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VYAVAHĀRA BHĀṢYA PĪTHIKĀ

Edited, translated and annotated

by

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Foreword

The richly annotated edition and English translation of the *Vyavahāra-bhāsa-pīṭhikā*, a Prakrit work on Jaina monastic jurisprudence and code of discipline, is Willem B. Bollée's second book published by Hindi Granth Karyalay in India, after the enlarged and corrected edition of *The Story of Paesi (Paesi-kahāṇayam)*. Soul and Body in Ancient India. *A Dialogue on Materialism* was reprinted in 2005. The present edition is copiously supplemented with extracts from Malayagiri's *Vivaraṇa* on *Vavahāra* and annexed with a glossary of selected words as well as with *pāda* and thematic indices.

Professor Bollée's book continues the research commenced by Walther Schubring with his edition of the *Vavahāra- und Nisīha-Sutta* (Gedruckt mit Unterstützung der Königlichen Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, XV. Band, No. 1, Leipzig 1918; reprinted: Kraus, Nendeln/Liechtenstein 1966).

Jainism arose primarily as a monastic movement in which soteriological concerns played much more pronounced role than either philosophical interests or religious ritualism centred around a temple that catered to the lay community, two vital strains in Jainism that emerged only much later. In the emphasis on asceticism and a regulating code of salvifically relevant conduct from its earliest days, Jainas shared a number of features with fellow monks and recluses, the Buddhists, the Ājīvikas etc.

Given that all human activities, including seemingly innocuous actions and physiological processes, were believed to have ethical and eschatological implications, it is not surprisingly that elaborate rules regulating every aspect of the behaviour of monks and nuns developed, reflecting local and lineage peculiarities and undergoing various transformations that followed social and historical changes in respective regions of Indian subcontinent. These rules gradually evolved into fixed codices, which formed the core of monastic discipline and jurisprudence, and composed an essential segment of Jaina literature, beside three other topical sections: edifying and didactic stories and sermons, the exposition of Jaina doctrine and, finally, analysis and criticism of hostile doctrines.

They entered the Śvetāmbara Canon partly as portions of subsections or chapters of other works on miscellaneous topics and partly separate texts which were chiefly classified under the heading of the *Cheya-suttas* (*Cheda-sūtra*), or 'Degradation Manuals' and *Mūla-suttas* (*mūla-sūtra*), or 'Fundamental Manuals'. It is the former which incorporates the 'Manual of Monastic Proceeding' (*Vavahāra*, *Vyavahāra-sūtra*) along with the explanations *Vavahāra-nijjuttī*, both traditionally ascribed to Bhadrabāhu. The commentary *Vavahāra-bhāsa* (*VavBh*, *Vyavahāra-Bhāṣya*) in 183 verses (*gāthā*) is an anonymous work, written by a certain 'ancient teacher' (*pūrvācārya*), although Walther Schubring suggests a certain Sanghadāsa as its author.

Not only the order of the *Cheya-suttas*, which incorporate *Vavahāra*, seems to have remained unfixed over a long period of time, although there has been a marked tendency to enumerate six such texts, but also the actual number of the works and their titles changed (the number five occurs in more ancient classifications). In various

enumerations we come across altogether seven separate titles, although the first six are most often mentioned: (1) *Nisīha* (*Niśītha*), a text to be recited ‘at night’ or ‘in concealment’, or perhaps a text that contains ‘prohibitions’ (*niseha/niṣedha*?) and punishments for transgressions; (2) *Mahā-nisīha*-[*suya-kkhandha*] (*Mahā-Niśītha*-[*śruta-skandha*]), an often reworked text which in its present form is a medley of diverse issues pertaining to monastic discipline, including lists of transgressions as formalised confession formulas (not recognised by the Sthānakavāsins); (3) *Vavahāra* (*Vyavahāra*); (4) *Āyāra-dāsāo* (*Ācāra-daśāh*), also known as *Dasā-suya-kkhadha* (*Daśa-śruta-skandha*), and often abbreviated to *Dasāo*, i.e. either ‘Ten Chapters on monastic conduct’ or ‘Ten collections of sermons’, which contain a number of rules that derive from the five great vows (*pañca-maha-vvaya*, *pañca-mahā-vrata*) and expiations for their transgressions, qualities of the community leader (*gaṇa*), succession lists, legendary material etc.; its widely popular chapter eighth is the *Kappa-sutta* (*Kalpa-sūtra*), which is recommended to be recited (especially its last subchapter) during the great annual ceremony (*saṃvatsārī*) of public confession and forgiveness which takes place in the rainy season (*pajjūsana*), hence it is also called *Pajjosaṇā-kappa* / *Pajjosavaṇā-kappa* (*Paryūṣaṇa-kalpa*); (5) *Bihā-kappa* (*Bṛhat-kalpa* / *Sādhukalpa-sūtra*), i.e. ‘The principal book of monastic rules’ codifying the mode of conduct of monks and nuns; (6) *Jīya-kappa* (*Jīta-kalpa-sūtra*), or ‘Established text on rules of behaviour’, a text that describes various kinds of punishment, composed by Jinabhadra-ga in the seventh century (likewise not recognised by the Sthānakavāsins); (7) *Pañca-kappa* (*Pañca-kalpa*), ‘On five rules’ describes various approaches to monastic discipline; when lost, it was replaced with *Jīya-kappa*. Occasionally also the ‘Explanations to [the rules of] begging for food’ (*Piṇḍa-nijjutti*, *Piṇḍa-niryukti*) and the ‘Explanations to [the rules of] begging for utensils’ (*Oha-nijjutti*, *Ogha-niryukti*) are added, although they are usually classified as the fourth and fifth *Mūla-suttas*.

