DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS IN JAINA MONASTICISM

Peter Flügel

The study of Jainism as a living religion is still hampered by a lack of reliable sociological and demographic information both on the Jain laity and Jain mendicants. Most empirical studies to date have been thematically oriented or were of an exploratory nature. They were based on the methods advanced by the classical anthropological village studies or on small surveys of a non-representative nature. In both cases, the units of investigation were defined in terms of observer categories which were often created ad hoc in the field due to the advantages of snowball sampling under conditions of limited resources. In a paper read at the American Oriental Society Meeting in 1978, at a time when comprehensive field studies had yet to be conducted, the late Kendall Folkert (1993: 156) suggested avoiding the inevitable abstractions of ‘general accounts of the Jains’ by concentrating on ‘the smaller divisions within the tradition’ which ‘have actually been the basic units of the tradition’. What Folkert had in mind was to study the individual ‘schools, sects or orders’ (gaccha) of the Jain mendicant tradition, rather than ‘Jain religious culture’ in general. Certainly, not all Jains coalesce around monastic groups, but the majority does so in one way or another.

The investigation of categories which are recognised by the Jains themselves promises indeed to yield testable results of greater accuracy and relevance for the Jain community itself. However, the research programme envisaged by Folkert has yet to be implemented. Despite the pioneering studies of Vilas Sangave (1959/1980) on the social divisions of the Jain lay community and of Muni Uttam Kamal Jain (1975) on the pre-modern history of the religious divisions of the Jain mendicants, most students of Jainism, and indeed most Jains, have still no way of knowing how many independent mendicant orders exist today and how they are organised. The aim of this chapter is to fill this gap and to provide a brief overview of the present schools, orders and sects within both the Śvetāmbara- and the Digambara-denomination and to bring together the available demographic data on the current Jain monastic traditions.
A comprehensive description of the Jain lay movements is beyond the scope of this chapter.

Jain laity

Although no studies of the demographic trends in Jain monasticism are currently available, general surveys of the Jain lay community have been produced on the basis of the available census data by Sangave (1959/1980), Sharma (1976) and M. K. Jain (1986). The inclusion of the category ‘Jain’ into the questionnaire for the Census of India 1881 is widely regarded as one of the defining moments for the modern construction of Jainism as an independent ‘religion’. It was introduced by the colonial government after Jacobi (1879) proved the historical independence of Jainism from Buddhism, and a number of high court judgements in favour of westernised Jains such as Pandit Padmarāja (1886), J. L. Jaini (1916) and C. R. Jain (1926) who were interested in securing a privileged legal status for their community. However, notwithstanding the desire of the educated Jain elite to establish a clear-cut boundary between ‘Jainism’ and ‘Hinduism’, in the census itself many Jains continued to return themselves as ‘Hindu’.

A number of explanations have been put forward for this. Amongst them ‘enumerators’ error’ figures most prominently, since local volunteers frequently filled in the census forms themselves on the basis of their own local knowledge. Another interpretation suggests that many respondents were either unable or unwilling to make a distinction between the categories. They may have followed the example of their ancestors who often, in the fear of persecution, maintained an outward conformity with Hinduism (cf. Williams 1983: xix). In other words, they were not so much confronted with the question of ‘who they were’ (Cohn 1992: 248), but rather how they preferred to be perceived.

Reform orientated Jain intellectuals were highly conscious of the problem of communal self-objectification already by the 1870s, and in response to the low turnout of Jains in 1881 actively embraced the census as a medium of communal self-representation. At the turn of the twentieth century, the leaders of the newly founded Jain Conferences even designed petitions which actively encouraged community members to return themselves as ‘Jain’ and not as ‘Hindu’. They also volunteered to carry out the census in their own communities in an attempt to boost the numbers and hence the importance of the Jain community in the eyes of the colonial government. Demographic growth was generally depicted as a sign of communal progress and used as an argument in contexts of ‘democratic’ politics of representation. This sentiment is still echoed today in the work of Vilas Sangave (1980) and other Jain intellectuals who lament the fact that, even after a century of communal revival, many Jains keep on regarding themselves and are regarded as Hindus, which necessarily vitiates the census figures and obscures the increase or decrease of the Jaina population from census to census (ibid.: 3).
The debate on whether Jains are culturally ‘Hindus’ or a ‘minority community’ wages unabated within the community. Thus far, Jain communalists have failed to establish the Jains ‘as a separate social group’ (ibid.: 411) against the opposition of many Śvetāmbara ācāryas. The majority of the Jain laity retains an ambiguous social identity midway between the Jain mendicant communities and the wider ‘Hindu’ society. It is therefore not surprising that still no reliable demographic data is available for the Jain laity. Certainly, the Jain community is very small. The official figure generated by the Census of India 1991 was 3,352,706, that is, 0.4 per cent of the Indian population (Vijayanunni 1991: x–xi). The Census of 2001 produced the figure of 4,225,053, also 0.4 per cent of the Indian population (www.censusindia.net). In addition, about 150,000 Jains live outside India, but no mendicants. No data is available on the number of lay followers of particular Jain schools and sects, although some of these may be estimated on the basis of caste directories, in cases where caste and sect membership widely overlap.

Jain mendicants

The rhetoric of numbers, adopted by the Jain lay Conferences, also had a significant influence on the monastic orders, which were put under pressure to compete with each other not only in terms of behavioural purity and education, but also in terms of sheer numbers – in the name of democracy and modernisation. The rhetoric of numbers is not necessarily new, but no documents containing information on the actual number of Jain monks and nuns are known before the early-modern period.

There are two exceptions. The Jinacaritra in the so-called Paryuṣaṇa Kalpa Sūtra, which was traditionally attributed to Bhadrabāhu I who is said to have lived c.170 or 162 years after Mahāvīra although the Jinacaritra is certainly much younger, tells us that Mahāvīra’s four-fold community comprised of

fourteen thousand Śramaṇas with Indrabhūti at their head; thirty-six thousand nuns with Candana at their head; one hundred and fifty-nine thousand lay votaries with Sakkhaśataka at their head; three hundred and eighteen thousand female lay votaries with Sulasā and Revati at their head.

(Jinacaritra 136f., in Jacobi 1884: 267f.)

The Sthāvīravālī, or List of the Elders, which is generally attributed to Devarddhi Gaṇi, the fifth century CE redactor of the Śvetāmbara canon, mentions not 14,000, but merely 4,411 monks and gives no total figures for nuns and laity (Sthāvīravālī 1, in Jacobi 1884: 286f.). Both of these accounts, collected in the same compilation, are somewhat mythical, but they clearly depict relatively small communities. The first
The text pictures a very high proportion of mendicants (1–9.54 laity) and an overwhelming numerical dominance of female ascetics and lay supporters. The prevalence of nuns is all the more remarkable, because, until very recently, neither Buddhist nor Hindu monastic orders had significant, if any, numbers of female ascetics. Even today, Theravāda Buddhist orders in Sri Lanka, Thailand, Burma and Laos do not have fully initiated bhikkunīs.21 The second account contains a list of the succession after Mahāvīra, which is corroborated by epigraphical evidence.22 It mentions only the names of 7 nuns amongst a total of 19 disciples of Nandanabhadra, the seventh elder (thera) after Mahāvīra.23 The corresponding inscription of the first or second century CE, mentions 9 nuns, which Bühler (1890: 321) accepted as ‘clear proof that in the first century of our own era the order of female ascetics was well established’.24 25

At the beginning of the twentieth century most lay communities began to publish sporadic demographic information on the numbers of their monks and nuns in community newsletters. However, these newsletters had only a limited circulation. Readily available information on individual monastic communities remained largely inaccessible until the last two decades of the twentieth century, which saw a significant improvement. The person responsible for this is the Sthānakavāśī layman Bābal ‘Ujjavala’ Jain of Mumbaī. Once an active member of the Akhil Bhāratiya Jain Mahāmaṇḍal, the principal ecumenical forum of the Jain communalists founded in 1899 under the name Jain Young Men’s Association but renamed in 1929, he began to compile and publish charts of the cāturmāsa residences of all the mendicants of the reformist Sthānakavāśī Śramaṇa Saṅgha from 1979 onwards. The rational was to generate a sense of unity and coordination amongst the followers of the Śramaṇa Saṅgha, which, although nominally governed by only one ācārya, is internally subdivided into many local mendicant traditions. The documentation proved to be useful in keeping track of the movements of the almost 1,000 mendicants, which from the time of the foundation of the Śramaṇa Saṅgha in 1952 began to extend their vihāras from their traditional strongholds in western and northern India to the entire territory of the new independent state of India.

In 1984, B. U. Jain produced an extended version of the cāturmāsa list, now covering not only the Śramaṇa Saṅgha, but all Sthānakavāśī ascetic and lay communities. In this he was supported by the Śramaṇa Saṅgha muni Kanhaiyālāl, the Murtipujaka paimāyas Harās Sāgar, and the Akhil Bhāratiya Samagra Jain Cāturmāsa Sūcī Prakāśan Parisad Bambā. Finally, in 1986, the first annual Samagra Jain Cāturmāsī Sūcī was published with the intention of providing information on the cāturmāsa residencies of all Jain mendicants.25 This project was officially endorsed by the great assembly of the Śramaṇa Saṅgha ascetics in Pune in 1987 (AISJC 1987: 19f., B. U. Jain 1987: 71). From this time onwards, the available demographic data of all Jain mendicant communities were published annually, first by the Cāturmāsī Sūcī Prakāśan Parisad 1986–1992, then by the Jain Ektā Mahāmaṇḍal, and last by B. U. Jain himself (SJCS 1987: 67f.).

The following overview of the current divisions of the Jain mendicants, their numbers and main demographic shifts between 1987 and 2002 is to a significant
extent based on the data compiled in B. U. Jain’s Cāturmās Śucī publications of 1987, 1990, 1996, 1999 and 2002. For want of reliable information, I was not always able to shed light on earlier demographic developments. To my knowledge, only the Śvetāmbara Terā Panth has published complete demographic and biodata going back to the time of its foundation in 1760 (Navratnamal 1981ff.). I was able to locate some useful material on the numbers of Sthānakavāśī mendicants in the early twentieth century, but little on the Mūrtipūjaka and Digambara ascetics. In these instances I had to rely on sporadic information scattered in the secondary literature.

I have rearranged B. U. Jain’s data on the Śvetāmbara mendicant orders into a number of tables summarising figures from 1987, 1990, and 1996, with additional information from 1999 and 2002 provided either in the text or in supplementary tables or footnotes. Initially, the figures published by B. U. Jain were not reliable for non-Sthānakavāśī orders, but this has changed with regard to the Śvetāmbara orders. An important lacuna in B. U. Jain’s publications is the lack of reliable information on the Digambara ascetics, on which no sound data existed until recently. I have nevertheless cited some of B. U. Jain’s fragmentary and inconsistent figures on the Digambaras between 1986 and 2000, because they contribute significantly to our generally meagre knowledge on the Digambara mendicants, whose organisational history is reviewed in greater detail in this chapter. From the year 2000 onwards, reliable information on the Digambara mendicants and cāturmāsa places is published annually by A. Jain (2000a, 2000b, 2001) of Indore in form of a brochure which together with D. Śāstri’s (1985) Digambara Jain Sadhu Paricay is the main source on the demography of the Digambara ascetics.

The figures in the available Jain publications rely on credible self-reporting by the different Jain orders. The quality of this data, especially from the Mūrtipūjaka traditions, varies from year to year. In order to compensate for this, B. U. Jain included personal estimates in his summary tables to account for those ascetics for whom no detailed information was supplied to him (B. U. Jain 1996: 37, 27f., n. 1–2; 1999: 382, n. 1–7). By contrast, I only counted those ascetics which were listed individually and not B. U. Jain’s considerably higher estimates, which may nevertheless represent a more accurate picture. Another difference concerns the classification of mendicant orders into broader categories. From 1990, B. U. Jain re-classified certain reformist movements, such as Amar Muni’s Virāyatan, Muni Suśīl Kumār’s Arhat Saṅgha and the Nava Terā Panth, under the new category ‘independently roaming progressive thinkers who use vehicles’ (pragatiśīl vicārak vāhan vīhare svatantra vicarān karne vāle). But I continued listing them together with their traditions of origin. A major deficit of the publications of B. U. Jain and A. Jain is the lack of statistical data on the social background of the ascetics, especially on caste, class and region, their initiation age and level of formal education. They also offer no overview of the history and organisation of the mendicant groups. As far as possible, I have supplemented this information from other sources.
In the following tables, the ācāryas are also included in the total numbers of sādhhus. A hyphen indicates that no information is available or means zero. The data is neither complete nor entirely consistent. But, in general, it is reliable and provides the most accurate available information to date.

Mūrtipūjaka

The Mūrtipūjaka mendicants are currently divided into six independent traditions, which emerged between the eleventh and the sixteenth century CE from the caityavāsins, or temple-dwelling, Śvetāmbara tradition.26 (1) the Kharatara Gaccha (1023), (2) the Añcala Gaccha or Vidhi Pakṣa (1156), (3) the Āgami- or Tristuti Gaccha (1193) and (4) the Tapā Gaccha (1228), from which (5) the Vimala Gaccha (1495), and (6) the Pārvacandra Gaccha (1515) separated.27 The two main reasons for these so-called gaccha-reforms were (a) the laxity of the caityavāsins, and (b) minor doctrinal differences. Similar reforms within the gacchas in the seventeenth century led to the division between yatis and samvegī sādhhus. The term samvegī, upright, was introduced by Upādhyāya Yaśo Vījay (1624–1688) for his own reformist mendicant group, whose tradition was revived in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, at a time when most of the previously dominant white-clad yatis were replaced by yellow-clad samvegī sādhhus. Today, almost all Mūrtipūjaka mendicant groups are samvegī orders. With the exception of the Vallabhasūri Samudāya of the Tapā Gaccha, all reverted to wearing white dresses. The orders are independently organised and form the institutional core of distinct sects and schools. At present, no detailed sociological or demographic information is available for most of these monastic traditions, especially for the period before the twentieth century. Two notable exceptions are the studies of the recent history and organisation of the Tapā Gaccha by Cort (1989: 93–112) and of the Añcala Gaccha by Balbir (2003), both of which are supplemented by the studies of the paṭṭāvalis of both traditions by Śivprasād (2000, 2001). Of the Kharatara Gaccha only the paṭṭāvali of its monastic order and contemporary religious practices of the laity have been studied (Laidlaw 1995, Babb 1996).

The Kharatara Gaccha and the Añcala Gaccha are the only Mūrtipūjaka traditions which still have a dual system of succession (paramparā) of yatis and samvegī sādhhus;28 although there is only one yati left in the Añcala Gaccha (see Figures 12.1 and 12.2).29 The sādhhus and sādhwīs of the Añcala Gaccha are nowadays centrally organised under the supervision of only one ācārya (gacchādhipati) and still constitute one of the largest mendicant orders of the Mūrtipūjaka tradition.31 By far the largest of the six Mūrtipūjaka gacchas is the Tapā Gaccha. According to Darśanavijaya (1933: 67, fn.), it had only 428 members at the end of the fifteenth century. By 2002 this figure had risen to 6,696.32 Today, the Tapā Gaccha is divided into two branches (śākha), the Vijaya Śākhā and the Sāgara Śākhā. The śākhas are further subdivided into a number of lineages which
are currently divided in twenty separate groups, or *samudāyas*, which are named after prominent *ācāryas* of their root lineage, with the *sādhvīs* defined through the male members of the traditions (Cort 1991: 661f.). The origins of the Sāgara Śākhā are opaque. Kaṅcansāgarsūri *et al.* (1977: 311–76) attribute its beginnings to Hīra Vijaya Sūri (1527–1569), though Sāh (1987: 14, 65, 168) points to the year 1630 in which Ācārya Rāj Sūri (formerly Muni Mukti Sāgar) seceded from the main line of the Tapā Gaccha with the help of the first *nagarśeth*.
of Ahmedabad, Šántidās Jhaverī (1585/1590–1659);33 who in 1660 also sponsored the Ānandī Kalyāṇjī Trust.34 According to Dundas (1996: 101, n. 108), this tradition was disrupted in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.35 It was revived in the mid-nineteenth century by Mayā Sāgar with the help of Hemābhāī, another nagarśeth of Ahmedabad, and of Śeth Haṭhisinh Kesārībhāī (died 1845).36 After Mayā Sāgar, the tradition split into two samudāyas, the two most famous ācāryas of which were Buddhī Sāgar Sūri (1874–1925) and the ‘Āgamoddhāraka’ Sāgar Ānand Sūri (1875–1950) respectively. The Vijaya Śākhā emerged apparently in 1657, a date which roughly corresponds to Śāh’s (1987) version of the origin of the Sāgar Śākhā, following a succession dispute after the death of Vijay Deva Sūri (1577–1656).37 In 1999, it was internally subdivided into twenty samudāyas.

Cort (1989) observed momentous changes within the Vijaya Śākhā over the last one and a half centuries, as narrated in the histories of the Tapā Gaccha orders by Ratna Prabha Vijay (1948) and others. First of all, the yatis, that is, sedentary ascetics who fulfil ritual and administrative tasks and who do not pledge themselves fully to the observance of the mahāvratas, became almost extinct in the twentieth century38 and were replaced by the reformed samvegī
sādhus, of which apparently only two dozen or so existed in the early nineteenth century:39

In the mid-19th century, several activist sādhus reinvigorated the institution of the samvegī sādhu. Over two-thirds of the over 1,000 sādhus in the Tapā Gacch today trace their lineage back to Pañnyās Maṇi Vijay Gaṇī (1796–1879), known as Dādā (Grandfather). One of his disciples was the former Sthānakvāśī sādhu Muni Buddhī Vijay (1807–1882), known by his Sthānakvāśī name of Buterāyījī. He was very active in the Panjab among both mendicants and laity, convincing Sthānakvāśīs of the correctness of the Mūrtipūjak teachings. Among his disciples was the charismatic Ātmārāmjī (1837–1896), who in 1876 in Ahmedabad took a second dīkṣā (initiation) as the Mūrtipūjak samvegī sādhu Ānand Vijay, along with eighteen other Sthānakvāśī sādhus, under the leadership of Ātmārāmjī and other similar minded sādhus, and later under the umbrella of the Śvetāmbar Mūrtipūjak Conference, a wide-ranging campaign was waged to reform both mendicant and lay practices. As the result of this reform the institution of the yati has virtually disappeared from the Mūrtipūjak society.

(Cort 1989: 99f.)

Cort showed that after the disintegration of the gaddī-centred yati-orders, new decentred patterns emerged, based on demographics, geography and charisma rather than on organisational power and property. It is worthwhile quoting him again at length:

As the Tapā Gacch has grown, it has subdivided in new ways which shed light on earlier processes of subdivision and gacch formation. The former subdivisions, which were based primarily on affiliation with the gāḍīs (seats, thrones) of specific śīpūjyas, have disappeared, with the exception of the Vijay-Sāgar śākhā distinction, and been replaced by about 15 samudāyas (literally ‘co-arising’, i.e. descendants of the same sādhu; here synonymous with sampradāy). In general, three interrelated principles accounted for the development of the various samudāyas: geography, demographics, and charisma. As the number of sādhus increased, it became increasingly difficult for one ācārya to oversee the large number of sādhus under him. Smaller groups of sādhus were placed under the direction of other senior sādhus, and the sharp increase in the number of the ācāryas within the Tapā Gacch in the past several years is directly related to this need for additional supervisory personnel. As the sādhus increasingly interacted solely with the lesser ācārya rather than the seniormost ācārya, a new samudāy might evolve.

