⁶ Biographies of sādhis are still very few and far between and it took me several years to discover the 11 biographies mentioned here. It must be stressed that each community is part of a closed group, which usually knows nothing of the publications of another community.

⁷ The titles of these sections are those of the original biographies.

but on a collection of *pravacanas* from which the personality of the *sādhvi* who delivered them stands out very clearly. The sixth section is a brief compilation of the lives of six *sādhvis*. Together they form a single whole in which may be observed a great diversity operating within a life that is common to all.⁸ Each flower exhales its own sweetness and the bouquet in which all the scents unite and mingle gives forth a fragrant perfume.

A - *Puṇya Jivana Jyoti*

The radiant life of Sādhvi Puṇya Śrī

The arid desert soil of Rājasthāna, its extremes of climate, have nurtured in its inhabitants endurance in face of all trials, a spirit of chivalry, deep-rooted faith and lively piety. It was in a small village called *Girāsara*, in the district of *Jesalamera*, a fortress-city of the desert well known for its temples whose subsidiary buildings house so many ancient manuscripts, that in 1858 *Pannākumāri* was born. *Pannā* means emerald, the precious stone; *kumāri*, girl, virgin, princess. *Pannākumāri* was indeed destined to be a jewel in the history of the *Kharataragaccha* of the *Mūrtipūjakas*. She was not, certainly, the first *sādhvi* of this *gaccha* and of this region, for many others had preceded her.⁹ We recall that the first *Terāpanthī* *sādhvis*, all of Rājasthāna, received *dikṣā* in 1764 and that their first *Pramukhā* did likewise in 1840.¹⁰ What makes the biography of *Sādhvi Puṇya* a precious document is that, on the one hand, it is the most ancient and the most complete biography existing today and, on the other, it recounts the life of a pioneer whose spiritual progeny are still alive. Furthermore, the author, *Sādhvi Saijana*, our contemporary, herself also a native of Rājasthāna, possesses literary gifts which render the text very lively and allow us to penetrate straightaway into the "feel" of that day and

⁸ These biographies are in Hindi, except that of *Sādhvi Candrayaśa*, the text of which is published both in Gujarātī and English. The majority of these books contain several hundred pp. each.

⁹ Cf. P 176 ff.; 186 ff.

¹⁰ Cf. P 247 ff.

age, of the places mentioned and of the inner life of the sādhis of which she herself has experience. Sādhvi Sajjana did not know Sādhvi Puṇya personally, but from the testimonies of other sādhis and of the śrāvakas and śrāvikās who did and thanks to her belonging to the same *gaccha*, she succeeds in conveying a life-like portrait of her heroine, while at the same time she adds here and there her own reflections which are by no means lacking in interest.

In this life we find a unity, a determination, a tenacious will directed from the earliest age towards an ideal to be pursued, a deep insight into her own milieu, coupled with a desire to escape from obscurantist orthodoxy and to remedy the evils that stem therefrom. It is not possible to single out the different aspects which go to make up the unity apparent within this life; everything hangs together. Moreover, the biography does not adhere to a well-defined pattern; its narration follows the facts, the events, a certain internal order, the one, in fact, that constitutes the life of the sādhis. From the whole we can pick out certain characteristics that highlight Sādhvi Puṇya for us as Daughter of the Desert, a fervent Sādhvi, a Guruṇi and Pioneer.

*A Daughter of the Desert*¹¹

Pannākumāri, so it seemed, began to show very early on an attraction for spiritual things and even a predilection for *vairāgya*. In her childhood, instead of playing at ordinary games with her companions, she led them to imitate the sādhis whom she had encountered and thus they played at *gocari* or at delivering *pravācanas*. Pannā willingly accompanied her mother to the temple and in her company learned the rudiments of *sāmāyika* and *pratikramaṇa*. During this same period a śrāvaka exerted a powerful influence upon her, which further strengthened these initial impulses. This śrāvaka was a palmist. After studying the lines on Pannā's hand, he predicted that she would become a famous and influential sādhi. Thereafter he taught her the elements of the doctrine, explaining to her that this *saṃsāra* is merely misery and suffering and that earthly enjoyments lead to *nāraka*, the world below. The state of existence

¹¹ Cf. Sajjana, 1960, chs. 9-16

proper to this world below, though terrible, is not an eternal one.¹² However, popular belief attaches to it considerable importance and this belief is supported by the ascetics who play upon this fear in exhorting the *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* to adhere faithfully to the doctrine and the austere practices it enjoins. The *śrāvaka*, acting no doubt in good faith, succeeded in convincing the small girl who was already predisposed towards such a belief that *vairāgya* represented the most perfect of all states of life. The seed was sown!

Here we must pause a few moments to consider the social conditions of that day in Rājasthāna and in the country as a whole, conditions which were inherited from a long previous age and of which we have already spoken. Sādhvi Sajjana writes that the marriage of young girls at a tender age is to be explained by two factors: firstly, the influence exercised upon the minority Jain community by texts of the Hindu Scriptures which were negative towards womankind¹³ and, secondly, the custom prevalent among the kings and princes of that day of obtaining for their harem, often by force, a large number of young and older girls, a practice which was not confined only to Musulman princes. In the face of the all-powerfulness of the local sovereigns, one can well understand that parents were eager to give away their young daughters in marriage in order to protect them. This state of affairs was such in Rājasthāna that it was not uncommon for parents to promise a daughter in marriage from the moment she was born, sealing thus a firm alliance with an honourable family.¹⁴

The father of Pannā found for her a bridegroom when she was twelve years old. When she discovered about the negotiations in progress for her marriage, she expressed firmly to her mother her desire to become a sādhvi and begged that she should not be bound by

¹² Cf. TS III, 1-6.

¹³ Cf. P 88 ff.

¹⁴ Cf. Sajjana, 1960, p. 25.

marriage to another family.¹⁵ Her mother referred the matter to her father, who attached to it no importance. Pannā was obliged to submit to the will of her parents. After the celebration of the marriage she went, as was the custom, to live with her parents-in-law, but, lo and behold, just eighteen days after the marriage, the young husband was carried off by cholera, that terrible scourge of a malady that was causing havoc at that time. Sādhvi Sajjana heads the paragraph relating this sudden event with the title: "The incomparable gain wrought by a thunderbolt."¹⁶ Pannā, now a young widow, found herself free to follow her calling. This, however, was to take time; she had to convince both parents and parents-in-law of the sincerity of her desire and also to gain permission from the sādhis for admission to their *saṅgha*. Being a widow, she was able to live either with her own parents or in her family by marriage. Her native village was scarcely likely to offer her the possibility of meeting any sādhis, so she elected to stay with her parents-in-law in the small town of Phalodi. Her elder sister was also living at Phalodi, so she saw her frequently and hoped to obtain her moral support. Pannā began to visit the sādhis assiduously and so frequently that her mother-in-law was disquieted. One day she begged the guruṇī to accept her and this latter encouraged her to reflect well on the hardships of the ascetic life and to obtain the consent of her two families. Pannā thought that the quickest and most effective way open to her was to fast.¹⁷ When she returned to the house, she remained in meditation in one corner. When the meal-time came round and her mother-in-law called her, she replied: "I will not eat until I have permission to receive *dikṣā*." Her mother and father-in-law tried in vain to dissuade her from fasting,

¹⁵ Jaina tradition considers that awakening to spiritual realities does not necessarily co-incide with physical growth: what counts is the state of awareness of the *ātman* and children from eight years of age onwards are permitted to receive *dikṣā*. Recently, in one branch of the *Sthānakavāsis* some restriction has been put to children *dikṣā* (P 601 n. 52).

¹⁶ Sajjana, *ibid.*, p. 30.

¹⁷ Later, when she herself had become a guruṇī, without explicitly recommending this method to a young girl in an identical situation, she nevertheless conveyed to her that, if other methods failed, that one was "never-failing"; *ibid.*, p. 151.

and counselled her, in view of her youthfulness, to wait before speaking further of *dikṣā*. Nothing persuaded her. The parents-in-law in great consternation, informed her parents, who arrived the following day, when Pannā was pursuing her fast and the news was spreading throughout the village. Her father, touched to the quick, after trying in vain to reason with her, resigned himself to the prospect of granting the desired permission. Before them all, he declared that, having given her in marriage against her will and having now been defeated by this so sudden widowhood, he could no longer oppose her desire. The other family-members unanimously agreed, and, to Pannā's great joy, they left her free to rejoining the *sādhvis*.

Four years after the marriage, Pannā received *dikṣā* and became *Sādhvi Puṇya*. *Puṇya* means well-being, virtue, merit, that which is propitious, pleasant, beautiful, purifying.

The perseverance shown by *Sādhvi Puṇya* before *dikṣā* is not, particularly in the Jaina milieu of Rājasthāna, anything very extraordinary, as other biographies, with slightly differing details, prove and contemporary *sādhvis* say that they too came up against the same family resistance. *Sādhvi Puṇya* gives us in all simplicity the testimony of a Daughter of the Desert reared in the Jaina tradition.

A fervent *Sādhvi*, *Guruṇī*, Pioneer

After her description of the *dikṣā*, *Sādhvi Sajjana* accords a position of prime importance - which is as it should be - to the question of *vihāra* and we find ourselves, along with the group to which the young *Sādhvi Puṇya* belongs, on the rocky or sandy roads, in the burning heat of summer and also in the icy cold of winter, for the cold can be so intense that it gives rise to a sharp sensation in the feet "like that of a scorpion-sting."¹⁸

In the course of the *vihāra*, one was obliged not only to endure a harsh climate, but also to face epidemics of cholera or plague, which were common in those days and did not spare the *sādhvis*. At Jayapura

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 145-146.

two young sādhis were carried off by cholera, another at Nāgaura.¹⁹ Some time later, when the group was at Indaura, plague began to decimate the population. The sādhis followed the śrāvakas who went for refuge to Ujjayini.²⁰ Another time they were overtaken suddenly by plague in Jayapura. When the inhabitants fled from the town, the sādhis remained, for the *cāturnāśya* was not yet over.²¹

On the subject of *vihāra*, Sādhvi Sajjana has developed an important point in the chapter entitled: "Arrival in the land of her birth".²² The ascetic life does not remove love for one's native land, indeed, to the contrary. Having renounced all, a sādhi's disposition is one of *maṭṭi*, friendship for every being. Moreover, within this universal friendship, the land of one's birth holds pride of place. There is a *ṃa*, a debt, that each one owes to the *prthvi-kāya*, the "body of the land" which has supported and nourished the sādhi since her birth; there is also a *ṃa* towards one's family and the local inhabitants. A sādhi continues to be one of theirs. She owes it to herself to guide them, give them the joy of her presence, which is for them a blessing. Sādhvi Puṇya returned to her native village a few years after her *dikṣā* and spent there one month. The inhabitants received her with enthusiasm, proud to welcome the little Pannā of days gone by. By her presence and her words she re-kindled their faith and enlightened their minds; it became the occasion of a renewal. It was then also, it is said, that she sowed the seed of *vairāgya* in the heart of her young brother who later on became Muni Trailokyasāgara.

Subsequently, when she had become *prayartini*, Sādhvi Puṇya turned her attention towards the most remote villages of the desert, where the inhabitants, receiving no visits at all, or very few, from ascetics, were living in such ignorance of their tradition as to neglect completely their local temple. Nor did her ardour stop there, for she

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 240-242.

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 325-327.

²¹ Ibid., pp. 388-389.

²² Ibid., ch. 22.

emboldened herself to cross the borders of Rājasthāna and pass through the villages of Madhya Pradesh; thus we find her at Ujjayini, Bhopāla, Indaura.²³ At Gvāliyara she was received in triumph. An influential śrāvaka, who had on several occasions implored her to come and spend the *cāturmāsya* in that town, organised things on a grand scale when she arrived with her group of twenty-nine sādhis. A procession, the first of its kind within living memory, was waiting to welcome the sādhis at the entrance to the town: at its head was the royal elephant, followed by a hundred or so horses caparisoned with gold and silver, the children of the nobility riding in carriages, on foot a concourse of men with the local notables at the front, while here and there in the procession several bands were playing their music. Sādhvi Puṇya, her disciples and the group of women brought up the rear.²⁴ Of this last group there was one special feature: one could hear its singing but could not see it. The women of that time were living in strict seclusion and they were advancing now within a huge moving tent.

On her arrival in the town, Sādhvi Puṇya organised daily *pravacanas* attended by eager crowds; sometimes she herself taught and sometimes she delegated the task to one or other of the sādhis. When the king and the royal family evidenced a desire to have the *darśana* of Sādhvi Puṇya and her disciples, these latter repaired to the court. Sādhvi Puṇya even gave a *pravacana*, seated, in accordance with custom, on a low wooden table, while the audience, including the king and queen, were seated on the ground on carpets. It is said that the king and other members of the royal family, touched by her words, pledged themselves to abstain from meat on the occasion of *ekādaśī*, the eleventh day of each fortnight of the lunar month.²⁵

She had the gift of communicating her knowledge, rendering it accessible to all in a way that carried conviction, that conviction which characterised her *pravacanas*, and she furthermore bore witness

²³ Ibid., ch. 37.

²⁴ Ibid., ch. 40.

²⁵ Ibid., ch. 41.

in her life to what she taught through her words. It is not surprising that Sādhvi Puṇya attracted the crowds and inspired numerous vocations to the ascetic life, for many requested to follow her. Throughout this biography, *dikṣā* succeeds *dikṣā*. To give just two examples: the first concerns a household in which the husband and wife, who were already of a certain age with children well-established in life, agreed to separate, persuaded to this course by the words of Sādhvi Puṇya, each took steps to receive *dikṣā*.²⁶ The second is the case of a gifted woman who had made a happy marriage; after encountering Sādhvi Puṇya, being unable to resist the attraction of *vairāgya*, she wrote to her husband, who was travelling on business, to obtain his permission to receive *dikṣā*. The husband, in consternation, tried in vain to dissuade her, but finally gave his consent on condition that she find for him a new bride, which she immediately did. Furthermore, when the husband re-married, his wife made a gift of her jewels to the bride and departed joyfully to receive *dikṣā*. She became Sādhvi Suvarṇa Śrī, one of the luminaries of the *gaccha* and succeeded Sādhvi Puṇya as *pravartini* after this latter's Great Departure.²⁷

Sādhvi Puṇya very soon grasped, in an age when girls had no chance to study and when the sādhis had scarcely any possibility of going beyond a very elementary knowledge of the doctrine, the importance of serious, regular study. With the utmost tenacity she both studied herself and helped the sādhis to educate themselves. The periods of *cāturmāsya* were devoted to study, with the limited means that were at their disposal in a society that was still very tightly closed. Grasping the necessity of knowing Prakṛit and Sanskrit in order to be able to understand the *Sūtras* in their original texts, she studied the chief elements of these two languages and taught them to her disciples.²⁸ The impetus was given; thereafter, the Kharataragaccha sādhis were fired with this same zeal for *svādhyāya* and *adhyāyana*.

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 121-124.

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 138-143.

²⁸ Ibid., ch. 19.

Fired by this same zeal which took in all the aspects of asceticism, Sādhvi Puṇya attached also great importance to *tapas*, the means of personal purification. Her example and her teaching captivated the sādhis, śrāvakas and śrāvikās wherever she went. We know that the *cāturmāsya* is the favourable period for fasting and the other forms of *tapas*. The biography abounds in details concerning the fasts undertaken by Sādhvi Puṇya and her disciples during each *cāturmāsya*. *Tapas* is the fire which burns, destroys, purifies. Sādhvi Puṇya, thanks to her regular fasts, was considered to have attained a high degree of purification. Because she was herself free from attachments, she was available to all. Her *ātman*, fully awakened because fully purified, was extremely sensitive to persons and situations; she was able to give counsel and direction with remarkable wisdom.

At Jayapura, at the age of sixty-two, when her vital breath was diminishing, Sādhvi Puṇya, fully lucid in mind, blessed her disciples and then addressed to them once again a few words: she exhorted them to maintain among themselves a sisterly understanding, not to allow themselves to sink into indifference in the course of their earthly pilgrimage, to persevere in renunciation, to put themselves at the service of the aged sādhis and to give to Sādhvi Suvarna, their new *pravartini*, the same filial obedience that they had had towards herself. She asked pardon from all with all her heart, if certain of her words had perhaps appeared harsh, or if her manner had offended them.²⁹ Two days later, while preparing for the Great Departure by a total fast, her *ātman* left this world.

Sādhvi Sajjana avows, at the end of the biography, that she feels little satisfied with what she has attempted to write, to pass on to others. How to communicate the message of so holy, deep and radiant a life? Then, to fill in the gaps and make up for deficiencies, she brings together, in one final chapter, as in a shining cluster of rays, the outstanding qualities of Sādhvi Puṇya: docility, deference towards the elders and to authority; a simplicity totally free from pride which enabled her to exercise her functions as *pravartini* with complete

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 407-409.

naturalness, a naturalness which blended perfectly with an unremitting perseverance; patient endurance in the face of so many difficulties and complex situations; a goodness and compassion which made of her a fervent sādhi, a capable and much-loved guru and a pioneer who imparted a decisive new impetus not only to the sādhis, but to the whole *gaccha*.³⁰

In order to immortalise the testimony of the life of Sādhvi Puṇya the *saṃgha* of Jayapura erected a *saṃādhi-mandira* in her memory.³¹

B-Jaina Kokilā

The Jaina cuckoo, Sādhvi Vicakṣaṇa Śrī

Sādhvi Vicakṣaṇa known far and wide by the name *jaina kokilā*, the Jaina cuckoo,³² is also, by reason of her lineage, a Daughter of the Desert. She possesses all the characteristics of her race. Moreover, while continuing the line of valiant sādhis who followed in the wake of Sādhvi Puṇya, she belongs to another generation. Through her the tradition is continued but, at the same time, she is in her own person a sign of openness, of renewal.

Sādhvi Vicakṣaṇa was born into a Kharataragaccha Jaina family in 1912, four years after the Great Departure of Sādhvi Puṇya. On her mother's side, the new *pravartini*, Sādhvi Suvarṇa,³³ was her kinswoman. She received *dikṣā* before marriage, which at that time was still an uncommon occurrence. She is still in our midst and is one

³⁰ Ibid., ch. 44.

³¹ Cf. P 254.

³² *kokilā*: the female cuckoo.

³³ Cf. P 255.

of the two *pravartinis* of her *gaccha*.³⁴ This biography, unlike most of the others, was not written by a *sādhvi* but by a *śrāvika*, Bhaṁvara Bāi Rāmapuriyā, who, ever since she became a widow at the age of thirteen, has been living at close quarters to the *sādhvis*.³⁵

How Dākhi became Sādhvi Vicakṣaṇa or an amazing struggle in the name of *vairāgya* ³⁶

Jethi Bāi was born at Amarāvati, a town of Mahārāṣṭra, into a family whose origins were in the district of Jodhapura. Like the majority of Māravādīs settled in other regions or overseas for business or professional reasons, the parents of Jethi Bāi had family members in their native village to which they frequently returned. The horoscope of the child revealed, so it was said, an unusual degree of courage and predicted that she would become an ascetic of great renown. In the meantime, she was an affectionate, friendly and intelligent child. They called her Dākhi, from *drākṣā*, bunch of grapes. In accordance with the custom of the day, she was affianced in childhood and up to the age of eight she knew the life of a happy family. The sudden death of her father was a terrible shock for her, for not only did she now lack his parental affection, but she began to ask the reason for her father's being so abruptly snatched from her. Life changed for her. Having neither brothers nor sisters, she remained alone with her mother, a young widow who was obliged to yield to the customs of her community. After many enquiries, this latter managed to trace the whereabouts of her cousin Sādhvi Suvaraṇa and, taking Dākhi with her, stayed with her several times. Thus Dākhi came into contact with the *sādhvis* whom she proceeded to astonish by the liveliness of her intelligence. The mother of Dākhi had decided to receive *dīkṣā* when her daughter married the young man to whom she

³⁴ I met her in Dilli in 1972 and 1975; she gave me the biography of Sādhvi Puṇya and also her own, as well as a collection of her *pravacanas*: *The Voice of Vicakṣaṇa*.

³⁵ It is fairly rare for a biography of a *sādhvi* to be written in her life-time. There are two further instances, the biographies of Mahāsati Pannādevī and of Mahāsati Yaśakumvara, both *Śihānakavāsīs*.

³⁶ Cf. *Rāmapuriyā*, 1966, chs. 2-5; 10-20.

had been betrothed. This, however, was not Dākhi's desire. She felt an attraction for the ascetic life and to fulfil this aspiration, she carried on a tenacious struggle with her paternal grandfather, who loved her dearly and refused to give his consent to the *dikṣā*. The young man's family, perturbed and unhappy, also applied pressure. Dākhi struggled alone with a grandfather whom, at the same time, she loved - alone, for neither could her mother or the sādhis help her in any way, for the grandfather would have accused them of bringing influence to bear upon the child. The story of this struggle follows.

At the outset, Dākhi tried to obtain her grandfather's permission for the engagement to be broken off and for herself to be admitted to *dikṣā* among the sādhis. The grandfather would hear nothing of it; he even employed several stratagems to lure Dākhi into the family of her betrothed and celebrate the marriage. For her part, Sādhvi Suvama, showing considerable wisdom, had not yet fully decided to accept Dākhi. Over and above the question of her tender years, she considered that so gifted a child ought to be encouraged to study, in order later on to become an expert on Jainism who would instruct not only members of the *saṅgha* but would go as a missionary all over the world. Such was her vision. Furthermore, she was not one to admit to *dikṣā* whoever presented herself. However, Dākhi succeeded in persuading the guruṇi to accept her as a disciple and, after several conversations not without strain on both sides, the grandfather yielded.

The double *dikṣā* of Rūpāmadevi and her daughter Dākhi was due to take place at Pipāda, the city of Dākhi's parents' birth, where the grandfather and other members of the family were living. The entire local *saṅgha* was rejoicing in the making of preparations. According to the tradition, in the days preceding the *dikṣā*, relatives and friends invite the *vairāginī* to a meal. On one of these days Dākhi was leaving the house of a relative, mounted on a pony, with musicians going ahead and hymn-singing women and girls following behind. All of a sudden the grandfather appeared, ordered Dākhi to dismount from the pony and to follow him to his house. Preparations were at a standstill, the joy was extinguished and gave place to a great anxiety, fear and uncertainty. What had happened? This: the grandfather, who was already highly perturbed, had met a friend who began to remonstrate with him very severely, reproaching him for his lack of concern, for his weakness towards Dākhi, his only grand-daughter, whom he was

allowing to go off for a life of austerity; could he not show some strength of character and forestall Dākhi now while there was still time? Surely he could, the more so as he had only granted permission with the utmost reluctance.

Now started the second phase: Dākhi was kept at home and forbidden to go out to visit the temple or the *upāśraya*. Dākhi replied that she would obey, that, as she was being forbidden to go to the temple, she would fast. This, then, is what she did. In the evening of the first day of the fast, her grandfather, softened at heart, offered her a cup of milk, but Dākhi refused. Softened still further, the grandfather gave her permission to attend the temple, but re-affirmed stoutly that he would never give his consent to her receiving *dikṣā* and that Dākhi must needs get married. To this she replied that she would not disobey, so, said she, she would wait for *dikṣā* but would never on any account marry! Confrontations of this sort continued for one week. The grandfather, realising his powerlessness to persuade Dākhi and despairing of the affair, lodged an appeal with the civil authorities. He informed them that the *sādhvis* had brought pressure to bear upon his thirteen-year-old grand-daughter and were desirous of admitting her to *dikṣā* against the will of her guardian (himself); that they should be so good as to help him prevent Dākhi from joining the *sādhvis*. A *thākura*, a type of magistrate of the district, was appointed to study the case and administer justice. He sent for Dākhi and questioned her at length, even threatening her with his rifle. She did not allow herself to be intimidated and responded to everything with astonishing clarity and determination. Meanwhile, the grandfather was sending telegrams to two of his grandsons to come at once to his aid. While the magistrate, highly embarrassed by this difficult case, was considering what verdict he should give to the grandfather, everybody was trying to dissuade Dākhi, but all to no avail.

Next day, at the Court of Justice, the courtroom was packed and a heavy silence reigned in the assembly; each one was anxiously awaiting the verdict. Just as, so they say, when a camel sinks to the ground, one never knows in which direction he will flop - on account of the movement he must make to balance himself - so the anxious eyes of all were fixed on the magistrate's face; towards which side would he lean? With conviction he then declared "that no-one had put pressure upon Dākhi, that, having cross-examined her, he was

persuaded that she was sincere, knew very well what she was doing and was capable of following the path she had chosen, that in times past other cases also had been known of young persons being called to the ascetic life. Therefore, he enjoined the grandfather to oppose Dākhi's desire no longer, but to leave her free in the name of the *dharma*." Immediately the heavy silence was broken, cries of joy burst forth on all sides and the crowd became jubilant. Moreover, at Pipāda, the preparations were resumed. There was, however, one shadow cast over the general rejoicing. When Dākhi wanted to receive the blessing of her grandfather, she could not find him, for he had fled to another village. Finally, after all these painful contretemps, the mother and the daughter received *dikṣā*; Rūpāmadevi became Sādhvi Vijñāna Śrī and Dākhi, Sādhvi Vicakṣaṇa Śrī, *vicakṣaṇa* meaning the one who is clear-sighted, wise, intelligent, who has discernment.

Here are some of the replies given by Dākhi to those who were harassing her:

Her grandfather wanted her to attend the wedding-ceremony of a relative at Amarāvati, thinking that, once she was on the spot, he would come to some agreement with the bridegroom's family to convince her of the necessity of marriage. Now Dākhi, foreseeing this stratagem, refused to follow her mother to Amarāvati and remained with the sādhis at Āgarā. When the grandfather saw his daughter-in-law arriving unaccompanied, he despatched a telegram to the *upāśraya* saying that Dākhi's mother was very ill, that her daughter must come at once and he even sent a man to fetch her. Here again Dākhi suspected a ruse and very firmly declined to go with her grandfather's messenger and, having told him that all this was simply a scheme to lure her away and marry her off, she added: "I have no need of a mortal spouse; here (at the *upāśraya*) there is an immortal spouse who will never abandon me. Sādhvi Suvaraṇa can set her seal to such a union."³⁷ Later on, she was to use the same turn of speech to the magistrate: "... I have no desire for a mortal spouse, but for one who is not self-regarding and is immortal."³⁸ In a Jain context, where

³⁷ Ibid., p. 54.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 81.

belief in God and a relation of Love with his Person do not exist, these words, especially on the lips of a young girl, appear mysterious. We can conclude that Dākhi wished to refer in these terms to that deep spiritual reality that she had sensed in her contact with the sādhis.

Here, now, are her chief replies in her dialogue with the magistrate: *Thākura*: "Do you really, my child, desire to embrace the ascetic life?"

Dākhi: "Yes, sir."

Thākura: "Why?"

Dākhi: "It is an inner call."

Thākura: "Why do you not wish to marry?"

Dākhi: "I have no desire for it."

Thākura: "Do you know what the ascetic life means?"

Dākhi: "Without a knowledge of the ascetic life it is not possible to experience its attraction. I do know what is meant by both life in the world and by asceticism."

Thākura: "Is not obedience to one's parents also part of the *dharma*?"

Dākhi: "Yes, indeed, but if it is clear that one's parents' demands are an obstacle to the full realisation of human life and of the *ātman*, respectfully to oppose these demands is not contrary to the *dharma*."

Thākura: "Do you see, my child, what is in front of you?"

Dākhi: "Yes, it is a rifle."

Thākura: (to test her) "Leave aside all these arguments of yours and do as your grandfather tells you. If not, I'm going to use this rifle." - and with that he grasped the rifle.

Dākhi: "If it is your duty to do so, use the rifle. I have no fear of death, one must die some day. It's all the same, whether I die today from a gunshot or tomorrow from some illness. It is a great thing to die for one's ideal."

The formative years with Sādhvi Suvaraṇa ³⁹

After the *dikṣā*, the young Sādhvi Vicakṣaṇa became a disciple of Sādhvi Jātana Śrī. Her two first *cāturmāsya*s were spent in Rājasthāna, at Baḍalū and at Jayapura where she gave evidence of her capacity for study. Then, to her great joy, she was summoned to Dilli to the side of the *pravartini*, Sādhvi Suvaraṇa. She stayed there until the latter's Great Departure, that is to say, about seven years. These years of training were thus passed under the direction of a remarkable guruṇī. Sādhvi Suvaraṇa continued in the same line as Sādhvi Puṇya. She inherited all that the great pioneer had brought into being and was able to discern wisely how, at one and the same time, both to consolidate and deepen the inheritance and also to make further advances. She attached prime importance to *dhyāna*, *svādhyāya* and *adhyayana*. She was herself the example and also the inspiration of her disciples. For her, *dhyāna* did not consist solely in a technique that one followed for a limited time; *dhyāna* was, as it were, the breathing of her whole being. Her depth of contemplation, people say, was most striking. She habitually remained for six to seven hours in deep concentration, in which *japa* alternated with long moments of silence. Whoever her interlocutor might be, she brooked no idle talk. During the last years of her life, her concentration intensified and she was used to remain thus silent and absorbed for about twelve hours. Her favourite, because very short, *mantra* was *arham* (*arhat*).

Thanks to her openness of spirit she was able, even in her own day, to impart fresh impetus to the sādhis' studies, as being a necessary aid to *svādhyāya*. She laid great stress on more thorough study of the *Āgamas*; during the life-time of Sādhvi Puṇya, she had already obtained permission from this latter for pandits to instruct the sādhis, which thing until then had never taken place. In her far-sighted way, she reckoned that times were changing. From the turn of the century

³⁹ Ibid., ch. 6.

she was envisioning what others are nowadays attempting to introduce, namely, and very specially, that candidates for *dikṣā* should not be admitted straightaway, but that a type of *gurukula* should be set up, a permanent centre of studies with good instructors, where a solid character-training and serious doctrinal teaching should be given over a period of several years. After which, only those candidates who felt the attraction of *vairāgya* would receive *dikṣā*, while the others would form an advance-guard whose members would go forth to preach the doctrine, even outside the country. Sādhvī Suvarṇa was very much in advance of her time; even though her vision was not completely fulfilled in her life-time, she succeeded in imparting to her disciples a sense of the essential values of their life and now, long years afterwards, we are observing in the *śramaṇisaṅgha* the very movement that she foresaw.

After the Great Departure of Sādhvī Suvarṇa in 1932, Sādhvī Vicakṣaṇa was deeply moved. This was, in addition to the death of her father during her childhood, a second bereavement, the rupture with a very beloved and venerated guruṇi. Now, under the profound influence of her spiritual mother, this youthful and ardent sādhvī is going, in her turn, to become a living flame, an inspiration for her own disciples, for the *gaccha*, for the Jaina *saṅgha* and for any whose lives she will touch.

Viśvamiṭrā: The universal Friend⁴⁰

After the years of training in Dillī, Sādhvī Vicakṣaṇa began her *vihāras* up and down the country. We find her in the North, in the West, in the Centre and in the South. Her ardour is diminished by no obstacle or difficulty. She has, however, a delicate constitution and suffers from malaria and, after a while, from a heart condition that obliges her to remain stationary for two years; later on, on account of a fall, she hurt her ribs and must receive attention. Each time, with simplicity of heart, she agrees to see the doctor and follow the prescribed treatment. She accepts also, temporarily, the hospitality of the *śrāvakas*.

⁴⁰ Ibid., chs. 24; 27; 38; 49; 59-60; 72-73; 76; 79-84; 88; 97; 98; 100; 104.

They have called her: *jaina kokilā*, the Jain cuckoo, on account of her melodious voice, the sincerity and convincingness of her words, which, like the cuckoo's song, have enchanted all hearts. Of what does Sādhvi Vicakṣaṇa speak? Why do the crowds flock to hear her? The answer is simple: her language is direct, without pomposity or the slightest affectation; she goes straight to the essentials. It is her deep sincerity, her love for all living beings and the clarity with which she expresses herself that not only captivate all hearts, but transforms them, removing both barriers and prejudices and lessening or even completely obliterating all enmities. On reading her biography, one is struck by the way in which, simultaneously, she resembles a fresh breeze and a blazing fire. A fresh breeze, for in her presence one feels uplifted; a blazing fire, for her ardent words act like a purifying fire.

Sādhvi Vicakṣaṇa preaches *ahimsā*, respect for all beings, an inner attitude which is expressed in concrete form by *karuṇā*, compassion and *maītri*, friendship. The words and expressions that occur frequently in the biography and which convey so well the living message of Sādhvi Vicakṣaṇa are: *viśvamaītri*, universal friendship; *aikya*, unity; *samanvaya*, universal harmony; *saṁghaṭhana*, meeting, assembly, togetherness; *hṛdayaparivartana*, change of heart, conversion. This clear-sighted sādhi, thoroughly aware of the accumulation of dissensions, hypocrisy, and schisms that has come about in the name of the *dharma*, says both powerfully and persuasively: let us leave aside all sectarianism, all doctrinal quarrelling, all ill-will and let us live out the *dharma* in friendship with all. In a spontaneous way she leads her hearers back to the source, to the message of Mahāvira. She knows the *Āgamas* very thoroughly and well knows how to extract their nectar and put it into present-day language, adapted to her audience.⁴¹ With the gift that she has of being present to each person, she enjoys an immense popularity and is the object of true veneration. This, however, does not affect her in the least, she is *nirgranthi*, free from attachments.

She addresses herself first and foremost to the Jainas, so little united among themselves; when she arrives in some place, her presence constitutes a unifying factor between the several

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 112-113.

communities, of which one may be affecting indifference, another being positively hostile, towards the rest. Her *pravacanas*, furthermore, are for all human beings without exception; here and there Hindus and Muslims alike come to listen to her, through her they come to know the Jaina *dharma* for the first time or to see it in a fresh light. Let us consider a few particular passages or actual happenings that may help us to grasp her influence. In the presence of Digambaras, Sādhvī Vicakṣaṇa, herself a Śvetāmbara, attacks neither party, but rather seeks that which may unite them. At Hastināpura, a pilgrimage-place venerated by both traditions, but where the Digambaras are more numerous and more firmly entrenched, she broached the subject of the principal causes of dispute between them: can women attain *mokṣa*? Do the *kevalins* take nourishment or not? The Digambaras answer both questions in the negative, the Śvetāmbaras in the affirmative. Addressing the whole assembly, she told them: "Brethren, a man all of whose *karmas* were destroyed would not even so attain *mokṣā*, is not this what nowadays you and I believe? Then, why this question on the subject of women? It is surely stupid to vitiate the present on account of differences void of substance (for today) . . ." Then she went on to say: "Do we not believe, you and I, that the *ātman* is neither male nor female, that it is subject to no change and that male-ness and female-ness are due to the mode of *karman* relative to the body? But is *mokṣā* attained in the *ātman* or in the body? . . ." In the same vein, she said: "Do the *kevalins* take nourishment or not? Does that really affect the state of *kevala-jñāna*? *Jñāna* appertains to the *ātman*; nourishment is for the body. It is of little concern to us whether the *kevalins* take nourishment or not. Our aim is to believe in the state of being of the *kevalin* and to strive towards it. These useless quarrels are damaging and lead nowhere."⁴² Thus she exhorts them all, as disciples of Mahāvira, to drop these scholastic disputes inherited from the past, to come to a brotherly understanding and demonstrate *viśvamaitrī*, instead of reviling one another and becoming thus the laughing-stock of all.

When she passed through Bikānera, an important settlement in the desert, she attended the *pravacanas* of a Tapāgaccha ācārya. When she was getting ready to leave with her group, the ācārya prevented

⁴² Ibid., ch. 24.

her, requesting her to remain in order to celebrate with them, in several day's time, the *svarga-jayanti*, the anniversary of the Great Departure, of a much-venerated ācārya. Here was an event rare indeed, as her biographer remarks: a Tapāgaccha ācārya asking a Kharataragaccha sādhi to delay her *vihāra* for a celebration in common! The day of the *jayanti*, the ācārya requested Sādhi Vicakṣaṇa to precede him in addressing the assembly. She did so in all simplicity. She spoke of unity, of meeting one another, and gave this example: "Look at the water-melon; from the outside it appears to be divided into slices, but once the skin is removed, one round ball only remains, without divisions. . . , in the same way, regarded from the outside, we are of different *gacchas*: Tapā , Kharatara and others, but on the inside are we not all the spiritual descendants of Mahāvira? If, in meeting thus together, we do not renounce the spirit of division, our meeting has no meaning." The ācārya, very happy and touched at heart, invited the gathering to respond favourably to the appeal launched by Sādhi Vicakṣaṇa.