The category of the *Cheya-suttas* embraces normative texts that in great detail codify monastic rules of behaviour, situations in which a monk is exempted from obeying a particular rule as well as a range of punishments for transgressing the rules. The latter include the reporting the guilt to the superior and confession as well as various kinds of expiations and additional penances, such as fasting, but also partial and radical remission of the monastic seniority, relegation (degradation in rank) and expulsion (e.g. VavBh 53). Especially important is the degradation in monastic rank which is technically called *cheya* (*cheda*), ‘cutting down [the position in monastic hierarchy (*dīkṣā-paryāya*)]’, a term which may have given the name to the whole category of codices. The *Cheya-suttas* were supposed to be studied by advanced monks (*pariṇata*) and not by novices, who were, at least in theory, introduced to the monastic jurisprudence and conduct by the *Mūla-suttas*.

The *Vavahāra-bhāsa-piṭhikā*, commenting on the *Vavahāra*, deals with diverse aspects of monastic conduct, including the well-known means of implementing good conduct, which pertains to the body, speech, thought and behaviour, as well as rules of circumspection (*saṃiti*) and mental control (*gupti*) etc. In the background of the prescribed conduct there is a conspicuous social aspect: the guidelines regulate interactions of a monk towards other monks, including the categories of younger and senior or trained and untrained monks, towards the monk’s superiors, householders,

rulers etc. Such a process of the monk's acculturation and training reinforces the rigid hierarchical structure of the monastic order. An element that is repeatedly emphasised is the monk's obedience, devotion to and care of his guru, which should even include gentle massage (vv. 91-93). The ethical framework for injunctions and prohibition is provided by the five great vows (*pañca-maha-vvaya*, *pañca-mahā-vrata*; vv. 45, 119) as well as a range of lesser vows, from which various implications for practical monastic life are derived. Infringements of the vows and other rules, which imply also affections and yearnings, entail the element of intention (vv. 173-9): we are told only an intentional act of transgression incurs guilt. Breaches in proper monastic conduct are punished in a variety of ways, including the monastic seniority being reduced or the monk being expelled from the order temporarily or permanently. The punishment, however, should be aptly administered so that to match the severity of a transgression. Despite the disdain for corporeality, a fit body is accorded to be indispensable in pursuing ascetic goals (vv. 180-181). The text of the *Vavahāra-bhāsa-pīṭhikā* contains also a nucleus of a confession formula. Only on very rare occasions, sectarian polemical vein comes to the fore, for instance when criticism of Buddhism is formulated (vv. 49-50) or the monk is instructed to refrain from any contact with heretics.

The author makes an attempt (vv. 150-157) to assign different roles to *Kappa-sutta* and *Vavahāra-sutta* whose contents partly overlap. Both texts originated independently, perhaps in various ascetic milieux or successions or in different localities, but dealt with similar issues. Subsequently, after they had been grouped together under the same category of the *Cheya-suttas*, along with the *Nisīha-Sutta*, the problem arose how to differentiate their subject matters and applications and thereby justify their existence as separate texts.

On a few occasions the author of the *Vavahāra-bhāsa-pīṭhikā* employs an analytical device to distinguish three aspects of every action: the process, the agent and the object of the action, e.g. (1) a proceeding, a person in charge of the proceeding and the people who are subject to the proceeding (v. 1, *vavahāro vavahārī vavahariyavvā ... purisā*), all equally relevant for proper administration of punishment; (2) knowledge, a knower and the object to be known (v. 3, *nāṇaṃ nāṇī neyaṃ*), (3) offender, the act of offending and the subject of offence (v. 37; *paṭisevao paṭisevaṇā paṭiseviyavvagaṃ*). His approach resembles the well-known arrangement of Vātsyāyana Pakṣilasvāmin: valid cognitive procedure, the cogniser and the cognoscible, all relevant for the ensuing valid cognition (*Nyāya-bhāṣya* 1.1.1: *arthavati ca pramāṇe pramātā prameya pramītir ity arthavanti bhavanti*).

The *Vavahāra* and its commentaries not only provide valuable information on Jain asceticism but are also an important source of knowledge of ancient Indian practical religiosity and prove highly useful in comparative studies of the Buddhist *vinaya*. And now, thanks to Prof. Bollée, they are more easily available to the English reader as well.