(Cort 1989: 103f.)
According to Jacobi (in Glasenapp 1925: 342, 352–354), the Tapā Gaccha was in 1913–1914 still ruled by ‘a number’ of śrīpūjyas and, as a whole, comprised 1,200 sādhus and sādhvīs.40 Guérinot (1926: 56) reported the existence of ‘30 subdivisions’ of the Tapā Gaccha at the beginning of the twentieth century, without mentioning any figures, while B. U. Jain (1986) and Cort (1989: 100–105) found only two sākhās and altogether 15–17 autonomous groups (samudāya). Table 12.1 shows that by 1999 this figure had grown to twenty due to further splits in the dominant Vijaya Sākhā tradition of Prem Sūri, the latest being the separation of Kamal Ratna Sūri from the Rāmacandrasūri Samudāya in 1998. Prem Sūri was one of the chief disciples of Buddhi Vijay, the reformer of the saṁvegī sādhus, together with Ātmā Rām, Dharma Vijay (1868–1922) and Nīti Sūri (whose lineage further split into the Bhaktisūri- and the Siddhīsūri Samudāya) (Ratna Prabha Vijay 5, 2 1948: 218). At present, four samudāyas trace themselves back to Prem Sūri: the Rāmacandrasūri Samudāya, the Kamalaratnasūri Samudāya, the Bhuvanabhānusūri Samudāya and the Amṛtasūri Samudāya. Four samudāyas descend directly from Ātmā Rām (Vijay Ānand), the most famous disciple of Buddhi Vijay: the Vallabhasūri Samudāya, the Mohanalāla Samudāya, the Dharmaśūri Samudāya and the Sānticandrasūri Samudāya. The Rāmacandrasūri Samudāya is the only group which advocates the be tīthi interpretation of the religious calendar,41 and has therefore been excluded from many Tapā Gaccha upāśrayas. Table 12.1 does not include detailed figures for 1986 (cf. Cort 1989: 491f.), 1999 and 2002, which are appended in the endnotes. But it reflects the group structure of 1999 and shows that at the time the Mūrtipūjakā tradition was divided into some twenty-seven independent monastic groups.

In 1999, the Mūrtipūjakā gacchas comprised altogether 6,843 mendicants, 1,489 sādhus and 5,354 sādhvīs. Amongst them, the Tapā Gaccha was the largest tradition, with 6,027 mendicants, 1,349 sādhus and 4,678 sādhvīs.42 The table shows a massive increase in numbers particularly of female ascetics within little more than a decade.43 It also illustrates the fact, emphasised by Cort (1989: 494, 1991: 661), that occasionally significant population shifts occur within and between samudāyas, which – in the absence of centralised gaddi-structures – seem to divide and unite like segmentary lineages, under the influence of circumstantial factors. Similar changes cannot be observed at the level of the gaccha categories.44 Commensality between ascetics of different gacchas is, for instance, prohibited.45 Schubring (2000: § 139, p. 252) already noted that gacchas are not necessarily actual groups. Mūrtipūjakā gacchas are in the first place doctrinal schools and at the same time social categories which may or may not be congruent with organised monastic groups, such as the samudāyas. However, doctrinal disputes are also significant for processes of group-formation at the samudāya level. A good example is the ek tīthi/be tīthi dispute between Rām Candra Sūri and Bhuvan Bhānu Sūri, which split the Premśūri Samudāya into two main sections in 1986 (Cort 1999: 50f.).

Another important factor influencing processes of fission and fusion are the ways in which gacchas and samudāyas are organised. Shāntā (1985: 329–331) and
Table 12.1 Mūrtipujaka sādhus and sādhvis 1987, 1990 and 1996

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gaccha Samudāya</th>
<th>Gacchādhīpata</th>
<th>Ācārya</th>
<th>Cāturmāsa-places</th>
<th>Sādhu</th>
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<td>Kalāpūrṇāsūri&lt;sup&gt;62&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>(Vāgadvālā)</td>
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<td>Panyās Ratanākāra&lt;sup&gt;63&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>Bhāg 1</td>
<td>Bhuvanēkharsūri&lt;sup&gt;64&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>Bhāg 2</td>
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<td>Subodhōgaśūri&lt;sup&gt;66&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>81</td>
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<td>5 Tristuti Gaccha</td>
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<td>Bhāg 1</td>
<td>Jayantēnāsaśūri&lt;sup&gt;70&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>Bhāg 2</td>
<td>Hemendrāsūr&lt;sup&gt;71&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>Bhāg 3</td>
<td>Up. Prasāmcandra&lt;sup&gt;72&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>Muni Bhuvaṃcaṇḍa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gaccha&lt;sup&gt;73&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bhāg 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Other&lt;sup&gt;74&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Ánandāhansūri etc.</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>7</td>
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Cort (1991) explain population shifts and processes of group segmentation amongst the Tapā Gaccha samudāyas mainly with reference to charismatic leadership. Cort emphasises, for instance, the effect of the unusually high numbers of ācāryas on the processes of segmentation and the size of Tapā Gaccha samudāyas. He explains this effect both with ‘internal organisational pressures for the growth of the number of Tapā Gacch ācārāyas – a growth which has been criticised by many sādhus and laity’ and with ‘the desire of influential laity to have the sādhu of whom they are a personal devotee be an ācārāya’ (ibid.: 668, n. 16). But he also notes that a distinction between ‘charismatic’ saṃvegī sādhus and ‘domesticated’ yatīs is not exactly applicable, since even the saṃvegī sādhus have a succession of leaders and thus are not ‘purely charismatic figures in the Weberian sense’ (ibid.: 669, n. 22). Weber (1978) himself categorised Jain monastic orders not as charismatic movements but primarily as ‘hierocratic organisations’.

Although some samudāyas share the same customary law (maryādā), Tapā Gaccha samudāyas are generally organised independently, and compete with one another, even within their sākhās. As a rule, members of one samudāya do not share food with those of another (personal invitations notwithstanding). Each samudāya is governed by a gacchādhipati or pramukhā ācārya, head teacher, who is generally determined according to monastic age (dīkṣā paryāya) or by consenus, except in the Rāmacandrasūri Samudāya, where the gacchādhipati ideally selects his own successor. The gacchādhipati presides over a varying number of monastic functionaries, including subordinate ācāryas with or without administrative duties, who received their title solely because of their academic achievements.

I suspect that the maximum size of Jain monastic groups is primarily a function of their rules and regulations, which mediate between the categories of descent and the imperatives of group integration (Flügel 2003b: 191ff.). Circumstantial factors such as the socio-economic resources of a particular religio-geographic field (ksetra) or charismatic leadership are important in specific cases, particularly on the level of gatherings. But generally, the degree of organisation determines its chances of reproduction over time, the maximum group size and thus the potential geographic influence of a particular monastic order. To put it simply, the better the organisation of a group, the greater its potential size and the greater its size, the greater its potential influence. The three principal dimensions of Śvetāmbara monastic orders are descent, succession and seniority. They can be combined in various ways to produce different types of organisation.

In theory, it should be possible to develop a formula for calculating the ability of different types of organisation to compensate for demographic pressure. Practically, there is an upper limit for the size of groups without formal organisation based solely on the principle of recurrent personal interaction. As a first approximation, the breaking point leading to group fission within the orders of the Vijaya Sākhā can be estimated through simple averages. In 1996, the average group size of the smallest organised units of the Tapā Gaccha samudāyas, the
itinerant groups or saṅghadās, gatherings, was 5.24 at cāturmāsa. This figure is not unusual for Śvetāmbara orders. It reflects both religious rules on minimal group sizes as well as socio-economic factors, such as the number and wealth of lay-supporters. Evidently, a large group of alms-collecting ascetics can only stay together at one particular place if provisions are available and if their procurement is carefully organised (with the help of the laity).

Within the Mūrtipuja tradition, as a rule, the saṅghadās have a fluctuating membership. They comprise the members of one or more categories of ascetics who belong to the lineage of one particular ācārya. These are called parivāras, or families, and are composed of both sādhus and sādhvīs. The parivāras are co-ordinated by one pramukha ācārya, who is the leader of a gaccha or a samudāya. The majority of the ācāryas have no administrative duties, although this varies from group to group, but they possess the qualification for the transformation of their parivāras into independent groups. In 1996, the actual average size of a Tapā Gaccha samudāya was 278.4 ascetics, distributed, on average, among 53.13 itinerant groups. However, the number of Tapā Gaccha ascetics divided among the total number of ācāryas is 41.24, which represented theoretically the lowest average limit of potential group fission between Tapā Gaccha ācāryas in 1996. The difference between average actual group sizes and potentially lowest average group size demonstrates the importance of other organisational factors determining group size. But in order to understand, for instance, how the 447 ascetics under the sole leadership of Ācārya Kālāpūrṇ Śāri of the Kanakasūri Samudāya operate as an integral monastic order, further historical and ethnographic research is required. Segmentary lineages can temporarily form very large groups. Nevertheless, it seems that samudāyas of such a size are not merely segmentary lineages, but internally highly organised, and divided into subgroups whose membership is not based on descent alone.82 That the Tapā Gaccha samudāyas form distinct monastic orders, whose members share specific rules and regulations (marâyādā), is evident for instance in the explicit prohibition of sharing meals with members of other samudāyas.83 In fact, most Jain mendicant groups operate on the basis of an internal administrative hierarchy and a rudimentary division of labour. However, further statistical investigation of the correlation of group size and group structure becomes only meaningful if more information on organisational structures and other important variables is available. Complete data and careful theoretical modelling might, in future, lead to reliable predictions of expected group sizes under specified conditions.

**Sthānakavāsi**

The Sthānakavāsi mendicants are presently divided into twenty six monastic orders. These can be classified according to regional affiliation, doctrinal schools and the lineages descending from one of the five founders of the contemporary traditions, the so-called pañcummuni.84 Three of these founders separated themselves from the now virtually extinct Loikā Gaccha yati traditions to set up reformed ascetic orders within the aniconic, or non-image worshipping, Jain tradition which originated
between 1473 and 1476 after the 'protestant' reforms of the Jain layman Loṅkā (c.1415–1489) in Gujarāt.\(^{85}\) (1) Jīv Rāj (seceded 1551, 1609 or 1629), who apparently canonised the thirty two Śvetāmbara scriptures that are acceptable to the Śthānakavāṣīs, established the permanent use of a mouthmask (muḥapattī), and other principal features shared by all modern-day Śthānakavāṣī traditions; (2) Dharma Śinha (seceded 1628, 1635 or 1644) and (3) Lava (seceded 1637, 1648, 1653–1655 or 1657). Dharma Śinha was the founder of the Āṭh Koṭī (eighth grade) traditions,\(^ {86}\) and Lava the founder of the Dhāṇḍiyā traditions, which are also known under the name Rṣi Sampradāya. (4) The founder of the Bāś Tolā traditions, Dharma Dāsa (seceded 1659, 1560, 1564 or 1665), was originally a member of the lay order of the Ekala Pāṭriyā Panth and maybe a follower of Jīv Rāj shortly before Jīv Rāj’s death; and (5) Hara (seceded 1668 or 1728), the ancestor of the Śādhu Mārgī traditions, divorced himself either from the Lahauri Loṅkā Gaccha or from the Rṣi Sampradāya.

Doctrinally, Dharma Śinha’s Āṭh Koṭī tradition differs significantly from the other four schools, which disagree only on minor points of interpretation. It is today represented by the Dāriyāpāṇī tradition in Gujarāt and by the two Āṭh Koṭī traditions in Kacch, one of which – the Nāṇā Pakṣ – is very orthodox. The other Śthānakavāṣī traditions are divided along regional lines between the Gujarātī and the non-Gujarātī (North Indian) traditions. The non-Gujarātī traditions are further subdivided into those who joined the reformist Śrāmaṇa Saṅgha, which was founded in 1952 in a merely partially successful attempt to unite all Śthānakavāṣī groups, and those who remained outside or left the Śrāmaṇa Saṅgha. Both the centralised Śrāmaṇa Saṅgha and the independent traditions include ascetics from four of the five main Śthānakavāṣī traditions which were split into thirty three different organised groups at the beginning of the twentieth century (excluding only the Āṭh Koṭī traditions).

I have written elsewhere on the history and organisation of the aniconic Loṅkā, Śthānakavāṣī- and Terā Panth Śvetāmbara traditions.\(^ {87}\) Therefore, I confine myself here to the description of their principal demographic features. Like the Jain Śvetāmbara conference of the Mūrtipājaka laity, the second All India Śthānakavāṣī Jain Conference in Ajmer in 1909 resolved to increase the educational standard and the total number of Śthānakavāṣī ācāryas in order to raise the competitiveness of the Śthānakavāṣīs vis-à-vis other Jain traditions (AISJC 1988 II: 8–32). In 1933 in Ajmer, the first assembly of representatives of all the Śthānakavāṣī monastic orders decided to unify all traditions under the leadership of one ācārya. Finally, the Śrāmaṇa Saṅgha was created by 22 out of the 30 traditions present at the assembly in 1952 in Sādārī in Rājasthān. Table 12.2 shows the regional distribution and the number of ascetics of the Śrāmaṇa Saṅgha, which is now the largest organised group amongst the Śthānakavāṣī mendicants, from 1987–1996.

Although they are nominally under the command of one single ācārya (at present: Dr Śīv Muni), the remaining founding traditions continue to operate within the Śrāmaṇa Saṅgha more or less independently. The official statistics therefore do not tell the whole story. Some mendicant orders never joined the Śrāmaṇa Saṅgha: for instance, the Jñāna Gaccha. And because of perpetual discord
Table 12.2 Regional distribution of the Śramaṇa Saṅgha sādhus and sādhvis 1987, 1990 and 1996a

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Note a The table is based on the group-by-group accounts listed in B. U. Jain 1996. B. U. Jain did not have accurate information on ‘other’ Śramaṇa Saṅgha mendicants in 1996, but cited the total figure of 1,017 mendicants and 230 cāturmāsa places. For 1996, he quotes the figure of 208 muniṣ (identical figure) and the much higher figure of 809 sādhviṣ, based on estimates (see ibid.: 37ff.).
Table 12.3 Sādhus and śādhvīts of the Independent Sthānakavāśī-Traditions outside Gujarāt 1987, 1990 and 1996

<table>
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<th>Sampradāya</th>
<th>Acārya/ Gacchādhipati</th>
<th>Cāturmāsa-places</th>
<th>Sādhu</th>
<th>Sādhvīt</th>
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<td>—</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otherf</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes
a Today: Vīrāyatan.
b The group had only two ascetics in 1999 (B. U. Jain 1999: 365).
c The information for 1996 is incomplete.
d The Arhat Saṅgha was founded by Muni Sūsīl Kumār. In 1999 it was lead by Yuvācārya Amarandra.
e There is no information for the year 1990.
f This category also comprises mendicants who ‘walk alone’ (ekala vihārī).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sampradāya</th>
<th>Ṛacārya/ Gacchādhīpati</th>
<th>Cāturmāsa-places</th>
<th>Sādhu</th>
<th>Sādhvi</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Dariyāpurī Āth Koṭi</td>
<td>Ācārya Śāntilāl</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Kacch Āth Koṭi</td>
<td>Gacchādhīpati Prāṇalāl</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Kacch Āth Koṭi Nānā Pakṣa</td>
<td>Ācārya Rāghva</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Khambhāt</td>
<td>Ācārya Kāntīṣa</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Līmbāṭī Cha Koṭi Moṭā Pakṣa</td>
<td>Gacchādhīpati Narsīna</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Līmbāṭī Cha Koṭi Nānā Pakṣa</td>
<td>Tāpasvī Rāmmuni</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Gondal Moṭā Pakṣa</td>
<td>Tāpasvī Ratīḷāl</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Gondal Saṅghāṇī</td>
<td>Narendrāmuni</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Barvādā</td>
<td>Sardārmuni</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Botād</td>
<td>Navāṁmuni</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Sāyāḷā</td>
<td>Balbhādrāmuni</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Hāḷārī</td>
<td>Keśāmbāṃ</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Vārdhamān</td>
<td>Nīrmalāṃ</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12.5 Sthānakavāśī sādhus and sādhvīs 1987, 1990, 1996 and 1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sampradāya</th>
<th>Ācārya</th>
<th>Cāturmāsa-places</th>
<th>Sādhu</th>
<th>Sādhvī</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Śramansāṅgh</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>222</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarāṭī</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>689</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note
between the founding traditions, many disappointed ascetics, such as Upācārya Gaṇeśīlāl (1890–1963) of the Śādhu Mārgī or Upādhyāya Amar Muni (1901–1992) of the Manoharadāsā Dharmadāsā tradition, subsequently left the Śramaṇa Saṅgha and re-established their own independent groups. Moreover, in May 2003 the Śramaṇa Saṅgha split into two groups, one of which is nominally presided over by the orthodox Pravartaka Umeś Muni, who has however not officially accepted the ācārya title in order to avoid further conflict. Table 12.3 shows the independent Śhānakavāsī groups outside Gujarāt (for details see Flügel 2003b).

The majority of the Śhānakavāsī traditions in Gujarāt, listed in Table 12.4, descend from Dharma Dāsa and separated themselves in the years after 1788 from the Limbāti Dharmadāśa Sampradāya (Chah Koṭi Moṭā Pakṣa). The only surviving Rṣi Sampradāya in Gujarāt, the Kambhāṭ Sampradāya, and the Āṭh Koṭi traditions restrict their activities to Gujarāt and Mumbai. None of these Gujarātī groups joined the Śramaṇa Saṅgha, which is a Hindi-speaking order or association. They are usually not lead by a selected head, like the independent traditions outside Gujarāt, but by the monk with the highest monastic age, or dikṣā paryāya, who may or may not be called ācārya.

The overall number of Śhānakavāsī mendicants is much higher than generally assumed. At the time of the first All India Śhānakavāsī Śramaṇa Sammelan in Ajmer, the total number of mendicants of the then 30 Śhānakavāsī traditions was 1,595, 463 sādhus and 1,132 sādhvīs (Maṇilāl 1934: 263). This figure had more than doubled by 1999 to altogether 3,223 mendicants, 533 sādhus and 2,690 sādhvīs, and by the year 2002 had increased further to altogether 3,331 mendicants, 559 sādhus and 2,772 sādhvīs. In the sixty-six years between 1933 and 1999 the total number of Śhānakavāsī ascetics grew by 102.07%. However, the number of sādhus increased merely by 15.19%, while the number of sādhvīs expanded by a staggering 137.63%, increasing their share by 12.48% from 70.97% to 83.46%. Table 12.5 shows that the total number of Śhānakavāsī mendicants grew from 1987–1999 by 20.40%. All this growth was generated by an accelerated increase in the number of Śhānakavāsī sādhvīs during the last 12 years. At the same time, the absolute number of sādhus slightly declined.