It was on her initiative, during her stay at Ratalāma in Rājasthāna that the various religious communities celebrated together *Kṛṣṇa-janma-utsava*, the anniversary of the Birth of Kṛṣṇa, a national festival. The civil authorities undertook the organisation of this festival on a grand scale. A gathering of about seven thousand persons listened with joy and evident interest to the various speeches. Sādhi Vicakṣaṇa spoke last. With an exquisite mastery of her subject, the *Bhagavad Gītā*, of which she quoted number of verses from memory, she expounded faithfully the message of Kṛṣṇa, pointing out its similarities to that of Mahāvira and showing that the spiritual path of the Vaiṣṇavites and that of the Jainas contain certain essential elements in common. Later on, at Amarāvati on the occasion of the celebration of this same festival, she again joined the Vaiṣṇavites ⁴³

In Gujarāta, where the Tapāgacchas are in the majority, the atmosphere is far from favourable towards the giving of *pravacanas* by sādhis in public; Sādhi Vicakṣaṇa, without affronting anyone, gave

⁴³ The Jainas, as is known, have adopted Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Rāma; they have 'Jainified' them and made them into *mahāpuruṣas*, heroes of their own tradition. Sādhi Vicakṣaṇa did not on this occasion speak in terms of this transposition, but took her inspiration solely from the *Bhagavad Gītā*.

her *pravacanas* there as elsewhere - since her *gaccha* permits this. All flocked to listen to her and in this way she helped lessen a stubborn prejudice against women.

Her *charism* being such, delegations from all regions, from towns and villages alike, come to find her months in advance to beg her to come and spend the *cāturmāsya* with them. It's one never-ending procession! She is sometimes highly embarrassed, for she must choose, decide, decline. . . Sometimes, to make sure that she will pass the *cāturmāsya* in a particular place, the inhabitants thereof take advantage of her passing through on *vihāra* to hold her as prisoner until she promises to remain. At Indaura, a number of *śrāvakas* of all *sampradāyas* went on telling her for three whole days: "We will not let you leave!" Now she was meant to be passing the *cāturmāsya* in a village. She endeavoured, but in vain, to explain. A delegation of *śrāvakas* set off for Ujjayini to request permission from the *ācārya*, who to the immense joy of all acquiesced and they retained her at Indaura!

It is not difficult to see that, especially during the *cāturmāsya*, the local *saṁgha* is very busy; they must continually receive crowds of visitors, provide lodging for *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās*. We read how at Ratalāma, for example, they set to well in advance in order to foresee every possible need: a *paṇḍāla* (marquee) for the daily *pravacanas*, houses available for accommodating travellers, the requisite foodstuffs and personnel to feed all that crowd.⁴⁴

How to describe the reception given to Sādhvi Vicakṣaṇa in her ancestral home, Pipāda, and the place of her birth, Amarāvati, when she returned there forty-two years after her *dikṣā*? A delirium of joy! They took advantage of her stay to celebrate her birthday on a grand scale, for several days. Invitations were sent out to every member of the local *saṁgha*, scattered though they were in various places. Many came. With her usual simplicity, she, an ascetic, an *anagāri*, let it all happen. It was a unique opportunity for one and all to rejoice, to fraternise, to experience renewal: songs, poems, speeches, gifts,

⁴⁴ Cf. Ibid., p. 279.

everything was one long demonstration of fidelity to the *dharma*. In her speech of thanks, she said: "I am only a humble servant of this *samgha*. I am not worthy of so many honours. All that I am today I owe to my guruṇi Suvaraṇa."⁴⁵ Then, addressing herself to this community composed for the most part of well-to-do businessmen, she told them that so much devotion and so many honours directed towards her person and so much expenditure would only truly and properly be addressed to her and accepted by her when, in full awareness of the suffering of those who surrounded them and of the prevailing injustices of society, they would all unite to alleviate the ills of this society and particularly those of children. She spoke with such sincerity, there was such a depth of compassion within her, she was so eloquent that on the spot, stirred simply by her presence among them, the assembly decided to open a fund called 'The Suvama Mutual Aid Fund' and generous gifts began to flow in. In a quarter of an hour they had already collected seven thousand rupees!

We have here, in an era when there is much talk of ecumenism, encounter, dialogue, peace, understanding between peoples, nations and religions, the testimony of a courageous, fervent, open-hearted, clear-thinking, compassionate and humble sādhi. She does not devote much time to expounding theories or discussing doctrines - although she is very well-informed - she has an open attitude towards those men and women whom she is addressing. She is what in simple language she sets forth and it is this authenticity that touches hearts and opens up minds. Her presence creates communion, incites fresh enthusiasm and pre-disposes towards *viśvamaitrī*⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 385.

⁴⁶ This section was written a little while before the Great Departure of Sādhi Vicakṣaṇa on April 18th 1980 at Jayapura. Suffering though she was, for more than one year, from a serious illness, she never failed to impress all who met her by her thoughtfulness for others and her complete disregard of her own suffering. The cuckoo's outward call may now be silent, but her inner call continues to inspire.

C-Tapasvini Sādhvi Candrayaśā Śrī*Zeal for tapas*

The short life of Sādhvi Candrayaśā- she left this world at the age of twenty-four - differs from those described in the foregoing biographies in many ways. This sādhvi was from Gujarāta and belonged to the Tapāgaccha. She was never betrothed or married, but herself choose the ascetic life in her adolescence. She exercised no particular functions within her group and we have in her regard just one short biography.⁴⁷ The very ancient tradition of the Tapāgaccha sets out, as its name indicates, to inculcate the great importance of *tapas*. It is also well-known that this *gaccha* is very flourishing in Gujarāta, that it contains ācāryas many and powerful, as well as considerable number of munis. The impact of the ācāryas and munis and the pressure of the surrounding Jaina community, numerically important and conservative in its approach, are factors conducing towards the infrequent appearance of the Tapāgaccha sādhis in public. Their training is aimed above all at making of them ascetics vowed to total renunciation, purification by means of *tapas* in the form of fasts being stressed. Except for a few rare exceptions, they write very little. It is against the Tapāgaccha backdrop that a glimpse of the life of Sādhvi Candrayaśā is shown to us.

Her life was very simple, orientated, since her *dikṣā* and even prior to it, towards one particular goal, a life typical of a zealous *śramaṇi* whose sole task is to work at her self-purification. There have been and there still are Tapāgaccha and other sādhis equally zealous. If

⁴⁷ Biography in English written by Sri V.G. Nair, 1969. A few years later another biography, also brief, was written in Gujarāti by Sādhvi Sarvodāya Śrī (her guruṇi) and Sādhvi Vācaṇyamā Śrī. It took me years to procure a copy of this biography. The Jaina Centre in Madras which published the English text did not reply to letters and several Tapāgaccha śrāvakas whom I consulted did not know to whom I should address myself. Finally, at Ahamadābād, during the *cāturmāsya* of 1977, when I was visiting an *upāśraya*, a sādhvi happened to tell me that she was a disciple of Sādhvi Sarvodāya. She gave me her address in Bijāpura and in October I received the biography in the two languages.

Sādhvi Candrayaśā has suddenly emerged from obscurity, it is because her ardour for *tapas* carried her off suddenly, while she was still young. She has become well-known because of her *mahāprasthāna* which so stirred the hearts of the crowds in Madrās who accompanied her at the time of her last pilgrimage that after her death her radiance, her influence, became visible even tangible. The one who certainly never gave a *pravacana* to a congregation has preached silently to thousands of persons through the example of her short life, which was consumed in the fire of *tapas* and totally purified in an awakening of the self to the supreme Reality: the *ātman*.

The stages of her life were as follows. Sādhvi Candrayaśā came originally from Cambay, the ancient Stambhatirtha in Gujarāta, well-known for its numerous Jaina temples. Here the *saṁgha* is firmly established. Her elder sister was already a sādhvi. At the age of thirteen, she expressed her desire to join the group of the guruṇi Sarvoḍāya, who accepted her as a *vairāgiṇi* and kept her on probation for about two years. Immediately after her *dikṣā*, when she received the name of Candrayaśā, the splendour of the moon, she evinced an unusual degree of ardour for *tapas*: rigorous repeated fasts and different form of *pratyākhyāna*.⁴⁸ These fasts were only one of the expression of her zeal for the ascetic life. Her *svādhyāya* consisted in the regular repetition of a considerable number of *sūtras* that she knew by heart, her *dhyāna* was reinforced by very frequent *japa* and by numerous hours of silence.⁴⁹ Her fasts, we are told, in no way diminished her energy, she followed all the observances of her group without showing any fatigue and she was prompt to help and care for the other sādhvis. She spent successive *cāturmāsya*s in several districts of Mumbai, in Mahārāṣṭra and then in the town of Bijāpura in the northern part of Karnāṭaka. In 1968 the group proceeded in the direction of Madrās, a distance of about nine hundred kilometres. At the beginning of this *cāturmāsya* in Madrās, Sādhvi Candrayaśā undertook a fast of thirty days and, as several of her companions were also fasting, a zeal for fasting spread among the *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās*

⁴⁸ After several years, she was advised to write a diary describing her spiritual pilgrimage.

⁴⁹ Cf., Nair, 1969, pp. 5-6.

who were visiting the *upāśraya*.⁵⁰ When this fast-period was coming to an end, she asked for and received permission to continue until the forty-fifth day. She was showing no fatigue and was even going from place to place in the town for the *vandana* to the *ācārya* and munis. The forty-sixth day in the morning, she consented to take a little liquid nourishment. During the day she seemed well and was already proposing to undertake an even longer fast during the next *cāturmāsya*. Then all of a sudden, towards the end of the afternoon, she fell ill and expressed a desire to see the *ācārya*, and, while the *sādhvis*, realising the seriousness of her condition, were singing the *Namaskāra-mantra*, she peacefully passed away.⁵¹

The news spread rapidly; *śrāvakas*, *śrāvikās* and very many others made their way to the *upāśaya* to have the *darśana* of Sādhvi Candrayāśā. Observing the pressure of the throngs, some students took it upon themselves to ensure orderliness. The money-offerings given in her memory were distributed to the poor. The next day, at half-past twelve, an endless procession followed her body. The cortege reached its destination at a distance of several kilometres from the *upāśraya* towards five o'clock. The civil authorities of Madrās had put at the *saṅgha*'s disposal fifteen vehicles to transport mourners and wood for the cremation and had deputed for the occasion four hundred policemen who, together with the six hundred volunteers, maintained good order. Reporters from the better-known daily newspapers and photographers were also in attendance. It was truly an event in which the whole town participated.

Then the body which Sādhvi Candrayāśā had mastered and purified with the whole of her energy in order to set free from it the *ātman*, that body which was now the object of so much veneration, was placed on the pyre of sandal-wood. The quantity of this precious wood, presented as a gift by the *śrāvakas*, was such - about three tons in weight, they say - that the fire burned all night long, illumining the whole area and diffusing the sweet fragrance of sandal-wood.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 13.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 15.

Sādhvi Candrayaśā had not chosen to terminate her life by *saṃlekhanā* (or *saṃstāra*), which is the culmination of an absolute fast. She was young and zealous with the consent of her guruṇi, she was endeavouring to live out in every detail and stage by stage, the ideal set forth in the doctrine, namely, the purification of the *deha*, the body, with a view to its final separation from the *ātman*. To reach this goal, she used the means prescribed: faithful adherence to the rules, *dhyāna*, *svādhyāya*, and fasting, to which, in accordance with the tradition of her *gaccha*, she attached particular importance.

The people of Madrās, greatly impressed and deeply moved, thus venerated with enthusiasm a young saint who had evidenced extraordinary zeal for spiritual values. It was this life-testimony, bearing, as it did, the mark of the Absolute, that attracted in her train people of all ages, all beliefs and all social strata. By her faithful adherence to her ideal, Sādhvi Candrayaśā awoke in everybody's consciousness, in differing degrees of course, an awareness of the *ātman*, of that Reality which is simultaneously both transcendent and immanent.

D - Ujjvala Vāṇī

The pravacanas of Mahāsati Śrī Ujjvalakumārī

Mahāsati Ujjvalakumārī likewise was originally from Gujarāta and belonged to the Sthānakavāsīs. Her memory is still very vivid among those who knew her, for she left this world only in 1976 at the age of around fifty-seven. As a child, she lived with her mother, a young widow and schoolmistress, in a suburb of Mumbai. When the young girl was no more than ten, they came into contact with Mahāsati Rājakumārī. The young woman, attracted by the teaching of this guruṇi, decided to become her disciple and her daughter followed suit. For several years they shared the life of the sādhis who took good care to instruct them and in 1934 both received *dīkṣā* at Karamālā in Mahārāṣṭra. The mother became Mahāsati Śrī Candanabālā and the

daughter, who was in her sixteenth year, Mahāsati Śrī Ujvalakumāri.⁵² Ujjvala means splendour, radiance, brilliant light.

Among the Sthānakavāsis, as a general rule, sādhvīs are encouraged to study, both for the sake of their own spiritual progress and also to equip them to give *pravacanas*. Mahāsati studied a lot in her youth, systematically and with the help of masters. Never, however, did she stop extending her knowledge, her range of learning. She pursued her studies all her life. In addition to everything that concerns Jain doctrine, she knew classical Indian philosophy, she had a vast knowledge of literature, she was interested in other religions and could without the slightest difficulty quote a passage from the Upaniṣads, the Bhagavad Gītā, the Purāṇas, the Buddhist Scriptures or the Gospels. Nor did she limit herself to the writings of times past, for she had learnt several modern languages. The sciences did not escape her interest either, for, without undertaking any particular course of scientific study, she was able, thanks to her reading, to follow the progress of contemporary science.

She had a wide open spirit, a lively intelligence, an insatiable desire to study, to know, to deepen her knowledge. She did not content herself with mere book-knowledge, but, rather, took a keen interest in all aspects of a subject, in people and in situations at the level of experience. Her vast range of knowledge, her wise judgement and the harmonious way in which she had assimilated all she knew gave her a remarkable breadth of vision and generosity of spirit which evidenced

⁵² These details were given me by Mahasati herself at Ahmadnagara in 1971. Later, in 1974, in Pune, Sri K. Munot told me that he had been opposed to this *dikṣā*, as the young girl was highly intelligent and his intention was to remove her from the influence of the sādhvīs and help her to pursue higher studies. This is in fact mentioned in the Preface to *Ujjvala Vani*, 1965, pp. v-vii. Moreover, it is expressly noted that the *dikṣā* should have taken place at Pune when the candidate was fourteen years old, but that the 'Youth League' of the town, disapproving of this practice, appealed to the Court of Justice. A magistrate questioned the girl and, in the face of her determined resolution, was left in no doubt about her will in the matter. However, he decreed that she should await the decision of the conference of munis at Ajamera. The members of the conference fixed a minimal age of 16 for admission to *dikṣā* and thus the candidate waited for two more years.

themselves in a straightforward and spontaneous fashion. One was immediately at ease with Mahāsati. She was eager to help, inform, guide; she replied to questions, procured documents and unfailingly saw to it that letters were duly answered.

She was greatly helped, from a few years after her *dikṣā* until she was of mature years, by her learned guru, Muni Śrī Mohana Ruci. Her attitude towards him was one of profound, daughterly devotion and she consulted him often. For long years she was obliged to lead a sedentary life on account of a serious eye condition. She lived at the *upāśraya* of Ahmadnagara, the town where Muni Mohana Ruci, already advanced in years, was permanently residing.

As long as her health permitted, she gave numerous *pravacanas*, particularly in Mumbai, where she was well known. In her capacity as *pravartini* for a long period, she encouraged her disciples to study and kept those who were studying at her side in order to give them guidance.⁵³

Why Ujvala Vāṇī?

In 1948 one of the Mumbai *saṁghas* made arrangements to collect and then publish the *pravacanas* that Mahāsati had given during the *cāturmāsya* when she was twenty-nine years old. The *śrāvakas* thought that this course of instruction, put into one book, would be readily accessible to many readers. This collection is called: Ujvala Vāṇī, the voice of Ujvala. Even though the written text cannot convey the voice, the intonation of the spoken word, the warmth of conviction and physical presence of her person, it nevertheless does communicate to us the spirit of Mahāsati. This collection is all the more valuable and interesting in that it dates from the period which followed Independence, a period when the *sādhvis* were still confined to the strict orthodoxy of a conservative grouping. Mahāsati Ujvalakumārī, even in those days, was not the one and only *sādhvi* to

⁵³ During my stay at Ahmadnagara in 1971 she had 27 *sādhvis* under her direction; they were divided into 5 groups, out of which 4 were on *vihāra* and I remained with her at the *upāśraya*, this last-named being composed of students.

speaking out boldly. Certain sādhis in other regions had preceded her and others have followed.

Why then study *Ujvala Vāṇī*? Because *Ujvala Vāṇī* is believed to be the only collection of *pravacanas* of a sādhi of that period; because it transmits to us the ever-living and contemporary message of an exceptional sādhi, who was in direct contact with those who cared about essential values, more particularly with Gandhiji;⁵⁴ because the character and content of these *pravacanas* testify to the mission of the sādhis, they demonstrate how, by acquiring a firm grounding of knowledge, they can succeed in communicating it to their contemporaries; and, finally, because, having known Mahāsati and stayed with her, how could one not, as a sign of gratitude for her so friendly welcome and ready understanding and as a sign of respect and devotion to her memory, try to make her known, how could one not try, however imperfectly, to make her voice heard?

The inspiration conveyed by *Ujvala Vāṇī*

All those who knew her recall unanimously how impressed they were by Mahāsati's breadth of spirit. Her eagerness for knowledge and the wide range of her culture were of enormous help to her, but she also must have been fortified by an uncommon degree of courage to have expressed as she did revolutionary ideas such as were bound to upset the sectarianism, rigidity and sterile conservatism of one type of Jain milieu. We have to realise the audacity and strength of conviction this required on the part of a young sādhi, as well as her concern to enlighten others and free them from every fetter. She knew how to captivate her audience, not only by the thoroughness of her knowledge in many spheres and the clarity of her exposition, but also by her remarkable capacity for touching upon all domains, religious, moral, cultural, social. Mahāsati lived for the most part in Mumbai; she was addressing groups of its citizens, most of them engaged in commerce, not always honest in their transactions nor mindful of the

⁵⁴ During one of Gandhiji's stays in Mumbai, in September 1944, when he had come to meet Jinnah, the founder-to-be of Pakistan, he held with Mahāsati daily conversations for 19 days, conversations concerning religion, society and politics. These are published in a booklet entitled: *Gandhi Ujvala vārtālāpa*.

prevailing social injustice. Mahāsati, with her very real oratorical gifts, knew how to speak fearlessly in picturesque, yet also concrete and exact terms. Nearly always she would recount a story taken from one or other of the religious traditions and then, with the utmost skill, would guide her hearers towards the essential, would cause them to reflect, knowing on every occasion just how to distill the spiritual message of her talks without being dogmatic, abstract or boring.

Her *pravacanas* were grounded in the doctrine, but doctrine must not be a dead-letter affair. She raised her voice against the sterility, the uselessness, of certain practises divorced from real life. She was daring enough to attack at its root all hypocrisy, egoism of every type, those crying injustices which most people tend to tolerate. She insisted on the need to purify motives and actions and spoke out against the exploitation of the poor. She was always exhorting her audience to respect those whom society, out of blindness, habitually oppresses, insults and despises. She begged people to come to their aid, to welcome them, love them. It is in this, she would say, that the *dharma* consists, it is in this way that one lives out *ahimsā*. Mahāsati, through her own person and through her words, was a great encouragement and powerful inspiration to women of all walks of life and, in particular, to girls to whom she imparted fresh incentive and the conviction that, despite so many obstacles, they must get themselves educated and thus be able to advance.

Sometimes, it is true - and notably in the course of some of her references to western-culture - Mahāsati's observations could be wide of the mark. She expressed somewhat erroneous opinions, oversimplified, and had recourse to clichés. This was due chiefly to the prejudices of the age and to her lack of information and firsthand knowledge of this subject, her opinion being based on rather sketchy reading. It is unfortunate that she did not have an opportunity to meet any experts in this very broad domain. However, considering the milieu to which she belonged, it is truly remarkable that she had taken the trouble to acquire information. Moreover, she invariably maintained a benevolent outlook.

***Ujvala Vāṇi*, a brief survey**

The series of *pravacanas* opens with the following topics, each topic being the subject of one talk:

- Victory over the passions.
- The importance of good company and good reading.
- How to perfect and enhance one's life.
- The spirit of service.

She then broaches the important subject of the *aṇuvratas* or small vows, the same in content as the *mahāvratas* of the ascetics, but implemented to a lesser degree.

- *Ahiṃsā*: Mahāsati points out that, before being attentive in relation to insects, one must first be attentive in relation to human beings; that to lie is also a form of *hiṃsā* and she goes on to say: "None of you, surely, would eat mutton, even if you were offered a considerable sum of money, and yet would you not be willing to lie for a very small sum? Certainly this is proof that you attach importance only to the outer aspect of *ahiṃsā*." She then continues by indicating in concrete terms what is meant by inner *ahiṃsā*. She lays great stress on the way men and women servants should be treated: not to demand from them extra hours of work, to give proper remuneration to them, to look to their work-conditions and to see that they receive medical help. She insists on the positive aspects of *ahiṃsā*.⁵⁵

- *Satya*: to this, because it is of vital consequence, she attaches such importance that three *pravacanas* are devoted thereto. She begins by drawing attention to the fact that satya is a constitutive dimension of the human person. By means of several examples she reminds her hearers that *satya* is not restricted to one compartment; it issues from the mind, from speech and from action. *Satya* is quite as essential as *prāṇa*, the breath of life.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ *Ujvala Vāṇi*, 1965, (*pravacanas* of 1948) ch. 7.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, chs. 8-10.

- Asteya: it is not enough, she says, to refrain from purloining the possessions of others, to refrain from stealing; asteya goes much further- it consists as well in not amassing things, keeping more than one needs. All superfluity is a form of steaya.⁵⁷ She knows very well whom she is addressing!

- Brahmacarya: after mentioning the two aspects, the positive and the negative, the mastery of all the senses and healthy work which channels all the energies, she lays great stress on the dignity of manual work. Having followed closely all the activities of Gandhiji, she narrates a few episodes of his life. Then, turning to the men of her audience, she draws their attention to this anomaly: a woman must remain faithful to her husband all her life and a widow is not permitted to re-marry, but a widower may always remarry, why this difference? This injustice?⁵⁸

- Aparigraha: on the subject, Mahāsati has so much to say that she devotes to it four pravacanas. Her speech is direct and emphatic, for the spirit of possessiveness, the thirst for money and the accumulation of riches are the root causes of spiritual backsliding and of an enormous amount of social injustice. The more riches one accumulates, the more sins one piles up. She insists over and over again that aparigraha consists in not considering oneself the depository or guardian of money; rather, having seen to the needs of one's own family members, one must utilise the surplus to relieve the sufferings of others. Addressing herself to the śrāvīkās, she says: "Certain ones of you undertake regular fasts, yet hardly any tangible spiritual results of them are to be seen. Why is this so? Because you are not detached in spirit. So, while fasting, get rid of any surplus sādis and other things that you keep in your cupboards. . ." The spirit of possession, she says does not operate solely in relation to money and goods; it has subtle ramifications and is also at the root of intransigent sectarianism, that fury with which each one blindly defends his sect, his guru, his

⁵⁷ Ibid., ch. 11.

⁵⁸ Ibid., cf. 12.

doctrine, his party, his province, all of this being a form of avarice and greed. She directs her hearers' attention towards the eternal riches: faith, right conduct, the study of the Scriptures, study in general, detachment, compassion, broad-mindedness.⁵⁹

- What is the purpose of the *anuvratas*? To help one reach immortality. The subject is developed at length with the help of concrete examples and specific directions for attaining the goal in everyday life. When dealing with *tapas*, she stresses first and foremost its inner expression.⁶⁰

During this time of *cāturmāsya* several festivals take place, notably that which celebrates Independence and that of the *pariyuṣanā*. On the anniversary of Independence, Mahāsati asks whether people are aware that the political independence acquired a year ago should carry with it an acute sense of the accompanying responsibilities, courage to act, to make changes, to bring about reforms? Have people grasped all the implications of this freedom? Should they not resolutely confront and tackle all the social, religious and educational problems? She strongly condemns the spirit of casteism, its inhuman rigidity, the affront to human dignity and human rights that this system involves. She then reminds her hearers what personal independence and liberty really mean.

This series of thirty *pravacanas* was intended to prepare the śrāvakas and śrāvikās for spiritual renewal on the occasion of the feast of *saṃvatsari*, the first day of the Jain new year. By way of follow-up, the next series treats of various subjects, such as:

- The *dharma* and Science.
- The *dharma* and society.
- Jain culture and Buddhist culture.
- The *dharma* for today.
- On the path of progress.
- The goal of life.

⁵⁹ Ibid., chs. 13-16.

⁶⁰ Ibid., chs. 22-26; 29.

- The strength of unity.

- The *dharma* not to be regarded as an elegant heirloom.⁶¹ In enlarging on the theme "Self-sufficiency", she stresses once again the way in which servants should be treated. *Himsā*, she says, is not merely a question of wounding, killing, causing blood to flow, but it is also to make use of others for one's own advantage, to turn them into slaves, into sweated labour. Let the Jains first abolish among themselves this form of slavery and lighten the burdens of others by labouring themselves!⁶²

- *Khādi* and the Jaina *dharma*: acting as a mouth piece for Gandhiji, she sets forth very clearly, from the Jaina point of view, the advantages of *khādi*, handwoven cloth. On the one hand, this type of weaving avoids *himsā* which is unavoidable in cloth mills, and on the other hand it provides a livelihood for large numbers of persons and especially for village women who can take up weaving as a home-craft. She exhorts the whole Jains community to encourage this group of artisans and to wear *khādi* themselves.⁶³

- On the potential of women and their duty in society: she reminds her hearers of the worship addressed to the goddesses *Saravati*, *Lakṣmī* and *Kālī*, personifying respectively knowledge, wealth and energy; that, within Indian culture, moreover, womankind has not always been relegated to a back seat. She raises her voice against a certain masculine mentality that considers woman to be inferior. What is this "strength" of which men speak? If strength means physical strength, woman, it is true, possesses less than man, but if

⁶¹ Cf. *Ujvala Vāṇī*, 1951, chs. 1-7; 10.

⁶² *Ib.d.*, ch. 13.

⁶³ Two remarks here: firstly, it is well-known that of the great industrialists, owners of important textile factories, especially in Gujarāta, several are Jains; secondly, after more than thirty years of independence, during which a strong boost has been administered to industry, it is now recognised that the rural population and the craftsmen have been neglected. Thus there is now, though somewhat on the late side, a reversion to certain forms of handcraft and handweaving is also being encouraged anew.

strength denotes spiritual and moral strength, then it must be admitted that in this regard woman is superior to man. If, furthermore, man has a powerful brain, he does not equal woman in depth of feeling. In the heart of woman there are vast reservoirs of love, affection and compassion seldom possessed by man. She goes on to expound clearly what that feminine potential is that man and society in general cannot do without. She speaks with fervour of the movement launched by Gandhi in favour of women. She does not encourage women to a purely external imitation of men, but implores society to set women free from the heavy chains with which it had shackled them in order to maintain masculine domination. She encourages women to have the courage and tenacity to contribute themselves to their own emancipation.⁶⁴

Mahāsati Ujjvalakumāri, on account of her state of health, was unable to continue to teach large crowds of people, exhort them, convert them, but at the *upāśraya* in her retirement she went on teaching the sādhis and imparting to all the many persons who came to consult her a taste for knowledge. Her personal influence was striking and the number of people or institutions in need who have benefited from gifts or from kindly interest on the part of śrāvakas and śrāvikās counselled by Mahāsati is beyond telling. She was irresistible. In her presence *parigraha* was softened, for Mahāsati communicated to others her own altruistic outlook.

E - Ratna Raśmi

The extraordinary fast of Sādhvi Śrī Ratnavati

Ratna means jewel and *raśmi*, a ray of light, splendour; thus *ratna-raśmi* means the splendour of the jewel. This jewel is a young Terāpanthi sādhi called Ratnavati.⁶⁵ Unlike Sādhvi Candrayā, she did not have a burning zeal for *tapas*, she was of delicate health, sick already for several years, and was living painfully but courageously

⁶⁴ Cf. *Ujjvala Vāṇi*, 1951, ch. 23.

⁶⁵ Lit. resembling a jewel.

the ascetic life when, suddenly, a change took place in her. She felt inspired to undertake the total fast which leads to *mahāprasthāna*. In the course of this fast, which lasted twenty-two days, her insight into spiritual realities intensified and on October 23, 1964, the Jewel left this world, but its splendour remains. She was thirty years of age and had been a *sādhvī* for thirteen years.

The book is not, properly speaking, a biography. It is a collection of eye-witness accounts, written by several munis and *sādhvis* and by the brother of *Sādhvī Ratnavatī*, to which are added some poems extolling different aspects of this extraordinary case.⁶⁶ Each short study is a personal one, which seeks to explain this event and give it its rightful place in the Jaina tradition. As we read these accounts of the events and the reflections arising therefrom, we can observe the successive stages of a rapid ascent.

From childhood to *dikṣā*

Sādhvī Ratnavatī was born in *Rājasthāna* into a well-to-do and devoted *Terāpanthī* family. She did not attend school, but studied at home, in particular Sanskrit. When still very young, she evidenced an attraction for the ascetic life and even requested her parents' permission to receive *dikṣā*. Her father, alarmed by this request, hastened to get her married when she reached the age of thirteen. The young bride allowed the ceremony to take place, but a few days later she declared firmly that she could not remain in this state of life one day longer and, to annul the alliance contracted against her will, took a vow of virginity. The two families, much concerned about this state of affairs, attempted to dissuade her and lure her from her purpose, but in vain. About two years after the marriage, seeing her determination, the parents requested the *ācārya* to accept her. To her great joy she was admitted to the ranks of the *vairāgiṇīs* of the *Samsthā*.⁶⁷ There

⁶⁶ We recall how one of the chief characteristics of the *Terāpanthīs* is to have one single *ācārya*. This tends to result in a highly compact organisation and community participation in the proceedings of and happenings within the *gaṇa*.

⁶⁷ Cf. P 469 ff.

she pursued her studies for two years and at the age of seventeen received *dikṣā*.⁶⁸

From *dikṣā* to *anaśana*

After her *dikṣā* she studied the doctrine and learnt several *Āgamas* by heart. She began, moreover, to evidence great fervour for the ascetic life. She possessed, so they say, a lively spirit and a literary bent and wrote furthermore a collection of poems. However, after a few years her health deteriorated and it seemed that this way of life was too harsh for her physical constitution. As one malady after another laid her low, she unfailingly endured these trials with great fortitude and patience. This sickly condition, which prevented her from concentrating, studying or serving her elders and which did not permit her to undertake any form of *tapas*, lasted about eight years. She was gradually experiencing during this time a growing revulsion against food and medicaments. Thereupon, being aware of the doctrinal teaching and thus knowing that in a case of incurable illness such as renders impossible the practice of asceticism, *anaśana*, the type of fast termed *caturvidha*, a total fast unto *mahāprasthāna*, is permitted, she decided to request permission to undertake this fast with a view to total self-purification.⁶⁹ At that time she was in the small town of Byāvāra in Rājasthāna.

An extraordinary *anaśana*: resultant manifestations

In making this firm resolve, Sādhvi Ratnavati knew that she must first obtain the permission and blessing of the *ācārya* and thereafter rely solely on the strength of the *ātman*. Now it was the period of the *cāturmāsya*. The *ācārya* was staying in the same area, but he could not move anywhere. It was possible, however, to contact him quickly and he replied that the leader of the group, Sādhvi Śrī Kūmār, must first put Sādhvi Ratnavati to the test, after which, if her resolution

⁶⁸ Cf. Śricandra, 1966, pp. 21-23.

⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 32-34.

remained unshakeable, he would feel free to accord her permission to undertake the great fast. Several days later, in accord with Sādhvi Kūmāri, he gave his consent. One sādhvi of the same group, Śrī Phūlakumāri, who remained constantly at Sādhvi Ratnavati's side, kept a record of the most striking moments of the fast and of its effects. These manifestations reveal an increasingly rarefied awakening and consciousness of being, in proportion as progressive detachment from the body took place. To this awakening corresponded a progressive inner purification and, at the same time, a confirmation of will and intention. Other sādhis have undertaken this fast during the final days of their lives, but the extraordinary feature of this particular case was the state of extreme lucidity and vigour observable in a sādhvi who had hitherto been weakened by successive illnesses, a vigour which mustered together all her now purified faculties. It was because of this heightened awareness and this mental vigour that the fast lasted an exceptional length of time and that it communicated a radiance and a message to all who thronged around her. Sādhvi Phūlakumāri took notes on the spot, as the situation unfolded, of the stages of this final advance. Here is a resume of this existential eye-witness account.⁷⁰

***Dhyāna* assumes an essential role**

From the very outset of the fast, Sādhvi Ratnavati began to find herself capable of sustained mental concentration she grasped forthwith the importance of *dhyāna*, which up till then, as she herself avowed, she had hardly recognised. She said that she felt the power of the *ātman* stirring within her.

Ālocanā

On the seventh day of the fast, she experienced a need for inner 'stripping', for clarification, and expressed a desire for full and frank confession to the sādhis of her group. These latter were struck by the simplicity and honesty with which she addressed each one, recognising her faults and asking for pardon.

⁷⁰ Ibid., chs. 2 and 3 of the second Part for what follows.

The ācārya expresses his faith and confidence: jubilation

On the eight day, the ācārya, who was being kept regularly informed, sent a message, after mature reflection, to say that: "if the inner flow was flowing strongly, it should not be curbed; that he had total faith in her resolve and that Sādhvī Kūmārī, being on the spot, should herself assess the firmness of her decision and permit this *saṁstāra-pratyākhyāna*."⁷¹ Immediately she heard the words of the ācārya confirming her in this new path, her face became radiant and she exclaimed: "Today I am truly blest; for me this dawn is full of light. . ." Some sādhis had attempted to dissuade her because of her youth and delicate health, Sādhvī Kūmārī, upon whom fell the responsibility of the final decision, was still hesitating, but Sādhvī Ratnavatī began to urge her. Then, without the shadow of a doubt and in front of all those present, Sādhvī Kūmārī, having invoked the *paramēsthins*, gave to Sādhvī Ratnavatī the desired permission. A little later, Sādhvī Ratnavatī, who was continuing to express her joy, attributing it to the blessing of the ācārya which was imparting to her the necessary strength, spoke words of great gratitude to Sādhvī Kūmārī for the guidance she had given her since her *dikṣā*.

For eight days already the gold had been tested in the fire; it must now be still further purified.

Dhyāna intensifies

The longer the fast went on, the more intense became Sādhvī Ratnavatī's capacity for concentration. She spent long periods absorbed in *dhyāna*, but since during the day visitors came and went, she pursued her *dhyāna* during the night also. This *dhyāna* was not limited to certain hours only when there was complete silence; all day long she kept her mind fixed on the essential. From members of her family who had come from a distance to see her she firmly requested that they should only speak with her of spiritual things. Having discovered the importance of *dhyāna*, she conceived a desire to guide others in this regard, but she recognised that she had not strength

⁷¹ Another expression for the great and total fast-to-Departure. One is impressed by the wisdom of the ācārya who did not give immediate permission for the great fast.

enough to do so; yet, according to the accounts of those present at the time, her vigour was scarcely abated. To see her and speak with her, one would never have thought that she had been fasting for such a long time.

The impact of her radiance

Sādhvi Ratnavati did no preaching through word of mouth, her very presence was enough; seeing her thus continuing in this state of deep recollection, several of those who came to visit felt themselves drawn to *dhyāna*, certain ones pledged themselves to a life of chastity and others embarked on a fast.

She replied with brevity, clarity, precision, wisdom and firmness to all those who put questions to her. Her replies made transparently clear her spiritual strength and her serene joy, which were due both to her having gone beyond the range of any contingency and to her certainty of being on the right path. Without letting herself be upset by trifling questions, or becoming impatient, she made short work of any useless or misplaced comments. The radiance of her person was such that the members of the different *sampradāyas* of the region all considered her as one of theirs.

Even the sceptics are convinced

The news spread rapidly all over the district. Certain ones showed doubt, even hostility, and there began to be talk of suicide. The civil authorities arrived on the spot and a lady doctor was appointed to study the case at close quarters. However, at the sight of the happy countenance of Sādhvi Ratnavati, most of the sceptics held their peace and certain ones even considered themselves her defenders. The authorities came to the conclusion that it was not for the civil power to meddle in what concerned the Realisation of the *ātman*.