The overall growth rate in 1987–1999 was almost twice as high in the Śramaṇa Saṅgha and the independent orders than in Gujarāt (Śramaṇa Saṅgha 24.12%, Independent 25.26%, Gujarātī 13.5%). This can partly be explained by the fact that in 1987 the percentage of sādhvīs was already particularly high in Gujarāt (1999: Gujarāt 89.39%, Śramaṇa Saṅgha 79.29%, Independent 81.08%). While the overall share of the sādhvīs increased by 3.63%, their growth was higher outside Gujarāt (Śramaṇa Saṅgha 4.32%, Independent 5.17%, Gujarātī 2.4%). It is difficult to say why Gujarātī traditions have a larger percentage of sādhvīs in the absence of detailed historical studies. It is not inconceivable that initiations were artificially increased in Gujarāt; since already in 1933, at the Ajmer sammelan, an inconclusive debate was held amongst leading monks of the Śhānakavāsīs about a proposal to deliberately increase the number of disciples (Devendramuni 2000: 20).
B. U. Jain does not supply any information on the biodata and on the social background of the mendicants. According to Bordiyā (in Shāntā 1985: 336f.), 30% of the Śhānakavāśī sādhvīs were widows in 1975, 16% married and 53% unmarried. The average age of initiation was 10–20 years. Most of the Śhānakavāśī ascetics stem from the Ośvāl and Śrīṁālī castes in Gujarāt, Rājasthān, Madhya Pradeś, Mahārāṣṭra and Pañjāb, but also from southern India (Shāntā 1985: 333). In contrast to many other Śhānakavāśī traditions, the Śramaṇa Saṅgha comprises a large number of mendicants recruited from non-Jain castes such as Rājputs, Brāhmaṇas, or Jats particularly in the Pañjāb, while the lay following is almost entirely composed of members of the Ośvāl castes, who are almost all Jain by religion. However, by convention, only an Ośvāl can become ācārya. Like most orders, the Śramaṇa Saṅgha has banned the initiation of children below the age of 8 (bādi dīkṣā) and of old people (vrddhā) (AISJC 1987: 52). However, the Jīāna Gaccha and the Dariyāpūrī Sampradāy set a minimum age of 15 years.

The two largest schools amongst the five principal Śhānakavāśī traditions are at the moment the Bāīs Tolā (Dharmadāsa) and the Lavjiṛṣī tradition. Manilāl (1934: 211, 233) mentions that before its internal division in 1788, the Mūlacandra Dharmadāsa tradition in Gujarāt comprised about 300 mendicants. In 1933 it had not much more than 334 mendicants. If the figure for 1788 is correct, then little growth occurred in the 150 years between 1788 and 1933.

Groups of more than 100 mendicants are rarely reported before the twentieth century. This may be due to the fact that no reliable figures are available before the nineteenth century, which had generally lower numbers of Jain ascetics than the twentieth century. In 1933, the six largest organised mendicant orders (saṅghārā or saṅghādā) were the Amarasiṁha Lavjiṛṣī Sampradāya in the Pañjāb (133 mendicants: 73 sādhus and 60 sādhvīs), the Amolakarṣī Larviṛṣī Sampradāya in Mālvā (105 mendicants: 24 sādhus and 81 sādhvīs), the orthodox Rāmaratna Dharmadāsa Jīāna Gaccha in Rājasthān (118 mendicants: 13 sādhus and 105 sādhvīs), the Jayamala Gaccha of the Bāīs Tolā tradition in Rājasthān (103 mendicants: 13 sādhus and 99 sādhvīs), the Limbīṭ Moṭā Pakṣa of the Bāīs Tolā tradition in Gujarāt (94 mendicants: 28 sādhus and 66 sādhvīs), and the Gōṇḍal Moṭā Pakṣa of the Bāīs Tolā tradition in Gujarāt (86 mendicants: 20 sādhus and 66 sādhvīs) (Manilāl 1934: 211–262).

A closer look at the gender composition of the mendicant groups in 1933 shows that, with the remarkable exception of the Amarasiṁha tradition and certain sub-groups within the Śramaṇa Saṅgha, all traditions with more than ten mendicants tended to have many more sādhvīs than sādhus (generally at the rate of 3:1). It also becomes clear that small groups, such as the Manoharadāsa tradition (7 sādhus) or the Boṭād and Sāyāḷā traditions (6 sādhus each), were and often are homogeneous male groups.

The principal factor for the emergence of exclusively male groups is schisms. Generally, divisions are only instigated by sādhus who initially form small single sex groups which, after a while, may or may not accrete an entourage of sādhvīs.
The severance of the Terā Panth from the Raganātha Sampradāya in 1760 is one example. In some cases breakaway groups are formed by both sādhus and sādhvīs. But even then, sādhus are generally the majority.

Larger groups of up to 100 mendicants seem to have emerged more frequently at the end of the nineteenth century with the general revival of Jainism. In response, some groups, such as the influential Amarasiṅha Lavīṛṣi tradition, re-introduced rudimentary hierocratic structures to prevent the breakup of their communities. Organisation is necessary for the integration of nuns and for the reproduction of a monastic order over time. The need for organisation arises in times of expansion, when the mendicant orders grow and attempt to exert their influence on society as a whole. Organisation is also a major factor determining group size, as indicated earlier. It is symptomatic for an increase in power, not necessarily purity, because it counteracts the segmentary pressures that are systematically generated by the observation of the canonical rules for mendicant-lay interaction. These rules prescribe the itinerary of the ascetics and unmediated face-to-face interaction between guru and disciple, thus impeding the permanent aggregation of large assemblies of ascetics in small towns and villages. Even sizable and well-organised groups are split into smaller itinerant groups of 2–15 and, rarely, up to 70 mendicants, called saṅghādā or parivāra among the Sthanakavāsīs, to make the observation of the canonical rules of non-violent conduct easier.

Another approach to the processes of group segmentation amongst Jain mendicants follows from network theory. I have outlined this approach in an earlier, yet to be published, paper (Flügel 1991) and restrict myself here to general remarks. As mentioned earlier, the size of sustainable groups depends partly on the number of followers in a given region. Studies in network size have shown that informal personal networks rarely exceed thirty individuals in a modern urban environment: ‘In general it appears that there is probably a limit to the number of people with whom an individual might be in direct and regular contact, but as yet there does not seem to be enough empirical evidence available to provide an estimate of what it might be’ (Mitchell 1969: 19f.).

By observing the canonical codes of conduct for their itinerary, or vihāra, and the collection of alms, or gocari, Jain mendicants are both forced and able to sustain much larger networks of personal, if formal, contacts. In practice, this often requires the keeping of lists of addresses and various other organisational techniques which cannot be detailed here. In other words, while the monastic code of conduct limits the size of mendicant groups, it simultaneously contributes to the widening of the circle of lay contacts. However, even if one accepts that the formalisation of mendicant-lay interactions through the Jain monastic code results in a larger personal network, there seems to be an upper limit of sustainable contacts (a figure which awaits to be calculated). Beyond this limit, both the mendicant order and the mendicant-lay network can only be enlarged with the help of hierocratic organisation. The permutations of this general postulate still await thorough sociological analysis. However, given that schisms privilege male ascetics, it seems that the sustenance of large numbers of female mendicants is
predicated on the existence of large and formally organised monastic groups with the capacity of weaving partial individual or parivāra networks into aggregate group networks. Historically, the emergence of organised monastic orders amongst the Śvetāmbaras seems to be related to the problem of integrating the principally bilateral structure of descent of nuns and the unilateral structure of descent of monks within a single tradition.¹⁰⁰

**Śvetāmbara Terā Panth**

Systematic research in the history of the Terā Panth began in 1946 under the supervision of Ācārya Tulṣī, who commissioned Muni Navratnamal (1921–2004) to collect the biographies of all Terā Panth mendicants and asked his lay followers to submit all family records and personal notes on the movements of the mendicants, since little reliable data can be found in the writings of the early Terā Panth monks. It is due to Muni Navratnamal’s meticulous study of these sources, spanning more than five decades, that the Terā Panth offers now almost complete published demographic data on the monastic order and on the individual life-histories of its ascetics from its inception in 1760. During the last four decades an annual census was conducted and published under the title Terāpanth Digdarśan. The demographic statistics extracted from these materials differentiate between region of origin (deś), caste (jāti), age (vay), marital status before initiation: unmarried (avivāhit), married (patnī/pātī ko chorkar), or widowed (patnī/pātī-vidyog ke bād), age at the time of initiation (navali/bālig), initiation with or without spouse (sapatnī/patī sahit), initiation of one spouse after the other (prāg dīkṣit patnī/patī), death (svargavās), departure (gan bāhar), and the name of the initiating ācārya. Most of the available data was compiled by Muni Navratnamal (1981 ff.) and published in 26 volumes under the title Śāsana Samudrā. Slightly different figures are quoted by Muni Budhmāl (1995) and in other Terā Panth publications. The statistics of different Terā Panth publications do not always match, but are reliable enough to support general conclusions.

The Terā Panth is governed autocratically by a single ācārya who is invested with the constitutional power to select his successor, to initiate all mendicants, to annually rotate the personnel of the itinerant groups, and to determine the number and size of the groups. This administrative technique is unique amongst Jain orders, although the ācārya of the Sthānakavāśi Jāna Gaccha – always the monk with the highest monastic age – also rotates the personnel of the itinerant groups, while most other Sthānakavāśi orders similarly operate with only one ācārya. It was devised deliberately to counteract segmentary pressures resulting from the fact that traditionally the members of a saṅghāda stayed together for life and automatically developed a distinct group identity and clientele. The centralised system of administration was introduced by Ācārya Bhikṣu (1726–1803) and refined by Ācārya Jītmal (1803–1881). It allowed the Terā Panth to grow both numerically and geographically well beyond the size of an average samudāya in the twentieth century. In 1955 the Terā Panth comprised of
Table 12.6 Terā Panth sādhus and sādhvīs 1987, 1990, 1996 and 1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sampradāya</th>
<th>Ācārya</th>
<th>Ācārya Tulśi</th>
<th>Ācārya Candannal</th>
<th>Ācārya Rūpcandra</th>
<th>Ācārya Dr Nagrāj</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terā Panth</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nava Terā Panth 1</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nava Terā Panth 2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagrāj</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note

a The Nava Terā Panth was already split in two sections in 1990, but B. U. Jain 1990: 106 did not have any figures. Therefore, numbers for both groups are listed under Rūp Candra’s section for 1990.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acarya (period of reign)</th>
<th>Entry</th>
<th></th>
<th>Death</th>
<th></th>
<th>Exit</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sađhu</td>
<td>Sādhvī</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Sađhu</td>
<td>Sādhvī</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Sađhu</td>
<td>Sādhvī</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Bhikṣu (1760–1803)</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Bhārmāl (1803–1821)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Rāycand (1821–1851)</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Jītmal (1851–1881)</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Maghrāj (1881–1892)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Mānakāl (1892–1897)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Dālcand (1897–1909)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Kālurām (1909–1936)</td>
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<td>255</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 Tulsī (1936–1997)</td>
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<td>619</td>
<td>876</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
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<td>769</td>
<td>1616</td>
<td>2385</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>980</td>
<td>1361</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note

a These figures stem from Budhmal 1995: 237, 292, 328, 532 and Navratnamal (personal correspondence 30 April 2000). They refer to the day of death of the Acarya.
altogether 660 mendicants (180 sādhus and 480 sādhvis), in 1975 of 657 mendicants (151 sādhus and 506 sādhvis) and in 1981 of 695 mendicants (164 sādhus and 531 sādhvis). The 1981 figures would have been higher had they not been compiled shortly after the secession of the groups of the Muni Nag Rāj and the Nava Terā Panth, lead by Muni Candan Māl and Muni Rup Candra. The main reason for the constitution of breakaway groups was the controversial introduction of a new intermediary category of novices, called samanā śrenī, by Ācārya Tulṣī in 1981. The dispute leading to the division focused on the decision to allow these novices to travel abroad and to use modern means of transportation and even money. In this respect, Terā Panth samanās resemble the bhātārakas of the Digambara and the yatis of the Śvetāmbara, which form similar categories midway between the laity and fully initiated mendicants. While orthodox ascetics rejected the innovation, reformist ascetics were disappointed that the reforms did not go far enough.

Initially, the samanā śrenī proved to be extremely popular, at least among young females, who were interested in religious education and travel. But the expansion has periodically slowed down. In 1992 the order comprised of 4 samanās and 51 samanīs, in 1996 of 4 samanās and 81 samanīs, and in 1999 of 4 samanās and 80 samanīs. However, in the meantime the recruitment has been accelerated. Altogether 89 samanīs existed by 2001, and more than 100 in 2003. The periodical reduction in numbers is a result of the progression of many samanīs into the order of the sādhvis.

In 1992 the main branch of the Terā Panth had altogether 827 ascetics and novices and apparently more than 300,000 lay followers. At that time, it was one of the largest corporate Jain mendicant groups. If ascetics and novices are taken together, the Terā Panth had also the highest rate of growth of all Śvetāmbara Jain orders between 1987–1999. However, if only the numbers of fully initiated ascetics are taken into account, the growth rate seems to be stagnating. Table 12.6 shows that under Kālū Rām’s reign both the absolute number of initiations of mendicants and the ratio of female mendicants increased dramatically. Simultaneously, caste exclusivity also increased. Terā Panth mendicants were increasingly recruited only from the Osvāl jātis. By contrast, many of the ascetics that were initiated by the first four Terā Panth Ācāryas between 1760 and 1881 were Agravālas (sometimes Sarāvagīs) and Porvālas, and Maheśvarīs, though Bhikṣu himself was also a Bīsa Osvāl. The main expansion of the Terā Panth occurred under Ācārya Kālū Rām (1877–1936) and Ācārya Tulṣī (1914–1997) in the first half of the twentieth century, that is, during the Indian struggle for independence and the first decade after independence. Table 12.7 shows that under Kālū Rām’s reign both the absolute number of initiations of mendicants and the ratio of female mendicants increased dramatically. Simultaneously, caste exclusivity also increased. Terā Panth mendicants were increasingly recruited only from the Osvāl jātis. By contrast, many of the ascetics that were initiated by the first four Terā Panth Ācāryas between 1760 and 1881 were Agravālas (sometimes Sarāvagīs) and Porvālas, and Maheśvarīs, though Bhikṣu himself was also a Bīsa Osvāl.104
patterns also reflect regional changes. Initially, most of the Terā Panth mendicants came from Mārvār and Mevār. However, after a series of cāturmāsa sojourns by Ācārya Jıtmal in Lādhūn and Bidāsār between 1872 and 1877, the focus of activities shifted towards the Thalī region. From Ācārya Kālī Rām onwards the great majority of Terā Panth ascetics were recruited from the area of the old principalities of Bikāner.105 Table 12.7 shows the pattern of growth of the Terā Panth, whose ācāryas initiated altogether 2597 mendicants between 1760 and 1997.106

The table shows that one of the factors contributing to the low number of sādhūs are secessions or excommunications, which occur much more frequently amongst sādhūs than amongst sādhvīs (cf. Navratnamal 1981 II: 311, 322, III: 273, 291, X: 309, 325). This confirms Balbir’s (1983: 42) observation that the disposition to rebel against the autocratic regime of the Terā Panth ācāryas is greater amongst male ascetics. The figures show that the number of exclusions was much higher under the regimes of the reformist disciplinarians Jıtmal, Kālūrām and Tulsī.

Goonasekere’s (1986: 87ff.) analysis of the recruitment patterns between 1760–1944 shows that, with the exception of the first years after the foundation of the Terā Panth during which the sādhūs were in the majority, at all times significantly more sādhvīs were initiated than sādhūs (on average 65.97% sādhvīs and 34.03% sādhūs), and that the percentage of female ascetics continually increased. His investigations of the marital status at the time of initiation give further insights into the historical changes taking place within the monastic community. He shows that until 1944 the two dominant categories were ‘unmarried men’ and ‘widows’: 49.83% of all sādhūs were unmarried between 1760–1944, 37.28% widowed, 12.89% married, and altogether 67.77% of the sādhvīs – 44.77% of all Terā Panth mendicants – were widows (ibid.: 100f.). Goonasekere explains the different ratio of widows and widowers by the fact that, in contrast to women, men were always permitted to remarry (due to Ācārya Tulsī’s reforms widow remarriage is today officially accepted by the Terā Panthīs though it is still despised by the Osvāls). From this he infers the prevailing motives for renunciation: widowhood for women, and impossibility or fear of marriage for men. But he also mentions other socially induced reasons for renunciation, such as infertility, bankruptcy, unhappy marriage, and death of a family member (ibid.: 114f.) – in my experience a very, if not the most, significant external factor, particularly for women, apart from the influence of the monks and nuns, and the alternative to marriage that is offered to women by a well-organised monastic order.107

Cort’s (1991: 660) re-analysis of Goonasekere’s data reveals important changes in the marital status of the Terā Panth ascetics. Under Ācārya Bhikṣu (1760–1803) less than 10% of all mendicants were unmarried. However, between 1909 and 1944 all mendicants under Ācārya Kālī Rām and Ācārya Tulsī were unmarried (women: 72.7%, men: 56%). Similar increases in the share of unmarried women amongst the sādhvīs had already been observed by Shāntā (1985: 320, 336f., following Bordiyā 1975) for the Sthānakavāśīs and the Kharatara Gaccha, and by Cort (1989b) amongst the Tapā Gaccha samudāyas. Cort (1991: 660)
rightly concludes that ‘P. S. Jaini’s (1979: 247, n. 8) statement that most Jain
sādhus is widows needs to be qualified’.

The average age at the time of the initiation has also increased. It is today 18–19
years, compared to 15–16 years some sixty years ago. The significant increase of the
age of initiation can be explained by Ācārya Tulsī’s reversal of Ācārya Kālū Rām’s
preference for child initiations (bāla dīkṣā). Kālū Rām favoured child initiations in
order to reduce the prevalence of widows in the order and to boost the overall num-
ber of mendicants. Tulsī, by contrast, was primarily interested in increasing the
standard of education. The rising age of initiation is mainly a consequence of his
decision to initiate only educated female candidates, given the overall trend towards
the initiation of young unmarried women, who seem to prefer the relative independ-
ence of monastic life to marriage. One of the reasons for the creation of the samana
category was to give young women the opportunity to study and thus to qualify
themselves for full mendicancy, which nowadays can only be entered by young
females after some years as a novice. Usually, girls are not initiated before the age of
20. But there is no such arrangement for boys, who are generally less inclined to join
mendicancy. They are trained after initiation.

Initiations of children from the age of 8 and initiations of 45–60 year olds are
exceptions today, although they still take place.109

Digambara

With the exception of very small traditions, such as the Tārana Svāmī Panth, the
Gumāṇa Panth and the Totā Panth,110 the overwhelming majority of the
Digambaras follow either the Terah Panth, the ‘path of thirteen’, or the Bīsa
Panth, the ‘path of twenty’ or both traditions in a non-discriminate manner. In
contrast to the aniconic Śvetāmbara Terah Panth, the image-worshipping
Digambara Terah Panth – both are also called Terā Panth – was originally not a
tradition led by mendicants but a lay movement. It emerged in the sixteenth and
seventeenth centuries in North India in protest against the lax and ostentatious
conduct of contemporary orange-clad ‘Bīsa Panthī’ ascetics, the so-called
bhaṭṭārakas, whose ‘modern’111 monastic lineages evolved from those of the
naked munis and increasingly replaced them from the thirteenth century onwards.

The precise significance of the distinction between Terah Panthīs and Bīsa Panthīs
is not known anymore. Nor do we know much about the history and organisation of
the contemporary Digambara ascetics.112 Most writers associate the beginning of the
Terah Panth movement either with Paṇḍit Ţodarmal (1719–1766), an influential
Digambara layman of Jaypur, or with Banārsīdās (1586–1643), a merchant and co-
founder (ādīguru) of the Adhyātma circle in Agrā which drew on the mystical phi-
losophy of Ācārya Kunda Kunda to inspire its own version of a non-ascetic lay
religiosity that is oriented towards self-realisation through the direct meditative expe-
rience of the soul. Yet, the fundamental ideas of both the Adhyātma circle and the
Terah Panth movement clearly antedated both Banārsīdās and Ţodarmal. Lath
(1981: xxxvi–vii), for instance, points to the influence of the revenue minister of
King Akbar, Rājā Todarmal (died 1589) in Vārānasi and to his younger associate Bāṣū Sāh, who introduced Banārsīdās to Digambara mysticism. Cort (2002: 63f.) emphasised the fact that ‘we cannot conclude that an interest in Digambar mysticism equates automatically with the Terah Panth emphasis on reforming the Digambar ritual culture’ (p. 66). It appears rather that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the trans-sectarian Adhyātma circle in Āgrā and the more ritualistically oriented and more radically anti-bhaṭṭāraka Digambara Terah Panth movement around Jaypur constituted distinct though related lay movements, which became indistinguishable only with the waning of the influence of the Adhyātma movement in the eighteenth century and the institutional consolidation of the Terah Panth through the construction of numerous temples in North India.

According to M. U. K. Jain (1975: 137f.), the radical anti-bhaṭṭāraka movement was started either in 1528114 or in the early seventeenth century by Amar Cand, a resident of Sāṅganer near modern Jaypur. The movement first called itself Vidhi Mārga, though its opponents mocked it ‘Terah Panth’, the path of (only) thirteen. The second account is corroborated by Lath (1981: xxxix), who points to Amar Singh as the founder of the ‘Terah Panth’ movement in 1626. The most detailed investigation of the origin of the Terah Panth/Bīsā Panth distinction was undertaken by Nāthurām Premī (1912, 1957), one of the main sources for M. U. K. Jain and Lath, who identified the oldest confirmed record of the word Terah Panth and of the year 1626 as its date of origin in Paṇḍit Bakhat Rām’s eighteenth century work Buddhivilās v. 631.115 He concluded, therefore, that the origin of the Terah Panth must be located in the early seventeenth century. In Premī’s (1912/n.d.: 22f.) assessment, the passage refers to the ritualistic Terah Panth and not to the Adhyātma movement, as Cort (2002: 67) argues.116 Premī (1957) later recorded three versions of the origin of the Terah Panth in the literature of its opponents.117 All of these point to the pivotal role of the family of Amrā Bhaumā Godiṅkā of Sāṅganer: One version can be found in Bakhat Rām’s work Mithyāṭva Khaṇḍan Nāṭak of 1764, which describes how Amrā Bhaumā Godiṅkā was expelled from the congregation of the brahmacārī Amar Cand [sic!] because of his ostentatious display of wealth. In turn, he founded his own group which initially had only thirteen (terah) members and was therefore mocked as the ‘Terah Panth’. The group built a temple apparently with the help of a minister of the king of Amer. A second version is given in a poem called Kavitt Terāpanthkau by Cand Kavi. The poem describes how Jodhrāj Godiṅkā, the son of Amrā Bhaumā Godiṅkā, in 1618 – a date which Premī regards as fifty years too early118 – repeatedly interrupted the sermon of the visiting bhaṭṭāraka Narendrakṛti of the Balātkāra Gaṇa Dillī-Jaypur Śakhā of Amer. He was then expelled and founded his own group on the basis of thirteen unreported principles. The third and oldest version goes back to Jodhrāj Godiṅkā himself who, in his 1667/1669 Hindī translation of Kunda Kunda’s Pravacanasāra, exploited the homonym of terah and terā by interpreting terah panth, ‘path of thirteen’, as terā panth, ‘your path’, that is, as another term for the ‘Jina’s path’ or the ‘right path’.119 Hence, the Śvetāmbara Terā Panthī ascetics must have borrowed their own identical explanation of the
three possible meanings of their name from existing Digambara Terā Panth sources;\footnote{120} though M. U. K. Jain (1975: 138) reports that N. Premī elsewhere expressed the view that the name terā panth only became current amongst the Digambaras after the founding of the Śvetāmbara ‘Terā Panth’ in 1760 – a view which may merely reflect the fact that Bakhat Rām’s works Mithyāṭva Khanḍan Nāṭak and Buddhivilās were composed in the year 1764 and 1770.

None of the sources cited by Premī give a clear answer to the question of the significance of the numbers thirteen and twenty in terah panth and bisa panth, which may indeed just reflect a superficial claim of superiority by the self-declared ‘Bisa Panthīs’ ‘since the number 20 exceeds 13 by 7’ (Nathmal 1968: 7). The influential twentieth century Terā Panth pandit Phūlcond Ṣāstri (1985b: 538), a born Parvār, could therefore take the liberty to identify the Terā Panth with the ‘orthodox Mūla Saṅgha of Kunda Kunda’ and the Bisa Panth with the ‘heterodox Kāsthā Saṅgha’;\footnote{121} and also to associate the ‘pure line’ (śuddhamāya) of the Parvār caste with the tradition of Kunda Kunda (ibid.: 536).\footnote{122} Ṣāstri could, of course, only identify the entire bhattāraka tradition with the Kāsthā Saṅgha by disregarding the known history of the muni and bhattāraka traditions. However, many Terā Panthīs nowadays claim descent from the ‘orthodox’ Mūla Saṅgha and interpret the words terā panth as a designation of the ‘right path’ shown by the Jinas and Kunda Kunda.\footnote{123} The words bisa panth, ‘path of twenty’, is in turn polemically depicted as a corruption of viṣam panth, ‘irregular-’ or ‘poisonous path’ (Ṣāstri 1985b: 538),\footnote{124} or as a corruption of viśva panth, ‘universal path’ (Glasenapp 1925: 357 for both versions).

**Digambara Terā Panth**

The Digambara Terā Panthīs are today guided by pandits, or lay intellectuals, who are associated with predominantly local religious trusts and temples. There is no unifying organisational framework. About 500–600 Terā Panth pandits exist in North India today with strongholds in Jaypur, Āgra and Vārānasi. Most of them teach Jainism only part-time. Although they do respect ‘true’ Jain mendicants,\footnote{125} the Terā Panthīs represent largely a temple-centred form of lay asceticism, whose main doctrinal inspirations derive more from the mystical writings of Ācārya Padmanandin, known as Kunda Kunda (Pkt. Koṇḍa Kunda), than from Bhūtabāli and Puspadanta for instance. Their following has recently split between those who accept Kāṇji Svāmī’s (1889–1980) deterministic interpretation of Kunda Kunda’s teachings and those who do not.\footnote{126}

Two-thirds of today’s Digambaras\footnote{127} are said to be Terā Panthīs,\footnote{128} who are the predominant Digambara tradition in Rājasthān, Madhya Pradeś and Uttar Pradeś, while the Bisa Panthīs dominate in Mahārāṣṭra, Karnāṭaka and Keralā, as well as in Tamil Nādu and Gujurāt where only few Digambaras are left\footnote{129} apart from the followers of Kāṇji Svāmī. The reasons for the differential distribution of Terā Panthīs and Bisa Panthīs have not yet been studied, but there seems to be a clear correlation between caste membership and sectarian affiliation in North India, where, today, most Agravāls and Parvārs are Terā Panthīs and most Khaṇḍelvāls
Bīsa Panthīs, however, the majority of the Digambara laity does not consciously differentiate between Terā Panthīs and Bīsa Panthīs qua sectarian membership or following, and merely practises local Jain rituals and caste customs. The absence of deep-seated sectarian awareness amongst the Digambara laity in North India – apart from the divide between the followers and the opponents of Kāṇjī Svāmī – can be attributed to a number of factors: the extinction of the last North Indian bhaṭṭāraka seats in the early twentieth century, the revival of the doctrinally amorphous muni traditions, and the lack of organisation not only of the Terā Panth, but of the Digambaras in general whose dearth of inspirational religious leaders in the nineteenth century resulted in the dominance of caste (jāti) identities amongst the local Digambara communities (samāj) in both North- and South India.

Another factor may have been the long-standing cultural influence of Terā Panthīs on the Bīsa Panthīs in North India, whose rituals are less elaborate than those of the Bīsa Panthīs in the South.

Bīsa Panth

In contrast to the Terā Panthīs, who practise a dry pūjā and reject the bhaṭṭārakas, the Bīsa Panthīs practise pūjā with flowers and fruits and support the bhaṭṭārakas, who continued the ascetic tradition after the decline of the muni in the late medieval period. The reconstruction of the organisational history of the Digambara ascetics is a difficult and not yet fully accomplished task. Carrithers (1990: 154) suspects that the current use of specific designations for monastic lineages or groups is largely fictitious since from the medieval period onwards no independently organised muni saṅghas existed besides the bhaṭṭārakas. One of the problems is the unclear contextual meaning of the lineage and group categories used by the Digambaras. Muni U. K. Jain (1975: 132) writes that ‘Units like Āmnāya, Anvaya, Bali, Samudāya, Saṅgha and Vaiśā appear to be peculiar to the Digambara section’; though he does not fail to mention the common use of the terms gana, gaccha, kula and sākhā in both the Digambara and the Svetāmbara traditions. The difficulty in connecting the influence of the classical Digambara teachings of Umāsvāmī, Gaṇadhara, Puṣpadanta and Bhūtabali, on the one hand, and the mystical tradition of Kunda Kunda, on the other, with specific lines of succession is, at least in part, connected to the problem of clearly identifying enduring organisational units within the relatively unorganised Digambara ascetic lineages. It has only sporadically been observed that the doctrine of Kunda Kunda, who in old inscriptions is generally associated with the Nandi Saṅgha, was more prominent in the Māthura Gaccha and in certain factions of the Sena Gana.

The nineteenth century paṭṭāvalīs of the Sarasvatī Gaccha (Balātkāra Gana Uttara Śākhā), which were translated by Hoernle (1891, 1892), trace the origin of the lineages of the contemporary Digambara bhaṭṭārakas to a disciple of Ācārya Bhadrabāhu II, Guptigupta, who is also known under the names of Ardhabalī and Viśākhācārya. Ardhabalī is presented as the last pontiff who was able to keep the
monks (munī) of the originally undivided Mūla Saṅgha, or root community, together. When he was succeeded, apparently in the year 21 BCE, each of his four chief disciples – Māghanandin, Vṛṣabha called Jinasena, Śiṅhā and Deva – took over one of the four sub-groups which subsequently developed into independent traditions: the Nandi, the Vṛṣabha- (Sena-), the Śiṅha- and the Deva Saṅgha.141 The oldest sources for this narrative are two inscriptions in Śravaṇabelagolā dated 1398 and 1432.142 The later inscription dates the group formation within the Mūla Saṅgha to the latter half of the eight century.143 Schubring (2000: § 30, p. 63) pointed out the discrepancy between this account and references to a Mūla Saṅgha of a different internal composition of the twelfth to thirteenth centuries, and Dundas (2002: 122) concludes ‘that the Mūla Saṅgha gradually became little more than a prestigious but artificial designation, redolent of a long unattainable orthodoxy’.144

For the early medieval periods four ‘heterodox’ Digambara traditions are attested to by Deva Sena’s tenth century polemical work Daṁsanasāra (Darśanasāra):145 the Drāvīḍa-, Kāśṭhā-, Māthura- and the Yāpanīya- or Gopya Saṅgha. The four traditions are described as ‘heterodox’, because they differed on specific points of doctrine and practice from the ‘orthodox’ Mūla Saṅgha,146 which is not mentioned in the text because it was represented by Deva Sena himself (Schubring 2000: § 30, p. 63).147 The reported dates of origin of these traditions vary in the surviving manuscripts of the Darśanasāra. Hence, the Drāvīḍa Saṅgha may have been founded either in 479 CE,148 469 CE,149 or in 583 CE150 by Pājya Pāda’s disciple Vajra Nandin in Madura (Madurai) in South India. The reported reason was a disagreement within the Mūla Saṅgha over the eating of particular plants, bathing in cold water, practising agriculture and trade.151 The origins of the Kāśṭhā Saṅgha152 seem to go back to the seventh or eighth century CE. By the tenth century it was divided into four divisions:153 the Māthura Gaccha,154 Lāda Bāgada/Lāta Vargata Gaccha,155 Bāgada Gaccha156 and Nandī Taṭa Gačcha.157 The Yāpanīya Saṅgha – the only one of the four ‘heterodox’ traditions which is depicted as a non-Digambara tradition in the academic literature158 – originated apparently in 648 CE,159 in 159 CE,160 or in 148 CE.161

In North India the most influential traditions162 were the Sena Gaṇa163 and the Balāṭkārā Gaṇa (Sarvasvati Gaccha)164 with its ten sub-divisions which were internally further sub-divided: Kāraṇḍa Śakhā,165 Lāṭṭha Śakhā,166 Uṭṭha Śakhā,167 Iḍara Śakhā,168 Bhānapura Śakhā,169 Surat Śakhā,170 Jērahaṭṭa Śakhā,171 Dīḷi-Jaypur Śakhā,172 Nāgaura Śakhā,173 and Aṭera Śakhā.174 Both the Sena Gaṇa and the Balāṭkārā Gaṇa presented themselves as branches of the ‘orthodox’ Mūla Saṅgha in a direct line from Kunda Kunda (Padmanandin). However, the link appears to be a later construction.175 The currently available sources point to Ācārya Śrī Candra (r. 1013–1030) as the founder of the Balāṭkārā Gaṇa.176

After the demise of the Yāpanīya- and the Drāvīḍa Saṅgha in the late medieval period, merely a few branches of the Kāśṭhā Saṅgha – especially the Māthura Gaccha – and of the Sena Gaṇa, the Balāṭkārā Gaṇa and the Deśiya Gaṇa of the Mūla Saṅgha remained, and only some sections of the Sena Gaṇa and the Balāṭkārā Gaṇa survived until today. In the late medieval period the members of

343
most sub-branches of these traditions transformed themselves from naked munis to orange-clad bhattārakas with a relaxed code of conduct. These domesticated bhattārakas had only very few disciples, amongst them occasionally nuns (āryā),\textsuperscript{177} which may be the reason why the term yatī is rarely used in the Digambara tradition. There is no reliable demographic information available on the bhattāraka traditions, but one can safely assume that the absolute number of both Digambara munis and yatīs was very small during this period. In the first of his planned two volumes on the early bhattāraka traditions, Joharāpurkara (1958: 23) identified the names of only 400 bhattārakas and 165 disciples who were associated with 31 jātis and 200 place names in North India between the thirteenth and nineteenth centuries.

**Bhattāraka traditions**

The honorific title bhattāraka, ‘great lord’ or ‘learned man’, was given to prominent ācāryas and munis in the early medieval period (Premī 1912/n.d.: 3ff.). From the late medieval period onwards, the term came to designate the celibate heads of monasteries (matha)\textsuperscript{178} who observe a relaxed set of ascetic vows, which entitles them to wear clothes, to administer monastic property in the name of the sanga (private property is not permitted), to live permanently in one or more monastery, to use vehicles, to act as heads of the Jain communities and later of Jain castes, etc. To distinguish the two types of bhattārakas, the term pattācārya is also used for the latter.\textsuperscript{179} Domesticated bhattārakas are not fully initiated mendicants, but occupy an intermediary status between the naked munis and the common laity.\textsuperscript{180} Technically, they are defined as ksullakas and classified together with the ordinary ksullakas and ailakas as ‘superior laymen’ (utkṛṣṭa śrāvaka) who accept to observe the eleventh śrāvaka pratimā, to different degrees, in contrast to the ‘basic’ (jaghanya) and the ‘intermediate’ (madhyam) laity, who must only observe the pratimās 1–6 and 1–9 respectively.\textsuperscript{181} In practice, jaghanya śrāvakas observe at best the first or dārśana pratimā, that is the stage of ‘right views’ combined with vegetarianism. The barah vratas or ‘twelve vows’ of the second or vratā pratimā are rarely formally accepted (in toto) by lay Jains, who are reluctant to impose lifelong (ājīvana) vows upon themselves, except sometimes in old age.\textsuperscript{182} Similarly, the intermediate status is regarded as almost synonymous with the seventh or brahmacarya pratimā, the vow of sexual continence which is outwardly marked by wearing a white dress. The eleventh or uḍḍiṣṭa tyāga pratimā, which should be practiced by bhattārakas, demands world-renunciation and the observance of a monastic lifestyle, including the begging of food. The uḍḍiṣṭa tyāga pratimā is today sub-divided in the stages of the ksullaka and the ailaka.\textsuperscript{183} The ksullaka (f. ksullikā) or ‘junior’ (monk) gives up all but two (or three) pieces of cloth of orange colour, while the ailaka keeps only a loincloth (kaupīna).\textsuperscript{184} Both the ksullakas and ailakas are consecrated by a personal guru. At their dikṣā they are both given the three possessions of a Digambara ascetic: peacock feather broom (piñchi), scripture (śāstra) and water pot (kamandalu).\textsuperscript{185} In contrast to the ksullakas, who may reside with householders, the ailakas always stay with the munis, and should eat their food, like
the munis, with ‘one hand’, that is the two hands folded into one, but in a seated position. They also have to practice keśa luñcana, or the ritual plucking of hair and beard, and silence at night, and are not permitted to use vehicles.\textsuperscript{186} For this reason aイラkacs are considered to be superior to bhatt\=arakas although this is disputed some bhatt\=arakas who as the descendants of the original muni tradition claim predominance even over the modern munis and perform a modified muni dikş\=a.