The messages of the ācārya

Being unable to come in person to speak with her and guide her, the ācārya, who was receiving regular bulletins through the *śrāvakas*, sent her several messages, messages that were brief and simple, in which he gave her his moral support for this extraordinary venture,

telling her of his joy and pride, which were also, he assured her, those of the *saṃgha* and which redounded to the honour of the *dharma*. In spite of the distance he assures her that whoever has unshakeable faith in the guru remains always in the heart of the guru; now, he knows how much confidence she has in him and he reminds her, moreover, of the help that she is receiving from Sādhvi Kūmāṃ. These messages were for her a source of joy and courage and she said that this unity with the ācārya was imparting to her the energy which was upholding her.

Mahāprasthāna

On the morning of the twenty-second day of this fast, the *ātman* of Sādhvi Ratnavati abandoned her body which, after being a handicap to her for so many years and an obstacle to her spiritual progress, had become the very instrument of this rapid final advance. In the history of the Terāpanthis this was a striking event, for never had a *saṃstāra* been seen to last so long and to be lived out with such lucidity and in so heightened a state of awareness. We are told that a fervent throng of about five thousand persons accompanied the body on its last journey, uttering joyful acclamations, cries of victory in honour of the *tirthaṅkaras* and of this humble *śramaṇi* who had shown indomitable courage and so strong a faith in the *dharma*.

It would be quite improper to try to analyse that which defies all analysis. One can simply gather together respectfully certain ones of Sādhvi Ratnavati's replies that give one a glimpse of a state of being, of an experience. To the question put by several people: "Why this fast?", she replied that it was to awaken the *ātman*. To another question: "Was it an urge towards *tapas* that first of all made its presence felt in you or did you first acquire knowledge". The nature of this knowledge and the degree thereof is not made clear either in the question or the reply. These short dialogues, which took place in highly unusual circumstances, constituted a break-through into the existential, they resembled neither a discussion nor an investigation. Yet her attitude and words during this final period give the impression that she had, during the years of illness, pondered, matured, penetrated into the meaning of the Scriptures and that a slow inner development had been taking place within her which culminated in this decision to

undertake the total fast which led her to full awareness of her own being.

She went on insisting on the inward joy that accompanied such an experience. She said that if this joy were lacking, then there was really and truly no *tapas*, seeing that, in itself, *tapas* is simply an efficacious method for bringing about the stoppage and destruction of *karman* and, thus, the Liberation of the *ātman*. To one *sādhvi* who asked whether she was experiencing the awakening of the *ātman*, she replied in all simplicity: "On this subject I can only remain silent."

F - *Satsaṅga*

In holy company

The five *sādhvis* mentioned above have introduced us to the setting in which their life was lived, they have allowed us to share in their personal pilgrimages, within the *saṅgha*. Each represents a crystallisation, as it were, of certain values which, while being specifically Jain as regards their doctrinal formulation, also belong to humanity as a whole. There are many other *sādhvis* who have lived or are still striving faithfully to live the ascetic life, without, however, attracting any attention. Each one is part of a whole in which each member has her place. This whole, this great assemblage is called the *satsaṅga*, the society, community of those men and women who have chosen to follow the good, who have directed their steps towards what is true and helpful.⁷² The *sādhvisamṅgha* is a constituent part of the universal *satsaṅga*, in which the corporate belonging to a spiritual family is not outward and visible, but is very real, going beyond all religion and all nationhood. Here are a few additional life-testimonies of *sādhvis* who have departed from us and of others who are still with us. They invite us to enter into relationship with them, to be in their holy company.

⁷² The meaning of *satsaṅga* is not restricted to the groups composed of ascetics.

Mahāsati Śrī Candā ⁷³

She came of the noble lineage of the Rājapūtas, famous knights in the history of Rājasthāna. Her family was residing in Āgarā and it was there that she was born in 1876. Her mother liked to go and listen to the *pravacanas* of munis and sādhis and took her along with her. When she was about seven years of age, Mahāsati Śrī Pannādevi (of the Sthānakavāsīs) noticed the child's precocious intelligence and her attraction for spiritual things and sensed in her a far from ordinary budding personality. She requested her mother to leave her with her so that she could teach her Jaina doctrine and make a sādhi of her. The little girl, realising what it was all about, supported the request and her mother devotedly offered her daughter to the guruṇī. At the age of twelve, she received *dikṣā*.

In addition to pursuing her studies, she began from the age of fourteen to give *pravacanas*. The influence of her talks was such that she won over śrāvakas, it is said, in a way that very well known munis failed to do. She was only twenty-eight years old when her guruṇī left this world, having named her guruṇī in her place and having charged her not to put herself under the direction of another sādhi, for she was bequeathing to her a spiritual heritage that she in turn must pass on to her own disciples. This bereavement was a terrible trial for Mahāsati, who remained alone with one very young sādhi. During many long years she experienced isolation and troubles of every type. A Mūrtipūjaka muni offered to receive her, her mother besought her to return home, but she flatly refused both the one and the other. She tried several times to find her place in a group of sādhis, but without success. Finally, eleven years after the departure of her guruṇī, she succeeded in putting herself under the obedience of the guruṇī Mahāsati Śrī Rājimati who, later on, became *pravartini*.

When we scan the list of *cātur māsyas* spent here and there by Mahāsati Candā, we observe that she made long journeys, through towns and villages of Panjāba, Jammū and the regions around Mumbai, Dilli, Āgarā. But the Panjāba above all was her field of activity and it was in this province, of which the grievous partition

⁷³ Cf. Mahendrakumārī, 1954, "jīvana-khaṇḍa."

took place a few years before her Great Departure, that her words were most fruitful. She knew just how to convince, to touch hearts, transform lives, inflame youthful hearts with zeal for *vairāgya*, with all the resultant family struggles! She was also well able, in this region where the different religious sects have always found a fertile soil, to reply to questions, discuss, explain the Jaina position. At her sessions one could hear veritable *dharmopadeśas*, discourses on the *dharma*, in a company which included knowledgeable members of other Jaina communities, the Āryasamāja, the school of Vedānta, Sikhism and Islām. They say that sometimes the members of other traditions present at her *pravacanas* exceeded in number the Jainas. She had also a great concern for social questions and endeavoured to play her part in raising the status of women in the society of her day.⁷⁴

For the last days of Mahāsati Candā, her sādhvī biographer, with deep filial love and profound grief, takes the reader in imagination to the *upāśraya* at Ludhiyānā where, still fully lucid in mind, this remarkable guruṇī and valiant daughter of Rājapūtana, long since become a disciple of Mahāvira, is preparing herself for *mahāprasthāna* after sixty-nine years of *vairāgya*, years that were oftentimes very hard and sometimes heroic, years during which she brought light into the world by her presence, a gently, radiant light, that of Candā, the Moon!⁷⁵

Mahāsati Śrī Mohanadevi ⁷⁶

⁷⁴ The *pravacanas* constitute a lengthy, separate section of the book. They were collected and edited by 2 śrāvakas. A 3rd section, *śradhdhānjali*, is made up of 38 eulogies in poetry and prose composed in honour of Mahāsati by various authors: 12 munis, 4 sādhis, 4 śrāvikās and 18 śrāvakas.

⁷⁵ There are several different but similar words for the moon: *cānda*, *candra*, *candramā*, and also: *śaśī*, *śaśī*.

⁷⁶ This sub-section relies on the admirable biography written by her disciple, Mahāsati Śrī Hukamadevi, in a spirit of great devotion to the one who had been to her both guruṇī and veritable mother; cf. several refs. to this biography in the other sections. Mahāsati Hukamadevi sent to me excellent replies to a questionnaire addressed to sādhis. I was expecting to meet her in

A contemporary of Mahāsati Candā, she belonged to a wealthy family in Dilli. Little Mohanadevi was the great pet of her whole family; in contemporary language *mohana* means enchantment, charm, seduction; *devī*, goddess, queen, princess.⁷⁷ Married as a child, she was widowed while still very young. When she announced her intention of receiving *dikṣā*, her parents-in-law, who were greatly attached to her, found what they thought to be a sure method of retaining her. They adopted a baby boy a few months old and entrusted to her care. In an obedient way, she reared this adopted son with great care and affection, but, when the child was eleven, she renewed her petition, saying that now he could well manage without her. This tenacity was a source of vexation to her parents-in-law, who even so did not allow themselves to be convinced. She then proceeded to take action. She cut her hair, put on sādhu's clothing and remained in seclusion in her room till she should be permitted to receive *dikṣā*.

A fervent ascetic, she became, first, a highly-valued *guruṇi* and then *pravartini*. Through her teaching, she became very well-known and highly appreciated, especially in Panjāba. Not only did she struggle against ignorance in general, but she strove with determination to help women and girls to free themselves, by means of education, from the social fetters with which they were bound. To enlighten and awaken by the spoken word was not enough for her. With her practical and realistic turn of mind, she inspired the formation of groups and saw to it herself that concrete decisions should be without delay taken, decisions that would set the younger generations on the path towards a progressive evolution. She had an acute sense of the omissions and defects of her own day and pertinaciously set herself to make up for them all in view of a near future; she knew that she would not see the results of her unceasing

Dilli in October 1978, when a śrāvaka wrote to me in September that she had passed away in August.

⁷⁷ We recall that, as a general rule, there is no change of name among the Sthānakavāsīs at the time of *dikṣā*.

toil, but she had the moral certitude that she had done her utmost to aid, encourage and support the śrāvikās, and for her that sufficed.⁷⁸

Mahāsati Śrī Pannādevi

In one of the densely-populated quarters of Dilli, on the first floor of an old house, is what is called the *sthiravāsa*, the permanent dwelling. Here, for the last several years, resides Mahāsati Pannādevi with some of her disciples who take turns in waiting upon her. Mahāsati must be about ninety years of age and, like Mahāsatis Candā and Mohanadevi, belongs to the Panjābi branch of the Sthānakavāsīs. Like them also, in their footsteps and with similar zeal, she has covered in her journeyings those same regions. Mahāsati is frail, alert, joyful and of a modest spirit.⁷⁹ For her eightieth birthday, one of her disciples, Mahāsati Saralā, with the encouragement of the *saṃgha*, wrote her biography.⁸⁰

Mahāsati Pannādevi is a daughter of the *kṣatriyas* of Rājasthāna, a cavalierly warrior class. From her childhood onwards she was in contact with Jainas and sādhis and showed signs of a precocious intelligence and determination. On her own re-iterated request, she received *dikṣā* when she was in her tenth year. The *pravartini* of that day, a highly capable person, saw herself to the education of her young disciple. Mahāsati was outstanding for her indomitable courage and valour throughout numerous vicissitudes, a courage that was inherited from her forbears and strengthened by her own unshakeable faith, that in its turn was enlightened by her knowledge of the Jaina *dharma* of which she was a tireless preacher.

⁷⁸ Cf. P 456 ff. on the subject of the Mahilā Satsaṅgas and Kanyā Vidyālayas that were started on Sādhvi Vicakṣaṇa and Mahāsati Mohanadevi's initiative.

⁷⁹ I met Mahāsati two times, in 1975 and 1977.

⁸⁰ This sub-section draws upon Parts II and III of Saralā, 1970; cf. Appendix I.

Her *pravacanas*, of which a selection is given in the biography, are based upon a thorough knowledge of the doctrine which she had the art of explaining in a concrete fashion, appropriately to the actual conditions of life of her listeners. Certain subjects were particularly dear to her and she reverted to them often, especially to *ahimsā*. She struggled ceaselessly for the emancipation of womankind from cruel and restrictive traditions and showed a lively interest in social service and aid for the poor and despised.

Service to others - it was this that Mahāsati herself performed for the *pravartini* who was her spiritual guide and then for the *pravartini* who succeeded. She was always at the service of her *sādhvi* disciples, whom she guided with maternal and enlightened care. She was intent that they should be abreast of their day and age, open, well-instructed. While giving pride of place to the study of the Scriptures and the doctrine, she always encouraged also broader studies: philosophy, psychology, new trends of thought. In this she was a pioneer and her present day disciples prove the wisdom of her views. As for the *śrāvikās* in the greater part of the Panjāba where devotion is fervent and faith firm, they very quickly adopt modern notions in practical affairs, but do not have an innate urge for reflective thinking and philosophical study. Mahāsati endeavoured to guide them in this to them somewhat unfamiliar domain. She alerted their minds and fostered within them the spirit of service to the disinherited, inspiring them with *karuṇā*.

One day Mahāsati Saralā asked her to give to her disciples a *mantra*, with the help of which they might be worthy of their guruṇi and continue her work. Mahāsati Pannādevi turned towards her, gazed at her seriously and asked: "What is your *namé*?"

- The disciple, taken by surprise, replied in a low voice: "Saralā".

- The guruṇi replied: "Saralā! That is my *guru-mantra*. Your name is Saralā; I myself am *saralā*, in spirit. That is the most important *guru-mantra*: to be *saralā*, simple. She who is simple, whose spirit is not crooked, whose heart is free of all craftiness, hypocrisy, deceit, whose words are sincere, this Saralā is loved by all and respected by all."

Mahāsati Śrī Yaśakumhara ⁸¹

In a well-watered village of Madhya Pradeśa a girl called Jānaki was returning to her borther's house, carrying a vessel of water on her head. Suddenly she stopped, in order to listen attentively to some words of a muni who, hard by, was giving a *pravacana*. The vessel of water was heavy, Jānaki could not linger, but she decided to go the next day to listen to the muni. Till that moment, she had never had any contact with Jainas, this was her first encounter. She acquired a taste for *pravacanas*. After several days she asked the muni to give her *dikṣā*. He replied that it was possible, but only with the permission of her parents, and that if she was fully decided, she should not wait long before making her commitment. Straightway, Jānaki set to put her plan into action. Now, this was extremely difficult, for Jānaki came from a very well-to-do family of the Hindu sect known as *vairāgi-sādhus*, though in fact a number of its members are not *sādhus*. She had had a pampered childhood and then the death of her father had ruined the family's fortunes. She was married off at the age of five and lived in her family by marriage.

Many pages would be needed to describe the incredible struggle Jānaki was obliged to undertake, with her own mother as well as with her husband and parents-in-law, a struggle that was the more painful because she was alone, not being as yet a member of the Jaina *saṅgha*. The struggle ended in Jānaki's favour, for a *śrāvaka*, impressed by her courage and determination, invited her to come and receive *dikṣā* in his village, assuring her of his protection. To avoid any violent intervention on the part of the family-in-law, the procession was flanked on either side by armed soldiers. All passed off peaceably and Jānaki became Mahāsati Yaśakumhara, *yaśa* meaning glory, honour, splendour, praise and *kumhara* being an alternative to *kumāri*. All this took place in 1937 and Mahāsati Yaśakumhara, an admirable and much-loved *guruṇi* is still among us.

After *dikṣā* she continued her struggle on other fronts. Attacked by tuberculosis, she showed extraordinary moral strength. When the doctors had lost hope and the *sādhvis* were filled with consternation,

⁸¹ This sub-section draws from Āryā Premakumhara, 1973.

she comforted them and assured them that she would survive. Everybody's courage was restored and little by little, thanks to her own powers of endurance and to a new treatment, she was healed. Hardly was she fully recovered than her guruṇi fell ill and an urgent operation for cancer was necessary. The group, which was at that time in a village, proceeded slowly to the city of Ajamera. Arrived there, the sādhis knew no-one, nor did they know to whom they should address themselves, as this detour had not been foreseen. At the time of *gocari* a śrāvaka took the trouble to ask: where did they come from? Where were they staying? When Mahāsati explained the situation, the śrāvaka showed them the *upāśraya* and informed his son, who had a friend who was a doctor. The guruṇi was obliged to stay several months in the hospital. During these months, Mahāsati's life was very difficult; the hospital was a long way away and often it was she who went three times a day on *gocari* to get milk and other nourishment to take to the invalid.

Mahāsati is especially characterised by her shining, invincible confidence in the *dharma*, a confidence which upholds her and gives her an unusual strength of character. She is convinced that the spiritual comes first and, whatever the circumstances, she remains centred on the essential. She believes in the unifying power of *dhyāna* and it is from this state of constant concentratedness that she draws her strength.

Mahāsati is attentive to both individuals and situations and, wherever she passes, she brings good. Her presence is beneficent not only to hearts and minds but also to bodies. Her disciple, Mahāsati Śrī Premakumhara, who writes the biography, reports that in several places Mahāsati has performed healings. It is very possible that the absolute faith of the sick person in the spiritual power of this *śramaṇi* vanquishes the sickness. Mahāsati seeks no popularity, she simply allows one and another to come to her and, with her immense compassion, comforts and soothes.

And what are we to say of the effect of her *pravacanas* in certain isolated villages of Rājasthāna, where enmities between fellow-Jains have split the community and where often for years no muni or sādhi has passed through to bring about a renewal? Mahāsati Yaśakumhara arrives, gives clear and definite teaching, listens, counsels, reconciles.

All come to hear her, whatever their religion or caste. They say that Mahāsati has invincible faith in the *Namaskāra-mantra* to which, whatever the situation, she has recourse. By her ardent devotion to the *paramēṣṭhins* and her intelligent interpretation of their teaching, she follows faithfully the path they have traced.

Sādhvī Śrī Bālū ⁸²

Bālū means beloved. *Sādhvī Śrī Bālū* was a true Mother and the book which is dedicated to her begins with the poem of a muni addressing "the Mother". The mother of three children, she became a widow after the birth of the third. Belonging as she did to a fervent Terāpanthī family, she would have like, after the death of her husband, to receive *dīkṣā* but desired first to bring up the little last-born. When, on a certain day when he was ten year old, he made clear to her his own attraction to the state of *vairāgya*, she felt herself free. The mother aged forty-three and the son aged ten received *dīkṣā* together, becoming *Sādhvī Śrī Bālū* and Muni *Śrī Nathamala*. As an ascetic she became the Mother of all alike: munis, sādhvis, śrāvakas, śrāvikās. On this point the testimonies of one and all, after her Departure, are unanimous.⁸³

Since she was already a person of mature years when she embraced the ascetic life, her fervour, her strong faith and her innate feel for the *dharma* helped her to make rapid progress on the path of renunciation. She did not have responsibility for a group and did not often give *pravacanas*, but imparted teaching chiefly through her presence and also through her counsel which was full of wisdom and good sense. Her speech was direct and sometimes blunt, owing to her zeal for the *dharma*, but her heart was large and benevolent. Her life was totally consistent and she lived her asceticism to the full. People were impressed by her glowing faith which expressed itself in veneration towards the ācāryas: the founder of the Terāpanthis, the ācārya who had given her *dīkṣā* and the present one. She was always vigilant,

⁸² This sub-section draws upon *Surānā*, 1972.

⁸³ Each has contributed his or has testimony or reflections: 8 munis, 12 sādhvis, 15 śrāvakas and śrāvikās; the poems are by 4 munis, 12 sādhvis, 6 śrāvakas and śrāvikās.

never allowed herself any form of slackness, and taught the young that *jñāna* does not consist in words, but first and foremost in the judicious use of time, precious time that must not be wasted but must be used for the maintenance of a constant state of concentration. She furthered her *tapas* through fasting and *mauna* (silence); as regards *svādhyāya*, having little formal education, she had studied by heart, and would often repeat, sundry passages of the *Sūtras*.

During the last five years of her earthly pilgrimage, from the age of seventy-nine to eighty-four, she was constantly ill. At this age when physical strength diminishes, Sādhvi Bālū, assailed by piercing pains, not only patiently endured the suffering but transcended it in a state of great lucidity. She did not wish to undertake the absolute fast, for she said that her way was to live ever more and more devotedly until her last breath, just staying among the *sādhvis*. The *sādhvi* who had the special charge of caring for her during these years said that she was a true "artist", who knew how to mould hearts and spirits through the simple maxims she used to utter.

She lived with intensity a Jaina form of *samādhi*: *bheda-jñāna* or state of full awareness, recognition of the essential difference between *ātman* and *deha*, the body. Muni Nathamala had taught her this form of *japa*: *ātman bhinna, śarīra bhinna*. She repeated this with such conviction that after a while she spoke of her body, which gave her such pain, as being *bhinna*, other, distinct. She had reached, there is no doubt, a very high degree of the awakened state, which enabled her, while still conscious of the suffering, to rise above it. Sādhvi Bālū remained conscious and in the same state of fervour till her Great Departure which, on such an occasion, is called *samādhi-maraṇa*, bodily death in the state of *samādhi*.

*Sādhvi Śrī Lāṭā*⁸⁴

⁸⁴ This sub-section draws upon Saṅghamitrā, 1973.

The title of the book is very suggestive: "The drop of water which became the River Gaṅgā."⁸⁵ This "drop", from a little town of Rājasthāna with a strong Terāpanthi Jaina population, grew up in accordance with the tradition of that milieu. Three years after her marriage, when Lāḍām, or beloved one, was about fourteen years old, her life began to take on a different orientation. Her husband, who was about eighteen years old, began to feel a strong attraction to the ascetic life; he would like to receive *dikṣā*. He told her this desire and she professed herself ready to follow him. However, the young man, the only son of his parents, still had a duty towards his family members and was obliged to wait for some years. Life was continuing with the prospect of *dikṣā* at some future date, when a sudden illness carried off the young husband; Lāḍām at that time was eighteen years of age. Although she was much loved by her family by marriage, she did not want to postpone any longer the fulfilment of their joint decision. She expressed to the ācārya her desire to become a sādhi. This latter advised her to wait a while and prepare herself by studying; she had also certain eye troubles that caused him to hesitate. Obediently, she undertook an intensive *svādhyāya*.

At last, after another four years, she, together with her young brother Tulasi, received *dikṣā*, an older brother, Muni Śrī Campaka, having preceded them on the path. The drop lost itself in the *śramāṇisaṃgha* with eagerness. In 1936 her younger brother was nominated as the ācārya's successor and she herself as *agrani*, leader of a group.⁸⁶ In 1946, Ācārya Śrī Tulasi appointed her Sādhi Pramukhā, at the head of all the sādhis; for twenty-four years she fulfilled the role of Mother with wisdom, firmness and true goodness, a great-hearted Mother, a Mother whose heart was as vast as the River Gaṅgā.

Sādhi Lāḍām was a simple unassuming person who, especially at first, found it painful to be thrust into the foreground. She forbade

⁸⁵ The editor, Sādhi Saṃghamitrā, has arranged the contents of this book to excellent effect: a detailed and lively biographical section; a collection of letters; essays by 38 munis, sādhis, śrāvakas and śrāvikās; a short account of a colloquy with Sādhi Śrī Lāḍām and a selection of her maxims.

⁸⁶ *Agrani* or *agraganyā*; cf. P 429.

the sādhis to call her "Mahāsati" and declined to use a raised stool, sitting herself on the ground with the other sādhis. This, however, created embarrassment, for the śrāvakas and śrāvikās who came for the *vandana* did not know which was the Sādhi Pramukhā. In short, one day a śrāvaka mentioned the matter to the ācārya, who summoned Sādhi Lādā and enjoined her firmly to receive her visitors seated upon a low wooden table as was proper. Her biographer quotes a passage from the *Śhānāṅga-sūtra* which compares persons to four sorts of fruit: the coconut, the plum, the areca-nut and the grape. The coconut is hard on the outside and tender inside; the plum, tender on the outside and hard within; the areca-nut is hard both outside and inside, while the grape is tender both outside and in. She remarks that Sādhi Pramukhā could be, according to the differing requirements of people and circumstances, the coconut, the areca-nut or the grape, but certainly never the plum!

To be at the head of four hundred sādhis, during a time of renewal and under the vigorous leadership of Ācārya Tulasi, was no easy task. Sādhi Lādā had come to maturity in a family setting and deepened that maturity through the practice of asceticism. She had profound wisdom and great organising ability. She knew how to change and how to direct others intelligently towards the full realisation of their own potential. She attached great importance to study. Before becoming Pramukhā, she had already pleaded with the ācārya for more advanced study for sādhis. She encouraged Sanskrit studies and literary composition, having herself "the heart of a poet". *Svādhyāya* gave her immense joy. She acted as a stimulant to the sādhis by herself knowing an impressive number of texts and constantly recalling them to mind. *Svādhyāya*, to her, was tantamount to breathing. She had a horror of idleness and helped the sādhis to develop certain forms of arts and crafts compatible with their life-aim: the copying of texts, the painting of miniatures, drawing, painting, sewing.

She participated whole-heartedly, with the ācārya, in a great movement of new freedom and of struggle against the narrow and stifling orthodoxy and certain customs in regard to women current in the society of Rājasthāna. She addressed herself straight to the śrāvikās, by taking a personal interest in their spiritual instruction.

The last three years of Sādhvi Pramukhā's life were subject to a double trial: that of sickness and that of the absence of the ācārya, who was at a distance in the South. This latter and Muni Campaka sent a number of letters to their sister during her final year, to which she duly replied.⁸⁷ These letters, of which several are written in poetic form, are the expression of fraternal bonds rendered the stronger because of the sharing of all three in a common ideal and were written at a time when the sister, already on the threshold of the Great Departure, was nearing the end of a long spiritual journey and her struggle against acute physical pain. Sādhvi Pramukhā had one desire and only one, namely, to have once more the *darśana* and benediction of the ācārya. He himself was eager to come, but his mission retained him in the South. In February 1970, when news from Rājasthāna arrived describing the rapidly deteriorating state of Sādhvi Lāḍām, Ācārya Tulasi despatched from Haidarābād Sādhvi Saṁghamitrā, entrusting to her two written messages, one for Sādhvi Pramukhā, the other for the *saṁgha* of the North, along with a lengthy missive from Muni Campaka. The ācārya enjoined the messenger to give full and detailed news to the invalid; he was making plans to take to the road again in a northerly direction before long and hoped to see her again. Sādhvi Saṁghamitrā set out with a group of seven sādhis. In thirty-three days they covered about eight hundred kilometres, stopping by night wherever they could find shelter, in the jungle, in some hut or school or village-hall, or in some, dilapidated house. It was truly an extraordinary *vihāra*. The thought of the joy, hope and comfort that their message would bring gave them the strength to walk steadily on. But when they were already in Rājasthāna, within a few days' walk of their goal, a telegram announced to them the *mahāprasthāna* of Sādhvi Prāmukhā. This was a very hard blow for them and their energy flagged: After their arrival at Bidāsara, where everyone was impatiently awaiting their arrival, Sādhvi Saṁghamitrā read to the assembled company the message of the ācārya to Sādhvi Pramukhā.

⁸⁷ These letters number 27 and are dated between April and September 1969: 10 letters of Ācārya Tulasi to Sādhvi Lāḍām, 9 letters of Muni Campaka, 8 letters of Sādhvi Lāḍām to Ācārya Tulasi.

Finally, here are some of the "drips of ambrosia", words full of wisdom, vigour, clarity and affection, uttered in spontaneous fashion by Sādhvi Pramukhā. Each one is a veritable maxim:⁸⁸

"A truly affectionate attitude is the first step on the ladder of successful community life." (8)

"It is the *ātman* which conveys to the other shore of the ocean of existence, which is why the *ātman* is truly the guru, the *ātman* is truly the Lord." (12)

"Fear is at the root of sin." (22)

"Simplicity of heart and spirit fashions the beauty of life." (23)

"Receive every circumstance with a smile." (38)

"Change effected with discernment is called Life; stability devoid of discernment is called ossified tradition." (44)

"*Śraddhā*, faith, is ambrosia; *śraddhā* is heaven; in the pursuit of *saṁyama*, *śraddhā* is the breath of life." (74)⁸⁹

"To recognise one's faults in simplicity of heart, this is the most perfect form of *prāyaścitta*." (83)

"At the same time as you study from books, learn also to mould your life; otherwise knowledge will itself become a burden to you." (89)

"Wherever you find yourself, do your utmost to make the place pleasant." (92)

"If you want to harvest fruit, you must first water the seed." (101)

⁸⁸ This section of the biography gives 101 maxims noted by the sādhis during the course of personal conversations or teaching-sessions. They are not classified according to themes. The nos given here correspond to those in the book.

⁸⁹ *Samyama* must be understood here in the broader sense, viz. the way of the *dharma* to be followed in its totality.

Chapter 7.

Āryikās: The Digambara Sādhvīs

A small minority leads a life of absolute *aparigraha*

Of the ascetic who has grasped very thoroughly the essence of the doctrine, [the teaching] of the Scriptures, [who is] confirmed in self-mastery and in austerity, non-attached, the same both in pleasure and pain, it is said that he [enjoys] pure consciousness of the self.¹

The word *digambara*, clothed in space, indicates in an unambiguous manner the radical non-possession professed by the ascetics who have chosen this path. Although the epithet *digambara* designates specifically the one for whom outward nudity is the sign of a state of life, a token of inward nudity, the other members of this *sampradāya*, that is to say, the āryikās, śrāvakas and śrāvikās, are also called *digambara* in this sense, that all believe in the necessity of bodily nudity for the attainment of *mokṣa*.²

The *Digambara* ascetics pursue an ideal in which *saṁnyama*, self-control, and *aparigraha*, non-possession pushed to an extreme, are strongly accentuated, so that as a result and from the start there is a striving towards a radical and total purification such as ensures a state whereof mastery of the passions and complete detachment are constitutive elements. This does not imply that the one embracing this form of asceticism is forthwith a perfected being, but it does imply

¹ *suvididapayatthasutto saṁjamatavasamjudo vīgadarāgo samāṇo samasuhadukkho bhāṇīdo suddhovaogo tī.* PSa I, 14.

² We recall that this tradition maintains that women are not capable of attaining Liberation in this life, but the adoption of the ascetic life is not denied to them.

that his inner disposition is such as to favour the destruction of karmic matter and conduce towards the purification of the *ātman*.³ It cannot be repeated too often that *aparigraha* is first and foremost an inner attitude and that, once pledged to the path of renunciation, the ascetic must maintain a persistent effort towards constant purification, by listening, above all, to the words of the guru, by being humble and obedient and by studying the *Sūtras*.⁴

The *āryikās* are *anagāri*, *nirgranthi*, *śramaṇi*, but in regard, to the external features of this way of life, more radical in approach than the *Śvetāmbara sādhvis*. The *āryikās* are permitted a bare minimum for the maintenance of life. Furthermore, the two traditions have developed separately during the course of the centuries and, even if the doctrine is common to both despite certain divergences (of which the most important, concerns, precisely, the Liberation of womankind) and the duties are identical and the rite and means employed to fulfil these duties basically alike, nevertheless the *āryikās*, on account of possessing different though very similar in their essential content - Scriptures, constitute within the Jaina *saṃgha* a homogeneous and distinct group. This group is exceedingly small, due to a number of factors some of which are spiritual and some historical, a minority group of which scant mention is made and of whose existence many people are unaware. The *āryikās*, however, form a well-organised community which faithfully follows the tradition and merits our full attention.

In the light of the basic elements of asceticism according to Jaina doctrine and of all that we already know about the *sādhvis*, we are now going to consider the way of life of the *āryikās* in regard to its special features and their implementation in daily living. Here there is no question of making some sort of classification of differences in the *vidhis* or rituals observed by the *āryikās* and the *sādhvis*, but simply of recognising what shape or form the most important *vidhis* assume for

³ Part II contains a fair number of Digambara texts, particularly those of Ācārya Kundakunda, so there is no need to insert reference again here.

⁴ *uvayaṇaṃ jīṇamaṃgga līṃgaṃ jahajādarūvamidi bhaṇidam guruvayaṇaṃ pi ya viṇao suttajhayaṇaṃ ca niddiṭṭham* PSa III, 25; PSa III expatiates at length and in detail on the nature of this effort.

the āryikās, without lingering over secondary details.⁵ Nor most definitely is there any question of attempting to assess which of the two *saṃghas* is the more faithful to the teachings of the *tīrthaṅkras*, or more advanced or more spiritual. The observance of a very strict external austerity is not necessarily a sign of interior *aparigraha* nor of a higher level of consciousness. Drawing as they do upon a common doctrine, the essential for each of the āryikās and sādhis is fidelity to her vows in the setting of her own tradition, through which she journeys towards full realisation of the Three Jewels.

This chapter endeavours to transmit the teaching given to me by Āryikā Jñānamatī Mātāji at Hastināpura. Mātāji wrote in fact a book entitled *Āryikā* in response to a questionnaire sent to several sādhis. During my first stay at Hastināpura one of her *brahmacārin* disciples read aloud the manuscript in the presence of Mātāji and I was able to interrupt him in order to ask for explanations.⁶ Later on, when I myself had studied the text with careful attention and written out a long list of questions, we discussed, during a second stay at Hastināpura, each of these questions; at the same time I was able to take part in the daily rites of *sāmāyika* and *pratīkramaṇa* and to be present at the *āhāra-vidhi*.⁷ This chapter, therefore, assumes a personal character because it is based on the direct teaching of Mātāji. This

⁵ With the exception of the *āhāra-vidhi* (P 668 ff), which is very different from *gocari*, we do not indicate, in the case of a given *vidhi*, what differentiates the two *saṃpradāyas*, but simply describe what this *vidhi* means for the āryikās, knowing, of course, that it assumes a slightly different form among the sādhis. By referring back to the corresponding chapters and sections one can easily observe wherein the difference lies.

⁶ In March, 1976.

⁷ In March, 1977. Subsequently I paid a brief visit to Mātāji in January, 1978. I must add that, although the sādhis have been unfailingly welcoming and kindly and have made a great contribution to this study, certain ones of them in a very positive and perceptive manner, Mātāji has not only shown lively interest in instructing me personally, but has even taken the trouble to write *Āryikā* and explain it to me. She has also with the utmost simplicity allowed me to live during my stays in close contact with herself and the āryikās of Hastināpura.

teaching of Mātāji, as also her writings, is always grounded in the Scriptures and in tradition. In this chapter, therefore, we refer to her as a competent authority and as a contemporary āryikā who transmits to us her own fully orthodox tradition.

The number of āryikās is very limited, Mātāji for some years now for health reasons hardly ever goes out of Hastināpura, but nevertheless she is not only remarkably well-versed in the doctrine, but herself writes and translates with untiring zeal. These are all factors facilitating a direct contact on the spot with this tradition, whereas, to have a thorough knowledge of the sādhvis, one must take into the reckoning not only the different *sampradāyas*, *gacchas* and other institutions, but also a large number of groups scattered up and down the country. One must meet them, stay close to them in order to succeed in discovering in what the life of a sādhvi consists and the special features proper to each grouping. It is also necessary to establish contact with certain learned *gurupis* and sādhvis and with others who are in the vanguard of progress, in order to have a general view of the whole and neglect none; now this necessitates regular meetings and frequent travelling as well as the exchange of letters.

Keeping in mind, then, that we are already familiar with the basic tenets common to the two traditions, such as *vairāgya*, the vow of *sāmāyika* and the *mahāvratas*, we can proceed now to explore the milieu of the āryikās.

A - They are recognisable by these three signs:

- the *śvetavastra*: a white garment
- the *piccikā*: a small broom made of peacock-feathers
- the *kamaṇḍalu*: a gourd

The āryikās whom one may sometimes encounter on the roads or in the street of a large city can easily be recognised by these three signs.

i) Śvetavastra: The white garment

The garment is all of one piece: a *sāḍī* (*sāṇī*) of fairly thick white cotton, about eight metres in length. The āryikās wrap themselves in

their *sāḍi* in such a way it envelopes them completely.⁸ They have only two *sāḍis*, the one they are wearing and another to change into. Every day, in the morning, before going to the temple and then to the *āhāra*, their sole meal, they must change garments on account of the extreme purity necessary for anything connected with food. Often a *śrāvikā* undertakes the washing of the spare *sāḍi*. The *āryikās* also may perform this task, but only with boiled water, no more than will fill their *kamaṇḍalu* and without the use of soap.⁹ They have neither shawl nor blanket. They always go barefoot, clasping the *picchikā* under their right arm and holding the *kamaṇḍalu* in their left hand.

ii) *Picchikā*: The small broom made of peacock-feathers

This is the *rajoḥaraṇa* of the *āryikās*, an inseparable companion. The *picchikā* is made of peacock feathers, which are gathered up each year during the month of *kārttika*, when the peacocks shed their feathers. The *āryikās* then fashion new *picchikās* and at the end of the *cāturmāsya*, the *ācārya* gives a new one to each. The *picchikā* possesses some unique characteristics: dust does not adhere to it, but rather slips off it; it is affected neither by water nor humidity; it is so soft that even if it grazes the eyes, this touch produces no pain; it is beautiful, truly beautiful, with its colours and reflections and, finally, it is very lightweight and uncumbersome. The *picchikā* is the symbol of *ahimsā*; with so soft and so light an instrument it is impossible to hurt anything or anybody and its nature is such that it cannot harbour any insect. During the performance of the *vandana* and other *vidhis*, the *āryikās* hold the *picchikā* between the palms of their joined hands.¹⁰

⁸ Cf. Jñānamati, 1976, pp. 26-27.