The procedures of selection and the inauguration or paṭṭ\=abhiseka ceremony of a bhatt\=araka are different from an ordinary kśullaka dikş\=a which usually precedes it. Nowadays, a bhatt\=araka is often not chosen by his predecessor, but by a pa\=nc\=ayat or by prominent members of the community, who judge the available candidates according to their attitude, conduct and knowledge. If no suitable successor, a laghu-nandana or ‘small son’ such as a brahmâcâri or yati under training\textsuperscript{187} with a good horoscope, is available, the ācâryas of the muni saṅghas are approached to recommend one of their kśullakas or aイラkas who could be persuaded to fill the position.\textsuperscript{188} If a candidate is accepted by consensus, the paṭṭ\=abhiseka is organised, in which a Digambara muni plays the role of the dikş\=a-dâtâ or giver of initiation. The candidate first renounces his old clothes and his personal name\textsuperscript{189} in public and is then given a single orange dress and the traditional title of the occupier of the seat. After taking his vows (at least a lifelong brahmâcârya vrata), he is blessed with mantra and by sprinkled water on his head and then presented with the principal insignia of a bhatt\=araka – a piñch\=i with a handle made out of silver or gold, an insignia ring, and a metal kamandalu. A bhatt\=araka also commands ceremonial elephants, litters (men\=a), and other symbols of worldly status. Generally, he does not keep money on his own nowadays, but leaves the financial assets of the matha in the hands of the lay trustees, who will cover all his expenses.\textsuperscript{190}

The tradition of domesticated bhatt\=arakas evolved at the beginning of the thirteenth century under Muslim rule from the existing traditions of the naked munis who they replaced almost entirely until the revival of the muni tradition in the twentieth century. There are three accounts of its origin, all of which emphasise the pioneering role of the Bal\=atk\=âra Gâna: The first account attributes the introduction of the custom of wearing clothes – symbolic of possessions in general – to Ācârya Vasant K\=irti (1174–1207) of the Uttarā Śâkh\=â of the Bal\=atk\=âra Gâna, who died only one year after his accession to the seat in Ajmer. According to Śr\=uta S\=agar S\=\=ur\=i, he took the decision to cover himself with a sheet of cotton (tatt\=i-s\=\=adara) when going for alms in the village of M\=anda\=padurga (M\=anda\=lagar\=h) in R\=ajast\=h\=an in reaction to the Muslim rulers’ criticism of the custom of walking naked in public.\textsuperscript{191} Other accounts locate the beginning of the practice in the time of Phiroz S\=\=ah (1350–1387), the sultan of Delhi, who desired to meet the guru of the Digambaras.\textsuperscript{192} A p\={a}t\=\={a}v\={a}\={l}\=\={i} names the seventh āc\=\=arya of the Uttarā Śâkh\=â of the Bal\=atk\=âra Gâna, the miracle working Padma Nandin (born 1318, r. 1328–1393),\textsuperscript{193} as the first bhatt\=araka who put on a loin cloth. It is said that the title of a bhatt\=araka was conferred on him by a Gujar\=\=ati sr\=r\=avaka who wanted him to consecrate a statue and in this way to transmit to it his miraculous powers (Hoernle 1891: 354). According to an oral tradition, the reason for putting on clothes was Padma Nandin’s acceptance of the request by
King Muhammad Ghôrî to present himself in a decent manner to his wife who desired to meet him (ibid.: 361).194

Under the impact of the Terâ Panth reform movement in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, most of the bhattâraka seats in North India collapsed. The two last remaining seats in Râjâsthân, Mahâvrî and Prâtâpghâr, were discontinued in the first and second half of the twentieth century respectively, due to the increasing influence of the ‘modern’ lay reform movements which criticised the bhattârakas with arguments similar to those of the ‘protestant’195 Digambara reform movements of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.196 Only the southern bhattâraka traditions of the ‘Mûla Saṅgha’ in Mahârâstra (Sena Gana: Kolhâpura, Nândanî), Karnâtaka (Bâlât+kârâ Gana: Hûmâchâ; De+cîya Gana: Kambadahalli/Nagamanîgalâ, Kanakagiri/Maleyur, Kârkâla, Mûdâbîdrî, Sravanabelagolâ; Sena Gana: Narasînhârâjapura) and Tamil Nâdû (Sena Gana: Melasîttamûrâ (Arahataсugirî); De+cîya Gana: Tiruvannamalai) survived. The institutional pillars of the present-day Bîsa Panth traditions, the twelve197 surviving bhattâraka seats in Hûmâchâ,198 Kambadahalli, Kanakagiri, Kârkâla,199 Kolhâpura,200 Melasîttamûrâ,201 Mûdâbîdrî,202 Nândanî,203 Narasînhârâjapura,204 Sravanabelagolâ,205 Sondâ/Svâdî and Tiruvannamalai are all located in the south, and closely connected with individual local castes.206 The cultivation of exclusive links with the members of specific Jain castes in South India was facilitated by the fact that many of them were founded by bhattârakas,207 who protected and dominated them for centuries as their religious rulers, or rājâgurus, who exercised penitential powers. The bhattârakas still initiate and excommunicate their followers and in some cases select their own successor, who is then installed by the members of the respective caste and cannot be removed during his lifetime.208 In the past, the bhattârakas accumulated large assets in land and artwork and maintained an exclusive monopoly over the surviving manuscripts of the principal sacred scriptures of the Digambaras, the Kasîyapâhuda of Gunadhârâcârya and the Śaṭkhaṇḍâgâma of Puṣpadanta and Bhûtabali, until copies were produced and smuggled out of the maṭha of Mûdâbîdrî in the early twentieth century.

The exclusivist orientation of the bhattârakas towards the castes which they dominated and to the property of their saṅgha proved to be a major obstacle to the ambitions of Jain communalists to unify the Jain community on a national platform during the years of the freedom struggle in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Saṅgha reforms were imposed on the bhattârakas by the laity, who also increasingly took control of the monastic property from the latter half of the nineteenth century onwards. Much of the landed property was recovered by the state governments through Land Reform Acts.209 As a consequence, the legal powers which the bhattârakas once held over their followers have now completely disappeared. With the re-establishment of separately organised saṅghas of itinerant naked munis in the 1920s,210 who were predominantly recruited from the relatively impoverished agricultural Digambara castes of the Bogâras, Caturthas, Pañcamas and Saitâvâlas in northern Karnâtaka and southern Mahârâstra, even the southern bhattârakas lost much of their worldly and religious influence. They
have no disciples amongst the newly established lineages of munis and āryikās, who are independent and considered to be of a higher religious status. However, they are still consulted as arbiters for conflict resolution, and supervise the conduct of the upādhyāyas who conduct the temple rituals in southern India. It is due to the continuing influence of the bhattarakas on the social life of South Indian Jains that their castes tend to be homogenously ‘Jain’ and that the feeling of ‘Jain’ social identity, is more prevalent than in mixed Jain-Hindu castes.

The lack of credible mendicant leaders with a national reputation may explain why the desire for social and religious reform was at the time particularly strongly expressed by the Digambara laity in North India. Another factor was the aspiration of some community leaders to bridge the caste divisions, and the economic divide between the poor Digambara agriculturists in the South and the wealthy Digambara (and Śvetāmbara) merchants in the North. The revival of the munis came therefore just in time. The munis were promoted by the laity as symbols of Digambara unity on a national platform. Particularly the leading members of the Akhil Bhāratvarṣīya Digambara Jain Mahāsābhā and the Khandelvāla Mahāsābhā associated themselves closely with the new muni saṅgha. The reformist Akhil Bhāratvarṣīya Digambara Jain Parīṣad also supported the revival of the munis and the unity of all Digambaras, but advocated for social reforms in addition to the religious reforms which were promoted by the munis. The association was founded on the 22 January 1923 in Delhi by Champat Rāj Jain (1867–1942), Brahmacārī Stīla Prasad Jain (1879–1942) and other reformers from North India who had left the conservative Bhāratvarṣīya Digambara Jain Mahāsābhā, which was established in 1892 in Mathurā under Rājā Lakṣmāndās and supported by traditional bhattarakas and pandits, who resisted both the publication of the scriptures, and socio-religious reform movements amongst the Digambaras, such as the Dasa Pañḍhikārā Andolan, the Dasa’s Right to Worship Movement. Reportedly, some members of the Mahāsābhā even opposed the independence of the munis from the bhattarakas.

History of the modern muni saṅgha

The Digambara muni tradition never entirely disappeared, though for the nineteenth century the names of only a handful of munis are reported whose precise relationship, if any, with the bhattarakas is still not entirely clear. A Muni Nara Siṁha is reported to have visited the town of Dhākā with his disciple Muni Vinay Śāgar in 1870, and another muni is reported to have visited Jaypur. In South India, several munis lived away from larger settlements on hillsides and in caves, though reliable information on them is difficult to obtain. Amongst them was ‘Tapasvī’ Muni Candra Kṛti, who was probably born in Guramanḍayā, but no detailed information on him is available. At the time, the only muni in North India was Candra Śāgar, who was born into the Padmasī family of the Hūma caste in Phalāṭan (Satārā). He took the ksullaka vow in 1912 in Jīnapāśvāmi (Śolāpur) and a few months later the mahāvratas in Jhālarāpātan and started to wander as a naked muni as far as Āgrā. Munī Anant Kṛti was born in 1883 in Nellikār (Kārakal) and died
untimely on 16 February 1918 in Gvāliyar where, in his memory, an eternal light (akhandā jyotī) is still maintained by his followers.222 In South India, three additional munīs existed: Candra Sāgar ‘Maṇīhalī’, Sana Kumār, and Siddhā Sāgar ‘Tervāl’ (1828–1903),223 who reportedly self-initiated himself in front of a statue at Sammet Sīkhar. In 1921, one Muni Ānand Sāgar lived in Udaypur. It has been reported that he often visited the nearby shrine of Ṛṣabhdeva Keśariyā.224

Although the Digambara mendicants are not organised, most, but not all present-day munīs trace their lines of descent to ‘Caritra Cakravarti’ Śaṃti Sāgar ‘Dakṣin’ (1872–1955) – not to be confused with his namesake from North India: Muni Śaṃti Sāgar ‘Chāṇi’ (1888–1944) – who is ‘regarded as having revived the institution of munīs single-handedly from nearly complete eclipse’ (Carrithers 1989: 232). Śaṃti Sāgar was born on the 26 July 1872 (1929 Āṣādhi Krṣṇa 6) in the village Aināpur-Bhoj in the Belgaum District of Kanṭakata. His original name was Gaudā Pāṭṭīl, and he belonged to a family of farmers of the Caturtha caste. When he was nine years old, he was married to a five year old bride, who died only seven months after the wedding. In 1890, he took the brahmacarya vow ‘in the presence of a munī’225 on 25 June 1915 (1972 Jyeṣṭh Śuklā 13), the ksullaka vow from the Digambara ‘munī’ Devendra Kīrt;226 in Uttarāgram, and in 1916 the aīlaka vow from Muni Akālik Svāmī (= Āṭī Sāgar ‘Āṅkalikar’), who lived on the Bāhubali hill near Kumbhoj. He was finally initiated as a munī from another ‘nirgrantha munī’ on 4 March 1920 in Yarnāl (Yeranāl) in Kanṭakata227 and recognised as an ācārya after the initiation of his first disciple, Muni Vīr Sāgar, on 9 October 1924 (1981 Āśvin Śuklā 11) in Sāṅglī. He initiated altogether 18 munīs, ksullakas, āryikās and ksullikās, most of whom accompanied him on his barefoot journeys throughout India.

At the time, roaming naked in the streets of large cities was prohibited (berok-trak) by the Colonial Government (K. P. Jain 1938: 161f.). In British India and in the Indian princely states (riyāsati) wandering naked was an arrestable offence. The munīs were therefore more numerous in southern India. In 1926, the Commissioner of Kāṭhiyāvād gave permission for Muni Munīdra Sāgar to move lawfully, if he was surrounded by a circle of his devotees, though this restriction was opposed by the Akhil Bhāratīya Jaina Samāj, and a committee was formed to repel it with the argument that according to both British and an Indian law, neither the government nor any other ruler or sampradāya should interfere in the religious affairs of a particular tradition.228 When Ācārya Śaṃti Sāgar entered Bombay in 1927, the case was still pending. He therefore had to transgress the rule of wandering naked (nagna munī vihāra) and to cover his body during his visit to the city (Kāṣāljīvāl 1992: 35). On the request of the local Seth Ghāstrām Pūnāmcand Jauhari, he then lead a communal pilgrimage to the sacred sites of the Digambaras throughout India, to re-establish for the Digambara munīs the right to roam naked and uninhibited by provincial boundaries, and to revive the ‘true’ Digambara religion.229 On his tour, he was welcomed by the provincial kings of Mahārāṣtra. In the year 1927–1928, he led the pilgrimage from Bhopāl to the mahā sammelan of Digambara munīs at Mount Śikhar in Bihār,230 and on to Jalālpur, Lakhnāū, Kānpur, Jhāṃsī, Āgrā, Dhaulāpur, Mathurā,
DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS IN JAINA MONASTICISM

Phirozabād, Eṣṭa, Hātharas, Aligarh, Hāstīnapūr, Muzapharnagar, etc. to Delhi, where he spent cāturmāsa. He was famously stopped by the police in Delhi for breaking the law by walking naked, but was pardoned because he refused to move from the spot where he was stopped, asking: ‘how can I walk back?’ After cāturmāsa, he went on to Alavar for a sammelan of all existing sādhu gaṇas, that is, the groups of ascetics which performed mainly jñāna-dhyāna and tapas rather than the rituals promoted by the bhaṭṭārakas, though rituals were not rejected per se. The following six Digambara mendicant groups (saṅgha) were present (K. P. Jain 1932: 161f.):

1 Ācārya Śānti Sāgar ‘Dakṣin’, with the munis Candra Sāgar, Śrūt Sāgar, Vīr Sāgar, Nami Sāgar and Jān Sāgar (6 munis altogether).
2 Muni [Ācārya] Śānti Sāgar ‘Chāṇī’, with Muni Mallī Sāgar, Brahmacārī Phatah Sāgar, and Brahmacārī Lakṣmi Cand (2 munis altogether). Śānti Sāgar ‘Chāṇī’ was born as Kevaldās Jain into a family of the Dasa Humaḍ caste in the village Chāṇī, some 15 km from Rṣabhdev Keśāriyā in the state of Udaypur. He took the brahmacārya vrata on 1 January 1919 at Sammet Śikha, and a few months later, with permission of the lay community of Gaṛh in Rājasthān, initiated himself as ksullaka under the name Śānti Sāgar in front of the image of ‘Bhagavān Jinendradeva’ (due to the absence of munis in North India). On 5 September 1922 (anant caturdāsī) in the Ādīnath temple of Sāgavāra he started ‘to wear the dress of a Digambara muni’ (Digambara veṣa dhāraṇa). In 1926, he was installed as an ācārya by the Digambara community of Giriḍhā. He converted Thākur Krūrasinīha of Bhukhiyā (Bāṁśavārī) to Jainism, but had fewer disciples than his counterpart in the south.231
3 Muni Śūrya Sāgar (9 November 1883 to 14 September 1952), with Ajit Sāgar, Dharma Sāgar and Brahmacārī Bhagavān Dās (3 munis altogether). Śūrya Sāgar’s birthname was Hājārīmāl and he belonged to the Porvād caste of Jhālārāpātān. In 1916 his wife died. He was initiated by Śānti Sāgar ‘Chāṇī’ first as a ksullaka on the 19 October 1924 in Indore and a few weeks later as a muni on the 22 December 1924. In 1928 he was given the ācārya title from the samāj. He initiated at least four male ascetics: Ācārya Vijay Sāgar, Muni Ānand Sāgar, Muni Padma Sāgar, and Kṣullaka Cīdānand.232
4 ‘Muni’[Ācārya] Ādi Sāgar, (13 September 1866 to 21 October 1944) with Muni Mallī Sāgar and Kṣullaka Śūrī Sinha. ‘Mahātapsvī’ Ādi Sāgar ‘Aṅkalikar’ was born in the village Aṅkali in southern Mahārāstra. He belonged to the Caturtha caste and was named Śiv Gaurā by his parents. In 1909 he took the ksullaka vow, and in 1913 initiated himself in front of the Jinendra image at KuncHALgiri. He died in 1944 in the village Üd (Kāsalivāla 1992: 35, Suśīlā Bāt, in Brahmacārīnī Mainābāi Jain 1996: iv–x). In the year 1926, his group stayed at Udgariv (3 munis altogether).
5 Muni Muniḍra Sāgar, with the munis Devendra Sāgar and Vijay Sāgar. Munḍra Sāgar was born in Lalitpur into the Parvā caste. He was very young in 1927 and spent his previous cāturmāsa in Māṁdvī (Surat) (3 munis altogether).
6 Muni Pāy Sāgar, who restricted his movements to South India (1 muni).
In addition, Muni Jñān Śāgār of Khairābād and Muni Ānand Śāgār (and possibly others for which no record is available at the moment) belonged to the Digambara sādhu gana. These 21 mendicants were the only naked munis who performed vihāra at the time.

It seems, though this is a question for further research, that of these six groups only the lineages of Śānti Śāgār ‘Daksīṇ’, Śānti Śāgār ‘Chāṇī’, and of Muni Ādi Śāgār ‘Aṅkalikār’ survived. In accordance with the general tendency amongst modern Jains to present a homogenous image of the Jaina community to the outside world, it is often said that doctrinal disagreements are not significant within the tradition of the modern munis, only minor differences in lineage and succession. There is, indeed, no clear doctrinal division between the ācārya saṅghas with regard to the Terā Panth/Bisa Panth distinction concerning the latter’s use of green vegetables, fruit, worship with lamps (dīpa pūjā) or incense (dhupa), etc. Effectively, each ascetic follows his own interpretation. However, Ācārya Śānti Śāgār ‘Chāṇī’ was known for his rejection of the paṅca abhiṣeṇa ritual because it is conducted with milk. Instead he advocated for the use of ‘pure’ water in abhiṣeṇa rituals. He spent one cāturmāsa together with Śānti Śāgār ‘Daksīṇ’ in Byāvar, where differences of opinion emerged, since Śānti Śāgār ‘Daksīṇ’ insisted on the Bisa Panthī view. Śānti Śāgār ‘Chāṇī’s main line of succession is represented by the ācāryas Śāraya Śāgār (1883–1952), Vijay Śāgār, Vimal Śāgār (Bhīṇḍa) (1891–1973), Sumati Śāgār (1917–1994), and Upādhyāya Jñān Śāgār (b. 1957).233 However, a number of splits occurred due to succession disputes, and several guru-śisya paramparās exist today.234

Doctrinal disagreements were also instrumental for the schisms between the successors of Śānti Śāgār ‘Daksīṇ’, who after his death on the 20 August 1955 (202 Bhādrapad Śuklā 2) in Kūṅthalgirī split into five independent lineages. Four lines were started by Śānti Śāgār’s disciples Ācārya Nami Śāgār (1888–1956), Ācārya Pāy Śāgār (1890–1956), Ācārya Sudharma Śāgār (1885–1938) and Ācārya Kunthu Śāgār (1894–1945). However, the dominant line of his successors (paṭṭādharā or paṭṭādhiśā) is represented by the ācāryas Vīr Śāgār (born 7 June 1876, kṣūllaka 13 March 1924, muni 9 October 1924, ācārya 9 September 1955, died 23 September 1957), Śīv Śāgār (born 1901, dīkṣā 7 July 1949, ācārya 3 November 1957, died 18 March 1969), Dharma Śāgār (born 11 January 1914, dīkṣā 13 December 1951, ācārya 24 June 1969, died 22 April 1987),235 Ajit Śāgār (died 1988),236 and the present ācārya Vardhamān Śāgār (dīkṣā 24 February 1969), who was chosen by Ajit Śāgār, though the older and much more popular monk Abhinandan Śāgār (dīkṣā 29 October 1968) was favoured by the majority of the lay followers.237 After Ajit Śāgār’s death, Abhinandan Śāgār and his teacher Śreyāms Śāgār therefore separated themselves from Vardhamān Śāgār and founded their own group which is now headed by Ācārya Abhinandan Śāgār.

A third influential line was started by Ācārya Vīr Śāgār’s disciple Muni Jñān Śāgār (c.1891–1 June 1973), a Khaṇḍelvāla (Chābhra) Jain from Sikar, previously known as the Terā Panth Pandit Bhūrāmal Śāstri and from 1955 as Kṣūllaka Jñānabhūṣaṇ (dīkṣā dātā: Ācārya Vīr Śāgār). He was initiated as a muni
in 1959 in Jaypur by Ācārya Śīv Śāgar but seceded on doctrinal grounds from Śīv Śāgar and his dedicated successor Dharma Śāgar, in 1961 and – though not being recognised as an ācārya – initiated Vidyā Śāgar (dīkṣā 30 June 1968) in the same Samvat year in Ajmer. In turn, he was installed as an ācārya by his disciple with the consent of his lay followers on the 7 February 1969 in Nastrābād and immediately afterwards initiated Muni Vivek Śāgar (dīkṣā 7 February 1969 or 8 March 1969). Vidyā Śāgar was born on the 10 October 1946 into a middle-class Aṣṭage family of the Caturtha caste in the village Cikkoṭ-Sadlagā in Belgām. Vidyā Śāgar was born on the 10 October 1946 into a middle-class Aṣṭage family of the Caturtha caste in the village Cikkoṭ-Sadlagā in Belgām. 238 He took the brahmācārya vow from Ācārya Deś Bhūṣan in 1967, and muni dīkṣā from Ācārya Jhān Śāgar, who appointed him as the new ācārya on the 22 November 1972 in Nastrābād, and immediately afterwards resigned and asked Vidyā Śāgar to bestow upon him the sāllekhanā vow (M. Jain 2001: 23–26, 494, K. R. Jain 2003: 23–52). After Jhān Śāgar’s death in 1973, Vivek Śāgar parted company from Vidyā Śāgar, apparently because the charismatic Vidyā Śāgar was junior to him in physical age, although slightly older in monastic age. But the main reason may have been doctrinal differences. In the group of Vidyā Śāgar, āryikās cannot initiate ailakas, on behalf of the ācārya, on the grounds that the ailakas wear only one piece of cloth and therefore deserve a higher status than the āryikās, who cover their entire body. 239 This reversal of the traditional hierarchy – muni, āryikā, ailaka, ksullaka, ksullikā – was a main point of contention between Jhān Śāgar and Ācārya Śīv Śāgar. 240 Other disputes concerned the consumption of ‘green’ vegetables such as tomatoes, and Jhān Śāgar’s refusal to condemn the use of the sacred thread, which is common among the Digambara laity in South India but not practiced north of Karpātaka, which prevented him to become installed as an ācārya by Śīv Śāgar. Vidyā Śāgar additionally resolved that āryikās should not wear the pīncīt, the principal status symbol of a Digambara ascetic, during their menses, and that only ‘born Jainas’ should be able to become munis. The highest status for renouncers from non-Jain families amongst his followers is thus the position of an ailaka in his group. 241

A fourth line was started by Adī Śāgar ‘Aṅkālikar’, who was a contemporary of Sānti Śāgar ‘Dakṣin’, and is often presented as his disciple, despite the fact that he was not initiated by him. 242 He was succeeded by Mahāvīr Kīrti (born 1 June 1910, dīkṣā 1937, died 6 February 1972) and Vimal Śāgar (born 30 October 1915, dīkṣā 19 July 1950, ācārya 24 December 1961), who apparently gained the ācārya title not through succession but by acclamation of the lay community, especially by the pandīts Lālā Rām Śāstrī and Mānīk Candra Śāstrī. 243 Both Mahāvīr Kīrti and Vimal Śāgar were succeeded by a great number of ācāryas who created numerous small groups. 245 Vimal Śāgar’s successors were Ācārya Sanmāti Śāgar (born 26 January 1939, dīkṣā 9 November 1962, ācārya 5 March 1972), and the current ācārya Bharat Śāgar (born 7 April 1949, dīkṣā 23 November 1972) (who was Vimal Śāgar’s upādhyāya), 246 Puṣpadanta Śāgar (born 1 January 1952, dīkṣā 31 January 1980) (who shifted from Vidyā Śāgar to Vimal Śāgar and teaches an idiosyncratic mixture of Terā Panth and Bīṣa Panth views), Nirmal Śāgar (born 10 December 1946, dīkṣā 12 July 1967), Sanmāti Śāgar

351
‘Tapasvi Samrat’, Vasu Purva Sagar, Virag Sagar, as well as Muni Niranjan Sagar, Ganinvi Vijay Mati, the ksullakas Dhaval Sagar, Ratna Kirti, and the ksullikas Siddhanta Mati (A. Jain 2001: 1–34). Amongst Mahavir Kirti’s successors were the present acarya Sambhav Sagar and the present ‘ganadharacarya’ Kunthu Sagar, who initiated many disciples under new names ending in the suffix -nandi.

Some of his disciples parted from him in order to establish themselves as acaryas, acaryakalpas, upadhayas and munis in their own right – to name only the present acaryas Deva Nandi, Gunadhara Nandi, Gunja Nandi, Gupti Nandi, Kanak Nandi, Karma Vijay Nandi (‘= self-initiated’), Karun Sagar, and Kumud Nandi, Kuśagra Nandi, Padma Nandi, Śānti Sagar ‘‘Korasār Vāle’, the acaryakalpas Karunā Nandi and Śruta Nandi, the aylacarya Niścay Sagar, and the upadhayas Kāma Kumār Nandi Śruta Sagar. Ācārya Deś Bhūṣan (1908–1987), the politically most influential Digambara muni after Śānti Sagar, was a disciple of Ācārya Jay Kirti, who may have been associated with Mahavir Kirti, though the link is not clear. He is succeeded by the presently influential acarya Vidyānand ‘Rāṣtrasan’ (born 22 April 1925), who also comes from Belgaum but has few disciples and resides predominantly in New Delhi, by Ācārya Bāhubali Sagar, who separated himself from Vidyānand and by Ācārya Subhā Sagar, Ācārya Subal Sagar, Muni Guṇ Bhūṣan, Kṣullaka Vṛṣabh Sena, and Kṣullikā Anant Mati (ibid.).

In 1981, 151 mendicants and representatives of the national Digambara lay associations gathered in Śravānabelagolā in order to witness the mahāmastaṇkaṁbhiṣeca ceremony and to overcome the differences between the growing number of Digambara ascetics and lineages by establishing a common institutional framework for the mendicants – the Digambara Jain Muni Parisad. Several rules were drafted with the intention of preventing the practice of wandering alone (ekala vihāra) and a decline in the standards of conduct (śīthilācāra). But these resolutions were not implemented and had no effect (Kāsalīvāl 1992: 24).

Though there are no clear-cut divisions among the munis with regard to political-ideological and doctrinal orientations, conservative Bīṣa Panthī munis tend to support the Mahāsābhā, while modern monks such as Ācārya Vidyānand and Ācārya Vidyā Sagar associate themselves with the Mahāsamiti whose wealthy leadership has a wider support base in North India and tends to support Terā Panth views. The main catalyst for the recent trend towards a conscious doctrinal self-demarcation of Bīṣa Panthī and Terā Panthī mendicant groups was the debate on Kāṇṭi Svāmī’s idiosyncratic ‘Terā Panth’ interpretation of Kunda Kunda’s philosophy from the early 1960s onwards, which split the Digambaras into two clearly distinguished factions. Beyond the specific context of this dispute, the picture is less clear. There is no exclusive link between Kunda Kunda and the Terā Panth tradition. In the late twentieth century, the Terā Panth pandit Phulpand Sāstri (1985b: 244, 1992: 146) came to the conclusion that the Terā Panth is identical with the śuddhāmnaya, the ‘pure tradition’ of the Mūla Śaṅga Kundaśāṅgavāla Bālkāra Gaṇa Sarasvatī Gaccha, which propagates the mokṣa mārga and not – like the Bīṣa Panthī bhuttārakas (‘= Kāṣṭha Śaṅga’) – the ways of living a religious life in the world (saṃsāra). The same claim had already been made at the beginning of the
known, traditions are today respected both by the Ter muni Kha and from prominent may have inspired Phīlend Sāstri’s view. Although few details about his life are known, Ācārya Kunda Kunda (c. 1–8 CCE) is currently regarded by all contemporary Digambara munis as their ancestor. According to Anupam Jain, all munis derive their descent from the lineage of Kunda Kunda and Ācārya Śanti Sāgar. However, although the majority belongs to the lineage of Śanti Sāgar ‘Dakṣin’ and propagates southern, that is Bīṣa Panthī, practices, a minority descends from Śanti Sāgar ‘Chān’, who rejected the Bīsa Panthī pañca abhiṣeka and devī pūjā rituals, and from Ādi Sāgar ‘Aṅkalīkā’. 

After the recent death of the influential Ācārya Vimal Sāgar (born 1915), the most prominent ācāryas of today are Vidyānand (born 1925), who took the twelve year long sāllekhanā vow in 1999, and the charismatic Vidyā Sāgar. Vidyā Sāgar is renowned and respected for his strict observance of the rules of the Digambara Āgamas, and for his emphasis on Jain philosophy rather than on rituals and imposed vows; especially for his single-handed revival of the study of the Śatkhanda-gāma. He explicitly favours the Terā Panth view on rituals and speaks out both against the bhāṭṭārakas (first on 8 November 1998), and against the followers of the Kāṇḍi Panth. Like his guru, Jān Śāgar, who did not express any objections to the bhāṭṭārakas, he also favours the mystical teachings of Kunda Kunda. In contrast to his late rival, the ritualistically oriented Ācārya Vimal Sāgar, who was from a Khāṇḍelvāl business class background and supported the Mahāsabhā, Vidyā Sāgar comes from a South Indian merchant family of modest income and favours the ‘liberal’ Digambara Mahāsambhiti and the Digambara Pariṣad which promote both ritual and social reforms. He explicitly propagates the recognition of the Jains as a ‘minority’ community, which is now supported by most Digambaras, particularly in the South, where they form homogenous Jain castes. The North Indian Śvetāmbaras and Digambaras, especially those from Gujarāt and Rājāsthan, are traditionally self-employed merchants and wealthier than the southern Digambara agriculturalists and petty traders whose preferred route of social advancement tends to be government service. They form predominately mixed Jain–Hindu castes and tend to oppose the minority status for Jains. Vidyā Sāgar is also a strong supporter of the cow protection movement and inspired the formation of a lay organisation called Ahimīsā Army which is based in Delhi and works for a total ban on the slaughter of cows in India. It is possible that the North Indian cultural environment has influenced Vidyā Sāgar’s change of attitude towards the bhāṭṭārakas and the Bīṣa Panthī tradition in general. He was born in Karnāṭaka, but recruited most of his disciples in the North, particularly in Madhya Pradeś, where he spends most of his time.

With the notable exception of the strictly anti-monastic Kāṇḍi Panth, the revived munī traditions are today respected both by the Terā Panthī pandīts and by the Bīṣa Panthī bhāṭṭārakas, though the contact of the munīs with either of them is irregular. In fact, the majority of the present-day mendicants attach themselves neither to the Bīṣa Panthī nor the Terā Panthī Digambara tradition, but act independently and are
free to articulate their individual doctrinal interpretations. The widely held view that Digambara ascetics always preferred to impress people ‘more by their behaviour than by their church organisation’ and ‘seemed to favour solitary life’ (Deo 1956: 360f.) indirectly supports the claims of the modern muni that they are the revivers of the authentic form of Jain monasticism that was introduced by Mahāvīra himself. However, although the Digambaras did not, like the Śvetāmbaras, create elaborate monastic codes of conduct, their ācāryas and later their bhaṭṭārakas presided over mathas, or monasteries, which were highly organised manifestations of monastic landlordism. It was monastic property rather than a code of conduct which stabilised the tradition. The long-standing organisational and numerical weakness of the Digambara mendicants from the beginning of Muslim rule may thus be related to the relative success of the bhaṭṭārakas as well as the educated laity, whose influence within the Digambara community is reflected in the extensive post-canonical Digambara Śrāvakācāra literature, which is partly written by lay intellectuals: ‘Digambars seem to have felt more keenly than the Śvetāmbaras the need to concretize and systematize the lay doctrine’ (Williams 1983: xviii). The strength of the Digambara laity over the last 500 years also explains the leading role of Digambara intellectuals within the twentieth century Jain reform movement. Yet, the increasing influence of the scholars amongst the modern muni seems to displace the communal role of the lay intellectual for the time being.

Organisation of the muni saṅgha

Since the demise of the Drāvīḍa Saṅgha and other regional traditions, and with the ascendancy of the bhaṭṭārakas who profess to continue some of these traditions even today, Digambara mendicants are not split into distinct schools and sects anymore. Amongst modern muni the popular suffix -nandi or -sāgar does not indicate sectarian affiliation, only lineage affiliation. Not much is known about the doctrinal and organisational differences between the lineages. Maybe by using these suffixes some modern muni attempt to recapture the symbolic identities (and properties) of old bhaṭṭāraka lineages which are now extinct. But our empirical knowledge of Digambara history and sociology is presently not sufficient to answer this question. The lack of a reliable demographic survey of the contemporary Digambara ascetics was lamented by Carrithers (1989), who encountered great difficulties in his attempt to piece together a reasonably accurate ethnographic picture of the Digambara mendicants: ‘The muni as I met them are significantly different from their predecessors, especially those in the nineteenth century. Munis are few. They have no central organisation and it is difficult to gather even the most elementary census data concerning them. Jaini (1979: 247, n. 8) estimated that there were only sixty-five muni when he was writing, and another sixty novices. An unattributable Hindi newspaper cutting shown to me by the muni Vidyānandaji Mahārāj in 1984 estimated the number of muni at 100. These numbers have to be understood in relation to the number of Digambara laity. The 1981 Census of India returned about three and a quarter million Jains of
whom Jaini estimates a third to be Digambar. On that estimate there is one muni for every 11 or 12 thousand Digambars' (ibid.: 221).264

According to the information on individual ascetics made available by B. U. Jain, the Digambara mendicants were 1987–1996 split into some 175 independent groups, including ascetics who wander alone. But B. U. Jain’s figures on the Digambara ascetics are, in his own judgement, unreliable and inconsistent, due to insufficient self-reporting by the Digambara monks.265 Often, for instance, only the leader of an itinerant group is mentioned and not the total number of group members, which was simply estimated by B. U. Jain (1999: 382, n. 1–7) in his summary figures. However, his lists give some idea of the structure of the Digambara mendicant groups in the decade before the turn of the millennium and a rough estimate of the overall number of ascetics.266

A more precise annual cāturmāsa list, the Digambara Jain Sādhu-Sādhvīyam ke Vārṣayoga ki Śuči, was compiled for the first time for the year 2000 by A. Jain of the Tirthānkarā Rśabhadeva Jaina Vidvanta Mahāsāngha in order to provide information for the laity ‘who want to contact different sāṅghas’ (Letter 25 September 2002). The categories he used to compile complete alphabetical lists of groups (sarīgha),267 names (sādhu/sādhvī, etc.), initiating monks (dīkṣā guru), and addresses of the monsoon retreats (cāturmāsa sthāl evam sampark sūtra) of the Digambara mendicants in the years 2000 and 2001, confirm that the Digambaras effectively treat both nuns (āryikā) and novices who observe the eleventh śrāvaka pratima269 – the ailakas,270 kṣullakas, and kṣullikās – as members of the ascetic community. The change of status is indicated by the changes of the name at the kṣullaka/kṣullikā dīkṣā and the muni dīkṣā. Brahmacārīs and brahmacāriniṣīs are not listed in the almanacs of A. Jain and B. U. Jain, because

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Total number</th>
<th>Number of groups</th>
<th>Male members</th>
<th>Female members</th>
<th>All members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acarya</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acaryakalpa</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ailaca</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balacarya</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upadhyaya</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muni</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ganin Aryan</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aryika</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ailaka</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ksullaka</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ksullikā</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>818</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>453</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

they are considered to be lay ascetics, although they sometimes accompany the wandering ascetics like novices. According to B. U. Jain (2002: 312), there are more than 100 brahmacārīs and 300 brahmacārīnīs today amongst the disciples of Vidyā Sāgar alone, and some, though very few, are still under the command of the bhātārakas.

Table 12.8 summarises the data published by A. Jain in 2000–2001. The ranking of the monastic positions (pada) adopted by A. Jain indicates that the status of āryikās is generally considered to be higher than the status of ailakas and ksullakas. The status categories ācāryakalpa, ailācārya and bālācārya designate the most disciplined and learned munis and the chosen successor of an ācārya, whom he will consult in all important matters regarding the saṅgha. With or without the official permission of an ācārya, members of all categories can form their own groups (saṅgha), which may comprise members from all lower status categories.273

There is only one ācārya in every saṅgha. A Digambara ācārya acts independently. He either wanders alone or forms his own ascetic group (saṅgha), which usually includes munis, āryikās, ksullakas, ksullikās and sometimes one or two ailakas. In 2001, of altogether 51 ācāryas,274 14 ācāryas wandered alone and 37 lead small groups of 2–25 ascetics. Of the 37 group leaders, 5 wandered with only one other muni, 2 with one āryikā, 18 led small groups of up to 9 male and/or female ascetics, and only 12 formed groups with 10 or more members (A. Jain 2001: 1–11).

For practical reasons, larger groups are usually sub-divided into smaller units of itinerant ascetics. Even if they belong to the saṅgha of one and the same ācārya, most munis roam alone or in small bands of 2–5 male mendicants who spend their cātuṛmāsa together in one place. Āryikās, however, should never wander alone and travel always in company of laity. Sometimes they can be found in pairs, or they form larger groups of 4–20 nuns who wander together independently of the monks. However, in most saṅghas the members of the central group surrounding the ācārya are of mixed gender, and the male and female sub-groups travel and assemble together in public. They also stay at the same location for cātuṛmāsa, but reside in different buildings.275 In the year 2001, for instance, only 13 of the 37 groups that were led by ācāryas were composed entirely of men – notably the groups of the popular ācāryas Kunthu Sāgar and Vidyā Sāgar (A. Jain 2001: 1–11).

The large and centrally organised group of Ācārya Vidyā Sāgar is exceptional amongst the contemporary Digambara saṅghas because of its size and influence.276 In the year 2001, 20.8% of all Digambara mendicants were under the control of Vidyā Sāgar. Uniquely, the structure and demographic composition of Vidyā Sāgar’s group in the years 2000–2002 can be precisely reconstructed from the accounts of A. Jain (2000b, 2001) and of B. U. Jain (2002: 309–12), who received comprehensive information for this particular Digambara saṅgha in the year 2002. Despite its exceptional status, the Vidyāśāgara Saṅgha can serve as a paradigmatic example for the organisation of contemporary Digambara mendicant groups in general. From the year 1999 onwards, B. U. Jain’s demographic figures for this saṅgha are said to be reliable (B. U. Jain 1996: 323, 1999: 372, n. 2). They show that in 1999 Vidyā Sāgar had 190 disciples and more than 50
brahmacāris and 150 brahmacārīnīs (commonly called didīs: elder sisters) under his personal command, although the figures do not exactly correspond to the self-reported number of 195 members in 1999 (62 munīs, 10 aīlakas, 114 āryikās, 9 kṣullakas) (Tongyā 1999: 8). For 2001, the figure of 188 members (63 munīs, 10 aīlakas, 113 āryikās and 2 kṣullakas) is reported by A. Jain (2001: 9–34).

Because of the rapidly increasing membership of this group, the mendicants were distributed into 26 different sub-groups in 1996, 34 in 1999, and 44 in 2001, as reflected in the number of cāturmāsā residencies.

In the year 2002, the group had 183 members which were divided into 42 groups: 64 munīs, 109 āryikās, 8 aīlakas and 2 kṣullakas (there are presently no kṣullikās in Vidyā Śāgar’s saṅgha).277 The munīs were divided in seventeen units.278 The majority (37) stayed together with Ācārya Vidyā Śāgar, 9 munīs formed groups of three, 10 munīs groups of two and 7 wandered alone. The 3 kṣullakas and 6 of the 8 aīlakas – which are considered to be superior to the āryikās in Vidyā Śāgar’s order – wandered alone.279 The āryikās were divided into 16 groups of 2–17 members, who roamed independently from the male mendicants. Male and female mendicants never wander together or spend cāturmāsā at the same location in order to maintain the reputation of this saṅgha for strict standards of conduct (B. U. Jain 2002: 312).280

Due to the large number of sub-units, the saṅgha commanded a vast geographical sphere of influence, covering Madhya Pradeś (20 sub-divisions), Maḥārāṣṭra (5), Rājasthān (4), Haryāṇā (2), Uttar Pradeś (1) and Kārnāṭaka (1). At the same time, almost half of all munīs and half of all āryikās spent cāturmāsā together in one single location in Madhya Pradeś and Maḥārāṣṭra respectively.281 These states are the two main recruitment areas for the Vidyā Śāgar Saṅgha. With few exceptions, all disciples of Ācārya Vidyā Śāgar come from Maḥārāṣṭra, Madhya Pradeś and Uttar Pradeś, although he himself was born in Kārnāṭaka. Similar patterns of a nationwide mission starting from a regional base can be observed amongst the Śvetāmbara Terā Pānṭhīs and amongst other contemporary Jain orders.