⁹ Ibid., pp. 29-30

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 53-54.

iii) *Kamaṇḍalu*: The gourd

This is a gourd made of coconut or of wood.¹¹ It is filled with pure water which the āryikās use for bodily ablutions. When they go to the temple for *sāmāyika* or other *vidhis* and before entering a room for their meal, they leave the *kamaṇḍalu* at the door.

The *kamaṇḍalu* is the one and only *pātra* possessed by the āryikās. To take their meal they use the *pāni-pātra*, their cupped hands forming the *añjali* (a hollow) which serves as a *pātra* both for food and for drink.

Where do these āryikās dwell during their halts?

How is their *saṁgha* organised?

a) *Vasatikāsthāna*: The dwelling-place

The Digambaras do not maintain *upāśrayas* for the ascetics. The āryikās, between *vihāras* and during the *cāturmāsya*, live in a room within the precincts of the temple or, if there is no temple within range, they may stay in a secluded room or in a house put at their disposal by some family. They call this temporary shelter a *vasatikāsthāna*, or dwelling-place. Among the Digambaras are certain *sampradāyas* and *gacchās* whose members, for the most part, go to the temple for worship.¹² This worship, which is very elaborate, uses an *ornate* and expressive form of *bhakti*. The āryikās stay, when possible, in the precincts of a temple, because they go at regular intervals to the temple to perform certain ones of their spiritual exercises. It is thus necessary to be near at hand and, during the monsoon, to reside on the spot avoids much coming and going.

In the *vasatikāsthāna* there are mats which the āryikās use for sitting on during the day and for sleeping on at night. In the winter

¹¹ Ibid., p. 16.

¹² Cf. P 172 & ns.

they sleep on straw. They may also use wooden boards for resting and small low desks for writing.

b) *Āryikāsaṃgha*: The community of Āryikās

The internal organisation of the *saṃgha* is the same as that of the *sādhvis*, with this difference however, that there is an intermediate category between the *śrāvikās* and the *āryikās*, namely, the *kṣullikās*.¹³

During their *vihāras*, the *āryikās* take nothing along with them except the *picchikā* and the *kamaṇḍalu*; books, mats and other necessary objects are always conveyed to the next place by *śrāvakas*. These last-named have, in fact, themselves determined the route to be followed, the *vasatikāsthāna* and other details.¹⁴ Because of their small number, there is a very close relationship between the *āryikās* and the *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās*, who have only very exceptionally had the chance of having *āryikās* in their midst.

The *āryikās* receive a solid training in asceticism and in the study of the Scriptures, the doctrine, Prākṛit and Sanskrit, from their own *guruṇi*, also called *gaṇini*; sometimes also, though this depends on prevailing conditions in the different places, they are helped by the *ācārya* or by a *pandit*. They do not, properly speaking, go in for *śikṣā-kendras*. However, they are permitted to give *pravacanas* and certain ones write or do translation-work.

i) Conditions of admission

These are the same as for the *sādhvis*.¹⁵ However, to the general conditions which ensure that a person is a fit subject for leading a

¹³ The *āryikās* have been mentioned frequently in Part I in connection with documents concerning them, which are found in various regions. We recall also that several *Satis* are venerated by both traditions; cf. P 256.

¹⁴ Cf. Jñānamati, 1976, p. 31.

¹⁵ Cf. P 449 ff.

rigorous ascetic life, the Digambaras add a further stipulation; the candidate must belong to one of the three castes: brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, or vaiśya. They do not admit to *dikṣā* persons belonging to the caste of the śūdras or candālas.¹⁶

ii) The kṣullikās

The word (feminine of *kṣullaka*) means: small, miniscule.¹⁷ Kṣullikās can be attached to a group of āryikās under the same guruṇi and the same ācārya. In this case they stay permanently with the āryikās. Alternatively, they may form a separate group which stays close to the ācārya the whole time, following him in his *vihāras*. The kṣullikās thus never form an independent group. In the case of some, this state of life is permanent, in the case of others temporary, lasting for one or more years, after which the kṣullikā becomes an āryikā. The kṣullikās are consecrated to this way of life by a special form of *dikṣā*, on which occasion a new name is given. They differ from the āryikās in practising a less strict asceticism and in undertaking vows of less radical content. They adhere to the eleven *pratimās*, the stages of spiritual life prescribed for the śrāvikās, the perfect observance of which bring one as far as the fifth *guṇasthāna*.¹⁸ These *pratimās* are:

¹⁶ Cf. PSa III, 25, 15* (interpolated v.); Kailāśacandra, ADh, Introd.;, p. 17. Mātāji told me that a girl who was considered to be of illegitimate birth cannot be admitted among the āryikās, but can be so among the kṣullikās.

¹⁷ The *saṃgha* of Digambara munis includes members who are kṣullakas.

¹⁸ Spiritual stage; cf. P 310 ff. Theoretically, there is no difference between an āryikā, kṣullikā and a śrāvikā in regard to the stage or level to which they can attain, which is the 5th *guṇasthāna* and no further. However, in actual fact, when all these subtle distinctions are taken into consideration, it transpires that a kṣullikā is in process of becoming, as regards her way of life, a perfected śrāvikā, which does not mean that, in becoming a kṣullikā, she has responded perfectly to all the requirements of the *pratimās*, but that her state of life, if she is faithful, will lead her to this degree of perfection. On account of the *mahāvratas* by which an āryikā is bound (one of which, *aparigraha*, is partial because of her wearing clothing), she is in a state of life superior to that of the kṣullikā; she is pledged to live the life of asceticism to perfection and is thus, if we may so express it, already far closer to a perfect

1. *Darśana-pratimā*, knowledge of the doctrine and faith, therein renunciation of the passions, devotion to the *paramēṣṭhins*.
2. *Vrata-pratimā*, observance of the five *aṇuvratas*, the three *guṇavratas* (which are subsidiary to these *aṇuvratas*) and the four *śikṣā-vratas*, i.e., various rules of the ascetic life, including certain fasts.
3. *Sāmāyika-pratimā*, observance of the rite of *sāmāyika*.
4. *Poṣadha-pratimā*, the observance of fasts on *aṣṭami*, the eighth day of the lunar fortnight and on *caturdaśī*, the fourteenth day of the lunar month.
5. *Sacittatyāga-pratimā*, the taking of only very pure foodstuffs.
6. *Rātribhuktavirata-pratimā*, abstinence from food in the evening.
7. *Brahmacarya-pratimā*, complete continence.
8. *Ārambhatyāga-pratimā*, renunciation of all professional and social activity, commerce, agriculture, etc.
9. *Parigrahyāga-pratimā*, renunciation of all forms of possession: goods, properties.
10. *Anumatityāga-pratimā*, renunciation of participation in family, professional and social activities, in anything of a worldly sort.
11. *Uddiṣṭatyāga-pratimā*, renunciation of the family abode in favour of an ascetic life in dependence upon a group of ascetics living from alms, either one formed around the *ācārya* or a group of *āryikās*.¹⁹

realisation of the 5th *gupaṣṭhāna*, so long, of course, as she is faithful to the demands of her promises. These promises constitute the 28 *mūlaguṇas*; cf. *dikṣā*, P 653 ff.

¹⁹ Cf. Jñānamati, 1976, pp. 65-66; one observes that certain *pratimās* are repetitious of the *aṇuvratas*.

Relaxations in the rules of austerity followed by the āryikās, when applied to the kṣullikās, are as follows:

- they have an extra garment, a blouse or *cāḍara* (a cotton scarf);
- they use for their meals a *pātra*, their own or one belonging to the śrāvakas;
- they are permitted to cut their hair every two, three or four months instead of it being plucked out;
- they are permitted to wear sandals for walking and to use a bus or other means of locomotion for their movement from place to place. In all other respects they follow the same rules of life as the āryikās.²⁰

When a kṣullikā by means of a new *dikṣā* becomes an āryikā, she must change her ācārya, if the one upon whom she is dependent has no āryikā in his group, and take her place in a new group. She either keeps her name or receives a fresh one.

On account of the austerity required in this state of life, certain girls who do not have strong enough constitutions to become kṣullikās ask to be received as *brahmacārinīs*; these retain their virginity and observe the *prātimās*, but in a more partial manner than do the kṣullikās. Some of them are attached to a group of kṣullikās, others to a group of āryikās, either living with the group or in their own homes, as circumstances dictate.

iii) The *saṃgha* today

The āryikās are natives of Madhya Pradeśa (the district of Sāgara), of Uttara Pradeśa, with one single āryikā coming from Kaṛṇāṭaka, from Śravana Beḷgoḷa itself. The kṣullikās come mostly from Māhāraṣṭra and Kaṛṇāṭaka. The āryikās and kṣullikās of today belong to the Sarasvatigaccha which has direct links with Ācārya Kundakunda.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 67. Kṣullikā Śrī Guṇamati replied in writing to some of my questions.

According to the list compiled during the *cāturnāsya* of August, 1977, the āryikās, divided into several groups, were reckoned to number sixty-two and the kṣullikās twenty-three.²¹ However, it is possible that some names, very few probably, were omitted from the list.

In the family of Jaina ascetics, the āryikās and kṣullikās form a tiny minority. In this small but fervent group there exists, however, a very real community spirit. They endeavour to live in a spirit of concord and harmony with one another, encouraging each other in the pursuit of a common ideal and attending carefully to the needs of the sick and the suffering.²²

c) *Strimukṭi-niṣedha*: The exclusion of Womankind from Liberation

From the start of our study we have mentioned this belief peculiar to the Digambaras, a belief that they justify by their own interpretation of certain doctrinal points, in introducing which we have briefly stated the Digambara point of view.²³ As we proceed to consider now the way of life of the āryikās, we need to review some of these ideas, give the Digambara interpretation of certain ancient and other later texts and the refutation of some of the arguments put forward. We are not proposing to submit a detailed analysis of the texts, but simply a few facts concerning the bases of this belief concerning the āryikās. This is, indeed, precisely what is of interest to ourselves: to have at least some depth of comprehension of that which moulds their life. We should stress once again that this exclusion²⁴ is only temporary, being connected with the female body; *mokṣa* will be the end-product of a future life.

²¹ Cf. *Samyagjñāna*, August 1977.

²² Cf. Jñāmatī, 1976, p.77; for further information, *ibid.*, pp.75-76; cf. PSa III, 52-53.

²³ Cf. e.g. P 140; 311.

²⁴ *Niṣedha*: obstacle, prohibition, debarring, deprivation, exclusion.

i) Some basic notions

These are inextricably connected with that of *karman* and are interdependent.

1. *Veda* or *liṅga*, that is, the sign and also sex in human beings.

The doctrine recognises three genders: feminine, masculine and neuter or sex-less.²⁵ Within the composite human being a distinction is made between *bhāva-veda*, which refers to the inner disposition and psychological state of a person of a particular sex, and *dravya-veda*, the physical constitution of this same person. While the *bhāva-veda* can change and be modified in the course of an existence proportionally as the capacity for self-mastery increases, the *dravya-veda* is unchanging during the existence of this same *jīva*.²⁶ These *vedas* are not due to the game of chance, but depend upon well-defined factors, namely *darśanamohaniya-karman* and *nāma-karman*.

2. *Darśanamohaniya-karman*, that is, *karmas* inherited from a former life that obscure right vision; these it is that determine the *bhāva-veda*, the psychic composition, of a person.²⁷

3. *Nāma-karman*, also inherited from a previous life. This, which may be more meritorious or less in accordance with different cases, determines a person's physique.²⁸

²⁵ Cf. TS II, 52; neuter or sex-less: a *-liṅga*, without sign, neither masculine nor feminine, or again *na-puṁsaka*, not masculine, impotent, effeminate. Infernal beings and those spontaneously generated are all of neuter gender, their birth in this state being due to unmeritorious *karmas*; cf. TS II, 50.

²⁶ Cf. JSK III, p. 590 and pp. 590-596 for a general study of the question.

²⁷ Cf. TS VIII, 9; P 307.

²⁸ Cf. TS VIII, 11; TS Sukhlal, pp. 308-312.

4. *Sarīhanana-nāma*, which, among the numerous types of *nāma-karman* determines the bony structure of a person. This physical feature is of major importance for the practice of *dhyāna*, for only a person who possesses an *uttama-sarīhanana*, an outstandingly good bone-structure, is by nature apt for *śukla-dhyāna*, the loftiest form of concentration. It is well-known that *dhyāna* is indispensable for *nirjarā*, the dissociation and elimination of *karmas* and thus for Liberation. These ideas form part of Jaina doctrine common to both traditions and we shall go on to see how the Digambaras have interpreted them in a way that is unfavourable towards womankind.

ii) The Digambara point of view

No important treatise dealing with the question of *strīmukti* exists, but in their commentaries on the doctrine the ācāryas of several epochs have treated this subject. Not all have submitted the same aspects to examination or treated them in the same way. However, the conclusion of all is identical.

1. The *Aṣṭaprabhṛta* of Ācārya Kundakunda

This text contains just a few verses, probably among the most ancient on the subject.²⁹ We have here certain reasons, succinctly expressed - without any explanation - as to why women are incapable of reaching Liberation.³⁰

- Āryikās wear a garment and retain it during their meal.

- According to the Law of the *jinas* there is no *mokṣa* without nudity being first espoused.

²⁹ Kundakunda's dates remain uncertain. The authors place him between the IInd and VIth c. A.D.

³⁰ There are almost identical vs. in the PSa, but these vs. have been interpolated and one cannot be sure that they are Kundakunda's; cf. PSa III, 24, 7* - 14*.

- Very minute living organisms are to be found in the vagina of a woman, between the breasts, on the navel, beneath the armpits, all of which constitutes an obstacle to the ascetic life.

- If women are purified by right vision and practise austerity, they are free from sin.³¹

- Their spirit is wayward, by temperament they are unstable, they have their monthly periods³² and are prone to doubt. For these reasons they are not fit subjects for *dhyāna*.³³

2. Notes, furnished by Mātāji, indicating the position put forward in certain later texts

- *Dravya-nāris* or female bodies of the *karma-bhūmi* do not possess any one of the three outstandingly good types of bone-structure.

- Women wear clothing and thus cannot attain perfection or Liberation.³⁴

- The same affirmation is made as regards the bone-structure. Hence women cannot possess the capacity for mental concentration necessary for *śukla-dhyāna*, the purest form of concentration.³⁵

³¹ PSa III, 24, 13* adds that even if, in addition, they know the Scriptures, they cannot succeed in destroying completely all their *karmas*.

³² This physiological function, in that it could have perturbing effects upon the psyche, might tend to be an obstacle to self-mastery.

³³ Cf. *Aṣṭaprabhṛta* 22-26.

³⁴ Jñānamati, 1976, p. 62, based upon the *Ācārasāra* II, 86, a text of Vīranandi of the X-XIth c.

³⁵ Cf. Jñānamati, *ibid.*, p. 63, based upon the *Gommaṭasara* I, 32, a text of Nemicandra (P 224.).

- *Dravya-stris* or female bodies cannot be liberated, for, because women wear clothing their self-mastery is not perfect, their vows therefore are also only imperfectly and partially fulfilled and they can only succeed in reaching some of the *guṇasthānas*.³⁶

- However, there are certain cases in which a person with a *dravya-puruṣa*, a man's body, may possess the *bhāva-veda* of a woman, that is to say, his inner disposition is that of a woman. Now such a person may well pass through the fourteen *guṇasthānas* and be liberated, thanks to his male body, while in the opposite case, that of a person possessing a *dravya-strī*, a woman's body, and a man's *bhāva-veda*, she will only reach the fifth *guṇasthāna* and will not be liberated in her present life. However, if she has, with this woman's body, embraced the ascetic life and followed the path of the *dharma*, she will be reborn with a man's body, will go in her next life to a period of enjoyment with the gods, then, returning to the earth in a man's body and practising asceticism, will thereafter be speedily liberated.³⁷

3. The reflections of Śrī Prabhācandra³⁸

- Although limited in content, they seek to vindicate themselves by proffering certain explanations:

- If one considers *prakarṣa*, excellence, superiority, pre-eminence, to be necessary for reaching Liberation, one can say

³⁶ Cf. Jñānamati, *ibid.*, based upon the *Dhavalā* I, 1, 93, a text of Virasena, IXth c.; the *Dhavalā* is a very elaborate commentary on the *Śaṅkhaṇḍāgama*, the most ancient of the Digambara texts and one of the two recognised as *Āgamas*, the 2nd being the *Kaṣāyaprābhṛta*; cf. P 149 ff.

³⁷ Cf. Jñānamati, *ibid.*, pp. 63-64.

³⁸ A Digambara muni of the Xth-XIth c., author of several works including the *Prameyacakamalamārttaṇḍa*, a text of logic thought to have been written at Dhārā in Madhya Pradesh, (JSK III, pp. 139-140), of which one part, several pp. in length, is entitled "*Śrīmukti-vicāra*" upon which we are here drawing, however giving only the main ideas.

that it is *māyā*, deceit, duplicity and certainly not excellence - understood here in the sense of outstanding virtues - that is clearly evidenced in the *Āgamas* in connection with women.

If one considers *saṁyama*, self-control, what can be said in regard to women except that their form of *saṁyama* is *saceta* or *savastra*, that is to say, cannot be dissociated from the wearing of clothing. Hence their capacity for self-control is the same as that of the *śrāvikās*. For in no text of Scripture is it affirmed that womankind may practise self-mastery in the state of bodily nudity. Therefore, if one were to permit her this nudity, one would undermining ascetic discipline and committing a sin.³⁹

- One attains *mokṣa* through a total inner and outer detachment. Now, clothing is the sign of a certain attachment to the body. If one justifies the wearing of clothing by affirming that it avoids *himsā* towards insects who are attracted by bodily warmth, this is not a valid argument, for one would then be condemning nudity in the name of *ahimsā*. Furthermore, the wearing of clothing does not in fact prevent *himsā*, for minute living beings which one may damage or squash may penetrate into the said clothing.⁴⁰ In using clothing, in washing, drying and repairing it, one is the cause of *himsā* and of some form of attachment as well. Moreover, if one takes into consideration only the aspect of *ahimsā* one should cease walking for the sake of protecting living beings.

- To return to the question of *saṁyama*, the munis use the *picchikā*, the *kamaṇḍalu* and books. Can one say that these constitute possessions? Certainly not, for these objects are used in order to avoid *himsā*, they are not, like clothing, the sign of an attachment to the body. These are *upakaraṇas*, aids which are *upakāri*, salutary; they contribute towards the realisation of the Three Jewels, while clothing is an *adhikaraṇa* a support, a possession.

³⁹ He too mentions the necessity of an excellent bone-structure.

⁴⁰ Cf. P 546 for the *aṣṭasūkṣmas*.

iii) Refutation of this thesis

Supporters of the Liberation of women have not let these arguments go unanswered. Here are two replies, coming from different epochs:

1. The *Strimuktīprakaraṇa* or treatise upon, discussion of, the subject of Liberation of womankind. This is a brief and well-argued treatise. The author, according to most experts, was probably Ācārya Śākaṭāyana, the celebrated grammarian, who was also called Pālyakīrti, of the Yāpaniya sect.⁴¹ The following are the chief points raised in this treatise in refutation of the arguments of the Digambaras.

- It is by way of the Three Jewels that one attains *mokṣa*. Nowhere in the *Āgamas* is it stated that women are unable to realise these Three Jewels.

- There is no solid reason for saying that in women, just as in the *devas* - who are capable of experiencing only enjoyment - there is an incapacity for *saṁyama*.

- Women know the teaching of the *jinas*, they believe in it and endeavour to live lives in conformity with it. To affirm that they cannot be liberated is contrary to the teaching of the *Āgamas*.

⁴¹ For the Yāpaniyas, cf. P 215. They conceded that womankind could attain Liberation. Śākaṭāyana probably belonged to the VIIth c. For further information about him, this particular treatise and his other treatise, *Kevalībhuktī*, cf. Premī, 1942, pp. 22-55; 157-158; 166-167; 542. Actually, although this topic of dissension had existed for several centuries, it had received scarcely any systematic treatment until the appearance of this text, which in all likelihood happened on account of the necessity of the Yāpaniyas and Digambaras adopting some stance in its regard; cf. Malvania (*Nyāyāvatāravārtika-vṛtti*, 1949, p. 332). However, doubt has been thrown both on whether Śākaṭāyana belonged to the Yāpaniyas and also on whether the celebrated grammarian and the author of the two treatises are one and the same person; cf. Birwe, 1969, pp. 15-21 (Introd. to the *Vyākaraṇam* of Śākaṭāyana).

- Women are capable in fact of perfect self-mastery.

- In the same way as munis utilise certain objects which are a help towards *saṁyama*, the *picchikā*, the *kamaṇḍalu* and books, so too women ascetics, in order to practise *saṁyama*, cover themselves with a garment. What is to blame in that? If one considers that there is in this a manifestation of the spirit of possessiveness, then one should say the same about munis also.

- Clothing, it is said, is the cause of sins of *hiṁsā*; minute living beings insinuate themselves into it; one washes it, wears it, mends it. This reasoning is not valid. Munis, in that they move around, sit down, and speak do not avoid any less the sins of *hiṁsā*.

- Women, say some, are less worthy of reverence than men. However, this cannot be claimed to be an obstacle to Liberation. The *gaṇadharas*, too, were less worthy of reverence than the *tirthaṅkaras*. Nevertheless, they attained Liberation.

- Women, people say, have weak characters. Now, this goes against Scripture. Do we not have the examples of Brāhmī, Sundarī, Rājīmatī, Candanā and other *gaṇinis*, who received *dikṣā* and were persons of outstanding character, venerated by one and all? And in our own days we see numerous exemplary āryikās up and down the country and, apart from the āryikās, do we not have examples of holy women of noble character such as *Sitā*? Do we not also know of heroic women who, abandoning the easy court-life and severing family-ties, received *dikṣā* and led lives of irreproachable virtue?

- And how let us consider *bhāva-veda* and *dravya-veda*. The more important, clearly, is *bhāva-veda*; in spiritual endeavour *dravya-veda* is secondary and is subordinated to *bhāva-veda*. Furthermore, to say that one can have a *dravya-puruṣa* and a *bhāva-stri*, a masculine body and a feminine psyche, or vice versa, is nonsense. Such anomalies would lead to aberrations. Women who have a *bhāva-puruṣa* would feel themselves attracted to women with a *bhāva-stri* and in the same way men

who have a *bhāva-stri* to men with a *bhāva-puruṣa*. There would then be unions between persons of the same sex.

- This must be well-emphasised: on account of their nudity, munis always risk feeling an attraction for women and this is why the *Āgamas* have decreed that these latter should be clothed. The reverse also is true and the same rule ought to be observed by the munis, for the nudity of men may also be a cause of excitement for women. Hence to deny the possibility of Liberation to women on account of their clothing is another invalid argument and there are no grounds for speaking of their lesser capacity for *samīyama* or for affirming that they can reach no further than the fifth of the fourteen *guṇasthānas*.

- It is certain that what matters is the *bhāva-veda*, while the *dravya-veda* is secondary. Now a secondary reason is never an obstacle to an authentic proof. Therefore, there is no well-established and convincing reason to exclude womankind from Liberation on account of her physical constitution. Women have exactly the same right to Liberation as men and there is no text in the *Āgamas* that teaches that womankind has less aptitude for Liberation; this is the truth.

2. The arguments of Ratnaprabhāsūri ⁴²

- Like the author of the *Strimuktīprakaraṇa*, this ācārya presents a refutation that is both consistent and, furthermore, on similar lines - it could not be otherwise - but with a few slightly different emphases:

- It is said that a woman cannot be liberated because, like the eunuch, she is weaker than a man, she is inferior to him. Now, what are the causes of her "incapacity"? Not that she cannot realise the Three Jewels, for she is quite capable of doing so.

⁴² A Śvetāmbara muni of the XIIIth c; his arguments, of which we give here only a brief resume, are to be found in Part III of his work, the *Ratnākaraṇavatārikā*, in a passage entitled: "*Strimuktīdvēṣiṇaṃ digambarāṇaṃ khaṇḍanāṃ*" or: Refutation of the Digambara hostility towards the Liberation of womankind.

- If one says that this incapacity is due to the wearing of clothing, one is maintaining that clothing is the cause of an attachment. Why should clothing be reckoned a "possession"? Because it touches the body? Because it provides a certain pleasure? The touching of the body is not a form of possession; one has frequent contact with the earth, but is it said that one experiences an attachment for the earth? There is no pleasure in wearing a garment. In the Scripture it is required that a woman should wear clothing because the complete renunciation that nudity involves is not possible for her. However, in order to attain *mokṣa*, woman renounces fully her own body. Why should she not renounce clothing? In our day and age, one does in fact come across some *yoginīs* who have abandoned all clothing.

- Clothing, in the same way as the *picchikā*, the *kamaṇḍalu* and books, is a *dharma-upakaraṇa*, a useful object helpful for self-control, and not a possession. Moreover, clothing is *upakāri*, beneficial and salutary, for the good reason that at the sight of a naked woman men would tend to lose all self-control.

- Furthermore, when one says that the wearing of clothing is a sign of an attachment, one is mistaken. Munis, because they dwell in certain villages and houses for a while, may easily get attached to these places or dwellings. Thus, there is no valid reason for saying that women have not the necessary capacity for realising the Three Jewels and that they are weaker than men.

- The argument that women are not venerated and therefore cannot be Liberated is quite untenable. Venerated by whom? By the ācāryas or by ordinary people? The āryikās, true, are not saluted by the ācāryas, but nor do the ācāryas salute their muni disciples; in that case Liberation would be denied to all these munis.

- Women are capable of devoting themselves to the arduous study of the Āgamas and of understanding their content.

- The affirmation that man possesses superior power - is this claim put forward on spiritual or purely external physical grounds? Women also can give evidence of a high degree of inner perfection, which is what counts as regards attaining *mokṣa*. External power is not necessary. Therefore the assertion that women cannot be *tirthaṅkaras* has no foundation in truth.

- Women receive *dikṣā*, this being permitted by the *Śāstras*; they observe the rule of *keśa-luñcana*, the plucking out of the hair; they use the *dharma-upakaraṇa*: the *picchikā*, the *kamaṇḍalu* and books; all the signs appertaining to ascetics are observable in them. Then how can one say that they are not worthy to receive *dikṣā*? And since they do in fact receive *dikṣā*, how can one say that they are precluded from Liberation?

- Wherefore the evidence gleaned from the *Āgamas* and from elsewhere all goes to prove the statement: the Liberation of womankind is a reality.⁴³

- As this whole chapter is devoted to the *āryikās*, the following few observations in the form of reflections or of queries which would benefit from full and careful replies are presented with the Digambara tradition in mind.

- After studying these few texts, we may consider afresh the question of the obligatoriness of complete physical nudity for attaining *mokṣa*, a question which is advanced in the name of that perfect self-mastery which goes hand in hand with the elimination of karmic matter. Not only, we note, are women debarred from Liberation but also all men who wear clothing, including the *Śvetāmbara* munis.

⁴³ Among other *ācāryas* who rebutted the opinions of the Digambaras and defended the right of womankind to Liberation we must include Dharmasāgara of the XVIth c; cf. Winternitz, 1977, p. 593. Cf. also P.S. Jaini, 1984, a short paper which brings together the arguments from both sects.

- And if nudity is indispensable for reaching *nirvāṇa*, why are women forced to wear a garment?⁴⁴ The reasons given can hardly be said to be based on the doctrine.

- As for the far-reaching assertion that women are only capable of a very imperfect degree of self-mastery, no solid doctrinal reason for this is given. Jaina history, experience and tradition - as the authors of the above refutations have declared - often testify to the contrary.

- Not only do the majority of arguments put forward lack any real basis, but certain interpretations seem to contradict each other, for after all the whole proposition hinges upon this one point: the major importance attached to the physical constitution, which leads to the imposition of a limit upon spiritual progress on the pretext that a person's *dravya-veda* cannot change in the course of a life-time.

- Thus the physical constitution is averred to be the major obstacle to Liberation, but no criteria are given in accordance with which women are adjudged not to possess any of the three bone-structures which are excellent for and indispensable to perfect concentration.

- Now how are we to explain the fact that so profoundly spiritual a tradition, one that is entirely orientated towards interiority and the realisation of the *ātman*, accords to *dravya-veda* a much greater importance than it does to *bhāva-veda*? Is there not here a contradiction?

- When one has a quick look at the place occupied by the āryikās in their own tradition,⁴⁵ one observes that the Digambaras also speak of the *cāturvidhasaṅgha*; so they, in practice, do assign a unique place to the āryikās which is not that of the śrāvikās. They do recognise, therefore, that the āryikās belong to the family of the ascetics.

⁴⁴ N.B. *Āśādhara* (the author of the *Adh*) says that in the last hours of her earthly life a woman may divest herself of all clothing; cf. *Sāgāradharmāmṛta* VIII, 38 (quoted by Williams, 1963, p. 169 n. 2).

⁴⁵ Cf. the various documents concerning the āryikās in Part I.

- The āryikās, no less than the Śvetāmbara sādhis, have always been the object of respect and veneration on the part of the *saṃgha*. Documents in their regard testify to the holiness of their lives. At Devagadha we may also see images of āryikās in *dhyānamudrā*, which proves that they are recognised as being capable of mental concentration.⁴⁶

- It may be said that, on the whole, the *saṃgha* is little preoccupied with doctrinal subtleties, that hostility towards womankind has not contaminated the śrāvakas and śrāvikās nor the wearing of clothing by āryikās prevented them from considering them models worthy of imitation.

- Furthermore, in the course of this introduction to the way of life of the āryikās, we are going to see, as Mātāji explains, that the rules are the same as those of the munis, except that the former are clothed, they take their meal seated⁴⁷ and certain postures are forbidden them.⁴⁸ The āryikās receive the same *dikṣā* as the munis, but on account of their wearing of clothing their *mahāvratas* are considered partial, in that their vow of *aparigraha* is not all-inclusive. Therefore it is affirmed that this *dikṣā* and these vows amount only to an *upacāra*,⁴⁹ a practice, custom or semblance. In all this there remains a fair degree of ambiguity and the Digambaras should explain their position on this question with greater clarity.

- For the āryikās of our own day their position forms part of a well-established system of belief. Since they are permitted to embrace the

⁴⁶ It is true that they are said to be incapable of advancing as far as *śukla-dhyāna*, but it is not denied that they can develop a certain capacity for concentration. It is interesting to note that so far no image of this sort depicting Śvetāmbara sādhis is known.

⁴⁷ The Digambara munis take their meal standing.

⁴⁸ These same postures are also forbidden to sādhis.

⁴⁹ Cf. Jñānamati, 1976, p. 26; JSK III, p. 597.

ascetic life, they are able to do so with complete generosity, and in their view perfection demands, precisely, the wearing of their own dress; to abandon it would be to commit a grave fault. From the moment, as Mātāji says, when they start to follow their rule of life, their conduct is honourable, their commitment fully valid. No one, not even the ācārya, imposes upon them any interdict in regard to their training and spiritual endeavour. They may study the texts of the sages of their tradition and translate them, in the same way as the munis do.⁵⁰ Mātāji is the first to have translated from Sanskrit into Hindi an important text of logic, the first part (which in itself comprises a voluminous tome of 445 pp.) of the *Aṣṭasahasṭri* of Ācārya Vidyānanda. Those who have the capacity can give *pravacanas*, which testifies, on the one hand, to their knowledge of the doctrine and their ability to expound it and, on the other, to the confidence which they enjoy within the *saṅgha*.

B - *Dikṣā-vidhi*: The rite of Consecration

Dikṣā has exactly the same import as regards life-commitment, to whichever *sampradāya* the *vairāgiṇi* belongs. However, the rite differs. The rite proper to each *sampradāya* embodies in its structure and contents the special features of the ideal followed within a specific community. A *vairāgiṇi* who requests admission as an āryikā knows, but as yet only from outside, what the demands of this way of life are. From the moment the *dikṣā* commences, she is led step by step along the new path that she is desirous of following; each act, each word, each gesture, each hymn of praise, each promise is a token of her entry once and for all into the *saṅgha* of the āryikās. Omitting repetition of certain essential features already described and elements common to both traditions, let us try to observe the successive moments experienced by a *vairāgiṇi* who, by the rite of *dikṣā*, is being consecrated as an āryikā.⁵¹

⁵⁰ The Tapāgaccha sādhis, as is known, do not enjoy the same latitude in regard to these pursuits. However, they are not debarred from Liberation; cf. P 493-494.

⁵¹ Cf. *Dharma-dhyāna-dīpaka*, pp. 376-386; *Jñānamatī*, 1976, pp. 14-17.

Before following this *vidhi*, we must make mention of one tenet proper to Digambara spirituality, which affects the structure and form of expression of the generality of Digambara rites. For the Digambaras, the temple is the place of worship, a worship which is at one and the same time both sober and very rich: sober, because it is based upon the teaching of the *tirthaṅkaras* and thus has a strong tendency towards austerity, and rich on account of the deep, upsurging *bhakti* that is always just beneath the surface. This *bhakti* is more than a personal form of devotion, it is an integral part of the rites of the *saṅgha* which are common to all. The *vidhis* of *dikṣā*, the *āvaśyakas* and various occasions of *pūjā* contain a certain number of texts which are actually termed *bhaktis*, preceded by the name which qualifies them. Each *bhakti* is a different hymn of praise and is addressed not only to the *arhats* but to all the major elements of the *dharma*. The *bhaktis* are composed in Sanskrit and vary in the number of verses they contain, the shortest having five and the longest sixty. Each is preceded by *kāyotsarga* and followed by *ālocanā*, a text in Prakrit in which contrition is expressed for faults committed in connection with the subject of the particular *bhakti* one has just recited and, more importantly, in one way or another faith is somehow re-affirmed in the particular aspect of the doctrine that the *bhakti* in question is extolling.⁵²

These *bhaktis* are inserted in the various *vidhis* obligatory for the *āryikās* and in each case form part of the order of the rite. They are called:

siddhabhakti, in praise of the *siddhas*;

śrutabhakti, in praise of Scripture;

cāritrabhakti, in praise of right conduct;

yogibhakti, in praise of the ascetics;

⁵² There exist also simplified forms of these *bhaktis*, i.e., for the same subject there is also a *laghu-bhakti* (little *bhakti*), e.g. *laghu siddhabhakti*; this is in Prakrit and forms part of the rite of *pratikramaṇa*.

ācāryabhakti, in praise of the perfect ācārya;

pañcagurubhakti and *pañcamahāgurubhakti*,⁵³ in praise of the *parameṣṭhins*;

tirthaṅkarabhakti, in praise of the *tirthaṅkaras*;

śāntibhakti, in praise of the *tirthaṅkara* Śāntinātha;

samādhibhakti, in praise of the state of perfection of the *jīnas*;

nirvāṇabhakti, in praise of the places where Mahāvira, Adinātha and other *tirthaṅkaras* attained *nirvāṇa*;

caityabhakti, in praise of the sanctuaries where the *tirthaṅkaras* are venerated - sanctuaries of stone and marble and also those constructed mentally by fervent devotion;

nandiśvarabhakti, in praise of the sanctuaries of the fifty-two mountains of the island of Nandiśvara where the *tirthaṅkaras* are venerated;⁵⁴

virabhakti, in praise of Mahāvira.⁵⁵

⁵³ This text in Prākṛit was probably composed by Kundakunda; it belongs to the rite of *sāmāyika*.

⁵⁴ The island Nandiśvara is the 8th island of the in-between world; it has 52 mountains, upon each of which is erected a temple. A realm of enjoyment frequented by the gods. At certain periods of the year, when the *tirthaṅkaras* are being celebrated, the gods repair to the temples on these mountains, while here below, simultaneously, men venerate these temples in honour of the *tirthaṅkaras*; cf. *SthS* 307 and *JSK* II, p. 503; U.P. Shah, 1955, ch. 11.

⁵⁵ Cf. Jñānamati, 1976, pp. 54-55, where the distribution of the various *bhaktis* among 13 important *vidhis* is shown. We indicate here the type of rites performed by the āryikās. Most of these Sanskrit *bhaktis* are attributed to Pūjyāpada. For the texts, cf. *Daśabhaktyādisaṅgraha*; *Dharma-dhyāna-dipaka*; *Sāmāyika*; *Sāmāyika-bhāṣya*. Furthermore, there exist several *bhaktis* in Prākṛit attributed to Kundakunda; cf. Upadhye, PSa, *Intro.*, pp. 25-27.