As a rule, all Digambara ascetics associated with the muni saṅgha are initiated by an ācārya or with his permission.282 Indeed, all members of the Vidyāśāgara Saṅgha today have been initiated by Vidyā Śāgar himself. Āryikās are also by rule always initiated by an ācārya and should never constitute entirely autonomous orders, although they do not always move around with the munīs.283 Within a saṅgha led by an ācārya the munīs and āryikās remain under the control of the ācārya who initiated them. However, though a gaṇini has a lower status than a muni, under certain circumstances an ācārya will appoint a qualified nun as the leader of all the āryikās in his saṅgha, while the munīs remain always under the direct control of the ācārya. As amongst most Śvetāmbara orders, in the absence of an ācārya, the head of the āryikā gaṇa, the gaṇini, will act like an ācārya for the āryikās.

Sometimes, gaṇinis or āryikās are given permission by the ācārya to initiate their own female disciples.284 The lists of A. Jain for the year 2001 show that 4 gaṇinis had initiated altogether 16 āryikās and 4 kṣullikās, and 4 āryikās initiated altogether 8 āryikās. There are evidently also male ascetics who performed
initiations independently. In 2001, 1 upādhyāya and 2 munis initiated altogether 6 āryikās. One aīlaka, 7 ksullakas, and one ksullikā were also initiated by various ācāryakalpas, aīlācāryas and munis – with or without the permission of an ācārya. Occasionally, even self-initiations of munis are reported.

The monastic names of the āryikās always have the double suffix -maṭī māṭā at the end. The gaṇinis are called gaṇinī āryikā śrī [name] maṭī māṭā jī. The gaṇinī pramukha Āryikā Jīān Matī and her namesake Āryikā Jīān Matī (Gujarat), have each one ksullaka amongst their disciples. However, the ksullakas were not initiated by the āryikās themselves but by Ācārya Vimal Sāgar and by Ācārya Ajit Sāgar respectively. According to Shāntā (1985: 514f.) and Balbir (1990: 182f.), the prominent Āryikā Jīān Matī (born 19 October 1933) was initiated by the late Ācārya Deś Bhusan. However, D. Sāstrī (1985: 150) points out that only her ksullikā dikṣā was performed by Deś Bhusan in 1953, but her āryikā dikṣā by Ācārya Vīr Sāgar in 1956. After his death, Jīān Matī was associated with the later Ācārya Sumati Sāgar. She now commands her own separate group, which is largely composed of family members but includes also celibate male lay followers (brahmacārī) who were personally initiated by her in 1987 – the first event of its kind. Due to health reasons, she stays more or less permanently in her abode in Hastināpur, where her followers have built a giant cosmographic model of the continent Jambūdvīpa in concrete. She is closely associated with the Mahāsābhā and with the opponents of the cosmological interpretations of the Kānji Panth.

Even the largest Digambara saṅghas have a flat administrative structure, which confirms that formal organisation does not play a prominent role in Digambara monasticism. The guru-śisyā link alone constitutes the institutional core of the Digambara mendicant traditions. This is reflected in publications such as D. Sāstrī’s (1985) Digambara Jain Sādhu Paricay, which lists only the immediate disciples of a muni, but does not depict any lineages. Of the 37 groups led by ācāryas, only 5 comprise another office-holder apart from the ācārya himself. The majority of these 5 groups are not even particularly large, which suggests that the titles (2x upādhyāya, 2x aīlācārya, 1x gaṇinī) designate honorary rather than administrative roles. The dedicated successors of an ācārya, the ācāryakalpas, aīlācāryas or yuvācāryas, bālācāryas and upādhyāyas, are usually permitted to form their own groups and to initiate their own disciples, while continuing to respect the moral authority of their dikṣā guru. Because of his limited powers, an ācārya cannot prevent his disciples leaving, if they are supported by members of the lay communities. Although, in principle, only an ācārya can convey the titles of ācāryakalpa, aīlācārya, bālācārya, or upādhyāya or gaṇinī on highly respected monks or nuns, there are several recognised methods for becoming an ācārya: either by the choice of the acting ācārya, or – if the ācārya dies without having determined a successor – by the choice of the muni saṅgha and/or the samāj, or by the acclamation of a self-selected successor (e.g. the oldest disciple). In practice, the laity always interfere in the decision making process. Often, individual monks sever themselves from their ācāryas and simply declare themselves to be ācāryas in their own right. However, most ācāryas, even those
who command their own disciples, remain nominally part of the lineage of their teacher, although ‘there is no formal recognition of a line of pupillary succession’ (Carrithers 1990: 153). In the absence of clear organisational and disciplinary rules (maryādā) – there are no established criteria for initiation and excommunication (which is never practised) – the group structure and the personnel of the peripatetic groups of a Digambara muni saṅgha is in perpetual flux. Changes occur not only through temporary visits in other groups for purposes of study, but also through the inflow and outflow of new mendicants from one saṅgha to another, and through the deliberate division of a large group into smaller groups for convenience by the ācāryas. It is therefore doubtful whether descent constructs are of practical importance beyond the purpose of legitimisation qua tradition. However, the doctrinal differences between the group of Vidyā Sāgar, who promotes idiosyncratic Tera Panth teachings, and the majority of the other Digambara ācāryas, sometimes causes the rejection of the munis of one lineage by another.

**Demographic trends**

According to the data collected by A. Jain, the total number of Digambara ascetics increased between 2000 to 2001 by 10.3% or 84 mendicants, within a single year. The category with the greatest increase is the one of the munis, who are responsible for the higher growth rate of male rather than female ascetics. In the year 2000, the 450 male ascetics represented 55% of all Digambara ascetics, the 368 female ascetics 45%, and in the year 2001 the 508 male ascetics represented 56.42% and the 394 female ascetics 43.7%. In 2001, the totally 902 ascetics were distributed over 341 groups. The average group size was only 2.65 (āryikā: 2.9). However, the average size of the groups (saṅgha) of the ācāryas was 6.9, which reflects their importance for the organisation of the Digambara ascetics. The fissiparous tendencies of the Digambara ascetics are illustrated by the fact that the groups led by ācāryas lost 18 members altogether within one year, whereas the groups led my munis and āryikās gained 51 and 32 members respectively.

The data published by B. U. Jain (1999: 382) show that the Digambara as a whole have by far the highest growth rate of all Jain mendicant traditions, even if we take into account that the nominal statistical growth largely reflects underreporting in earlier years. Within 12 years, the reported numbers have almost tripled from a total of 363 in 1987 to a total of 960 in 1999. The overall trend has been confirmed by the reliable information of A. Jain for the years 2000–2001. This growth is all the more astonishing considering the fact that one of the first modern munis, Ādi Sāgar, who died in 1943, initiated himself as late as 1913. The accelerated increase in numbers started even later, after Sānti Sāgar’s death in 1955, when the Digambara laity began to actively encourage the initiation of munis (Kāsalīvāl 1992: 35). Two explanations for the revival of the muni saṅgha are generally offered by the Digambaras: The abolition of the limitations imposed by both the colonial government and local kings on the free movement of the naked ascetics after Indian Independence, and the lack of any examination of the
qualifications of the candidates because of the absence of organisational rules. Critics noted that the artificial increase of numbers due to the unchecked intake resulted in diminishing standards of conduct amongst the munis, many of whom joined the mendicant life ‘mainly to gain influence and to enrich themselves’ and to leave again as they please. This argument is rejected by others, who point out that, if this would be true, then even more initiations would take place. Instead, the inspirational role of family members who became munis is highlighted, and the effects of the renaissance of Jain religious education in the last 100 years. Economic factors are generally discredited with reference to the fact that the main recruiting grounds for munis in northern Karṇāṭaka and southern Mahārāṣṭra, and elsewhere, have experienced considerable economic growth over the last decades.

The most interesting result of this preliminary demographic analysis of the Digambara mendicants is that the Digambaras are the only contemporary Jain tradition which has more monks than nuns (monks 1986: 86.89%, 1990: 63.38%, 1995: 54.13%, 1998: 54.25% and 1999: 54.25%). Part of the explanation for this must be sought in the Digambara doctrine of the spiritual inferiority of women, which is naturally unappealing for unmarried girls who may perceive monastic life as an alternative to marriage (Jaini 1991: 26). Yet, for all practical purposes, Digambara āryikās have more personal freedom than Mūrtipūjakas sādhvis, and their numbers are currently increasing. Another factor may be the lack of institutional structures, which offer protection to nuns.

Jaina mendicants 1987–1999

The total number of Jain mendicants for the period between 1987 and 1999, and the relative size of the four principal mendicant traditions are summarised in Table 12.9 and Table 12.10. According to the figures published by B. U. Jain, 11,737 Jain sādhus, aïlakas, ksullakas, sādhvis and āryikās have been counted in 1999. This total is based on confirmed figures only, excluding the personal estimates by B. U. Jain. The real number of mendicants was certainly higher, maybe between 100–300, disregarding yatis, bhatṭārakas, brahmacārīs and brahmacārīnīs.

The figures illustrate the continuing numerical dominance of the Mūrtipūjaka ascetics and particularly of the Tapā Gaccha mendicants, who retained more than 50% of the overall share. A look at the summary figures for 1999 and a comparison with those of 1987 shows that the ratios of the main sectarian schools remain relatively stable, considering the significant underreporting of the number of Digambara ascetics before 1996. In 1987, 59.37% of all mendicants were Mūrtipūjakas and 52.28% belonged to the Tapā Gaccha, and in 1999, 58.30% were Mūrtipūjakas and 51.51% belonged to the Tapā Gaccha. The percentages of the Sthānakavāsīs and the Terā Panthīs – whose rapidly increasing number of samantis was not taken into account in the statistics – fell slightly; in the case of the Sthānakavāsīs, from 29.03% in 1987 to 27.46% in 1999, and in the case of the Terā Panthīs, from 7.66% in 1987 to 6.06% in 1999. By contrast, the share of the
<table>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>138</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>2104</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Note
Digambaras rose sharply from 3.94% in 1987 to 8.18% in 1999 for the reasons given earlier.

A comparison of the data from 1987 and 1999 shows that the total number of Jain mendicants has increased from 9,222 in 1987 to 11,737 in 1999. The overall growth rate for the twelve year period 1987–1999 was an astonishing 26.75%: Murtipujaka 24.99%, Sthānakavāsī 20.40%, Terā Panth 0.57% (1987–1996: 6.65%) and Digambara 164.46%. The growth rate would have been even higher if the sharply rising number of novices and lay ascetics had been taken into account.

The accelerated increase in the number of Jain ascetics in recent years contrasts with the slow growth of the Jain population as a whole, which rose between 1981 and 1991 by 4.98%, from 3.193 million to 3.352 million. Apart from the Zoroastrians, the Jains had by far the lowest relative growth rate of all Indian religions (4.42% between 1981 and 1991, 26% between 1991 and 2001), which reduces their share of the total population from 0.48% in 1981 to 0.40% both in 1991 and 2001 (cf. M. K. Jain 1986: 33f., Vijayanunni 1991: x–xi, www.censusindia.net). The divergent growth rates of the mendicants and the lay population indicate an increasing popularity of monastic life for the period under investigation. This is a puzzling fact, especially if one assumes that secularisation and religious decline are two sides of the same coin. Cort (1989: 100, n. 16) remarked that the continuing rise of the numbers of Jain mendicants is a ‘quite striking phenomenon…given the economic and social status and the degree of Westernisation of Jain society’. If the data is correct, our pre-conceptions need to be revised. Apparently, westernisation and modernisation have not contributed to a decline, but to an increase in the popularity of renunciation amongst Jains.

**Reasons for renunciation**

How can we explain this? There is no easy answer. One explanation would be to argue that renunciation became more popular as a consequence of the monastic reforms at the beginning of the twentieth century, which improved the standards...
and therefore the appeal of monastic life. A social psychological perspective, on
the other hand, would focus on the function of the institution of renunciation as a
socio-cultural defense-mechanism which compensates for the disruptive effects
of modernisation and socio-economic change. We can, for instance, observe a
strong rise in the number of male mendicants during the struggle for national
independence and in the first years after Indian independence, when Gändhí’s
influence reached its zenith. During these years, male mendicants in particular
were attracted both by the political utility of the cultural symbolism of renunciation
for the purpose of social integration and by the social activism of reform-orientated
Jain ācāryas. But this interpretation does not account for the unprecedented pop-
ularity of renunciation in the last two decades.

Another argument points to the recent economic success of the Jain commu-
nity, which enables it to lose some male workforce and to sustain larger
mendicant communities. This point is sometimes raised within the Śvetāmbara
Jain community. The absolute number of Jain mendicants is very small, compared
to Buddhism which has at least 300,000 fully initiated bhikkhus worldwide or
Christianity which still has more than 1,000,000 monks and nuns. However, the
proportion of mendicants relative to the Jain population as a whole is higher than
amongst Buddhists or Christians, and probably always was. In 1990 the ratio was
1 mendicant for every 336 laity (9,974 mendicants: 3,352,706 laity). This
extraordinary high ratio of mendicants may indeed be explained in terms of the
wealth of the Jain population, which can easily afford to feed such a big
mendicant community.

Another explanation is given by Goonasekere (1986: 118f.), who interprets Jain
renunciation as an institutionalised protest movement against specific social con-
straints within the status-conscious baniyā castes in Western India. Yet, this variant
of the deprivation theory which explains the higher proportion of mendicants from
families with a relatively lower income from a rural or small town background
with reference to economic difficulties and the resulting psychological tensions
does not account for the motivation of the monks in his own sample, who cited
charismatic attraction to a monk or nun as the main factor. As we have seen, the
recent accelerated increase of Digambara munis is sometimes explained by mem-
bers of the Digambara community itself by the lack of disciplinary procedures
within the Digambara mendicant orders and by the opportunity for young men
from the relatively poor Digambara agricultural castes in South India to increase
their status and power by joining one of the saṅghas. However, if these were the
only reasons, then even more young men would renounce.

The main reason for the rapidly growing popularity of monastic life must be
sought amongst the population of male Digambara and female Śvetāmbara
renouncers. One of the most interesting findings is the continuing predominance
of the male ascetics amongst the Digambara, which reflects the different status of
nuns in this tradition. Amongst the Śvetāmbaras, only the Tapā Gaccha
Bhuvanabhānustri Samudāyā has – for the said reasons – also more sādhhus than
sādhvīs. Śvetāmbara Jainism is unique, because of the institutionalised option of
full ordination for women, which is neither offered by Hinduism nor Theravāda Buddhism. Why is the percentage of female Jain mendicants presently rising? A comparison of the percentages of the sādhvīs between 1987 and 1999 shows a significant (>3%) increase in the number of female ascetics amongst the Mūrtipūjakas and Stānakavāsīs, while the ratios of the Terā Panthīs and the Digambaras remained stable for the reasons cited earlier (Table 12.11). Stānakavāsīs have the highest percentage of female mendicants, most certainly because they allow the greatest degree of freedom for sādhvīs, who are permitted to read all scriptures, to preach, and to roam separately. However, the overall ratios between sādhus and sādhvīs remained not only relatively stable between 75% and 77%, they also roughly corresponded to the percentage of 72% sādhvīs quoted in the Kalpa Sūtra.

Social reasons, such as widowhood, unmarritability, high dowry claims amongst higher castes, and other experiences of institutionalised social constraints have been cited already by Bühler and others, in order to account for the consistent popularity of renunciation amongst Jain women. But this does not explain either the absence of female renunciation in similar social groups or recent developments. Reynell (1985: 269) pointed to the rising age of marriage in the Jain communities. Following on from Goonasekera (1986), Cort (1991) diagnosed ‘drastic changes in the demographics of Śvetāmbar mendicancy’ (ibid.: 659), from ‘a situation not unlike the traditional Brāhmaṇical prescription for the vanaprastha and saṁyāsa āśrāmas, the stages of gradual withdrawal and renunciation after the householder (gyhastha) stage of life’, to a pattern in which ‘the vast majority of contemporary ascetics are unmarried and take dīkṣā before the age of thirty’ (ibid.: 660). He sees the improvements in the social world of women as the reason for the declining number of widow mendicants during the twentieth century. He argues that because nowadays most widows are likely to have had children – due to the rise in the age of marriage and rising health standards – they are less inclined to renounce than child widows in the nineteenth century: ‘Having to raise the children means that becoming a sādhvī is less of a realistic option for a widow. Changing social attitudes towards widows also make it less likely that a Jain widow feels that she has little choice but to become a sādhvī’ (Cort 1989: 111f.). Therefore, ‘becoming a sādhvī is now seen as an alternative vocation to that of a housewife’ (ibid.).

This theory certainly explains the declining number of widows within the mendicant orders, but not the increasing number of unmarried women. Why should
more and more young Jain women become disillusioned with family life under conditions of increasing prosperity and personal freedom? An important factor, which has not been considered thus far, is the significant change in the standard of education of Jain women. One hundred years ago, most Jain women were illiterate. Yet, the last Census of India in 2001 recorded a female literacy rate of 90.6 per cent amongst the Jains – the second highest after the Parsis – while in India as a whole it was only 47 per cent. Contemporary Śvetāmbara women are often born into privileged social groups and increasingly able to enjoy higher education, to choose their husbands within given limits but rarely to give up housework for an independent professional career, unimpairred by customary constraints. Formal education and the experience of an extended period of pre-marital independence often raise expectations which make it difficult for young educated women to re-adjust to the lifestyle of a traditional Jain housewife.

The experience of small freedoms generally increases the desire for more. Yet, monastic life does not offer more individual freedom, but an even more disciplined and restrained way of life. Socio-economic reasons for renunciation are recognised as a matter of fact but not condoned by the Jain scriptures (Thānā 712a, 335a, Schubring 2000, § 137) and can only offer a partial explanation to a difficult question. A more complete answer must take into account multiple factors, in particular the motivating role of the Śvetāmbara doctrine of salvation and the opportunity of an alternative lifestyle offered by the existing sādhvī traditions themselves, as well as the elevated individual status of a nun in the Jain community. I think the most likely candidate for further exploration is the romantic image of freely roaming female ascetics, who enjoy enhanced conditions of living in reformed and materially well supported mendicant orders which offer opportunities for education and self-development that are still unavailable in traditional family life, which currently catches the imagination of young Jain women, in the same way as men were attracted by the political symbolism of renunciation during the independence struggle.