In addition to the *bhaktis*, there are two other elements which play a considerable part in the Digambara form of worship: the offering of a great variety of *pūjās* and the utilisation of *mantras*.⁵⁶

As for the text of the rite of *dikṣā*, this is the same for an *āryikā* as for a *muni*, but the vows of an *āryikā*, which are, so far as she is concerned, absolute, receive a lower rating, according to Digambara belief, in the hierarchy of values; in comparison with the vows of a *muni* they are of a lower degree. For this reason, it is always an *ācārya* who presides over the *dikṣā* of an *āryikā*, while a *gaṇini* is not authorised to do so.

Here is the order of proceedings in the rite of *dikṣā*.

Preparation

After residing for a while with the *gaṇini*, the *vairāgiṇi* must obtain the permission of the *ācārya* and of her family. Next, a *śubha-muhūrta*, propitious day, is chosen for the ceremony. The preparations for it may last for several days. In a temple where a *siddha-cakra* is to be found,⁵⁷ a *pūjā* is offered, such as that of *cāritra-śuddhi*, for purification, which may last a week or that of *ratnatraya*, the Three Jewels. It is performed by the *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* and the *vairāgiṇi*

⁵⁶ The subject of *mantras* is too vast and too complex to be considered here, for it requires a separate study; cf. *Namaskāra-mantra* (P 33); JSK III, pp. 256-258; P 379 ff. As for the various *pūjās*, the *āryikās* and *kṣullikās*, like the *sādhvis*, offer inner worship and take no direct part in the temple *pūjās*, but they encourage the performance of them and may be present, in an attitude of recollection, during a *pūjā* that is taking place.

⁵⁷ The *siddha-cakra* is a *yantra* (diagram) in honour of the *parameṣṭhins*; among the Digambaras it is commonly called the *nava-devatā*; in addition to the *parameṣṭhins* the following are also venerated: *caitya*, the statue of a *jina*; *caityālaya*, the temple; *dharma-cakra*, the Wheel of the Law; *śruta*, the Scripture; cf. U.P. Shah, 1955, pp. 97-103.

takes part.⁵⁸ Before the *pūjā*, the *vairāgiṇi* may also make a pilgrimage. In accordance with her means, she offers to a muni or to several munis or āryikās the *cāturvidhadāna*, the fourfold gift comprising food, shelter, pure medicine and books.

The *dikṣā* takes place in the morning under a big *maṇḍapa* or at the temple. After a ritual bath, the *vairāgiṇi* is ready to put on silk clothes and be escorted in procession as far as the *maṇḍapa*.⁵⁹ On arrival, a śrāvika makes the outline of a *svastika* with saffron-coloured grains of rice on a low table that she then covers with a new white cloth. The ācārya recites the *siddhabhakti*.

Commencement of the rite

1. The *vairāgiṇi* asks pardon for her offences from her family and the whole assembly.

2. She then offers *pūjā* to the image of the *jinendra* which has been erected in the *maṇḍapa*. Next, holding the *śrīphala* (one or more fruits) in her hand, she approaches the ācārya, begging him to guide her in this *saṁsāra-paribhramana* or earthly voyage and to be for her the *kaṇṇadhāra*, the boatman in the barque of *cāritra*. The ācārya, in his reply recalls to mind the obligations imposed upon the āryikās, to which the *vairāgiṇi* in turn replies that she accepts them. Then the ācārya, addressing the munis, the āryikās, her parents and the whole assembly, asks: "Is she to be admitted to *dikṣā*?" All respond joyously in the affirmative.

3. The *gaṇini* seats the *vairāgiṇi* on the low table, facing either towards the East or the North, and sits down herself beside her. The ācārya recites certain *mantras*, while at the same time

⁵⁸ In the North the śrāvakas and śrāvikās themselves offer the *pūjā*, as *pūjā* is regarded as community-worship; in the South, it is offered by *pūjāris*, officiating priests.

⁵⁹ The texts do not say when the *vairāgiṇi* changes her ordinary garments for the clothing of the ascetics. Mātāji, when consulted by letter, replied that "the *vairāgiṇi* receives *dikṣā* clothed in white."

mixing some ash and some camphor together in a *pātra*,⁶⁰ then he repeats other *mantras*, while the *gaṇini* proceeds to the *keśa-luñcana*.⁶¹ Next he recites the *siddhabhakti* and the *yogibhakti* followed by the *śāntimantra*.

The rite proper

1. The *ācārya* (or the *gaṇini*), using grains of saffron rice and cloves, makes the *bijākṣara Śrī* on the *vairāgiṇi*'s forehead and then makes the same sign with sandal-paste on the palm of each of her hands.⁶² Next, into the hands of the *vairāgiṇi* as she places them in the position of the *añjali* (cupped hands), he deposits *tanḍula*, *śrīphala*, *nāriyala*, that is, rice-grains, pieces of fruit and coconut. He recites the *siddhabhakti*, the *cāṇtrabhakti*, the *yogibhakti* and then receives her vow of commitment to the twenty-eight *mūlaguṇas* which constitute the obligations of each and every ascetic, namely, the five *māhāvratas*, the five *saṃitis*, the control of the senses, the six *āvaśyakas*, the *keśa-luñcana*, the state of nudity, abstention from taking a bath, sleeping on the ground, abstention from brushing the teeth, the taking of meals

⁶⁰ The ashes to absorb the drops of blood at the moment of the hair being torn out, the camphor for its soothing and healing effect.

⁶¹ Among the *āryikās*, the performance of *keśa-luñcana* every two months is considered *utkr̥ṣṭa*, excellent; every three months, *madhyama*, average, ordinary; every four months, *adhama*, inferior; cf. ADh IX,86. Some times the *keśa-luñcana* of an *āryikā* is made an opportunity for the *śrāvikās* of the place to get together and renew their fervour in the celebration of this rite; cf. e.g. *Samyagjñāna*, July, 1975: for the occasion of the *keśa-luñcana* of *Āryikā Abhayamati* at Panāgara (Madhya Pradesh), the *śrāvikās* in several of the surrounding localities organised groups for *svādhyāya* and circles for the study of the *dharma*.

⁶² *Bijākṣara*: *bija*, seed, grain; *akṣara*, syllable, letter; the *bijākṣara* is the 1st syllable of a *mantra*, in this instance *Śrī*. *Śrī* means a burst of light, splendour, glory, wealth, dignity, the goddess Lakshmi; it is a syllable of good omen, one which conveys happiness.

in a standing posture and the taking of only one meal a day.⁶³ The text makes clear that these vows are being taken and received in the presence of the five *paramēṣṭhins* and expresses the earnest wish that they may remain deeply embedded in the heart of the new āryikā.

The ācārya recites the *śāntibhakti*, after which follows what is called *ṣoḍasaśaṁskāra-āropana*, the inculcations of the sixteen *śaṁskāras*; these comprise the essential features of the doctrine and the obligations of the ascetic life which complete the *mūlaguṇas*: the Three Jewels, the inner and outer forms of *tapas*, etc.

2. The ācārya reads the *gurvāvali*, the list of the line of ācāryas of the Sarasvatigaccha, the Mūlasaṁgha and the Senagana starting from Ācārya Kundakunda; next, the new āryikā, the latest arrival, receive a new name. Henceforward the members of the *saṁgha* will address her as "Mātāji", Mother. Then each of the following objects is presented to her, symbols of her new status, with an appropriate *mantra*: the *picchikā*, a *Śāstra*, both of which she receives, one after the other, into her outstretched hands, and finally the *kamaṇḍalu*, which she holds in her left hand.

3. The new āryikā recites the *ācāryabhakti* and salutes the ācārya with a deep bow; then the munis and āryikās sit down. The śrāvakas and śrāvikās come forward bearing some fruit and salute the new āryikā. The ācārya or a muni or āryikā addresses the assembly, explaining and extolling the greatness of renunciation.

⁶³ *vadasamidindiyarodho locāvassayamacelamanhāṇam*

khidisaṇamadamitavaṇam thidibhoyaṇamegabhattam ca. PSa III, 8; ADh IX, 84-85. This text is recited during the daily *pratikramaṇa*; although it relates directly to the munis, it is not modified for the āryikās, but it is recognised that nudity and the taking of the meal standing are not permitted in their case; cf. Jñānamatī, 1976, pp.25-27. Seeing that the āryikās obey Scripture in having only two garments and in taking their meal seated, they do thus observe all the *mūlaguṇas*.

4. Celebration of the *ratnatraya pūjā*: the new āryikā recites the fortnightly *pratikramaṇa* and the final *vrata*s are enjoined upon her; which are usually certain types of *tapas*. The ācārya enjoins one *vrata* or another upon each of the śrāvakas or śrāvikās who have taken part in the rite of *dikṣā*.

Now that the consecration of the new āryikā has been accomplished, the āryikās can salute her with the *vandana*. To conclude the ceremony, the ācārya recites the *siddhabhakti*, the *yogibhakti*, the *śāntibhakti* and, finally the *samādhibhakti*.

The day of her *dikṣā* is for the new āryikā a day of fast. The following morning, when the ācārya, followed by the āryikās, leaves the temple, an invitation is extended to and accepted by each for the *āhāra*, the meal. The new āryikā arrives last; the śrāvakas who receive her consider this offering of theirs a very meritorious deed.

C - Āryikā-caryās: Observances practised by the Āryikās

The activities of the āryikās are characterised invariably by *aparigraha*, a deep *bhakti* and an extreme regard for purity in connection with food. On account of the fact that they take only one meal a day, receiving it into the *paṇi-patra* (their hands), and have only two garments that they change daily, they have more time for *svādhyāya*. *Pratīlekhanā*, among the āryikās, is limited to the use of the *picchikā*. However, three times a day, morning, noon and in the evening, they perform in addition a supplementary *vidhi* which is called both *sāmāyika* and *devavandana*, for it combines both aspects; this *vidhi* lasts on each occasion for one *muhūrta* (48 min.). The various *caryās* of one day, from well before sunrise until the first hours of the night, are apportioned as follows:

1. From just before dawn until about ten o'clock in the morning:
dhyāna - *svādhyāya* - *pratikramaṇa* - *sāmāyika*(*devavandana*)
svādhyāya - *āhāra* - *pratyākhyāna*.

2. From about noon until just before sunset: *sāmāyika* (*devavandana*)-*svādhyāya*-*adhyayana*-*pravacana*-*pratikramaṇa*.
3. From after sunset until well into the night: *sāmāyika*-*dhyāna*-*svādhyāya*.⁶⁴

As the rite of *āhāra* does not oblige them to go from house to house and as the number of āryikās competent to give *pravacanas* is small, their contacts with the exterior are thereby limited, although the śrāvakas and śravikās come frequently to salute them and consult them. Very exceptionally and when it is a question of giving spiritual help to a member of the local *saṅgha*, the āryikās may, though always two or more together and during daylight, pay a visit to a family outside the time of *āhāra*.⁶⁵

The *āvaśyakas*, *svādhyāya*, the ritual for *āhāra* and the *prāyaścittas*, though based on the Jaina doctrine common to all the *sampradāyas*, exhibit as practised by the āryikās some special features which possess an internal harmony and impart to their life its own style and character. Avoiding repetition of the basic ideas which are the underlying inspiration of each of the *vidhis*, let us endeavour to discern these characteristics.

a) *Āvaśyaka-vidhi*: The rite of duties

According to the prescribed numerical order *pratyākhyāna* comes before *kāyotsarga*. Among the āryikās a special feature of their *vidhis* is the recitation of the appropriate *bhaktis* in each of them, especially during *sāmāyika* or *devavandana*. In addition to this recitation of *bhaktis*, the *vidhis*, taken as a whole, are decidedly elaborate.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ All these words are already familiar (P 476 ff.); cf. Jñānamati, 1976, pp. 27-29.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 25.

⁶⁶ This subsection draws upon *Sāmāyika* (pp. 7-24) edited by Mātāji and containing the rite of *sāmāyika* as practised by the āryikās; Jñānamati, 1976, pp. 39-47. I regularly took part in these rites during my stays in Hastināpura in 1976 and 1977 with the help of *Dharma-dhyāna-dīpaka*.

Before we examine the structure of *sāmāyika*, we take note that the recitation of each text is accompanied by *mudrās*, that is, by certain gestures and bodily postures. At regular intervals, reverence for the *jinas* is expressed by means of *āvartas* (or *āvartanas*) and *śironatis* performed in a standing posture facing the image or icon.⁶⁷ The *āvarta* is a circular movement of the joined hands from right to left at face-height.⁶⁸ The *śironati* is an inclination of the head with joined hands. The *mudrās* number four:

1. *Jinamudrā*, the standing posture adopted for *kāyotsarga*.
2. *Yogamudrā*, the seated posture adopted for *kāyotsarga* which can be that of *padmāsana* or *paryāṅkāsana*; during *jinamudrā* and *yogamudrā*, the *picchikā* is deposited on the ground.
3. *Vandanamudrā*, a standing posture, the hands being joined at breast-height in *mukulita*, that is to say, half-open, holding the *picchikā*; this is the *mudrā* employed for the *bhaktis*.
4. *Muktāsuktimudrā*, identical to *vandanamudrā*, except that the hands are placed together in such a way that the palms and fingers are touching. This is the *mudrā* used in the *Namaskāra-mantra*, in *sāmāyika* and *caturvīṃśatistava*.⁶⁹

i) *Sāmāyika (devavandana)*

Although this rite contains the text of *sāmāyika*, it concentrates more on praise to the *tirthaṅkaras*, for which reason it is commonly called *devavandana*, *deva* being used here with the meaning of

⁶⁷ Cf. ADh VIII, 85-90; if *sāmāyika* does not take place in the temple, but in the place where the *āryikās* are residing, they perform the same gestures facing the East, even in the absence of any statue.

⁶⁸ Cf. P 320; 323.

⁶⁹ Cf. Jñānamati, 1976, pp. 39-40.

arhat.⁷⁰ *Sāmāyika* is a community rite, but, if there is a valid reason for doing so, an āryikā may perform it alone. As often as possible it takes place in the temple. Before penetrating within, the āryikās wash their hands and feet and then, repeating in a low voice the word "*nisahī, nisahī, nisahī*,"⁷¹ they enter the sanctuary. After a *praṇāma*, salutation to the image of the *jīncndra*, they make three *pradakṣiṇās*, circumambulations of the temple from left to right, reciting the while a hymn of praise in *vandanamudrā* and saluting each of the cardinal points with three *āvartas* and one *śironati*.

The *vidhi* then proceeds in this way:

- recitation of the *iryāpatha-śuddhi*, standing or seated;⁷²
- *kāyotsarga* in the *jīnamudrā* posture, during which they recite mentally nine *japas* of the *Namaskāra-mantra* accompanied by twenty-seven *ucchvāsas*, respiratory movements;⁷³
- recitation of the *ālocanā* of the *iryāpatha* in *paryāṅkāsana*;
- *pañcāṅga-namaskāra*;⁷⁴
- three *āvartas*, one *śironati*;

⁷⁰ Re. *devas*, cf. P 203 ff.

⁷¹ The āryikās repeat "*nisahī*" 3 times when they arrive at the temple, on entering the *vasatikāsthāna*, and similarly "*asahī*" 3 times on leaving these places; *nisahī* in order to request permission to enter from the gods, spirits and *yakṣas* who inhabit them, and *asahī*, permission to leave; cf. ADh VIII, 132-133; Jñānamati, 1976, p. 47; JSK I, p. 218.

⁷² The text is essentially the same as AvaS 16 (P 706).

⁷³ Each *kāyotsarga* is performed in this way.

⁷⁴ The prostration of the five members (P 323). Before each prostration the ground must be swept with the *picchikā*.

- *Namaskāra-mantra* and recitation of the text of *sāmāyika*,⁷⁵ in *muktāśuktimudrā*;

- three *āvartas*, one *śironati*;

- *kāyotsarga*;

- *pañcāṅga-namaskāra*;

- three *āvartas*, one *śironati*;

- *caturviṃśatistava* in *muktāśuktimudrā*,⁷⁶

- three *āvartas*, one *śironati*;

- three *pradakṣiṇās*;

- *caityabhakti* sung, in *vandanamudrā*;

- *ālōcanā* of the *caityabhakti* in *paryāṅkāsana*;

- *pañcāṅga-namaskāra*;

- three *āvartas*, one *śironati*;

- *sāmāyika-sūtra*;

- three *āvartas*, one *śironati*;

- *kāyotsarga*;

- *pañcāṅga-namaskāra*;

- three *āvartas*, one *śironati*;

⁷⁵ Prākṛit text in which is included AvaS 2, the most important section which contains the vow; cf. P 315 ff.; 700.

⁷⁶ The text is exactly the same as AvaS 3-9; cf. P 69 ff.; 701.

- *caturvīṃśatistava*;
- three *āvartas*, one *śironati*;
- *pañcamahāgurubhakti*, sung in *vandanamudrā*;
- *ālōcanā* (of the preceding *bhakti*);
- *pañcāṅga-namaskāra*;
- three *āvartas*, one *śironati*;
- *sāmāyika-sūtra*;
- three *āvartas*, one *śironati*;
- *kāyotsarga*;
- *pañcāṅga-namaskāra*;
- three *āvartas*, one *śironati*;
- *caturvīṃśatistava*;
- three *āvartas*, one *śironati*;
- *laghu-samādhibhakti*;
- *ālōcanā* (of the preceding *bhakti*);
- *dhyāna*.

We have here a harmony between the texts, recited or sung, and the gestures, postures and bodily demeanour, with the performance of *kāyotsarga* introducing a short regular cessation of all movement for a few moments of *dhyāna*.

This very comprehensive rite contains four *āvaśyakas*: the *iryāpatha-suddhi* (the *pratikramaṇa* related to comings and goings); the vow of *sāmāyika* and the *caturvīṃśatistava*, each being repeated

three times; *kāyotsarga*; and to these *āvaśyakas* are added the three *bhaktis*, each followed by the corresponding *ālocanā*.

ii) *Vandana*

When the *ācārya* is close by, then usually three times a day, after morning *sāmāyika*, the mid-day *sāmāyika* and the *pratikramaṇa* at the end of the afternoon, the *āryikās* sally forth for the *ācārya-vandana*. They sit, with the *gaṇini* in front, at a certain distance from the *ācārya*, in the posture called *gavāsana*, the *āsana* of the cow, that is, with legs folded to one side, holding the *picchikā* in their joined hands, and they bend forward to touch their foreheads to the ground. They recite the *laghu-siddhabhakti* and the *laghu-ācāryabhakti*; if the *ācārya* is particularly well-versed in the Scriptures, they recite also the *siddhabhakti*, the *śrutabhakti* and the *ācāryabhakti*. When the *āryikās* are on their own, then both before and after the principal *vidhis*, the *vandana* is addressed first to the *gaṇini*, then to each *āryikā* in order of seniority as regards the date of *dikṣā*. The posture is the same as in the *vandana* addressed to the *ācārya*, except that they simply say "*vandāmi*", "I salute", without reciting any *bhakti*.⁷⁷

iii) *Pratikramaṇa*

The texts expressing repentance for faults committed are long and detailed; this *vidhi* includes also *sāmāyika*, *kāyotsarga*, *caturvīṃśatistava*, as well as four *bhaktis*, namely, *laghu-siddhabhakti*, *virabhakti*, *tīrthaṅkarabhakti* and *laghu-samādhibhakti*. *Virabhakti* and *tīrthaṅkarabhakti* are two beautiful hymns of praise to the *arhats*.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Cf. ADh IX, 31; Jñānamati, 1976, pp. 41-42.

⁷⁸ Cf. ADh IX, 11; 52-56; *Dharma-dhyāna-dīpaka*, pp. 241-269. There is no basic difference between this and the *AvaS* as regards the nature itself of *pratikramaṇa*. As regards the frequency of its performance, it is a question of twice a day, at fortnightly intervals etc. and is the same as for the *sādhvis*; cf. IP 324 ff.

iv) *Pratyākhyāna*

In the morning, at the conclusion of the *āhāra*, the one meal per day, each āryikā recites mentally the *siddhabhakti* and takes a promise not to take food or drink until the same hour the following day. She then goes to the ācārya or to the *gaṇini* for *pratikramaṇa* in regard solely to faults committed during the meal, recites the *laghu-siddhabhakti* and the *yogibhakti* and renews her promise to take nothing till next day, followed by the *vandana*. She may also ask permission to undertake some additional form of austerity.⁷⁹

b) *Svādhyāya-vidhi*: The rite in regard to Scripture-study

After washing their hands and feet with pure water and sweeping the ground, the books and the little desk with the *picchikā*, the āryikās sit down in *paryāṅkāśana* and recite the *laghu-śrutabhakti*, followed by *kāyotsarga* and *vandana* to the *gaṇini*. At the end of the *svādhyāya* they recite the *laghu-śrutabhakti*, followed by *kāyotsarga*.⁸⁰

Svādhyāya consists of personal study, and pondering, but in the rule of life of the āryikās this study takes place simultaneously for all. The study of the texts of the doctrine and related works differs in accordance with the capacity of each. For contemporary āryikās there are no restrictions as regards Scriptures-study.⁸¹ All depends upon the aptitude, level of knowledge and greater or lesser capacity of each. The *gaṇini* guides the āryikās and gives them what explanations are necessary.⁸²

⁷⁹ Cf. Jñānamati, 1976, p. 44.

⁸⁰ Ibid., pp. 27; 49-53.

⁸¹ Ibid., pp. 50-51.

⁸² With their acute feeling for ritual purity, the Digambaras impose an even greater strictness upon the āryikās at the time of their monthly periods than do the Śvetāmbaras upon the sādhvis. Not only is an āryikā forbidden to touch any *dharma-grantha*, but she is even relegated to a room outside the temple precincts and takes no part in the performance of any of the rites, reciting them alone mentally. If she is able to fast, she does so and, if she is

c) *Āhāra-vidhi*: The rite in regard to meal

Āhāra means food. This rite is the outward expression of an extreme form of *ahimsā*, *aparigraha* and *tapas*. The āryikās may accept only natural food of the purest sort. They have no bowl other than the *pāṇi-pātra*, their hands, and take food and drink only once a day.⁸³

The *āhāra-vidhi* is a veritable liturgy, a liturgy both cosmic and human in which all the elements are included, in which the celebrants are the āryikās. In this *vidhi* there is truly actualised a profound intercommunion between the two parties for a single end.

i) *Navadhābhakti*, the *bhakti* containing nine parts:⁸⁴

1. *Nimantraṇa*, the invitation. In orthodox Digambara families the food is prepared with the utmost care; the wheat is ground at home and only water from a well or from a spring is used. If possible, cows are kept or at the least a careful watch is kept on the purity of the milk, and curds are prepared at home, etc.

In the middle of the morning, at about ten o'clock, the āryikās, having changed their *sāḍī*, proceed to the temple for *devadarśana*, a simple and brief *bhāva-pūjā* addressed to the *arhats*. During this time the śrāvikās of the place have prepared their meal. Knowing as they do that some āryikās are in their neighbourhood or in their village and the hour at which they

not strong enough, she must take nothing but *nirasa*, dry, tasteless food. She is permitted, however, to read books other than *dharma-granthas* and newspapers. She keeps total silence and touches no-one. At the end of the period she purifies herself with warm water, with the help of a śrāvikā, after which the *gaṇini* assigns her a *prāyaścitta*. Āryikās and sādhis alike greatly deplore this type of ostracism.

⁸³ This sub-section draws upon Jñānamati, 1976, pp. 31-38.

⁸⁴ *Bhakti* in this context has the meaning of a ritual performed with great devotion; none of the *bhakti* texts previously mentioned are recited.

emerge from the temple, several śrāvikās from two or three families, according to the number of āryikās, stand in front of their doors with a platter containing some fruit and, when the āryikās pass by, led by the *gaṇini*, the śrāvikās beg them to come and take the meal in their home, calling out: *Mātaji! Vandāmi, vandāmi, vandāmi, atra tiṣṭha tiṣṭha*" (Mātaji, I salute (you), I salute (you), I salute (you), stay, stay here). Each āryikā advances towards the śrāvikā representing the family she has chosen and this śrāvikā then makes the *pradakṣiṇā* three times round the āryikā.⁸⁵ She next escorts her to her house.⁸⁶ There all proceeds in accordance with a prescribed and meaningful ritual.

2. *Uccasthāna*, the raised seat. The śrāvikā ushers the āryikā to a small bench, upon which the āryikā then seats herself; the word "raised" simply points to the fact that in a śrāvaka's house the āryikās are given a position of honour and do not sit upon the ground. Several members of the family are present and assist the mistress of the house in the performance of this ritual which is considered highly beneficial for all.

3. *Carapa-prakṣālana*, the washing of the feet. A śrāvikā washes the āryikā's feet with warm water.⁸⁷

4. *Aṣṭadravya-pūjā*, the *pūjā* of the eight substances. On a small bench a śrāvikā places in offering, while reciting certain *mantras*: *jala*, water; *candana*, sandalwood; *akṣatas*, grains of rice; *puṣpas*, flowers; *naivedya*, a cooked offering in the form of a type of fritter; *dipa*, light (a lighted oil lamp); *dhūpa*, incense; *phala*, fruit.

⁸⁵ Here we have another sign of the deep veneration felt for the āryikās.

⁸⁶ Each āryikā is invited by a different family and there are often more invitations than āryikās, but the next day such families as have not been chosen can renew their invitation.

⁸⁷ Frequently, the śrāvikās who are present dip their right hands into this water and touch their foreheads with it, the water which has cleansed the feet of a muni or an āryikā being considered very holy.

5. *Namaskāra*, the salutation. The śrāvikā greets the āryikā by joining her hands and inclining the head.

6. *Mana-vacana-kāya-śuddhi*, purity of mind, speech and body. The śrāvikās urge the āryikā to accept the meal which has been prepared in this state of threefold purity.⁸⁸

7. *Āhāra-jala-śuddhi*, purity of the food and water.⁸⁹

ii) *Bhojana*, the meal itself:

A śrāvikā pours water over the hands of the āryikā, who then, after a moment of recollection in which she recites the *siddhabhakti*, eats and drinks from the *añjali* what the śrāvikās place therein, making a sign with her head when she has consumed enough of a dish or of milk or water.⁹⁰ During the meal, and only at that particular time, an āryikā is permitted to take a remedy, which must be a natural one and pure and thus ayurvedic. At the end of the meal the āryikā again washes her hands and recites inwardly the *siddhabhakti*. Then follows *pratyākhyāna*, the promise to abstain from eating and drinking until the following morning. After this, for a few moments, she converses with her hosts in a happy family atmosphere. Finally, they fill her *kamaṇḍalu* with hot water and often several members of the family accompany her as far as the *vasatikāsthāna*, one of them carrying the *kamaṇḍalu*.

⁸⁸ It is not enough that the food should be pure; the primary necessity is that those who offer it should be themselves pure, i.e., faithful to the observances enjoined by the *anuvratas*. They have not prepared this meal for ascetics but for their family and they have invited the āryikās to accept it without knowing whether they will accord them this honour.

⁸⁹ Cf. ADh V, 66-69.

⁹⁰ The āryikā maintains silence during the meal, but, as she cannot consume all that is offered to her, a śrāvikā points in turn to each of the dishes placed on a big round tray and the āryikā makes a sign with her head to indicate whether she accepts or declines.

The āryikās' *āhāra* and *sādhvis*' *gocari* stem from the same concepts of *ahimsā* and *aparigraha*; however, the two *vidhis*, both aiming at bringing about an identical inner attitude, present certain differences:

- the āryikās respond to an invitation and do not request alms in the form of food, whereas the sādhvis glean, so to speak, seeking here and there;
- the āryikās take one single meal a day and it is only during this meal that they may take a remedy. The sādhvis are permitted one full meal and two light ones and may drink water and take remedies from after sunrise until sunset;
- the āryikās have only the *pāṇi-pātra* by way of a utensil; the sādhvis have their wooden *pātras*;
- the āryikās always eat in silence; the sādhvis are allowed to talk.
- the āryikās take their meal in the house of a śrāvaka and in the presence of the whole family; the sādhvis, even if they are lodging in a śrāvaka's house, must not ask their host for food and must always eat their meal together and separately, with no-one else present;
- the āryikās are extremely meticulous as regards the purity of the food, the sādhvis less so. Although the context of their lives may differ, the faults to be avoided, in regard to *āhāra* are similar in both *sampradāyas*.⁹¹

In spite of their strict rules the āryikās may accept a meal offered by Śvetāmbara śrāvakas or even by *brāhmaṇas*, provided that the food is pure, that the hosts have a true devotion to the *tirthaṅkaras* and take no food after sunset. From other categories of persons they may accept fruit, pure water and milk.

⁹¹ Cf. Jñānamati, 1976, pp. 33-36.

d) *Rātriyoga*: Enclosure at nightfall

When the ācārya and some munis are close by, the āryikās join them for the recitation of the *pratikramaṇa* of the end of the day and then, after the *vandana* to the ācārya, the āryikās return to their *vasatikāsthāna*. If the *pratikramaṇa*, which is followed by a very brief *vidhi* called *rātriyoga* incorporating a promise to stay in the *vasatikāsthāna* during the night, followed by the *yogibhakti* and *kāyotsarga*.⁹² This does not, however, prevent the āryikās from going to the temple for the evening *sāmāyika* when they are staying within the precincts, always closed at night, of the temple.

e) *Prāyaścittas*: Expiations

The *prāyaścittas* are essentially the same in both traditions.⁹³ Each āryikā goes to the ācārya for *ālocanā*, but never alone, and, when the ācārya is at a distance, except in the case of a grave fault, the *gaṇini* hears the confessions and assigns the penances. The imposing number of *Cheda-sūtras* is reduced in this tradition to the *Prayaścitta-grantha*.⁹⁴ This *grantha* is in the keeping of the ācārya but those *gaṇinis* who are authorised to assign penances also have a copy. For ordinary minor faults there is no prescribed formula; after avowal of the fault has been made, the *gaṇini* decrees a penance which may be some form of fast, the recitation of the *Namaskāra-mantra* or another. When a graver fault is involved, the penitent must recite also the *siddhabhakti* and the *cāritrabhakti*.⁹⁵

⁹² Cf. ADh IX, 11; 40.

⁹³ Ibid., VII, 38-59.

⁹⁴ Cf. P 508 ff. it may be noted that nowadays, in actual fact, the majority of Śvetāmbara ācāryās use for the most part the *Jitakalpa-sūtra*, which is the equivalent of the *Prayaścitta-grantha* and thus it amounts to the same thing.

⁹⁵ Details provided by Mātaji.

D - *Triloka Śodha Samsthāna*: The Institute of Cosmographical Research

Jaina cosmography depicts the universe as comprising *trilokas*, three worlds, namely, the lower, intermediate and higher worlds.⁹⁶ During the course of the centuries the study of this cosmography has been neglected and the major texts upon which it is based are little known. In order to fill this gap, Mātāji, who is obliged to spend the greater part of the year at Hastināpura, has established a *Śodha Samsthāna*, an institute of research into the subject of the *trilokas*. It is not possible to enter here into the study of this vast and complex subject, but mention at least must be made of Mātāji's original initiative. She devotes herself to research into the manuscripts and to translation-work, in order to make the cosmographical texts accessible to the śrāvakas and śrāvikās and at the same time, with a view to rendering this cosmography more intelligible, more palpable, as one might say, she has embarked upon a vast project in the shape of a concrete representation of what, in the intermediate world, the earthly world where dwells humankind, is called *Jambūdvīpa* (the island of Jambū or red-apple-tree) and *Meruparvata* (Mount Meru) in the centre of this same island.

a) Why Hastināpura?

This place, situated to the Northeast of Dillī, combines a number of features that make it particularly appropriate for such an enterprise. It is a *tirthasthāna*, a place of pilgrimage. There, according to tradition, three *tirthaṅkaras* were not only born, but also received *dīkṣā* and attained *kevala-jñāna*. These are Śāntinātha, Kunthunātha and Aranātha, the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth *tirthaṅkaras*.⁹⁷ Within this immense, quiet jungle the Digambaras have large tracts of

⁹⁶ Cf. TS III; IV. For a detailed description of the *trilokas*, cf. JSK III, pp. 443-509.

⁹⁷ Cf. Jñānamatī, 1974d, pp. 23-40.

land and a beautiful ancient temple. In its precincts are to be found many well-lit cells for wayfaring munis and āryikās.⁹⁸

Mātāji, accompanied by several āryikās, spends long months at Hastināpura, working incessantly at her writings. She often goes to that part of the jungle where the construction-works depicting Jambūdvīpa and Meruparvata are going on, in order to issue instructions. On the same spot an administrator takes care of all the practical questions; he receives in his office the pilgrims' gifts of money and sells the various publications of Mātāji. These construction-works and publications are rendered possible thanks to the contributions made by the śrāvakaś of Dilli and the surrounding district formed into a committee. The proximity of the capital and the frequent arrival of numerous pilgrims are factors favouring intelligent and efficient organisation and also the necessary material help. It is a Dilli architect who, according to plans drawn up by Mātāji, has put the work in hand, employing local masons and workmen.⁹⁹

Two young *brahmacārins* and several *brahmacārīnis* are permanently in residence, all being under the spiritual direction of Mātāji. The *brahmacārins* deal with all matters connected with Mātāji's publications.

b) Jambūdvīpa, Meruparvata: Jambū Island, Mount Meru

The intermediate world, according to Jaina cosmography, is made up of a great number of concentric continents, each one separated

⁹⁸ On the same property are to be found a large *dharmaśālā* for the reception of pilgrims with an immense well in its central courtyard; a *gurukula*, boarding-school for boys; and, on the surrounding estate, a temple dedicated to Mahāvira and 24 small shrines, dotted around and dedicated to each of the *tirthankaras*. The Śvētāmbaras have also a beautiful temple and a *dharmaśālā* of recent construction, situated on the other side of the road which leads to the entrance of the Digambaras' domain.

⁹⁹ Lately, on April 28, 1985 we read, in *The Hindu*, that the Defence Minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, inaugurated the Jambū Dvīpa Jñāna Jyoti complex, stressing the need for peace and non-violence in a strife-torn world.

from the next by an ocean.¹⁰⁰ In the middle of these continents and oceans is to be found the island of the Jambū and, in the centre thereof, Mount Meru.¹⁰¹ The island takes its name from the vast *jambū* (tree), situated near the summit of Mount Meru. This everlasting tree is of earth.¹⁰² The island is divided into seven *kṣetras*, regions running crosswise: Bharata, Haimavata, Hari, Videha, Rāmyaka, Hairāṇyavata and Airāvata. These regions are separated from each other by six chains of mountains.¹⁰³ At the summit of each of these mountains there is a lake and, in the middle of each lake, a lotus-flower with this particular feature, namely, that each lake and each lotus is double the one before in size.¹⁰⁴ At the heart of each of the six lotuses is a palace in which resides a nymph: Śrī, Hṛī, Dhṛti, Kīrti, Buddhi and Lakṣmī.¹⁰⁵ Out of the afore-mentioned six lakes flow rivers, two for each region, fourteen in all,¹⁰⁶ the rivers of Bharata being the Gaṅgā and the Sindhu with their numerous tributaries.¹⁰⁷ Bharata-kṣetra is divided into six *khaṇḍas* (parts); one *ārya-khaṇḍa*, a land where dwell men capable of pursuing a spiritual quest and five *mleccha-khaṇḍas*, countries of barbarians;¹⁰⁸ we belong to the *ārya-khaṇḍa*. Bharata, Airāvata and Videha are *karma-*

¹⁰⁰ Cf. TS III, 7.

¹⁰¹ Known in the texts under the name of Maṇḍara; it has also 14 other names; cf. PPN, pp. 539-540.

¹⁰² Cf. TS III, 9.

¹⁰³ Ibid., III, 10-11.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., III, 14; 17-18.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., III, 19.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., III, 20.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., III, 23.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., III, 36.

bhūmis, lands of toil and endeavour in which men can attain Liberation. The types of activities pursued in the *karma-bhūmis* may be characterised by good or evil, either quality being possible in the highest degree, and include all normal human occupations.¹⁰⁹ Videha-kṣetras are not subject to ascending and descending cycles and *tirthaṅkaras* dwell there permanently. In that *kṣetra*, *kevala-jñāna* and *mokṣa* are always possible.¹¹⁰ As for the other *kṣetras*, they are *bhoga-bhūmis*, places of enjoyments, where Liberation is not possible.¹¹¹

Mount Meru is situated in Videha-kṣetra and is surrounded by four forests, each forest having a *caityālaya* (temple) at each of four cardinal points. To the South of Mount Meru is found a great tree, the *sālmali*; moreover, the two trees, the *jambū* and the *sālmali*, each have a temple within their branches.¹¹²

The total number of temples on the island is seventy-eight, each containing images of the *tirthaṅkaras*.¹¹³

This general and abbreviated description will suffice to give an idea of the scope and complexity of the enterprise and the difficulty met in its realisation. However, Mātāji, who is fully convinced of the usefulness of the project and well-conversant with the exact details of this cosmography, is at hand to enlighten, direct and inspire all concerned. Thus in this jungle, in the midst of flowerbeds, Mount Meru rears its head to the height of about twenty-two metres.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. JSK III, pp. 245-246; TS III, 37.

¹¹⁰ Cf. JSK III, p. 551; TS III, 31; P 76; 80 n.36.

¹¹¹ Cf. JSK III, p. 246.

¹¹² Cf. JSK III, pp. 474-475. For a description of Jambūdvīpa, cf. also SthS, 301-305.

¹¹³ These temples, situated on the different mountains, are "eternal", that is, there is no question here of temples and images fashioned by men's hands.

Jambūdvīpa and Meruparvata represent, for Mātāji, something much more than a visible reproduction of Jaina cosmography, interesting and pleasant to visit. This is first and foremost a place of worship. Mātāji has composed a beautiful text in Sanskrit and Hindi to be used in the *pūjā* to the *jīnas* of the sanctuaries of Jambūdvīpa, as well as *Śrī Jambūdvīpastuti* in praise of Jambūdvīpa and *Trailokya-caityavandana*, that is, *vandana* to the sanctuaries of the *trīloka*s.¹¹⁴ Herein is an appeal and exhortation addressed to all visiting Jains to study and become better acquainted with their tradition and their doctrine.

c) *Vira Jñānodaya Granthamālā*: The "Mahāvira" series of books for the increase of knowledge

The name of the publications-centre, an integral part of the Institute of cosmography, is in itself suggestive: *vīra*, for Mahāvira; *jñāna-udaya*, *udaya* meaning rise or increase of, in this instance, *jñāna*; *granthamālā*, series of books. Here a continuous production of books and translations, dealing with the various complementary aspects of the *dharma* and addressed to differing readerships according to their level of knowledge and their age-group, certainly makes for *jñāna-udaya*. These publications are the fruit of Mātāji's personal work, assisted by the two *brahmacārins*, Moticandra and Ravindrakumāra. These publications include:

- translations of philosophical and doctrinal works;
- works on cosmographical and doctrinal subjects;
- works concerning;
 - the *āvaśyakas*,
 - the *āryikās*,
 - the *munis*,
 - the history of Hastināpura;
- *bhakti* texts: Mātāji's own poetic compositions, some in Sanskrit, others in Hindi addressed to the *tirthaṅkaras*, to Bāhubali, to Jambūdvīpa;

¹¹⁴ For these hymns, cf. *Sāmāyika*, pp. 77-81; 82-94.

- a series of booklets for children, a simple presentation of the doctrine with imaginative and inspiring illustrations;
- a monthly review for grown-ups, which Mātāji edits and of which she herself writes most of the articles.¹¹⁵ Her aim is to help towards right knowledge and the articles, presented in accordance with a harmonious over-all design, conduce to this end.

A brief look at the contents of the *Granthamālā* reveals this: Mātāji, with the utmost simplicity, puts at the service of the *saṃgha* her vast store of knowledge and her extraordinary ability to approach a wide variety of subjects, probe them in depth and transmit them to others in a clear and accessible form. She communicates to them her own intense zeal for study and teaching and her fervent *bhakti*.

Their total number is small, but nevertheless we must make mention of two other learned āryikās: Āryikā Viśuddhamatī, who has translated the *Trilokasāra*, an important cosmographical treatise, and Āryikā Supārśvamati, well-known for her *pravacanas*.

E - Āryikā Śrī Jñānamatī Mātāji

So far no biography of Mātāji has been written. Certain persons would have liked to do so, but she has always refused. Recently a śrāvaka, a poet of Jhansi, wrote, in her honour a long poem of one hundred and twenty-eight verses in Hindi: *Śrī Jñānamatī jivana darśana*,¹¹⁶ in which there is a eulogy commemorating her life and her work.

Mātāji shuns publicity. She pursues her task ardently, living her life in accordance with the strict observance of the Digambaras, caring nothing for honours nor for making a name for herself. She is truly called 'Jñānamatī' and 'Śramaṇī', as being one for whom the daily acquisition, enlargement and deepening of knowledge is the supreme

¹¹⁵ The review contains about 40 pp. For further details of these publications, cf. Appendix I and Bibliography.

¹¹⁶ S. Jaina, 1976.

task and it is this knowledge that she spontaneously and ceaselessly communicates to others, more by her life and her writings than by word of mouth. For her, knowing and teaching are one and the same thing. She is aware of the ignorance of a large number of śrāvakas and śrāvikās - ignorance of their doctrine and tradition, due for the most part to a number of historical and social factors. It is against this obscure force of inertia, productive of many errors, that one must struggle, and the best way of doing so is to place knowledge within people's reach. To this Mātāji is consecrating her life, for how can the average śrāvaka or śrāvikā be required to set to on the study of Prākṛit and Sanskrit and endeavour to understand by themselves rather unintelligible ancient texts without some preliminary introduction, without a sure guide? Mātāji is this guide, who translates, explains, comments, and composes in the vernacular, while at the same time re-arousing fervour, inspiring devotion and always emphasising the importance of its expression in worship. Let us first take a look at the stages of Mātāji's life and then attempt to have, as it were, her *darśana*.

How Mainā became Kṣullikā Viramati and subsequently Āryikā Jñānamati and drew in her wake a part of her own family

Mainā means starling, the beautiful song bird. This name was given in 1934 to a little girl, the eldest of thirteen, born to a fervent Jain family of the village of *Tikaitanagara*, in the district of *Bārābanki*, *Uttara Pradeśa*.¹¹⁷ Mainā soon gave evidence of precocious gifts for study and a strong inclination towards all that concerns the *dharma*, but she was obliged to interrupt her studies at the age of eleven in order to assist her mother. Nevertheless, she continued to study as much as was possible and at the age of eighteen, feeling an irresistible attraction towards *vairāgya* - and one should hear the fervour with which Mātāji speaks of *vairāgya*! - Mainā escaped from the family-house to become an *anagāri*. For reasons of health, she joined the group of *kṣullikās* of *Ācārya Śrī Deśabhūṣaṇa* who gave her the name *Viramati*. She applied herself courageously to the tasks of a *śramaṇi* and at the end of three years she asked for admittance to the *dikṣā* of the *āryikās*. She was assigned to the group

¹¹⁷ For these paragraphs we are drawing upon the very brief notifications given in several prefaces to the writings and filling in the gaps with information gathered from our conversations at *Hastināpura*.

of Ācārya Virasāgara and received the new name of Jñānamati. From the moment she joined the kṣullikās, she showed unusual eagerness for study, combined with great fervour in the performance of spiritual exercises. How did Mātāji gain, and so rapidly, a good knowledge of Prākṛit, Sanskrit, the doctrine? Was she helped in this by the two successive ācāryās? "Very little" she says, "they scarcely had time enough". By a paṇḍit? Mātāji replies that at Jayapura a paṇḍit did help her for some months in the study of Sanskrit; but, she adds, "I wanted to cover the ground quickly and he did not like that very much, so I continued alone". Since then she has acquired a solid groundwork of knowledge from her svādhyaia. Her predilection is for Sanskrit and it is in Sanskrit poetry that she best conveys her transports of bhakti. Her preferred subjects of study are that philosophy which leads to realisation of the ātman, cosmography and grammar, particularly Sanskrit grammar.

During her time as a kṣullikā and as a still youthful āryikā, she passed the cāturmāsya in different towns of Rājasthāna, of which she remains very fond, for, she says, "In Rājasthāna people have a fervour, a faith, a persistence like nowhere else." Then, with four other āryikās, Mātāji undertook an immense tour of five years' duration. Starting from Rājasthāna, they set out in the direction of Bangāla, passing successive cāturmāsya at Kalikata, Haidarābād, Śravaṇa Belgōla, Śolāpura, Sanāvada (Madhya Pradeśa) and, once again, in Rājasthāna. Wherever she passed, Mātāji incited zeal for study and wrote and published books.

Over the years Mātāji has drawn after her several of her own family-members. First, one of her sisters embraced the ascetic life, becoming Āryikā Abhayamati; then another, not having the necessary physical constitution to be admitted to dīkṣā, became Brahmācārīni Malti; next a young brother, Brahmācārī Ravindrakumāra. When all her children were reared, their mother joined the ascetics and is now Āryikā Ratnamati; finally, two other sisters followed their example, Brahmācārīnis Trisalā and Madhuri, while the last up to date to follow this path is a niece, Brahmācārīni Mañju.

With the exception of Āryikā Abhayamati, the members of this family of ascetics remain, for the most part, at Hastināpura. Since 1972, Mātāji has had to stop going on vihāra for a great portion of the

year and has devoted herself to the important above-mentioned tasks. After two years in Dillī, she now resides permanently, since 1975, at Hastināpura, except for a few brief sojourns in the neighbouring villages. On the one hand, the place is highly suitable for her work and, on the other, her presence there gives the pilgrims the privilege and joy of having her *darśana*. As a general rule, Mātāji does not give *pravācanas* to the pilgrims, except on rare occasions, but when she is in a village she is available to the inhabitants for one hour during the morning and two hours in the afternoon. The rest of the time she continues her tasks.

"The life of an āryikā consists in *dhyāna* and *svādhyāya*"

This is Mātāji's dictum, spoken with simplicity and conviction: this is what she herself lives out completely without letting herself be distracted by a hundred and one secondary concerns. She goes straight to the essential with a penetrating intuition, sound judgement and few words. She has a keen sense of the ascesis of time. At Hastināpurā all is organised with a view to the mission to be accomplished, in which all collaborate, earnestly but without tension. Mātāji gives time to her disciples in a wise and judicious manner.

Dhyāna and *svādhyāya*, the two are inseparable. Mātāji tells how after her *dikṣā* as a *kṣullikā* she used to prolong the period of *dhyāna* which follows *sāmāyika*. But her companions did not understand and even smiled at this, so for a while, out of timidity, she stopped the practice. However, as soon as she had more confidence, she felt herself impelled to place no limit on her *dhyāna*, particularly that type known as *piṇḍastha-dhyāna*.¹¹⁸ She says that in this state time is transcended and one hour, or two, pass unnoticed. She adds that, although one cannot judge others, especially in this domain, the āryikās on the whole have received little training in those disciplines and methods that are of help to *dhyāna*. Mātāji is giving her attention to this question and would like to organise sessions on *dhyāna* for the āryikās, *brahmacārins*, *brahmacāriṇis* and *śrāvikās*.

118 Cf. P 387 ff.

The most striking feature of Mātāji is the unity that exists between her life and her work. This intellectual work, of whatever kind, is for her nothing other than uninterrupted *svādhyāya* and evidences this very special characteristic - and in this she continues the tradition of the sages - that *svādhyāya* does not involve a retreat from the world or the acquisition of knowledge for its own sake. For her, there is no cleavage between her own personal self-realisation and that of others. Thanks to her own deep study and reflection, into the midst of which, at regular intervals, the community rites are inserted, and also thanks to the purificatory effect of asceticism, Mātāji has most certainly a direct and high-level awareness of the supreme Reality, the *ātman*. It is for this reason that she is able to reach all beings. We are touching here on the ontological reality of essential unity. Absorbed as she ceaselessly is in study and in the translation of doctrinal texts, Mātāji's own compositions, each of which contains a note of originality, are just the overflow of a synthesis realised in her own person. These poems, these translations, these collections of materials for worship, these studies in cosmography and their concrete expression in brick and cement, these children's books and this monthly review combine to help, guide and lead human beings, as many as possible, to *samyak-jñāna*.

Mātāji has many interests and an openness of spirit, but she is totally gripped by and absorbed in the Digambara tradition and pre-eminently concerned to transmit it to others, which in itself is an enormous task. Within this tradition her particular interest is in those values which, just because they are truly spiritual, are also universal. However, the tradition through which these values are transmitted has become, during the course of the centuries, overloaded with certain subsidiary and sectarian practices and tendencies; furthermore, its close confinement within an, at times, fierce orthodoxy has often made it impenetrable, if not hostile, to other interpretations or to salutary changes. This fact Mātāji does not always realise. She is even on occasion somewhat militant, in this sense that she is fully persuaded that the orthodox Digambara tradition is superior to others and that it maintains a rigorous fidelity to the teaching of the *tirthaṅkaras*, which teaching, she believes, must be revitalised. This naturally leads to a certain critical and negative attitude towards the other *sampradāyas*. Mātāji's criticisms come from a sincere heart, one that is firmly determined to uphold what she believes to be the pure and original

dharma, that men have gradually altered through their ignorance and cowardice. She considers, very reasonably, that the Scriptures and the works of the first *ācāryās* are still available to recall us to the right path. So let us study them, she argues, and come out of our century old ignorance. And Mātāji devotes all her energies to enlightening her disciples, the *śrāvakas*, *śrāvikās* and whoever comes to meet her.

Chapter 8.

Cintās: Reflections

In the preceding pages I have tried to put forward a synthesis of the immensely rich cultural and doctrinal heritage bequeathed to the *sādhvis*. They comprise a study in depth of the tradition, doctrine and life of the ascetics, a study that has been both a personal one and one that has been inspired and guided by the *sādhvis* themselves. As in every religious, ascetic tradition, the *sādhvis* must follow an ideal which is very demanding. This ideal presents certain highly particular features that we have described, each of which constitutes for the *sādhvis* a belief to which they are bound to adhere, even if, not infrequently, they are somewhat vague about the bases of these beliefs - not through laziness or ill-will on their part, but because on the whole their training remains fairly elementary. Now these beliefs give rise to numerous rules drawn up in order to help the ascetics put their ideal into practice. One recognises, of course, that these rules constitute the solid staff upon which to lean during the journey towards Liberation, but they are only means. So what is important is to discern those ones which are inspired by the essential spirit of the *dharma*, and thus to distinguish between those that are essential and those that are less so. One knows also that these rules have been conceived and formulated in a far distant age, in a given context. Without minimising in any way the radical asceticism taught by the doctrine, an asceticism which demands a transcendence of the ordinary state of human life, and at the same time recognising that certain ones of these rules are, in our own days, obsolete, I am going to try now to share some of the reflections that have ripened during the course of my study of the Scriptures and my encounters with the *sādhvis*. These reflections will be presented under three headings: questions, hopes and, thirdly, a statement of the contribution the *Jaina dharma* can make to contemporary spirituality.

These considerations are not new; they have been already developed in several chapters where they came up in regard to the doctrine or daily life being studied. Here they are expressed in a few succinct phrases which bring together doctrine and praxis. Moreover the reflections that follow are neither judgmental nor critical in the pejorative sense of the word. It is a question, rather, of an awareness, a formulation in words of what several sādhvis think and say and what quite a number of others confusedly feel. It is to this last-named fairly large group that these reflections are addressed. It must be added that, with varying slight differences, they could also be applied to communities of women ascetics belonging to other traditions, for the community of sādhvis presents characteristics common to all communities of ascetics.

a) Praśnas: Some questions

Before stating these questions we must recall to mind two important and interconnected factors. Firstly, the Jainas are a tiny scattered minority. To preserve their own identity they must evidence a certain rigidity. Secondly, it is their belonging to the caturvidhasaṃgha that constitutes their identity; the four components together form a community of ascetics. Even if the śrāvakas and śrāvikās remain in the world, they are none the less constrained, if they are faithful to the dharma, to practise a certain asceticism and are closely bound up with the munis and sādhvis. The munis and above all, out of their number, the ācāryas - are fairly independent; the sādhvis, except for a few avant-garde groups, have scarcely any autonomy; they are subject to the authority of the ācārya and to the strict and vigilant surveillance of the śrāvakas and śrāvikās. Among these two last-named groups, certain ones are opposed to any change in the life-style of the ascetics for this life-style is for them the living expression of the dharma. They fear that the slightest modification therein may result in the disintegration of this dharma; hence their severity in regard to the ascetics, especially the sādhvis. We may note in passing that we have here a universal sociological phenomenon. Those "outside" are often more conservative than those "inside".

- Do the sādhvis fully appreciate the treasure their dharma comprises?

Not seldom their appreciation comes from head-learning rather than life-experience. It is fragmentary, static. They have not always been helped to grasp and discover their *dharma* in depth.

- Does not a certain passive acceptance of the traditional teaching play a part, in the long run, in deflecting the *sādhvis* from the original ideal?

This type of passivity does indeed give rise to ignorance and constitutes an obstacle to spiritual progress. In this regard, it is essential that the *guruṇis* should prove themselves equal to their task.

- Does their manner of life, as it is lived out by the majority, help the *sādhvis* to realise their ideal?

This life, in which the sole activity is spiritual activity, is one which is very difficult to realise to the full. It demands a most unusual degree of zeal, a wide-open and active intelligence and an innate feeling for spiritual things; it is necessary also to receive sound guidance at the start of the way. Now this, as things are at present, is only possible for a minority. For the others, the life is often fairly monotonous. In certain cases the common life lacks harmony just because its goal has disappeared from sight, and sometimes there is frequent quarrelling. The *guruṇis*' task is to attend to the training of their disciples and the preservation of good mutual understanding. It should be clearly understood that the *sādhvis* do not all have the same spiritual awareness nor the same intellectual capacities, and that all are not competent to pursue courses of study, to write or give spiritual teaching to others. Here we may mention again the example of the *Terāpanthi* *sādhvis*, who make good use of their time in the creation of works of art and in handicrafts. Although statistics, particularly in this domain, give only an approximate idea of the reality of the situation, yet they are revealing. A few years ago, to the question: "Are you satisfied with the style of life you live today?" 60 out of 100 *sādhvis* replied that they desired changes to be made in successive stages, while 13 desired radical changes of adaptation to our day and age. Thus 73 testified to a need for far-reaching renewal.¹ Similarly, in

¹ Cf. Bordiya, 1975, p. 275.

reply to the question: "Do you desire ~~changes in your~~ own daily life?" 65 sādhis out of 100 said that they were in favour of progressive change and 15 that they wanted minor changes; thus 80 of the total number were feeling the need of some change in their daily life.²

- Is an enlightened practice of asceticism compatible with the full flowering of the individual's personhood?

Asceticism is not, in itself, incompatible with the full flowering of one's personhood. All depends on the inner dispositions of each one and, to a very great extent, on the training received, the atmosphere prevailing in the group, and its spiritual fervour. When the sādhis are absolutely convinced of the value of their ideal and faithful in its pursuit, they exemplify, like Sādhvi Vicakṣaṇa, for instance, a life lived in the purest spiritual joy.

- Do not certain of the practices, in themselves secondary in importance, appear anachronistic in our day?

Yes, certainly, and discernment is essential. Up till now, those sādhis who, being aware of these anachronisms, have abandoned certain practices are considered "liberal", admired by a minority and criticised by a large number of people who remain obstinately attached to the letter of the doctrine.

- Should not the preparation for college and university examinations take place, preferably, before *dikṣā*?

A fairly broad general education is indispensable, but it should be the same for all and should have been acquired, if possible, before *dikṣā*. Preparation for state examinations after *dikṣā* deflects the sādhis somewhat from their central objective; furthermore, it creates differences between them. Those who have successfully taken these examinations tend sometimes to evidence a certain superiority and flaunt their qualifications. After *dikṣā*, studies should be mainly orientated towards knowledge of the Scriptures, the doctrine and the tradition.

² Ibid., p. 280.

- Should not the sādhis, one of whose tasks is to teach the way of Liberation to all members of the *dharma* and to all living beings, be *pātras* (vessels, receptacles) of the teaching and be so in the social context of today?

This is of the greatest importance. The sādhis are pillars of the *dharma* and must know how to express it in contemporary language, in openness of spirit towards their hearers.

- Would it not be desirable to undertake a new study upon the subject of *śrīmukti*, the Liberation of womankind?

Such a study is all the more necessary because the Digambara scholars themselves hold divergent views on this question.

- Does not the organisation, as it is today, lend itself, in certain *gacchas*, to a certain type of sectarianism, a withdrawal into oneself within a closed group?

This withdrawal is easily observable in some *gacchas* and it contributes neither to the full flowering of the individual person nor to his or her spiritual advance nor to the on-going development of the *dharma*.

- Might not the sādhis be able to create some independent *saṃghas*, directed by some of their own number and open to all the *gacchas*? Would not such *saṃghas*, formed out of the same restricted groups as exist today, promote a fraternal exchange between their members?

Many sādhis suffer on account of their enclosure within the confines of a group. Though remaining under the spiritual direction of an *ācārya*, which is indispensable, at least until a certain stage has been reached, certain ones of them do have aspirations towards broader pastures, towards encounters with other groups. Do not all belong to the spiritual family of Mahāvira? Several among them are capable of inspiring and directing their companions, but up till this present their influence is limited to their own group, on account of the lack of communication existing between the communities. The rigidity of their structures and the weight of secular prejudices combine to prevent any awareness of the mutual ignorance now prevailing

between the communities being other than very feeble at present in the case of the majority of *sādhvis*. Now, in order that a desire for unity should exist, it is necessary that there should come into being, firstly, an awareness of the existent ignorance, mutual indifference and, sometimes animosity and, next, the realisation that this failure in understanding makes for sterility and furthermore that division is opposed to the spirit of the *dharma*.

b) *Āśās*: Hopes in anticipation of a renewal

Each of these hopes corresponds to a point queried above. It does not suffice to dislodge prejudices; one must also be able to visualize a renewal and have an unshakeable hope that it will come about.

- Hope that the *sādhvis*, receiving an initiation into *svādhyāya* and *dhyāna*, will thus assimilate the essence of the *dharma* and that, through them, its unique elements will be more universally known, so that it will thus play its part in the spiritual renewal of humankind.
- Hope that the *gurunis*, following the example of the heroic pioneers, may succeed in combining harmoniously knowledge and praxis and may never relax their efforts to train their disciples with wisdom and maternal solicitude. Meetings between *gurunis* and conferences bringing them together would be a desirable development.
- Hope that the *sādhvis* together with their *gurunis* may succeed in introducing, by successive stages, salutary changes in their way of life.
- Hope that the *sādhvis* may be brought to a full flowering of their own beings by a return to the essentials of the spirit of the *dharma*. To help them in this, it would be necessary, not only that the *gurunis* be true spiritual mothers, but that the *upāśrayas* be conducive to recollectedness.
- Hope that the *sādhvis* may know how to distinguish between the spirit and the letter of the *dharma* and rid themselves of what is of secondary importance and merely burdensome.

- Hope that the *vairāginis*, the candidates for *dikṣā*, may all receive, as happens already in certain groups, a solid training in character and understanding and a general education such as will help them become enlightened *sādhvis*, well able to devote themselves to the study of their own tradition in all its aspects and also to that of other religious traditions.

- Hope that the *sādhvis*, adapting themselves to the needs of their own day, may be able to transmit to all the message of the *dharma*. The *sādhvis*, who are in constant contact with society, must not only be knowledgeable themselves about the burning questions regarding justice on a nationwide scale (such as the abolition of untouchability and the amelioration of conditions of life among aboriginal peoples, with due respect for their own customs) but also help the *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* to act justly themselves in their own personal lives and to take an active part in the movements for justice. This is, indeed, the spirit of the *dharma*: the mutual assistance of all beings.³ The Jain community has members throughout the world and, among them, there are those who return periodically to their native land and come to pay respects to the *sādhvis*. Such *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* will emerge from these conversations strengthened and enlightened, when the *sādhvis*, having transcended the narrow confines of their own group, open and receptive to everything that concerns humanity, know both how to listen to those men and women who speak to them of social conditions in Africa, Asia or Europe and also how to impart to them wise counsel.

- Hope that a study of *śrīmuktī* may shed fresh light on the question and that such a study may bring together in the same spirit of careful research both Digambara and Śvetāmbara schools of thought.

- Hope that in this our own day the rigid structure of the various *gacchas* and the secondary groups formed within certain of the *gacchas* may give place to an openheartedness towards *gacchas* other than one's own and that meetings conducive to positive exchanges of view may take place.

³ Cf. TS IV, 21. On this theme the fervent words of Mahāsati Ujvalakumārī spring to mind.

- Hope that the *sādhvis* may be able to combine to organise a movement of renewal and may take an interest also in the other ascetic religious traditions (as certain of them have evidenced a desire to do). After a study in depth of the other traditions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islām, Christianity, the *sādhvis* will be ready to encounter members of these traditions. These encounters, to be authentic, must lead to exchanges of a spiritual sort and such exchanges will surely bring about a positive and mutually enriching collaboration.

c) *Ratnas*: The jewels

We now come to the jewels which comprise the gifts which the Jaina *dharma* offers to all the ascetics, indeed, to all of humankind:

- *Ādhyātmika*, the primary of the spiritual, which is the primordial value, over and above everything else. What is of importance is the *āntariktā*, the interiority whose roots are embedded in *svādhyāya*, the meditative study of Scripture.

- *Tapas*, the purificatory value of austerity of which the loftiest form is *dhyāna*, mental concentration, that brings about the unification of the whole being.

- *Ahimsā*, the power that resides in self-mastery combined with an appreciation of cosmic reality, which leads to respect for all beings in one's personal life and in the life of a community and nation.

- *Aparigraha*, a challenge to the spirit of possession on all its guises.

- *Virya*, heroic courage in the pursuit of the ideal.

- *Vihāra*, the outward sign of the human condition, of life on pilgrimage: be-ing, ontologically speaking, is fixed nowhere.

- *Jñāna-dāna*, the gift of knowledge to all living beings through *pravāṇas*, instruction-sessions on the Scriptures - a unique feature in the history of universal women's monasticism.

PART IV

COSMIC AND PURIFICATORY RITE

From early on in this study we have been put directly in touch with the way of worship proper to the Jaina *dharma* through the *Namaskāra-mantra*¹ and the *Caturvīṃśatistava*. This worship in its very essence is centred upon the purification of the *ātman* and the separation of the same from karmic matter. It takes its inspiration from the examples of the *paramesṭhins*, both past and present, and from the *dharma* that they taught and teach to all living beings. The Digambara and Mūrtipūjaka śrāvakas and śrāvikās perform both forms of worship: *dravya*, the external form, by participation in the *pūjā*, and *bhāva*, internal worship. All adherents of the reformed *sampradāyas*, on the other hand, perform only the latter form of worship, the internal, that is the *āvaśyaka-vidhi*, the rite of duties.² The sādhis are required to perform this rite twice a day.

After a brief look at the history of the *dharma*, a study of the successive stages leading to *nirvāṇa* and a description of the way of life of the sādhis and āryikās, we can now more easily approach this rite. We are already familiar with the doctrinal bases of the *āvaśyakas* and the central place that from time immemorial the said *āvaśyakas* occupy in the life of the ascetics, both as rites and, in the case of certain ones of them, as expiations. In spite of a few inevitable

¹ At the beginning of the 1st *āvaśyaka* it is termed *pañcanamaskāra-maṅgala-sūtra* (AvaS 1); for the sake of simplification we are calling it, in this Part which deals with the *āvaśyakas*, the *Namaskāra-sūtra*.

² The śrāvakas and śrāvikās of all *sampradāyas* follow on the whole the same rite as the munis and sādhis. The chief differences are as follows: they take the vow of *sāmāyika* for a limited period; on each occasion in the *sūtras* that mention is made of the *mahāvratas*, they must substitute for that term the word *anuvratas*, little vows; furthermore, they do not recite the *śramaṇa-sūtras* which are reserved for the ascetics.

repetitions, this last Part is limited in its scope to the rite, presenting the major *sūtras*, the pillars, as it were,³ and outlining the order of this rite as followed by the *Sthānakavāsi sādhis*.⁴ No explanatory words can replace direct contact with the *sūtras* as they are read, re-read, studied and meditated. They are rendered correspondingly more intelligible, the more one has already assimilated the doctrine they contain and grasped their importance for the *sādhis*.

Before turning our attention to the more important *sūtras* and the over-all sequence of events within the rite, we may take note of a few facts concerning it, its special features and the structuring of this Part.

1. The rite

Dharma-kryiā, sacred action, ritual, is an integral part of worship. For the Jaina ascetics, the *āvaśyaka-vidhi* is the embodiment of worship.⁵ As its name indicates, its performance is obligatory. Moreover, it is a community rite and is to be performed in a given place, the *upāśraya* or some other place of shelter, and at a specified hour, namely, before sunrise and at sunset or later. This place of worship is necessary for *śramaṇis* who are perpetual pilgrims on this earth, so that the moments consecrated to this rite are pauses in the

³ This subject which in itself is very vast would necessitate extensive treatment. Here, to preserve harmony with the other Parts, we limit ourselves to what is essential.

⁴ The principal differences between this rite and that observed by the Mūrtipūjaka *sādhis* will be indicated. As for the rite followed by the āryikās, the rite of *sāmāyika*, which is peculiar to them, has already been given (P 662 ff.). As regards the other *āvaśyakas*, the content of the principal *sūtras* is identical, except for a few variants, to that of the *sūtras* recited by the Śvetāmbaras. The differences are confined to the secondary *sūtras* and to the order followed.

⁵ *Bhāva-pūjā*, the interiorised veneration of the *tīrthaṅkaras*, is one of the ingredients of *bhakti*; *japa*, the repetition of a *mantra*, is one of the ingredients of both *bhakti* and *dhyāna*. These two spiritual activities are personal and not strictly obligatory. They express the essence of the worship but are not integral parts of the rite.

course of this pilgrimage. However, the rite transcends both the place and the time, which are part of the human condition, for, from the first, one is centred on the *ātman*, as being the Sole Reality, and one is projected outside time. The gestures, the *pañcāṅga-namaskāra*, (the prostration of the five members) the recitation of *sūtras* and the recitation or singing of hymns - all this is in the realm of human expression and emanates from the mind, the heart and the senses. These gestures, together with the recitation and the right intention that animates them, all converge in seeking one goal, one sole end: the purification of the *ātman* and its liberation from matter. No external object deflects from this end, all is characterised by a profound sobriety. In the performance of this action, which is rendered doubly sacred through the end towards which it is directed and the recitation of the accompanying *sūtras*, it is the inner attitudes that are of supreme importance: faith in the *dharma*, the spirit of reverence towards the *tirthaṅkaras*, the *ācārya* and the *guruṇī* and sincere repentance for all faults and negligences. Without these inner attitudes, the rite is simply an empty and dry piece of ritualism.

Here we must make an important distinction between the lack of proper inner attitudes, such as nullifies the effects of the rite, and repetition, which is an integral part of every rite. The repetition of the *sūtras* by heart and the accompanying gestures performed twice a day their whole life long create a second person, so to say, in each *sādhvī*, a person whose mind and body - so soon as she pronounces aloud or mentally the first syllables of the *sūtras* or makes a prostration - are drawn spontaneously into a universe within. In this universe - except at the moments devoted to *kāyotsarga* which are always accompanied by *dhyāna* - reflexive thought and awareness of the self and of the sacred action in all its minutiae come into play very little or not at all. The *sūtras* and the accompanying gestures are integrated into the person, merge, as it were, with the person; the *sādhvī* identified with the rite. Moreover, if she is fervent, if she believes deeply in the *dharma* and in the indispensability of the rite, and if she comes to it with upright intention, the regular repetition of this sacred action constitutes an immensely valuable renewal. Such repetition is necessary for as long as the *ātman* stays in the human condition, for it is impossible to attain the final goal in one attempt. The all-important vow of *sāmāyika* is constantly renewed until the fervent *sādhvī* becomes firmly rooted, so to speak, in *sāmāyika*, in equanimity.

The rite is at one and the same time both immanent and transcendent; immanent, because it takes place through and within the *ātman* of the person in its present as yet impure state and, by association with this *ātman*, through and in the cosmos; transcendent, in regard to its goal, the Liberation of the *ātman*. The means employed to reach this goal are also transcendent: veneration for the *arhats* who enjoy eternal bliss, for the *ācārya*, the *guruṇi*, the senior *sādhvis*, for that which in them is already purified and for those spiritual values already present in them that escape the clutches of time.⁶

Every rite belongs to a tradition and bears its stamp. It conveys those who perform it, both men and women, towards the goal by recognised means, tried and accepted by the sages. Thus the rite of the *āvaśyakas* presents these two aspects, its specifically cosmic character and its purificatory effect.

The specifically cosmic character

Rites always have cosmic associations, because they take place in a particular place and in time. The rite of the *āvaśyakas*, owing to the doctrine which gives shape to it, has a specifically cosmic aspect, intimately linked to the person performing it. On account of the vow of *ahiṃsā* and with a view to *saṃyama*, self-mastery, all animate beings down to the ant, the earth, water, the vegetable kingdom including moss and lichen are regularly mentioned in this rite. The *sādhvis* express sincere repentance for having, through negligence, struck, crushed or killed any of these lesser living beings. At the end of the *sūtras* of repentance, they ask pardon from all living beings and affirm their friendship for all.

As for the vow of *sāmāyika*, it is a solemn promise for life not to perform any reprehensible or blameworthy activity, nor to provoke, or approve in others such activities. Now it is clear that these activities

⁶ For a more comprehensive study of the cosmological aspect of worship, the philosophy underlying symbolic ritual and the theology of ritual action, cf. Panikkar, 1970, pp. 110-113; also 1977.

are above all those which are harmful to beings, those which infringe the vow of *ahiṃsā*. During this rite, the whole cosmos, in its infinitely vast dimensions and down to the smallest of its living particles, is present. It is regularly evoked and one finds oneself in imagination in the immense temple of nature.

The purifying effect

In consonance with the end-purpose of this rite, each of the six *āvaśyakas* which compose it contributes to the purification of the *ātman* from all tarnish due to karmic dust.

- The rite starts with the *kṣetra-viśuddhi*, the purification of the area, the place (of the performance of the rite), of the mind and body of the worshipper.

- Next comes the renewal of the vow of *sāmāyika*, not to commit any blameworthy action in mind, speech and body, the condemnation of reprehensible actions committed in the past, and the *sūtra* concludes with this resolution: "I abandon my *ātman* [in regard to anything reprehensible it has done]" - which means that by virtue of renewing her vow and repudiating past faults, the *sādhvi* is divesting herself of her impure *ātman* just as one divests oneself of a garment.

- *Caturviṃśatistava*, a hymn of praise, assists the process of purification through the utterance of the Names of the *tirthaṅkaras* and a sincere desire to imitate them.

- *Vandana* expresses penitence for failures in respect and deference towards authority and for any action or attitude contrary to the rule of life of the *śramaṇis*. It purifies from these faults that are incompatible with the pursuit of a spiritual goal, for the undisciplined, arrogant or unsubmitive ascetic is on the path leading to perdition.⁷ The *sūtra* concludes, as does that of *sāmāyika*, by an act of abandonment of the impure *ātman*.

⁷ Cf. DS IX (P 454 ff.).

- *Pratikramaṇa*, the rite of repentance for and ritual confession of faults, reviews in detail all the obligations incumbent upon ascetics. The chief *sūtras* conclude with this wish: "May my offence [due to these failures and infringements] not redound [upon me]!" This means: "May my *ātman* be purified from all the karmic dust it has accumulated!" This corresponds well with the etymology of the word *pratikramaṇa*: return, return to the state existing before the fault was committed.

- *Kāyotsarga*, the temporary abandonment of all bodily activity, accompanied by mental concentration, comprises the supreme purification from all forms of possessive attachment. This act of dispossession is always connected with *dhyāna* and the prop and stay of *dhyāna* is the *Namaskāra-sūtra*.⁸ *Kāyotsarga* concludes with a recitation of the *caturvīṃśatistava*. There is a far-reaching connection between this radical type of *aparigraha* and concentration upon the *parameṣṭhins*, followed by the hymn of praise.

- *Pratyākhyāna* is a type of purification in anticipation, comprising as it does the promise of total abstinence for the hours which are to follow.⁹ This fast, a form of external *tapas*, must be matched by an inner intention to avoid all forms of impurity.

It is very evident that this rite, by means of each of the *āvaśyakas*, contributes to the purification, firstly, of the mind, through the renewal of the vow, through sincere repentance and through *dhyāna*; to the purification of speech, through the utterance and repetition of the *sūtras* and the hymn of praise, to the purification of the body, through each gesture, posture and prostration and above all through *kāyotsarga* and *pratyākhyāna*. This threefold purification, constantly renewed, leads the ascetics to an ever keener awareness of the essence of the *ātman* which is *cetanā*, pure consciousness of being.

⁸ I.e. during this rite; outside the rite the support may be any other *mantra*. We may recall that, by their very nature, *pratikramaṇa* and *kāyotsarga* are also forms of expiation.

⁹ *Pratyākhyāna* may, by definition, refer to various different types of renunciation, but in actual fact, at least in the course of this rite, it refers to abstinence.

2. The internal harmony of the *āvaśyakas*

The *āvaśyakas* form a whole and follow an orderly pattern, an inner sequence of spiritual growth corresponding to a progressively more complete purification of the *ātman*.

- The renewal of the principal vow, that of *sāmāyika*, is given pride of place. It reaffirms a total definitive commitment, in accordance with a well-defined aim and aspiration: renunciation of all blameworthy or harmful activity. After the renewal of this vow, one is free to address the *tirthaṅkaras*.

- The *caturviṃśatistava* may only be recited by ascetics who are worthy followers of the *jinas*, by disciples who are faithful followers of the *dharma*.

- Next comes *vandana*, for it is the *ācāryas* and *guruṇis* who continue to transmit the message of the *kevalins*, to teach the doctrine and guide the ascetics.

- *Pratikramāṇa* demands an unfeigned sincerity, a sustained effort of attention and concentration - in this all the doctrine and its demands are recalled to mind - with a view to expressing desire for a return, a veritable conversion. The three preceding *āvaśyakas* are instrumental in producing the necessary dispositions as just described.

- *Kāyotsarga* is, in its radical simplicity, the end-product, as it were, of *pratikramāṇa*. Already it is the new *ātman* that is centring itself in this total abandonment and concentration.

- *Pratyākhyāna* comes last, because it prolongs the effort of the other *āvaśyakas* and looks to the future.¹⁰

¹⁰ The Digambaras place *kāyotsarga* last, which appears reasonable in that it is the *āvaśyaka* par excellence. It is noteworthy that in fact, as we are going to see, the *sūtras* belonging to one *āvaśyaka* recur in the following *āvaśyakas*; however, each *āvaśyaka* comprises a rite within the longer rite and follows the prescribed order.

3. Outline of part IV

With a view both to providing a direct contact with the main *sūtras* and also to following the successive stages of the rite, this Part is divided into two sections:

The main *sūtras*

These are the pillars which uphold each of the *āvaśyakas*. Certain *āvaśyakas* such as the *caturvīṃśatistava* and the *vandana* contain only one *sūtra*, while *pratīkramaṇa* is made up of numerous *sūtras*. Among the *sūtras* recited during *pratīkramaṇa*, the *maṅgala-sūtras*, short stanzas of praise, the all-embracing *sūtra* of repentance, the *sūtra* which concerns movement from one place to another and the final *sūtra* which requests pardon from all beings, express perfectly both the meaning of *pratīkramaṇa* and its effects. The other *sūtras* simply make more explicit the comprehensive, all-embracing *sūtra*.

The *sādhvis*, whichever their *sampradāya* or *gaccha*, all recite these more important *sūtras*, which belong to the *Āvaśyaka-sūtra* and form the essential portion of that which, in our own day, continues a very ancient tradition. Any differences between the communities as regards the way they observe the rite have to do with the inner ordering of its parts and the number, greater or less, of *sūtras* and secondary hymns recited, certain ones of which do not belong to the *Āvaśyaka-sūtra*.

Successive stages of the rite

We give the order followed by the *Sthānakavāsī* *sādhvis*.¹¹ The *Terāpanthī* *sādhvis* follow a very similar one. It is, therefore, except

¹¹ I have chosen for practical reasons the ritual order observed among the *Sthānakavāsīs*. On the one hand, the *śramaṇa-sūtra* of Muni Amaraśandra and the *sāmāyika-sūtra* of Jñāna Muni, both of them *Sthānakavāsīs*, are valuable guides and, on the other, in the course of my own numerous *vihāras*, I have had the opportunity of being present at the performance of the rite by the *Sthānakavāsīs* more frequently than by the *Mūrtipūjaks*. In addition, Mahāsatī Tarulatā who spent two *cāturmāsya*s at Madrās where I was able to

for a few minor variations, the order followed by almost half the number of *sādhvis*. Among the *Mūrtipūjāka* *sādhvis*, the order is rather different and follows, with no important changes, the order described in the *Āvaśyaka-cūṛṇi*.¹²

A - The main *sūtras*

1. First *āvaśyaka*: *sāmāyika*

The *sāmāyika-sūtra*: *sūtra* of equanimity

"Master, I make [the vow of] *sāmāyika*, I renounce all blame worthy activity;¹³ my whole life long, I will do [none] of the three sorts [of blameworthy activities], of mind, speech and body; I will not incite others to do them, nor will I approve them.¹⁴ Master, I repent [of past faults], I abhor them, I condemn them, I abjure my *ātman* [as regards all reprehensible action it has committed]."¹⁵

consult her, has herself put into writing the order of rite observed by her own *gaṇḍhā* which forms a part of the *Sthānakavāsīs*.

¹² Cf. Sukhlal, 1921. In the course of Part III the main differences between the three Śvetāmbara traditions have been indicated. In this section, those which concern the rite in question receive further mention.

¹³ *Sāvajjam jogam (sāvadyam yogam)*: the reprehensible activities that create bad *karmas*, those which produce *rāga*, vehement desire or *dveṣa*, hatred. This vow, renewed morning and evening, attests vigilance in a constant effort towards purification, an effort which will lead to radical change, as the state of impurity due to faults committed is replaced by a state of total purity.

¹⁴ I.e.: when others commit such faults, I will reprove them.

¹⁵ *karemi bharṇte! sāmāyam, savvam sāvajjam jogam paccakkhāmi*
jāvajjivāe,
tiviham tivihenaṃ, maṇḇaṇaṃ vāyāc kēṇaṃ, na karemi na kāravemi
kareṇtaṃ pi annaṃ na samaṇujjāpāmi, tassa bharṇte! paḍikkamāmi

2. Second *āvaśyaka*: *caturvīṃśatistava*

The *caturvīṃśatistava*: praise to the twenty-four *tīrthaṅkaras*

"I will praise the luminaries of the universe, the victorious, the founders of the *dharma-tīrtha*, the *arhats*, the twenty-four omniscient ones. I salute with reverence Rṣabha, Ajita, Sambhava, Abhinandana and Sumati, Padmaprabha, Supārśva and the *jina* Candraprabha. I salute with reverence Suvidhi (Puṣpadaṇṭa), Śītala, Śreyāṁsa and Vāsupūjya, Vimāla and the *jina* Ananta, Dharma and Śānti. I salute with reverence Kunthu, Ara, Malli, Munisuvrata and Nami, Ariṣṭanemi, Pārśva and Vardhamāna.

Having praised them, [who are] free from [karmic] dust [and] tarnish, liberated from old age and death, the twenty-four excellent and victorious ones, the *tīrthaṅkaras* - may they show themselves favourable towards me!

May these supreme *siddhas*, being praised, saluted with reverence and honoured throughout the universe, accord me perfect well-being; the well-being of right vision and the highest form of concentration! May the *siddhas*, purer than the lunar stars and more luminous than the solar stars, as deep as the vast ocean, grant me Liberation!"¹⁶

3. Third *āvaśyaka*: *vandana*

The *guruvandana-sūtra*: *sūtra* of salutation to the *ācārya* and the *guruṇi*

"Compassionate Śramaṇa, having renounced [all blameworthy activity], I desire to salute you, paying full attention."¹⁷ [Let it be so!]

nirṇāmi garahāmi appāṇam vosirāmi. AvaS 2. The postures adopted for the recitation of the *sūtra* are as follows: first of all, the right knee touches the ground while the left knee is bent, and the hands clasped on this same knee; then, at the moment when the vow is to be pronounced, the *sādhvi* makes a kneeling prostration for the *pañcāṅga-namaskāra*.

¹⁶ For the text (AvaS 3-9) and related ns., cf. the same hymn (P 69 ff.).

¹⁷ This respectful ritual salutation, which is recited with the appropriate gestures, is addressed to the *ācārya*. The Mūrtipūjaka *sādhvis* recite it in his

Permit me to approach you.¹⁸ [I so permit]. Abandoning [all sinful activity]. I touch your feet with my body [the forehead or the right hand].¹⁹ Pardon me for the inconvenience [thus caused]. Has the day passed with [physical] well-being, without fatigue? [(It has passed) thus.] Does your spiritual journey [pursue its course?] [And yours, does it also pursue its course?] Are your senses well-mastered?²⁰ [Yes.] Compassionate Śramaṇa, I ask pardon for the transgressions of the day. [I too ask pardon.] I repent [of my faults concerning] the *āvaśyakas*. Compassionate Śramaṇa, for all lack of integrity, for all faults committed at any time, of mind, speech and body, due to anger, pride, dishonesty or covetousness, for all pretence, for all negligence in regard to the ten *dharmas*,²¹ for all such offences caused today by lack of respect,²² I am heartily sorry, I abhor them, I condemn them, I

presence or in front of the *sthapanācārya*. The *Sthānakavāsi* *sādhvis* address it also to the *guruṇi*. The *Terāpanthi* *sādhvis* facing the particular place in which the *ācārya* is located, recite the *sūtra* of the lesser *gurvandana*, then this same *sūtra* to the leading *sādhvi* of the group and to the other *sādhvis*. The *Mūrtipūjaka* *sādhvis* recite the lesser *gurvandana* as salutation to the *guruṇi*. The responses of the *ācārya* (or *guruṇi*) are given in brackets, for they do not figure in the *AvaS* and are not spoken nowadays.

¹⁸ Lit. "Allow me to penetrate a certain distance within the *avagraha* (space occupied by the *guruṇi*).

¹⁹ The *sādhvis*, adopting the *ūkaḍū* posture, i.e. that of the cowherd milking his cow, pronounce each syllable of each word slowly and emphatically, with heads bent and hands joined: "*a-ho-kā-yam. . .*" The *sādhvis* touch the right foot of the *guruṇi*, but when it is a question of the *ācārya*, the touch, which is a gesture of respect, takes place internally.

²⁰ As before and maintaining the same posture, each syllable is pronounced slowly and deliberately: "*ja - ttā - bhe. . .*"

²¹ Cf. P 360 ff.

²² Lit. caused by one or other of the 33 *āsātānās*, failures with regard to proper respect, deference; cf. *DasasS* III, 2.

abjure my *ātman* [as regards all reprehensible action it has committed]²³

4. Fourth *āvaśyaka*: *pratīkramaṇa* ²⁴

The *maṅgala-sūtra*: *sūtra* of Happiness

"The four [are] *maṅgala*,²⁵

the *arhats* [are] *maṅgala*,

23 *icchāmi khamāsamaṇo! vaṇḍiṃ javanijjāc nisihiyāe [chamdenaṃ] anujāṇaha me miuggahaṃ, [anujāṇāmi] nisihi, ahokāyaṃ kāyasamphāsaṃ, khamañijjo bhe kilāmo, appakilaṃtāṇaṃ bahusubheṇa bhe divaso vaikkamto? [taha tti] jattā bhe? [tubbhaṃ pi vaṭṭai?] javanijjaṃ ca bhe? [evaṃ] khāmemi khamāsamaṇo! devasiyaṃ vaikkamaṃ [ahaṃ api khāmemi] āvassiyāe paḍikkamāmi khamāsamaṇāṇaṃ devasiyāe āsāyaṇāe tittis' aṇṇayaṛāe jaṃ kiṃci micchāc maṇadukkaḍāe vayadukkaḍāe kāyadukkaḍāe kohāc māṇāc māyāc lobhāc savvakāliyāe savvamicchovayārāc savvadamāikkamaṇāc āsāyaṇāc jo me aiyāro kao tassa khamāsamaṇo! paḍikkamāmi niṃdāmi garahāmi appāṇaṃ vosirāmi. AvaS 10.*

There is a correspondence between the structure of the *sūtra* and the inner attitude and gestures: i) the *vandana* proper; ii) the brief dialogue in which the disciple enquires about the physical and spiritual condition of the *ācārya* (or *guruṇi*) and vice versa, a dialogue in which, despite the underlying note of austerity, the body is not despised; iii) repentance, expressed by a request for pardon for all faults due to lack of proper regard for the *ācārya* (the *guruṇi* and the seniors). This sincere expression of penitence purifies the intention. The gestures vary from one community to another; cf. *SramaṇS*; pp. 274-301 for the details of this elaborate rite, which is simplified in our day; cf. also II P 320 ff.

²⁴ The 4th *āvaśyaka* is made up of a large number of *sūtras* (cf. P 713); only the chief ones are given here.

²⁵ *Maṅgala*: happiness, felicity, a blessing, a propitious sign, good omens. The four constitute supreme *maṅgala*, they procure happiness in this sense, that they have taught the path to Liberation. To pronounce their Names has a beneficial effect.

the *siddhas* [are] *maṅgala*,

the *sādhus* [are] *maṅgala*,

the *dharma* taught by the *kevalins* [is] *maṅgala*." ²⁶

The *uttama-sūtra*, *sūtra* of Excellence

"The four [are] the most excellent²⁷ in the universe,

the *arhats* [are] the most excellent in the universe,

the *siddhas* [are] the most excellent in the universe,

the *sadhus* [are] the most excellent in the universe,

the *dharma* taught by the *kevalins* [is] the most excellent in the universe."²⁸

The *śaraṇa-sūtra*: *sūtra* of Refuge

"I take refuge²⁹ in the four,

I take refuge in the *arhats*

²⁶ *cattāri maṅgalaṃ - arahaṃtā maṅgalaṃ, siddhā maṅgalaṃ, sāhū maṅgalaṃ, kevalipannatto dhammo maṅgalaṃ. AvaS 12.*

²⁷ *Uttama*: the highest, the supreme, the best, the most excellent; it is on account of their excellence, though they possess that excellence in varying degrees, that the four are *maṅgala*.

²⁸ *cattāri loguttamā - arahaṃtā loguttamā siddhā loguttamā, sāhū loguttamā, kevalipannatto dhammo loguttamo. AvaS 13.*

²⁹ Or: I find my refuge. . .; *śaraṇa*, shelter, refuge, habitation, that which ensures protection. The four inspire, they are guides, ramparts, shelters which provide absolute certitude and unshakeable belief that the *dharma* is the good path.

I take refuge in the *siddhas*

I take refuge in the *sādhus*

I take refuge in the *dharma* taught by the *kevalins*.³⁰

The *saṃkṣipta-pratikramaṇa-sūtra*: sūtra of general repentance

"I desire to repent of the transgressions that I have committed during the day,³¹ by my body, by my speech, in my mind, [deeds] contrary to the Āgamas, contrary to the path,³² contrary to the rules of conduct, unworthy of a Śramaṇa, directing of the mind towards evil,³³ evil thoughts, evil conduct, undesirable, reprehensible; [such as affect] knowledge, belief, conduct, knowledge of Scripture,³⁴ equanimity; from all infringement, all transgression³⁵ of the three forms of control,³⁶ [of the mastery of the] four passions,³⁷ the five Great

³⁰ *cattāri saraṇaṃ pavajjāmi - arahante saraṇaṃ pavajjāmi, siddhe saraṇaṃ pavajjāmi, sāhū saraṇaṃ pavajjāmi, kevalipannattaṃ dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ pavajjāmi*. AvaS 14.

³¹ During the night, if it is being recited in the morning rite. All the duties of the ascetics are indicated in condensed form in this *sūtra*; the following ones review specific features of the vows and doctrine.

³² The one indicated by Scripture and tradition.

³³ A reference, in particular, to *ārtha-dhyāna*, painful concentration; cf. P 375.

³⁴ *Śruta*; cf. P 130; 273.

³⁵ *Khaṇḍaṇa*. . . *Virāhaṇā* (*khaṇḍana*. . . *virādhanā*): a *khaṇḍana* appears to be a slighter infringement than a *virādhanā*. These faults are not very grave, they are not irremediable infringements such as make null and void the vows; cf. P 324 ff.

³⁶ The *gupti*.

³⁷ *Kaṣāyas*.

Vows,³⁸ [the protection of the] six categories of living beings,³⁹ the seven rules concerning the alms of food,⁴⁰ the eight Mothers [three types of control, five types of vigilance],⁴¹ the nine ramparts of chastity,⁴² the performance of the ten duties of *Śramaṇas*,⁴³ may my fault [due to these infringements and transgressions] reap [for me] no reward!"⁴⁴

The *iryāpathika-sūtra*: *sūtra* of vigilance in movement from one place to another

"I desire to repent of the offences [I have committed during] my comings and goings, by treading upon living beings, seeds, by

³⁸ *Mahāvratas*.

³⁹ Cf. P 289.

⁴⁰ *Piṇḍaiṣaṇās*.

⁴¹ *Pravacana-mātās*.

⁴² Cf. SthS 663.

⁴³ The ten *dharma*s.

⁴⁴ *icchāmi padḍkkaṃ iyaṃ me devasī ayyāro kao kāro vāro māṇasīo ussutto ummaggo akappo akaraṇijjo dujjhāo duvviṇṇīo anāyāro anicchiavvo asamaṇapāuggo, nāṇe dāsaṇe caritte sue sāmāje, tiṇhaṃ guttiṇaṃ, caṇṇhaṃ kaṣāyāṇaṃ, paṇṇaṇhaṃ mahavvayāṇaṃ, chaṇṇhaṃ jīvaṇikāyāṇaṃ sattaṇhaṃ piṇḍesaṇāṇaṃ, aṭṭhaṇhaṃ pavayaṇamāṇaṃ, navaṇhaṃ baṇḍhaceraḡuttīṇaṃ, dasavihe samaṇadhamme sāmāṇaṇaṃ joḡāṇaṃ jaṃ khaṇḍīyaṃ jaṃ virāhiyaṃ tassa micchā mi dukkaḡaṇaṃ. AvaS 15. Sincere contrition destroys, annihilates both the fault and its consequences. Each *pratīkramaṇa* performed in full sincerity constitutes a return to the state which existed before the fault was committed. It is noteworthy that this *sūtra* contains: condemnation of the faults, specification of those commitments to which they relate and repentance, which is the expression of a firm resolution to become cleansed from all trace of impurity.*

walking upon plants, by trampling underfoot dew, an antheap, moss, water, earth, a spider's web; whatever *jīvas* possessing one sense, two senses, three senses, four senses, and five senses I have damaged, having hurt them [by a blow of the foot], covered them [with dust], slaughtered them [by crushing them against the ground], squashing them together, touching them, making them suffer, overwhelming them with fatigue, frightening them, shifting them from one place to another, taking their life from them,⁴⁵ may my fault [due to these infringements and negligences] reap [for me] no reward!"⁴⁶

The *kṣamā-maitrī-sūtra*: *sūtra* of pardon and friendship

"I ask pardon from all living beings and may all grant me pardon!⁴⁷ I profess friendship for all living beings [and harbour no] enmity for any."⁴⁸

The *antima-maṅgala-sūtra*: last *sūtra* of Happiness

"Thus, having made a true confession, having pronounced my faults blameworthy, having condemned them and, loathed them, my

⁴⁵ Throughout this passage there is an element of wretchedness, of suffering.

⁴⁶ *icchāmi paḍikkamiṃ iriyāvahiyaṃ virāhaṇāe gamaṇāgamaṇe pāṇakkamaṇe biyakkamaṇe hariyakkamaṇe osā-uttīṃga-paṇaga- daga-maṭṭi-makkaḍasamāntāṇa-samkamaṇe, je me jivā virāhiyā egimādiyā beimādiyā teimādiyā caurimādiyā paṇcimādiyā abhihayā vattiyā lesiyā samghāiyā saṃghaṭṭiyā pariāvāiyā kilāmiyā uddaviyā thāṇāo thāṇam samkāmīyā jivīyāo vavaroviyā tassa micchā mi dukkaḍam.* AvaS 16. This *sūtra* lays stress upon the vigilance and self-control required in order not to harm any living being; for *iriyā* and *aṣṭasūkṣma*, cf. P 533; 706; 546.

⁴⁷ For all the faults committed by them of which I may have been the cause.

⁴⁸ *khāmemi savva jive, savve jiva khamamtu me mettī me savvabhūesu, veram majjham na kepai.* AvaS 32.

repentance [covering] the three activities [of mind, speech and body], I salute with reverence the twenty-four *jīnas*."⁴⁹

5. Fifth *āvaśyaka*: *kāyotsarga*

The *kāyotsarga-pratijñā-sūtra*: *sūtra* containing the promise of *kāyotsarga*

"For the uplift [of the *ātman*], as a form of reparation, for purification, to avoid the thorns [the three sorts of tarnish, namely, falsity, a craving for enjoyments and erroneous belief],⁵⁰ and for the destruction of bad *karmas*, I abandon my body [all bodily activity]."⁵¹

6. Sixth *āvaśyaka*: *pratyākhyāna*

The *Namaskārasahita-sūtra*: *sūtra* [of total abstinence] accompanied by the recitation of the *Namaskāra-sūtra*

"From sunrise [for the duration of one *muhūrta* ending with the

⁴⁹ *evamaham āloiya nirṇdiya garahiya digumñchiyaṃ sammaṃ tivihēṇa paḍikkamto vaṇḍāmi jīṇe cauvvisam*. AvaS 33. A brief synthesis of all the *sūtras* that make up the 4th *āvaśyaka*. The confession is global in its scope and ritual in character, but it is the inner attitude, the sincerity of the repentance that is important. This repentance has to do with 3 types of *yoga*: mental, vocal and bodily activities. It contributes towards the elimination of the *karmas* produced by these same activities. One concludes on an auspicious note by venerating the *jīnas*

⁵⁰ *Māyā, nidāna, mithyā-darśana*; cf. TS VII, 18; P 356.

⁵¹ *tassuttarikaraṇeṇaṃ pāyacchittakaraṇeṇaṃ visohikaraṇeṇaṃ visallikaraṇeṇaṃ pavāpaṃ kammāṇaṃ nigghāyaṇaṭṭhāc thāmi kāussaggaṃ*. AvaS 36. The 2nd *sūtra* specific to this *āvaśyaka* is that concerning the *ākāras*, the exceptions. In this *sūtra* one enumerates the slight and inevitable bodily activities such as breathing, coughing, yawning, etc. which have no effect upon *kāyotsarga*. One then promises to remain motionless, concentrated, for duration of one recitation of the *Namaskāra-sūtra* (AvaS 37). Upon the subject of the postures and obligatory observances of *kāyotsarga*, cf. P 327 ff.

recitation] of the *Namaskāra-sūtra*,⁵² I abstain⁵³ from the four types of nutriments: cooked foods; liquids; fresh and dried fruits or other snacks; betelnut, cardamom and other spices;⁵⁴ excepting involuntarily or by dire constraint,⁵⁵ I renounce [these foodstuffs and any form of drink]."⁵⁶

The *divasacarima-sūtra*:

***sūtra* [of total abstinence] from sunset to sunrise**

"I [promise] that for the last part of the day⁵⁷ I abstain from the four types of nutriments..."

⁵² The *muhūrta*: 48 mins is not mentioned in the text, but is understood; the fast is broken after the recitation of the *Namaskāra-sūtra*.

⁵³ *Paccakkhāmi*: I refuse, I reject; here it refers to abstinence from food and drink, including water.

⁵⁴ Betelnut and cardamom are astringent spices that help digestion and purify the mouth; if they are offered to the *sādhvis*, they may accept them.

⁵⁵ Exception are only countenanced if they are involuntary or inevitable; e.g. in the case of a sudden downpour of rain, if one imbibes a few drops; this is not considered to break the fast.

⁵⁶ *sūre uggae ṇamokkārasahitaṃ paccakkhātī cauvvihāṃ pi āhāraṃ asaṇaṃ paṇāṃ khāimaṃ sāimaṃ annath' aṇābhogeṇaṃ sahasākāreṇaṃ vosirati*. AvaS 96. The original text uses the 3rd person, but the *sūtra* is recited at sunrise by the guruṇi and each *sādhvi* replies: "*vosirāmi*", I renounce.

⁵⁷ Cf. AvaS 103. *Divasacarima*: the last part of the day or of one's life; cf. SramanS pp. 332-333; here it is a question of the promise of total abstinence during the night (P 331 ff). It is only these two forms of *pratyākhyāna* that are obligatory for the *sādhvis*.

B - The order of the rite

The rite is performed morning and evening according to a fixed order to which there are numerous variants in accordance with the practice of the different communities. The order given here is that followed by the *Sthānakavāsi sādhis*.⁵⁸ The main rite is preceded by a lesser preliminary rite, called the *kṣetra-viśuddhi*, the purification of mind and body.⁵⁹

1. *Kṣetra-viśuddhi*

- i) The *laghu-guruvandana-sūtra* (to request permission to perform the *kṣetra-viśuddhi*).⁶⁰
- ii) The *Namaskāra-sūtra*.
- iii) The *laghu-guruvandana-sūtra*.

⁵⁸ This text of the order followed in the rite of the *āvaśyakas* was given to me by Mahāsati Tarulatā of the Gondelgaccha in Gujarāta. Mahāsati gave me the necessary explanations in Madras in December 1979 and October 1980. The *sādhvis*, either standing or seated on the ground (according to which *sūtra* is being recited), facing either North or East, form a semi-circle around the *guruṇi*, who is either standing or seated on a wooden stool at practically ground level. As the rite proceeds, the *guruṇi* makes the same gestures as the rest of the group, including the standing posture, *pañcāṅga-namaskāra*, but she remains seated when the *sādhvis* salute her with the *guruvandana*. All the *sūtras* are recited by heart by one *sādhvi*, taken up by a second and thus recited in rotation.

⁵⁹ *Kṣetra*: a field, place, region; here, the "field" is the body wherein the *ātman* dwells. The purification extends to the whole person. This explanation was given me by Mahāsati Tarulatā; it could also be interpreted as applying to the place where the rite is being performed, cf. *Śrāvaka Pratīkramaṇa-sūtra*, p. 32.

⁶⁰ This refers to the much-used short *guruvandana*. If the *guruṇi* is absent, permission is requested from Śrī Simandhara, the *tirthaṅkara* of Videhakṣetra, which is closest to our own continent; cf. P 76; 80; 676.

iv) The *iryāpathika-sūtra*.⁶¹

v) *Kāyotsarga* (during which each one examines briefly her behaviour during her comings and goings, while mentally reciting the *iryāpathika-sūtra*,⁶² followed by the *Namaskāra-sūtra* repeated thrice).

vi) The *caturviṃśatistava*.⁶³ Then the same *sūtras* are repeated from the beginning.⁶⁴

vii) *Kāyotsarga* (with an examination of one's behaviour during comings and goings, of one's study of Scripture and of the inspection of clothing, while mentally reciting the *iryāpathika-sūtra* and the *kāla-pratīlekhanā-sūtra*,⁶⁵ followed by the *Namaskāra-sūtra* repeated thrice).

viii) The *caturviṃśatistava*.

xi) The *praṇipāta-sūtra*.⁶⁶

x) This purificatory-rite being terminated, the great rite of the *āvaśyakas* begins. The *sādhvis* address the *guruṇi* in the *laghu-guruvandana-sūtra* and next address the senior *sādhvis* similarly in

⁶¹ The 4th *āvaśyaka* (P 706).

⁶² In the morning, one examines oneself on one's thoughts of the preceding evening and of the night and on one's dreams. We may recall that *kāyotsarga* always starts with 2 particular *sūtras* (P 708).

⁶³ N.B. *Kāyotsarga* is always followed by the *caturviṃśatistava*.

⁶⁴ I.e. from i to vi above.

⁶⁵ The *kāla-pratīlekhanā-sūtra* belongs to *pratīkramaṇa*; it refers both to *kāla*, the time reserved for *svādhyāya*, and to *pratīlekhaṇā*.

⁶⁶ The *sūtra* of prostration and reverential salutation, a hymn of praise to the *ūrthaṅkaras*; it does not belong to the *AvaS*.

turn, to request permission to perform the parts of the rite appertaining to the first three *āvaśyakas*.⁶⁷

2. *Sāmāyika-vidhi*

i) The *Namaskāra-sūtra*.

ii) The *laghu-guruvandana-sūtra*.

iii) *Vandana* to the *arhats*, the *siddhas*, the *kevalins*, to the *ācārya* (or *ācāryas*), to the *munis* and *sādhvis* of the *gaccha*.⁶⁸

iv) A *sūtra* (expressing desire of repentance and expiation of faults by means of *kāyotsarga*).⁶⁹

v) The *Namaskāra-sūtra*.

vi) The *sāmāyika-sūtra*.⁷⁰

vii) The *saṃkṣipta-pratikramaṇa-sūtra*.⁷¹

viii) *Kāyotsarga* (with examination of conscience in regard to the *mahāvratas*, the *saṃitis*, the *guptis*, followed by the *Namaskāra-sūtra* repeated thrice).

⁶⁷ In certain *gacchas*, one requests permission for the performance of each *āvaśyaka*. According to the order followed here, one asks this permission separately only before the 4th, 5th and 6th *āvaśyakas*.

⁶⁸ This *vandana-sūtra* does not belong to the *AvaS*.

⁶⁹ This *sūtra* does not belong to the *AvaS*.

⁷⁰ The 1st *āvaśyaka* (P 700).

⁷¹ The 4th *āvaśyaka* (P 705).

3. *Caturviṃśatistava-vidhi*

A recitation of the hymn.⁷²

4. *Guruvandana-vidhi*

Recitation of the *sūtra* twice accompanied by the appropriate gestures⁷³ and followed by the *laghu-guruvandana-sūtra*, to request permission to perform the rite of *pratikramaṇa*.

5. *Pratikramaṇa-vidhi*

i-ix) The *aticāra-ālocanā-sūtras*, the *sūtras* constituting the confession of faults (nine *sūtras* concerning the essentials of the doctrine and of conduct: *jñāna*, *darśana*, *mahāvratas*, etc).⁷⁴

x) The *saṃkṣipta-pratikramaṇa-sūtra*.

xi) The *Namaskāra-sūtra*.

xii-xxxiv) The *sāmāyika-sūtra*, followed by twenty-two *sūtras*.⁷⁵

⁷² The 2nd *āvaśyaka* (P 701).

⁷³ The 3rd *āvaśyaka* (P 701). The *guruṇi* employs the same gestures as the *sādhvis*, but she addresses this *vandana* to Śrī Śimandhara.

⁷⁴ The *sūtras* express repentance for faults and negligences, they do not belong to the *AvaS*; cf. *SramanS* pp. 395-404.

⁷⁵ These *sūtras* are also called the *śramaṇa-sūtras*; cf. 4th *āvaśyaka* (P 703-707) for the first 5 *sūtras*. These *śramaṇa-sūtras* give a succinct resumé of each of the obligations incumbent upon the ascetics and of the aspects of the doctrine set forth in the all-embracing *sūtra* (P 705). The recitation of these *sūtras* stimulates an awareness of faults committed and inspires contrition; cf. *AvaS* 17-26. So soon as they are purified in this way from their faults, the *sādhvis* re-affirm their faith in the *dharma*, and with renewed fervour promise fidelity to all the demands of the state of renunciation; cf. *AvaS* 27-31. In the final *sūtras*, they ask pardon from all living beings and salute once again the *tirthaṅkaras* (P 707).

xxxv) The *gurvandana-sūtra* (repeated twice).

xxxvi) The *laghu-gurvandana-sūtra* (to request permission to perform the rite of *kāyotsarga*).

6. *Kāyotsarga-vidhi*

i) The *Namaskāra-sūtra*.

ii) The *sāmāyika-sūtra*.

iii) The *saṃkṣipta-pratikramaṇa-sūtra*.

iv) *Kāyotsarga* (with reflection upon the sixteen aspects of *dharma-dhyāna*.⁷⁶ followed by the *Namaskāra-sūtra* repeated thrice).

v) The *caturvīṃśatistava*.

vi) The *gurvandana-sūtra* (repeated twice).

vii) The *laghu-gurvandana-sūtra* (to request permission to perform the rite of *pratyākhyāna*).

7. *Pratyākhyāna-vidhi*

The *divasacarima-sūtra* (a promise made by the whole community to maintain total abstinence from sunset to sunrise. The *guruṇi* utters the *sūtra* and each *sādhvi* replies: "vosirāmi", I renounce).⁷⁷

⁷⁶ These aspects are enumerated in the *Aupapātika-sūtra* 30 (ref. given by Mahāsati Tarulatā from a different edition to that cited in the bibliography).

⁷⁷ Cf. the 6th *āvaśyaka* (P 707); for the other types of *pratyākhyāna*, cf. AvaS 96-104. We may take special note of the one called *abhigraha* (AvaS 104), which vows not to accept nourishment except when certain conditions have been fulfilled; this was rendered famous through Mahāvira and his encounter with Candana (P 124); this form of *pratyākhyāna* is sometimes, though very rarely, practised by certain ascetics.

8. End of the rite

i) The *praṇipata-sūtra* (repeated thrice).

ii) The *laghu-guruvandana-sūtra*.

iii) *Kṣamāpanā*: each sādhi in turn approaches the guruṇi and then the elders in order of seniority, in order to salute them and ask for pardon.⁷⁸ This request for pardon is mutual: to each one requesting pardon, the guruṇi and sādhis respond: "I also request pardon."

When the rite is concluded,⁷⁹ some sādhis pursue their *svādhyāya* by recalling to mind what they have read or meditated upon during the day (generally they do not light a lamp), while others practise *japa* or *dhyāna*.

⁷⁸ The brief formulation makes mention of: *avinaya*, *abhakti*, *āśātanā* viz. lack of modesty (or discipline), lack of deference and filial devotion, lack of respect. It does not belong to the AvaS.

⁷⁹ In addition to the major *sūtras* and numerous secondary *sūtras* concerned with repentance, the Mūrtipūjaka sādhis recite some *sūtras* of praise: to the pilgrimage-places, to images of the *jinās*, to the temples of the three worlds; to the sādhus; to Pārśvanātha; to the *vīṭarāgas*; a four-part hymn of praise is addressed: i) to the five *tīrthaṅkaras*: Ādinātha, Śāntinātha, Nēminātha, Pārśvanātha and Mahāvira; ii) to all the *tīrthaṅkaras*; iii) to *śruta-jñāna*; iv) to Sarasvatī. Another hymn of praise is addressed, first, to Mahāvira and then to all the *jinās*, to the *Āgamas* and to *śruta-devī*. Yet another is addressed to *śruta-jñāna* another to the *siddhas*, another to *śruta-devatā*; cf. *Pañcapratikramaṇa-sūtra*, *sūtras* and *stutis* 12; 14; 15; 17; 18; 20; 21; 22; 23; 37. During the *guruvandana*, when pronouncing the syllables "a-ko-kā-yam...", the sādhis touch their *rajoḥaraṇas* and place them to their foreheads (ibid., p. 247, ns. 2; 3). On pronouncing the syllables: "ja-tā-bhe. . ." they touch the *sthāpanacārya* with both hands and then put them to their foreheads (ibid., pp. 115-116).

APPENDICES

I - Samikṣā Review of works and articles written by Sādhvis

A - Review of works

The works selected are classified here according to their types. Each is analysed briefly as regards its particular, internal structure and contents.¹

1. General introduction to the doctrine

Śrī jaina dharma praveśikā (Introduction to the Jaina dharma)²

✓ Sādhvi Hemaprabhā Śrī

This book is a collection of talks on the doctrine, given by Sādhvi Hemaprabhā during a course of instruction in the *dharma* arranged for young men and girls during the rainy season. The aim of the course was to give a solid groundwork of knowledge to Jaina men and girl students, who receive some general information in the colleges but have scarcely any opportunity really to study their own *dharma*.

The book is very well thought out and clearly presented. It starts with a Preface, which describes the place occupied by the Jaina *dharma* within Indian culture and indicates its important and unique attributes. The goal to be attained is clearly defined. Thereafter, the following 22 chapters present in turn different aspects of the doctrine, defining them concisely and lucidly. The value of the book consists not only in the clarity of its explanations, but in the harmonious way

¹ The works reviewed here are in Hindi and comprise together 2, 464 pp. There are also a certain number of works in Gujarāṭi composed by Sādhvis. I have met personally these Sādhvi authors (except Mahāsati Humarāvakuṃvara); three of them - Sādhvis Hemaprabhā and Rājimati and Āryikā Jñānamatī have contributed to this study. The bibliographical refs. of works and articles reviewed in this appendix are given in full in the bibliography.

² Calcutta, 1976; 168 pp.

in which she links together the doctrinal concepts, tenets of belief, and the praxis which devolves from them. Sādhvi Hemaprabhā has transmitted flawlessly the classical teaching concerning the Three Jewels and has placed it within the grasp of youthful contemporary auditors desirous of understanding their own spiritual way and of conforming thereto their conduct. The study and assimilation of the basic elements presented in this guide will permit all those who so desire to deepen their grasp of certain features of the teaching.

2. Study on a particular doctrinal subject

Yoga ki prathama kirāṇa (First ray of light upon yoga)³

Sādhvi Śrī Rājimati

This is a little treatise on yoga for the use of śrāvakas and śrāvikās. Here it is a question of Jaina yoga, that is to say, of a discipline which takes the form of progressive purifications of both body and mind, such as conduce towards spiritual progress along the path indicated by Jaina doctrine. In her words of explanation Sādhvi Rājimati takes as her starting-point a text of Ācārya Tulasi, *Manonūsāsanaṃ*, with which she combines certain ideas and practices found in the *Yoga-sūtra* of Patañjali and in *Haṭha-Yoga*. The book, in accordance with its declared aim, is divided into 7 chapters, each one dealing with one type of purification: purification of food, of the body in general, of the senses, of the breathing, of speech, of mental processes, while the last chapter, in a sort of recapitulation, gives some precise directives on the subject of exercises, both physical and spiritual, to be performed each day over a period of three years.

A perusal of this treatise is enough to make one realise that Sādhvi Rājimati has not only studied these subjects very profoundly, but also that she is herself totally and resolutely engaged to the spiritual quest that she describes. She is never superficial; no clichés are to be found here. She aims at being accessible and intelligible to beginners. She explains, encourages, counsels, to the point of being, at times, somewhat repetitive. Her style is clear and, to lighten the weight of technical terms, she uses paraphrases and concrete examples. She

³ Jayapura, 1974; 210 pp.

never loses sight of either the corner-stones or the demands of the doctrine and Jaina asceticism, while at the same time introducing en passant certain ideas of the *Yoga-sūtra* and recommending some postures and respiratory practices borrowed from *Haṭha-Yoga*. This much having been said, let us now consider a few of the characteristics of this treatise:

Its composition and structure: at first sight, the Table of Contents gives the impression that we have here a full and well-balanced study, which, on the whole, it certainly is. However, here and there, one notes certain inconsistencies. It is difficult to see, for example, why references to a subject such as *dhyāna* are dispersed here and there over several chapters (pp. 125-135; 145-148; 153; 155-160); *dhāraṇa*, moreover, should have been given before *dhyāna*, since the reference here is to the *Yoga-sūtra*. One finds, in the last two chapters, repetitions of what has already been mentioned.

The incorporations of other systems: we have here a bold, original and positive initiative Sādhvī Rājimati gives evidence of careful discrimination. However, she does not always succeed and one has sometimes the impression of an attempted juxtaposition that could lead to confusion.

The explanations of the ideas involved: *āsana*, *mudrā*, *cakra* and other terms are precisely defined and the numerous illustrations are a help to comprehension; no references are supplied, however, for the texts quoted.

From the technical point of view: taken as a whole, the book is a little disorderly. There are no notes and the text would be less heavy if certain explanations and references had been given at the foot of the page. One also regrets the absence of a bibliography.

With a view to the fact that this treatise is destined for śrāvakas and śrāvikās as an aid to their spiritual progress, one may say that, despite repetitions and a certain lack of over-all planning, this book does attain its objective and that this enterprising attempt, difficult of realisation, testifies to the profound concern of Sādhvī Rājimati to succour, to enlighten and to guide.

Namaskāra mahāmantra: sādhanā ke āloka mein(The great *Namaskāra-mantra* and the spiritual quest)⁴

Sādhvi Śrī Rājimati

As in the preceding work, we find here in Sādhvi Rājimati the same profound insight into her subject and the same eagerness to place spiritual riches within the grasp of śrāvakas and śrāvikās. We have here, as the title indicates, an unveiling of the whole potential hidden within the *Namaskāra-mantra*, with the aim of helping people on the path of Liberation. At the outset, 23 brief chapters are devoted to a general study of the *māntra*, its power, the vital role of the words, its influence on the one reciting it, particularly in regard to the physical well-being it imparts. Our attention is next turned to the *Namaskāra-mantra* and its unique role in the spiritual quest, the Liberation of the *ātman*. After a detailed analysis of each syllable, the importance of the basic elements stressed by this *mantra* and the types of *siddhis*, specific perfections, to which it gives rise, are clearly stated. Finally, different methods employed in the recitation of this *mantra*, in order to promote a calm spirit, sustained concentration and recollectedness, are enumerated. The presentation of these methods is followed by a commentary on each of the Names of the *parameṣṭhins* and by another on the twenty-four *tirthaṅkaras*. The last chapter of all is made up of eleven selected short stories, culled from tradition, in which the marvellous power of the *Namaskāra-mantra* is attested. The book ends with three beautiful poetic songs in homage and praise to the *parameṣṭhins*.

3. A study on one aspect of the tradition ✓

Jaina dharma ke prabhāvaka ācārya(The illustrious Ācāryas of the Jaina *dharma*)⁵

Sādhvi Śrī Saṅghamitrā

⁴ *Paṭanā*, 1977; 100 pp.

⁵ *Lāḍanūm*, 1979; 432 pp.

This is a very serious study of the great ācāryas of the spiritual lineage of Mahāvira, from the most ancient times to our own day. The book is divided into two Parts. The first, which is quite brief, is a retrospective survey of the epoch in which each ācārya lived. The second, which deals directly with the ācāryas using the surest available sources of tradition, is divided into three lengthy chapters:

- Chapter 1: the ācāryas of the time of the Āgamas, which was the age of oral transmission, of the first written commentaries and the final version of them, a period taking us up to Ācārya Kṣamāśramaṇa (VIth c.).
- Chapter 2: the eminent ācāryas of the Golden Age, authors of various valuable works (up to the XVth c.).
- Chapter 3: the ācāryas of a new era (from the XVth c. to our own day.).

One hundred and twenty ācāryas are presented, together with the various documents which concern them. Each is denoted by a highly expressive epithet which precedes his name and conveys to us straightaway a lively ideas of his personality. A biographical note, longer or shorter as the case may be, helps place the ācārya in the context of his own day, discern his role in the *saṃgha* and his influence upon his contemporaries, while a brief review, clear and as complete as possible, gives us information about the written works of the ācārya in question. In chapters 1 and 2, at the end of each review, one finds, whenever reference has been made to a passage in a particular text, the original, in Prakrit or Sanskrit, of this said text.

The book concludes with two appendices. Appendix 1 gives in two columns the name of each ācārya and references to the sources upon which the study concerning him is based. Appendix 2 consists of a bibliography, arranged in alphabetical order, of the works consulted. In this, it is regrettable that the dates of the publications mentioned are not given.

Sādhvi Saṃghamitrā has, with the utmost care, accomplished an immense task, of great importance and usefulness for seekers of knowledge. This type of study can well be set alongside the works of

eminent ācāryas. Let us hope that other Sādhvis also may feel themselves called to undertake, with the same degree of competence, works of this kind on other aspects of the tradition.

4. A collection of *pravacanas*, teachings concerning the doctrine

***Arcanā aura āloka* (On veneration and vision)⁶**

Mahāsati Śrī Umarāvakumvara

This volume contains 21 carefully elaborated *pravacanas* delivered during one monsoon period. Here various subjects are discussed which form a coherent whole, the aim being, during this lengthy retreat-period, to re-awaken the zeal of her hearers, to help them to deepen their knowledge of the doctrine, to cause them to reflect and to bring about a salutary renewal in their lives. Mahāsati Umarāvakumvara is well-known for her erudition and for her indefatigable zeal in travelling all over the North-west and Northern regions, eloquently imparting solid teaching to the Jains of the towns and villages through which she and her companions pass.

The collection is of interest, as much from the point of view of its arrangement of contents, its presentation and style as for the spirit which animates it.⁷

Arrangement, presentation and style: it must be borne in mind that although the *pravacanas* were originally spoken, the collection is now a written text. It is very well produced and follows a fairly systematic order without becoming dull and dry, quite, in fact, to the contrary.

⁶ Vijayanagara (Rājasthāna), 1970; 388 pp.

⁷ *Arcanā*: adoration, veneration, the homage due to the divine and to one's superiors; *āloka*: view, vision, light; the author does not comment upon the title of the book. This title, seemingly, expresses at one and the same time veneration of the *dharma* and the penetrating vision of this same *dharma* imparted by knowledge; moreover, if the author is thinking here in terms of light, the meaning is the same, for the vision one has of spiritual things itself constitutes a type of light.

Behind the words, one can feel the warmth and persuasiveness characteristic of *pravacanas*. Each subject taken up and developed forms part of a whole which introduces us to progressively deeper reflections and considerations. The style is that of a very learned, thoughtful person, who knows how to express herself in a readily understandable, concrete and undogmatic fashion. One is struck on reading this collection of *pravacana*s, by the number of quotations belonging to other traditions and cultures: the *śruti*, the *Bhagavad Gītā*, *Mahābhārata*, *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Purāṇa*, *bhakti* poems (of both North and South), the *Dhammapada* and Buddhist tradition, Sikh Scriptures, poems in Urdu and Persian, quotations from the Greek philosophers, from the Bible and from the Islamic tradition; historical reminiscences from the history of India, England, America and France, quotations from English, French and American authors, among them two names which one would hardly expect to find in a religious discourse, those of Voltaire and Victor Hugo!

A brief analysis of this astonishing variety of quotations leads us to conclude that the author has read widely, that she is well able to make her talks lively and to help her audience become receptive and enlarge its horizons. However, even if Mahāsati is very well read, it is certain, judging from the choice of certain quotations, that she has not been able to assimilate, for lack of the necessary masters, the religious and cultural traditions of other countries. She quotes and makes observations out of context, without ever giving references, not infrequently manifesting a certain rather unfavourable prejudice, simply through ignorance, towards the tradition or culture in question.⁸ What is grievous, and even painful, is that a Sādhvi should

⁸ To quote examples would take us too far from our present purpose. Given the brevity of the judgements delivered out of context, it would be necessary, for a proper assessment, to give a survey of the context in question, together with all the necessary nuances, and then to show that the opinion expressed in this book is far too hasty because of a fundamental ignorance of the relevant facts, situations, peoples and religions. One could make a similar observation concerning quotations not originating in Indian culture that the author has gleaned at random from her reading and thus torn from their context. To refer to other traditions is, in itself, excellent, but it is necessary first to have assimilated that of which one speaks. In this collection, the author would have been wiser to limit herself - outside the Jain tradition - to

so totally ignore the Christian ascetic tradition with its very deep spirituality, just because she has never had access to it. This shows how the religions have lived in isolation from each other and in mutual ignorance.

The spirit which animates these *pravacanas*: it is characterised by great openness. Mahāsati Umarāvakurīvara knows well how to yoke together the essential of some doctrinal teaching and its practical application in contemporary life and society, with both of which she is very well acquainted. She points frequently to all that gives rise to attachment and shows how, by progressive purification, one may achieve the destruction of all *karmas* and the Liberation of the *ātman*. She chooses her words skilfully so as not to wound, but is intransigent in her opposition to injustice, corruption, a narrow and sectarian spirit and all superficiality. She warmly encourages her hearers to manifest tolerance and respect for all human beings and to model themselves in accordance with the teaching of the *dharma*, which, in its essence, inculcates universal benevolence.

5. Biography

Sādhāna patha ki amara sādhiḥ

(An unceasing pilgrim on the path to Realisation)⁹

Mahāsati Śrī Saralā¹⁰

a few texts from a religion or culture well known to herself. The phenomenon of atheism, to which allusion is made several times (e.g. pp. 113; 123) is depicted either in caricature or in some cliché devoid of all metaphysical content. Now an ascetic who is well-acquainted with philosophy and Jaina doctrine, should be well able to grasp the origin of this phenomenon and its implications. As for the person described as "atheist", the author depicts him as a reckless libertine, either intellectual or artistic or any other. Even if, in order to shake the torpor of certain śrāvakas, it is good to remind them that a life of material enjoyments is an obstacle to spiritual growth, one should not use at random the words "atheism" "atheist" without previously giving at least some idea of the reality they convey.

⁹ Dilli, 1970; 323 pp.

¹⁰ With the collaboration of Mahāsati Śrī Candanā.

Mahāsati Pannādevi, the heroine of this biography, is already known to us. Here we will make a brief study of the contents of this book, written by a learned Sādhvi and fervent disciple of Mahāsati Pannādevi.

The contents of the book: it is composed of 4 parts.

- Part I extols the capacity of womankind for the spiritual life and sketches briefly the lives of remarkable women who were adherents of the Vedic, Jaina and Buddhist traditions.

- Part II narrates the life-stories of those Sādhvis who were the spiritual Mothers of Mahāsati Pannādevi, who is the subject of this detailed biography. The last chapter of this Part gives brief biographical notes and an excellent photograph of each of the eleven present disciples of Mahāsati. Next comes a list of her *cāurmāsyas* with a large double page entitled "A sweet-perfumed garden", the genealogical tree of the spiritual descendents of Mahāsati Śrī Parvatī, the *pravartini* of the heroine. Each Sādhvi - and they number many - is represented by a flower-petal. The whole drawing is a marvel of delicacy and precision.

- Part III speaks of the more important themes that Mahāsati Pannādevi has developed untiringly during her *pravacanas* (attended by the author).

- Part IV is a series of eulogies addressed to Mahāsati Pannādevi, written by numerous munis, some sādhvis and some śrāvikās. The book ends with a list of donators, both men and women, who have contributed to the cost of its publication. This biography is, without doubt, the work of its author, but it is also that of the *saṁgha*, each member taking part in his own way.

The style is pleasing, lively and poetic; Mahāsati Saralā is gripped by her subject and treats it with a sure knowledge of her tradition and with a profound and filial devotion towards her guruṇi, with many small added touches and with regard for harmony. She has conveyed very well the feel of the Sādhvi milieu in which she herself lives. Here and there, in the course of the chapters, one comes upon some repetitions, which might have been avoided if the book had been structured a little differently; moreover, the needed references are not

always given in regard to the subjects treated. However this tribute of filial affection has been written for the edification of members of the *saṃgha* and not for any academic goal.

If the book is taken as a whole, it is Part I that stands out as leaving most to be desired. Agreed, it is only a sort of prologue to the biography proper, yet it could have been written with greater consideration of the given facts of history. It would thus have sufficed to recall in a few pages the heritage bequeathed by tradition, together with the names of the *Satis* (Candanā, Mṛgāvati and others) which are well-known to all, and then careful research would have enabled the author to introduce some *Sādhvis* and *āryikās* of different regions, little known outside their own group. Even if such documents are rare, the simple fact of naming these saintly women is deeply meaningful, for it is a sign that they have existed and have followed the ideal shared by all the ascetics.

6. Biography of a muni, an introduction to his written words and explanatory notes on his poems

Śrīmad Devacandra padya piyūṣa ✓

(The nectar of the poetry of Śrīmad Devacandra)¹¹

Sādhvi Hemaprabhā Śrī

A request was made to Sādhvi Hemaprabhā by certain members of the Kharataragaccha to write a short biography of the distinguished muni Śrīmad Devacandra, together with an introduction to his numerous written works and explanatory notes on his poems. Śrīmad Devacandra was born in Bikānera, Rājasthāna, in 1689 and lived till 1755. He was a great sage, a scholar and a poet and his influence was enormous both upon his own age and upon the centuries which followed.

Sādhvi Hemaprabhā has succeeded perfectly in the task entrusted to her. She has managed in clear and expressive language to render the muni and his epoch living and close, by dint of immersing herself in the personality of this eminent spiritual muni, this poet who welcomed

¹¹ Jodhapura, 1977; 283 pp.

all, was the friend of all and whose sole desire, while himself advancing on the path of asceticism and true knowledge, was to draw others in his wake. He was very well instructed in the doctrine and had the gift, in his discourses, his writings and, above all, in his poems and songs, of bringing it within the reach of all. In love with his *dharma*, he radiated spiritual joy and, as a wandering troubadour, sang its praises by praising the *tirthaṅkaras*. He was thus a channel of the purest of pure Jaina *bhakti*.

Sādhvi Hemaprabhā has made good use of the available documents - manuscripts and inscriptions - and, with a very balanced sense of history, has given an overall picture of the epoch in which this muni lived. The most significant facts of Devacandra's life are recounted soberly and with discretion in regard to personal comment. Sādhvi Hemaprabhā is well able, with careful discernment, to insert commentary of a suitable sort which will guide and be of interest to her readers, neither over-emphasising her points nor giving useless repetitions.

The biography is followed by a presentation of each of the works, both in prose and poetry, of the sage. We have here a penetrating analysis both of the content of these works and of their style. Sādhvi Hemaprabhā excels in the presentation of poetic works, being herself carried away by the beauty of the author's spiritual songs, which convey vividly the joy of the *ātman*. She explains, with delicacy, what this *bhakti* truly is, the necessity of it and its influence upon the faithful. The mother-tongue of Devacandra was Rājasthānī, but he had sojourned a long while in Gujarāta and was familiar with its language. His poetic compositions are in Rājasthānī or archaic Hindi, in which words of local dialects are intermingled. Several of his poems were composed to be sung to *rāgas* (modes) of classical music.

The numerous poems given in this work - they occupy 192 pages - are arranged in five sections according to the subjects they treat. In the case of the majority, Sādhvi Hemaprabhā gives, in notes at the foot of the page, the meaning of words of local dialects as they occur.

The life, works and poems of Śrīmad Devacandra transcend the bounds of his own *gaṇa*. Indeed, welcoming as he was to munis and śrāvakas of all communities, he has left us a treasure which belongs

not only to the Jaina *dharma* but to the spirituality of every age. Sādhvi Hemaprabhā, as one of his faithful disciples, has accomplished with understanding, intelligence and fervent devotion a very worthwhile work.

7. Translation of an Āgama

*Uttarādhyayana-sūtra*¹²

Sādhvi Śrī Candanā

Until these last years, it was only munis who translated the *Āgamas* and wrote commentaries upon them. In addition to this excellent translation into Hindi made by Mahāsati Candanā, Sādhvis have latterly also translated certain *Āgamas* and other important texts into Gujarāṭī.

The text studied here is presented as follows:

- A lengthy introduction of a detailed scholarly type by Muni Śrī Vijaya.
- Each chapter of the *Āgama* is preceded by a short introduction, followed by the text. Each page is divided into two: on one side are the verses of the original in Prākṛit and on the other, opposite each verse, a translation of it into Hindi.
- At the end of the book come the *ṭippaṇas*, annotations, i.e., explanations based on the classical commentaries, classified according to chapters. However - and this is the one lack in this translation - it is regrettable that there are no cross-references to explanations given at the end of the work. This omission makes the book less convenient.

The translation is faithful to the original text, concise, but furnishing an expanded meaning of the word when the text is too brief. However, it is sometimes a little too literal, in that it often gives the Sanskrit word corresponding to the Prākṛit which makes for a

¹² Āgarā, 1972; 480 pp.

certain rigidity, in that these words belong to a very specialised vocabulary, whereas one would have preferred the meaning to have been transmitted through some simpler and more commonly used Hindi expression. This, however, is only a minor detail.

8. A brief review of the writings and translations of Āryikā Śrī Jñānamati

Of all contemporary Jaina women ascetics, it is Mātāji who has written and translated the most, and her productive flow is far from exhausted. Her intense intellectual activity, the expression of her no less intense spiritual life, extends into all spheres in which she hopes to be able to enlighten the śrāvakas and śrāvikās, help them to understand the doctrine and perform with devotion the rituals and the worship. In the November 1977 number of *Samyagjñāna*, the monthly review published by Mātāji, there is the following list of her publications:

1. Hindi commentaries upon Sanskrit doctrinal treatises: 8.
2. Translations of prākṛit poetic texts into Hindi poetry (among them the *bhaktis* of the daily rite): 18.
3. Composition in Hindi on doctrinal subjects: 30.
4. Hymns of praise composed in Sanskrit: 30.
5. Hymns of praise composed in Hindi: 30.
6. Compositions in Kannaḍa (2 hymns of praise and a short treatise): 3.
7. At the present time Mātāji is working upon 2 Hindi commentaries on doctrinal works and also a grammar.¹³

¹³ When this English translation was already completed, I received from the Digambara Jaina Institute of Cosmographic Research, Hastināpura, Mātāji's "List of Publications" for 1988. Their number amounts of 88: translations of major texts of doctrine with their commentaries, books, booklets. And Mātāji, imperturbable, carries on with her work.

It is not possible to give here a critical review of all these writings and translations; on the other hand, an analysis of one of these works would give little idea of the others. After studying eight of them, each one representative of a different type of writing, I can say that:

- the commentaries and doctrinal works are, fundamentally, perfectly faithful to the original texts and use clear and expressive language;
- the same applies to the translations;
- the hymns of praise, both Sanskrit and Hindi, are spontaneous outpourings, expressing profound conviction and devotion; they are the jewels of her entire output.

Nevertheless, it must be said that certain of these works, from the technical and scientific points of view, present some deficiencies. It would be tedious to make of these a detailed list, but it is not difficult to find the reason for what, from the outside, may seem a certain negligence. Mātāji works alone and herself writes all her manuscripts. She possesses the original texts and the principal commentaries upon them, but the library at her disposal is very limited. The two young disciples who help in the publication process have a good basic knowledge of the doctrine, are very devoted and, allowance being made for local conditions, do a good job. However, they do not have either the knowledge or technical experience necessary for this type of work. One could wish that Mātāji might have one or two competent pandits to help her, a better-equipped library and collaborators with specialist knowledge of the publishing side - this with the aim of producing her works as perfectly as possible. Mātāji, with whom I shared these observations, is of the same mind, but this poses considerable practical problems: what pandit could be found willing to devote himself to this close collaboration and how could a salary be assured? Furthermore, to acquire a thorough technical training would require a long apprenticeship in a specialised institution.

This important problem is not new and arises in an ascetic milieu which, as such, is a world of its own, a little removed from society. In all the religious traditions, there has always been this sort of non-relation between learned monks and scholarly academics. These are two worlds apart, two different milieus, which have, nevertheless, a

great deal in common as regards the subjects of interest to them and the works they undertake. It is essentially their manner of life that keeps them apart, although, in our own day and to a small extent everywhere, a rapprochement, even sometimes a true collaboration, is observable.

B - Review of articles

Certain *gacchas* and *sanghas* who publish a monthly magazine ask *sādhvis* from time to time to write an article. These articles are short, are written for the *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* and, for the most part, deal either with doctrinal subjects or questions of behaviour.

Here is a recapitulation of the subjects treated in 16 articles. To make for easy reading and to capture and hold the interest of their readers, it frequently so happens that the *sādhvis* recount a story from which a lesson is taken, in order, for instance, to demonstrate the futility of attempting to amass riches for a distant future¹⁴ or to show up the hypocrisy of a social or family group in which people treat with contempt an honest but poor family and then proceed to load it with honours in an obsequious fashion, when it becomes rich.¹⁵

Certain articles aim at helping the *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* to find and retain peace in a family or professional setting beset by worries, one in which attachment in all its forms often proves irresistible. This peace comes into being through *aparigraha*¹⁶ through strength of character; hence the necessity, especially in our day and age of one's conduct being rooted in a genuine spiritual life.¹⁷ One of these articles consists in an exhortation on the subject of giving; to whom should one give? Instead of making so many donations to temples, let us first of all be

¹⁴ *Sādhvi Aśoka*; Oct. 1973, pp. 44-45.

¹⁵ *Sādhvi Maṇiprabhā*; Nov.-Dec. 1973, pp. 14-16.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Aug. 1973, pp. 10-12.,

¹⁷ *Sādhvi Sajjana*; Nov.-Dec. 1973, pp. 9-10.

generous towards those people who are in need and let us help them. Then comes this very apt remark: the poor oftentimes give spontaneously the little that they have, while the rich give only from their superfluity or even show themselves to be miserly.¹⁸ Other articles treat more specifically the *dharma* as a whole or a particular aspect of the doctrine, for instance:

- The importance, parallel to the study of secular subjects, of the study of the *dharma* which leads to knowledge and wisdom, and contributes to a joy which is both deep and lasting.¹⁹
- The role of the guru, a beautiful and poetic meditation.²⁰
- The twelve sorts of reflection mentioned in the *Tattvārtha-sūtra*, explained here in an excellent commentary with the help of examples.²¹
- A synthesis of the various truths concerning the path leading to Liberation. It stresses the absolute necessity of perfect knowledge and imitation of the *vyarāgas*.²²

On the occasion of the 2500th Anniversary of Mahāvira's attainment of *nirvāṇa*, quite a large number of Sādhvis wrote articles. Among many others was one upon Bhagāvan Mahāvira and *ahimsā*. The article is very well thought out. After a brief reminder of the life of Mahāvira, the subject of *ahimsā* is taken up through the quotation of some passages out of the *Āgamas* and, using a very practical approach, the Sādhvi emphasises respect for others, the consideration

¹⁸ Sādhvi Maṇiprabhā; March 1974, pp. 15-16.

¹⁹ Sādhvi Manohara; Oct. 1973, pp. 18-21.

²⁰ Sādhvi Sudarśanā; Jan. 1974, pp. 27-28.

²¹ Sādhvi Nirmalakamvara; March 1975, pp. 13-19.

²² Sādhvi Maṇiprabhā; Oct. 1973, pp. 15-17; 21.

that is their due, and peace. The article concludes with a strong appeal to readers to follow in this our day the teaching of Mahāvira.²³

In the same way, for the celebration of the Anniversary of Ācārya Virasāgara's birth, several āryikās put into writing, each in her own way, their daughterly homage: the Ācārya ocean of peace and serenity, the supreme Guru of transparent purity, a Saint who was a jewel among the ascetics, lastly, a song of praise composed in verse brings to a conclusion what is called "the Great Golden Anniversary Celebration."²⁴

In one of these magazines it is recounted how some Sādhvis got permission to enter a prison and how one of them was permitted to address the prisoners. It was the day of the great festival of the Birthday of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The text of her talk is given. It evidences a deep understanding of human nature and a fraternal sympathy. The sādhi speaks chiefly about the positive aspect of imprisonment which should be a period of purification, about anticipation of a return to normal life and the great importance of work. She speaks also of compassion and refers to the example shown by Christ. Her remarks about evil and sin are very apposite, particularly her observations about prevailing social conditions.²⁵

The articles are very similar in content to the *pravacanas*, their aim being the same, it is a question here of using written language to help and encourage reflection. A reading of these articles makes it quite clear that the sādhis on the whole, or at least those belonging to certain groups, are making a contribution to the reviews published by the *saṃghas* which form a bond between all their members, both near and far. They express themselves in terms that are sufficiently concrete and understandable, so as to instruct, enlighten and guide.

²³ Sādhvi Priyadarśanā; 1976, pp. 45-48.

²⁴ Āryikās: Jñānamatī, Supārśvamati, Jinamati, Suprabhāmatī, Abhayamati; July 1976, pp. 15-17; 22-29; 65.

²⁵ Sādhvi Maināsundari; Oct. 1974.

On occasion they are somewhat dogmatic in approach and pessimistic about present-day conditions of life, but quite exceptional gifts are needed to be able to transmit in contemporary language the essence of the doctrine and awaken people's spirits. In this regard the mind turns to Mahāsati Ujjvalakumāri and Sādhvi Vicakṣaṇa, who did indeed possess these gifts. Nowadays it is their disciples, as well as other sādhis and āryikās, who are pursuing this immense necessary and difficult task.

II - List of names of towns, regions and states

Here only those names occurring in the study are given of which the orthography differs from that commonly employed today.¹

Āgarā	Agra
Ahmadābād	Ahmedabad
Ahmadnagara	Ahmadnagar
Ajamera	Ajmer
Alamodā	Almora
Amarāvati (Amraotī)	Amravati
Amṛtasara	Amritsar
Āndhra Pradeśa	Andhra Pradesh
Ārkkāḍu (Arcatus, Arkāt)	Arcot
Aruṇācala Pradeśa	Arunachal Pradesh °
Bangāla	Bengal
Bhāvanagara	Bhavnagar
Bhopāla (Bhūpala)	Bhopal
Bhṛgukaccha	Broach
Bihāra	Bihar
Bijāpura	Bijapur

¹ Cf. Technical Note P 24 ff.

Bikānera	Bikaner
Citrakūṭa (Chitor) ²	Chitorgarh (Chittaurgarh)
Devagadhā	Deogarh
Dhāravāra	Dharwar
Dillī	Delhi
Dvāravati (Dvāraka)	Dwarka
Elāpura (Eluru, Ellore)	Ellora
Girinagara	Girnar
Gujarāta	Gujarat
Gvāliyara	Gwalior
Haidarābād	Hyderabad
Hastināpura	Hastinapur
Himācala Pradeśa	Himachal Pradesh
Honnūru (Honnore, Hannūr, Honnāvar)	Honavar
Indaura (Īndora)	Indore
Jayapura	Jaipur
Jālandhara	Jullundur
Jesalamera	Jaisalmer

² There is also a Citrakuta (Chitrakuta) in Western U.P.

Jodhapura	Jodhpur
Kaccha	Kutch
Karṇāṭaka	Karnataka
Kāśmira	Kashmir
Kēraḷa	Kerala
Kolhāpura	Kolhapur
Lāhaura (Lahūra)	Lahore
Ludhiyānā	Ludhiana
Lāḍanurī	Ladnun
Madhya Pradeśa	Madhya Pradesh
Maṇipura	Manipur
Māravāḍa (region of Jodhapura, Bikānera)	Marwar
Mevāḍa (region of Udayapura)	Mewar
Mumbai	Bombay
Nāgarakōyil	Nagercoil
Nāgaura	Nagaur
Nepāla	Nepal
Orīsa	Orissa
Panjāba	Panjab, punjab

Paścima Bangāla	West Bengal
Pāṭaliputra (Paṭanā)	Patna
Pāṭaṇa	Patan
Rājagṛha	Rajgir
Rājasthāna	Rajasthan
Rāvalapiṇḍi	Rawalpindi
Sikamdrābād	Secunderabad
Śolāpura	Sholapur
Soratūru	Shirhatti
Śri Ḍuṃgaragaḍha	Sridungargarh
Śrinagara	Srinagar
Stambhatirtha (Khambhāta, Khambāyata)	Cambay
Sûrata	Surat
Syālakota	Sialkot
Udayapura	Udaipur
Ujjayini	Ujjain
Uttara Pradeśa	Uttar Pradesh

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1. One of the aims of this work is to be of use for a thorough study of the Jaina tradition. This being the case, in order to facilitate a knowledge of the *Āgamas* and doctrinal works - the various editions of which present divergences as regards the internal arrangement and sequence of the texts - I have followed this principle: the original of the texts given in the notes is taken from the first edition of the original mentioned in this bibliography, but, to enable interested readers who know neither Prākṛit or Sanskrit to place these texts in their correct context, all the references given in the notes (whether of a text quoted or a mere reference) are those of the first English or Hindi (if there is no English) translation mentioned in this bibliography. The other original texts and translations mentioned thereafter have also been consulted. For example:

- All the quotations in the original of the AS are taken from the edition produced by Muni Nathamala; and all the references to this *Āgama*, as regards its content, are also based on this edition.
- However, the numbering of these quotations and references follows that given in the edition of Jacobi SBE, vol. XXII. In this way readers will have no difficulty in finding a quoted text, or references and their context, in the English translation.
- Mention of the edition produced by Muni Jambūvijaya is an indication that it has been consulted.

It should be noted that certain editions give the original Prākṛit along with Sanskrit and English translations (e.g. DravSam; DS; SamSa) or the original Sanskrit along with a Hindi translation (e.g. Adh, of which there is no English translation). Sometimes, also, the edition gives the original Prākṛit along with a Sanskrit translation (e.g.

MA; I have not consulted the Hindi translation). In these three cases the numbering of the texts quoted and of the references is both that of the original and of the one or more translations.

2. A large proportion of the texts of the *Āgamas* and of the doctrine has been published, with a Hindi translation, by Hindi-speaking editors; moreover, numerous contemporary works are in Hindi, including all those of Sādhvi authorship. Therefore, with a view to preserving uniformity among the references in the bibliography, these latter have all - except in the case of English or French works - been given in English.

3. We have supplied, for each text and publication, full references according to the spelling of the edition consulted.

Abbreviations

- AA *Āgama Anuyoga Prakāśana, Samderav (Rajasthan).*
- Aspects *Aspects of Jaina Art and Architecture*, editors U.P.SHAH & M.A.Dhaky, published by Gujarat State Committee for the Celebration of 2,500th Anniversary of Bhagavān Mahāvira Nirvāṇa, Ahmedabad, 1975.
- ASS *Ādarśa Sāhitya Saṅgha Prakāśana, Churu (Rajasthan).*
- BJ *Bhāratīya Jñānapīṭha Prakāśana, Varanasi, Delhi.*
- DJTSS *Digambara Jaina Triloka Śodha Samsthāna, Hastinapur.*
- DS *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, publié sous la direction de M. VILLER sj, assisté de F. CAVALLERA et de J. DE GUIBERT sj, avec le concours d'un grand nombre de collaborateurs, Paris, Beauchesne.
- ERE *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, edited by

J. HASTINGS with the assistance of J.A. SELBIE and
L.H. GRAY, Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark.

JVB Jaina Viśva Bhārati, Ladnun.

JSSS Jaina Saṁskṛti Saṁrakṣaka Saṁgha, Sholapur.

KusN *Kuśala Nirdeśa* (monthly review of the Kharataragaccha),
Śrī Jinadattasūri Seva Saṁgha, Calcutta.

L.D. Institute Lālabhāi Dalapatabhāi Institute of Indology,
Ahmedabad.

Motilal B Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi.

SJ Sanmati Jñānapiṭha, Agra.

SMJV Śrī Mahāvira Jaina Vidyālaya, Bombay.

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¹ When the name of the publishing house is not given in abbreviated form,
one of the following words have been omitted: Prakāśana (publication);
Samiti, Maṇḍala, Saṁgha (society); Kāryālaya (office); Jaina..

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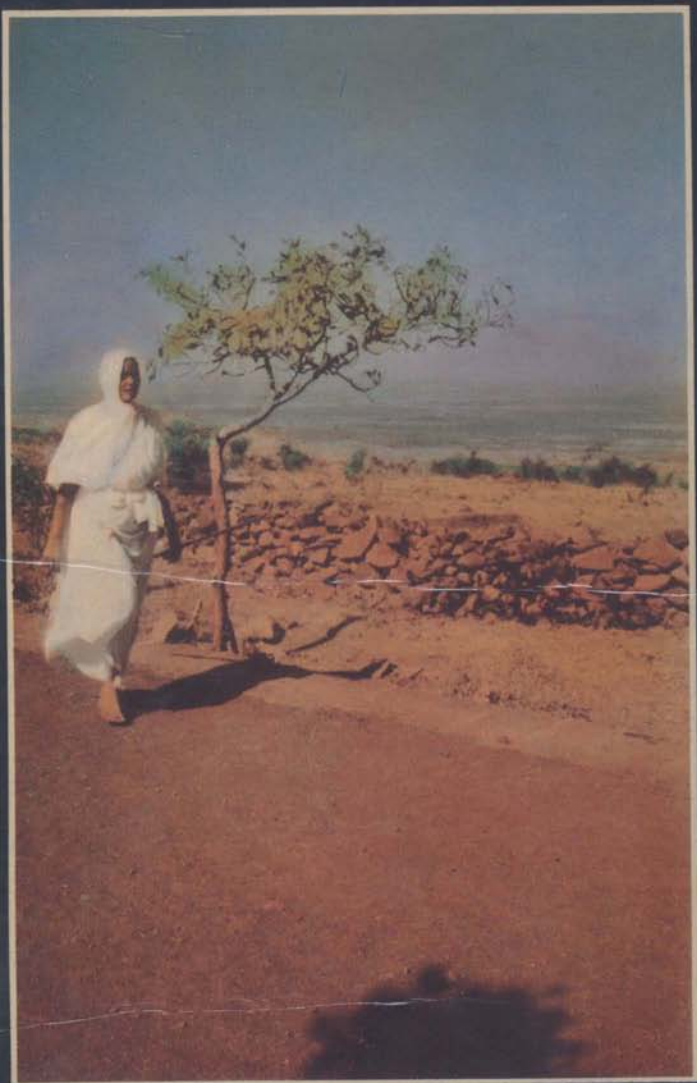
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