**Concluding remarks**

The most interesting result of this study, however preliminary it may be, is the emerging, nearly complete, pattern of the group structure of the current Jain mendicant traditions. The Digambara muni tradition is currently divided into some 341 itinerant groups and individuals, who belong to three lineages and maybe a dozen sub-lineages which have a flat administrative structure. However, more than half of all Digambara mendicants were initiated and are supervised by only a handful of ācāryas. Although the Digambara tradition has currently no monastic orders, nor clearly identifiable schools and sects, it shows significant organisational and doctrinal faultlines which deserve further investigation. In total, the Śvetāmbara tradition is composed of some 57 independently organised groups: 27 Mārtipijaka, 26 Sthānakavāsī and 4 Terā Panth. These independently organised ‘orders’, together with their lay followers can be designated as
sociological ‘sects’, in contrast to doctrinal ‘schools’, although some overlap and fluid transitions between the three categories occur. There are, of course, fewer doctrinal schools than orders and sects. The principal schools of the Mūrtiṇḍākas are the six gacchas. The situation amongst the Sthānakavāsīs is more diffuse, since not all of the 5 founding fathers had major doctrinal differences. However, there are at least two broad schools within the Sthānakavāsī movement. On the one hand, those who follow the teachings of Dharma Siṅha, who may have had a significant, though never acknowledged, influence on the Terā Panth ācārya Bhikṣu and his idiosyncratic teachings, and, on the other hand, those who follow the teachings of Lava and Dharma Dāsa, who had only minor disagreements. The few globalising mendicant groups on the fringe of the Sthānakavāsī movement, which allow their ascetics to use modern means of transport and travel abroad, represent a new development, and share many attributes with Jain lay movements with the yati traditions, and with the disdained mendicants ‘who wander alone’ (Pkt. egalla vihārī), who can always be found on the fringes of the organised Jain ascetic traditions. The use of modern means of transport might in future significantly modify the relationship between group size and size of lay following. However, the use of modern means of communication which, in contrast to the modern means of transport, are now endorsed by most, but not all, mendicant groups, has presently no significant influence on the pattern of recruitment of devotees, which continues to be predicated on regular personal contact between guru and devotee.

Acknowledgement

I am very grateful to Professor Padmanabh S. Jaini for his comments on an earlier version of this study.

Notes

1 Throughout the text, the colloquial ‘Jain’ rather than ‘Jaina’ is used, and with the exception of the Sanskritic names of sects and schools and technical Jain terms, proper names are not sanskritised.
2 See the volume Village India edited by McKim Marriott in 1955. Survey techniques were first used in Jaina Studies by Sangave 1959/1980, whose literature review on the social divisions of the Jains is still the standard reference source. The first book length field studies were the monographs by Mahias 1985 and Shāntā 1985. Regional, subaltern, media, etc. studies have yet to be applied on a larger scale in the emerging field of Jaina Studies.
4 Following Schubring 2000: §139, 252, Folkert 1993: 153, 163 translates the ambivalent terms gaccha and its Digambara equivalent saṅgha variably as ‘school’, ‘sect’ and ‘order’. He defines schools as ‘doctrinally’ demarcated units, sects as ‘modern’, and monastic orders as primarily concerned with issues of ‘praxis’. Balbir 2003: 48 focuses only on ‘orders’ or ‘lineages’ – the terms are used as synonyms – and dismisses the doctrinal dimension as insignificant with regard to gacchas. However,
many orders are doctrinally demarcated, as Balbir’s study of doctrinal controversies concerning proper praxis shows; and even in the pre-modern period sects existed with and without core monastic orders. For alternative definitions of the terms school, order and sect see Flügel 2000: 77f. and note 8.


6 See also Cort in this volume, p. 261.

7 Sangave’s 1959/1980 attempt at conducting a representative survey did not meet sufficient response from the Jain community.

8 It is neither possible nor methodologically desirable to find for every Jain (Indian) term an equivalent analytical term and vice versa. I would propose to define Jain schools, orders and sects in the following way (cf. Flügel 2000: 42, n. 9). Doctrinal ‘schools’ may inform both individuals or (un-) organised religious ‘movements’ of various types; organised monastic ‘orders’ contrast with unorganised ascetic groups and ascetics who ‘wander alone’ (ekala vihārī); ‘sects’ are exclusive groups which either (a) encompass both ascetics and laity, that is the classical four-fold community (caturvidha saṅgha) and variations created by added intermediary categories such as the pañcavidha saṅgha etc. or by the deliberate exclusion or factual absence of one or more of the four categories, or (b) represent self-conscious lay movements. Corresponding to the distinction between orders and sects is the distinction between the casual ‘supporter’ of the ascetics, the initiated (through the vow of allegiance) or simply dedicated lay ‘follower’, and the born and/or paying ‘member’ of a sect-specific Jain caste- or community organisation. See Flügel 1994: 404; and Dundas’ 2003: 129 for the differentiation between ‘affiliation’ and ‘conversion’. For the distinction between Indian monastic ‘orders’ and ‘sects’ which encompass both ascetics and laity see Vallée-Poussin 1918: 716. The peculiar dual organisation of the majority of the contemporary Jain (and other Indian) ‘sects’, with monastic orders as a core supported by amorphous lay communities under the spiritual command of the monks, was also highlighted by Max Weber 1920/1978: 207. See Dumont’s 1980: 284 distinction between the doctrinal exclusivity of an Indian ‘sect’ and its social inclusivity. Generally, social categories, organised groups and gatherings need to be distinguished.

9 It seems advisable to distinguish the level of more or less exclusive ‘schools’, organised ‘sects’ and ‘movements’ from the level of the two principal religious ‘denominations’ in Jainism which Leumann 1934: 1 called ‘Confessionen’.

10 The use of the word ‘Jaina’ as a self-designation for both the monastic community and the lay community is a relatively recent one (Böhtlingk and Roth 1861: 132, Flügel 2005: 3f.). In the ancient texts, the words niggamthā and niggamthī referred only to Jain monks and nuns, but not to their followers, or upāsakas (Jacobi 1879: 5), who were classified as part of the four-fold saṅgha only from the late-canonical period onwards by both the Śvetāmbaras (Viyāhapanatti 792b, Thāna 281b) and by the early Digambaras (Mūlācāra, Chappāhuda, etc.) (Schubring 2000, § 30, § 137).

11 Between 1871 and 1891, the Census of India gradually substituted the initial classification of the Indian population in terms of religion with a dual religion/caste classification: 1871: ‘Hindu’, ‘Muslim’, ‘Other’, 1881: ‘religion (caste)’, 1891: ‘religion (sect)’, ‘caste (sub-caste)’ (Baines 1893: 186f.). ‘The…change was made in order to get rid of the notion that caste, or social distinction, was not required for Musalmans, Sikhs, Jains, and so on, or was held to be subordinate in any way to sect or religion’ (ibid.: 187).


13 ‘Many Jains have…undoubtedly given their religion as Hindoo, and in some cases, though these are not many, I am inclined to think the enumerators have returned as Hindoos persons who really stated their religion to be Jain. As the followers of the
Jain creed are generally held and themselves generally claim, to be Hindoos, this is not surprising; nor is this error of importance, for the domestic and social economy of the Jains differ little from the orthodox Hindoo’ (Plowden 1883: 23, cf. Kitts, in Plowden 1883: 19f., Baines, in Plowden 1883, III: cvii). See Cohn 1992: 248, Sangave 1980: 3, Dundas 2002: 4–6, Carrithers 2000: 833f.

The main reason for the ambiguous self-identification of many Jains is the equivocal nature of the concept ‘Hindu’ itself.

For example, Keshroy 1924, Manilal 1934: 270f., Natarajan 1971 I: 39. The preface of Singh’s 1894: 1 report on the census of 1891 in Marwar states that in addition to the questionnaire of the census supervisors and inspectors ‘a good many facts were investigated through personal enquiries from trustworthy representatives of various communities’.

There is no evidence for the inflated estimates that are frequently quoted in popular Jain publications. Kalidas Nag wrote in his speech to a Jain audience, ‘Jainism – A World Religion’, in the Jaina Gazette 57, 2–3 (1951): ‘You should prepare a census of your own, regardless of the government census, to arrive at a correct conclusion’ (ibid.: 35).

Earlier attempts to produce community censuses, such as the Jain Śvetāmbara Directory (Gujarat) written in Gujarāt (Jain Śvetāmbara Conference 1909, 1915, 1916), were lacking an integral ‘Jain’ communal or communitarian perspective. The first Jain Śvetāmbara Directory was produced between 1906 and 1907 in accordance with resolution No. 8 of the Jain Śvetāmbara Conference in 1904 which called for the collection of information on the followers of the different Murtiptūjakā and ‘Lonkāgaccha’ Śvetāmbara gacchas and samudāyas in all districts (jilā), sub-districts (tāluka) and villages (gāma) in India. The book was intended in particular as a travel guide, for instance for pilgrimages (vātrā). With the help of local volunteers a questionnaire was distributed by the main coordinators Sōbhacand Mohanlāl Šāh and Dāhyācand Tribhovan Gāndhī, who listed the following categories: the number of families (kula gharā), women (stṛ), men (purūṣa), caste (jñāti), sect (gaccha), literacy; and the local temples (jina-mandira), images (jina-pratimā), monasteries (upāśraya), libraries (jñāna-bhandāra), schools (pāṭhāsāla), old books (pūrvācārya pranīta grantha), Jain societies (sabhā) and associations (mandala). The interesting resulting statistics suffer from imprecise lists of jñātīs and gacchas and problems of inaccurate self-reporting and counting, as the compilers of the first report emphasise (Jain Śvetāmbara Conference 1909: ii–iii). It was probably in response to the Śvetāmbara efforts that the eleventh meeting of the Digambara Jain Mahāsābhā inspired Mānīkand Hīrācand Jauhari of Bombay to produce between 1907 and 1914 the Shri Bharatavarshiyā Digambara Jain Directory (Jhaveri 1914) ‘for the good of all Digambara Jain brothers’. The ensuing publication contains lists of towns, leading community members, caste, professions, etc. Cf. Sangave 1980: 119–121, 124–130. I am grateful to Yashvant Malaia, who has pointed this source out to me. Nowadays, excellent self-produced national statistics are available for certain castes, such as the Khandelvālas, which have a high proportion of Jain members.

A Digambara Jain layman told me that the results of the Census of India of 1981 and 1991 in North Indian states were manipulated by ‘Hindutva’ inspired enumerators who wrote ‘Hindu (Jain)’ into the forms, even if the answer given was ‘Jain’. During the Census of 2001, Jain community leaders started awareness rising campaigns to prevent a recurrence of these practices.

The introduction of a question on religious affiliation into the UK-census of 2001 stirred similar sentiments amongst leading members of the Jain community in Britain. For a Hindutva inspired variation of demographic angst regarding the outgrowth of the Hindus by the Muslims in India see A. P. Joshi et al. 2003.

B. U. Jain 1999, for instance, lists the Murtiptūjakā samudāyas according to their size. See Appadurai 1993: 117 on the role of numbers for the colonial ‘illusion of
DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS IN JAINA MONASTICISM

bureaucratic control’. The role of numbers (regarding fasts etc.) is even greater in traditional Jainism.


23 Stāhvīravrātī 5, in Jacobi 1884: 289.

24 Sangave now seems to prefer the less charged term ‘communitarianism’ (personal communication, 2 January 2005).

25 Cort 1989: 491–94 summarised B. U. Jain’s demographic data of the Mūrtipūjaka sādhus and sādhvīs in 1986 in an appendix, but noted their incompleteness, which was partly rectified by B. U. Jain’s subsequent publications.

26 These are the conventional dates. Except in the case of the ‘panths’, I have represented the names of monastic orders in their sanskritised form, but proper names in their spoken form.

27 The primary source of information on the origins of these groups is the Pravacanaprakṣā of the sixteenth century Taṭā Gačcha uṇāḍhīya Dharma Sāgara. For an overview of their history, doctrines and practices see M. U. K. Jain 1975.

28 The pattaṅgavāls of the Kharatara Gačcha and of the A(ñ)cala Gačcha were published in many Sanskrit and vernacular editions. They were studied by Klatt 1894 and by Siyprasād 2001. See also Pārśva 1968: 9–21.

29 The Gačchādhipati of the A(ñ)cala Gačcha is presently Śrīpūrā Moti Sāgar Śūrī (born 1944). See Photographs. The Śvetāmbara Lōṅkāgačcha still has one yati but no sādhus. A notable feature of the yati traditions is that they do not have any female members.

30 The surprisingly high figure of more than 3,517 ascetics and a higher proportion of monks than nuns is reported in the A(ñ)cala Gačcha pattaṅgavāl for the A(ñ)cala Gačcha in the year 1180. It is said that Ācārya Āryarakṣita Śūrī (1080–1180) initiated ‘2100 sādhus and 1130 sādhvīs, the ācārya-padam to 12 sādhus, the upādhyāya-padam to 20, the paṇḍita-padam to 70, the mahattarā-padam to 103 sādhvīs (Samayaśrī and others), the pravartinī-padam to 82 sādhvīs, the total number of sādhus and sādhvīs being 3517’ (Klatt 1894: 175). If the figures are true, then a huge number of Jain mendicants must have existed during the heydays of Jainism in the medieval period.

31 The equally centralised Rāmacandрастrī Śamudāya of the Taṭā Gačcha is the largest order. Balbir 2003: 48ff, provides much information on the doctrinal foundation of the A(ñ)cala Gačcha, but not on initiation procedures.

32 According to Ācārya Jay Sundar Śūrī of the Bhuvanabhānu Śamudāya, the last saṁgha-cārya of the Viśya Sākha was Ācārya Viṣṇu Prabhā, who commanded c.200–300 ascetics. After him the number of saṁveği sādhus decreased to 20–25 under Buterāy in the early nineteenth century (plus 10–15 in the Sāgara Sākhā, and 40–50 in the Vimala Gačcha), while the Taṭā Gačcha yati orders had more than 1,500 members. Personal communication, Mumbai 23 October, 2005.


34 Desāi 1983 I: 106ff, M. Śāh 1987. The precise origins of the trust are not known, but Śāntidās Jhaveri was instrumental in institutionalising this influential organisation.

35 Probably only the saṁveği sādhu tradition was interrupted.

36 Kañcansāgaratī et al. 1977.

37 See Paul Dundas’ forthcoming book.

38 Only the Kharatara Gačcha and the A(ñ)cala Gačcha still have some yatis.

39 In his biography of Nemīṣūrī, one of the great reformist ācāryas of the early twentieth century, Śilcandravijay 1973: 6 has estimated the number of saṁveği sādhus
in the period 1845–1865 to be no more than 25 to 30. While it is not clear if he means only within the Tapā Gacch, or in all the Mūrtipūjaka gacchās, the number is still very small. He further comments on the low level of scholarly knowledge among these sadhus. Thus, the position of the Śvetāmbara svaṃg sadhu in the early nineteenth century was not at all different from the position of the full-fledged muni, or nirvāṇa svāmī, among the South Indian Digambaras (see Carrithers...’) (Cort 1989: 99, n. 14). Unfortunately, the only information we have on the numbers of yatis in the nineteenth century are a number of kṣetrādēśapattaṭakas and sporadic evidence in the reports of British colonial officials. A cāturmaṇa list of 1867 issued by the successor of Acārya Vijay Devendra Sūri, Acārya Vijay Dharanendradēv Sūri, for instance, lists 212 monks (figures for nuns are not given) organised into 74 groups of 2 and 14 groups of 4 (Sandesara 1974: 229–233). For the year 1891, Singh 1894: 82 cites the number of 834 ‘yatis’ in Marwar (Jodhpura) alone, but gives no figures for the samvegīs, who ‘owe their origin to one Anand Bimal Sūri’ (ibid.: 95). The Jain mendicants in Mārvar were classified as ‘devotees’ of the ‘priests’ (yatis, brāhmans, etc.) and all counted under the label ‘Samegi, Dhundia etc.’ (ibid.: 85). Their total figure of 2,314 comprises 725 male and 1,589 female mendicants.

40 The Jain Śvetāmbara Directory published in 1916 by the reformist Jain Association of India lists some 228 monks, divided into 79 groups, and 203 nuns, divided into 40 groups, apparently belonging to reformed segments of the Tapā Gacch, including the groups of the acāryas Vijay Kamal Sūri, Vijay Nema Sūri and Buddhī Sāgar Sūri which were mainly active in Kacch and Mārvar (Jain Śvetāmbara Conference 1916: 18–22).

41 See Cort 1999.

42 In 2002, the total number had increased to 7,541 mendicants, 1,585 munīs and 5,947 sadhus. The Tapā Gacch had 6,696 mendicants, 1,445 sadhus and 5,242 sadhvīs (cf. ibid.: 70, 305).

43 Jainī 1991: 26 explains the attractiveness of the Tapā Gacch for women with the ‘spiritual equality’ offered to Śvetāmbaras sadhvīs. However, Mūrtipūjaka sadhvīs are still not allowed to read certain āgama-texts nor to deliver public sermons, a fact which Shāntā 1985: 315, 321f., n. 5, 456 explains by pointing at the high number of acāryavas, which limits speaking opportunities.

44 ‘The samudāy is not as formal a grouping as the gacch. Mendicants in one samudāy will, for a variety of reasons, sometimes travel with mendicants of another samudāy. But mendicants do not travel with mendicants of another gacch, as that would involve changing some of the details of their daily practices’ (Cort 1991: 663). In his later publications, Cort 1999: 44, 2001: 46 supplies enough material for the conjecture that many samudāyas have a distinct doctrinal and organisational identity with separate pañcāṅgas, rituals and lay support.

45 Shāntā 1985: 329.

46 The use of the sign ‘-’ in the columns indicates cases of separation (cf. Tristutī Gacch).

47 The names of all acāryas of the Vijaya Śākhā are preceded by the title ‘Vijaya’. Some gacchādhipatis are not acāryas (sūri).

48 After his death, Prem Sūri’s line split into two samudāyas, led by Rām Candra Sūri and Bhuvan Bhānu Sūri respectively. Following Rām Candra Sūri’s (1896–1991) death, this samudāya was named after him by his successor Mahoday Sūri (died 2002), who was in turn succeeded by Acārya Hem Bhūṣan Sūri (B. U. Jain 1996: 165–177). Rām Candra Sūri was one of the most influential and orthodox acāryas of the Vijaya Śākhā. He nearly became the leader (sāsanasamrāta or adhipati) of the entire Tapā Gacch. Cort 1989: 103, n. 18 quotes demographic data which show that the Dān-Prem Samudāya has grown from 36 sadhus in 1944 to 219 sadhus in 1975.
DEMographic trends in Jaina monasticism

(Cort had no information on the numbers of sādhvīs). By 1999, this tradition had split into four sections, including Śānti Candra Śūri’s group, and Vībhuddha Prabhā Śūri’s group. However, after 1996 the Amṛtasūri Samudāya, lead by Jinendra Śūri, was re-integrated into the Rāmacandrasūri Samudāya, which had in all 905 members in 1999, 290 sādhus and 615 sādhvīs, and 1,138 members in 2002, 310 munīs and 828 sādhvīs (B. U. Jain 1999: 197, 2002: 169). Important particularities, in addition to the be tīthi doctrine, are the performance of guru pūjā in the manner of the aṣṭaprapārṇī pūjā to the body of the acārya, Rām Candra Śūri and his statues, and the permission for lay followers to mount Sātrūnjāyā Hill even during cāturmāsa (personal communication).

This group separated in 1998 from the Rāmacandrasūri Samudāya. It operates mainly in Rajasthan. In 1999 it had 45 mendicants, 23 sādhus and 22 sādhvīs (B. U. Jain 1999: 325f.).

This samudāya also derives from Prem Śūri, but was renamed after Bhuvan Bāhūn Śūri (1911–1993) who broke with Rām Candra Śūri in 1986 after a dispute on calendrical issues (ek tīthi-be tīthi). See Cort 1999, B. U. Jain 1996: 179–87. Originally, the group was active in Hālār, but its main sphere of activity is now Gujarat and Mahārāṣtra. In 1999 it had 560 members, 285 sādhus and 275 sādhvīs (B. U. Jain 1999: 230), in 2002 712 members, 361 sādhus and 351 sādhvīs (B. U. Jain 2002: 186). It is one of the few contemporary Jain orders which has more monks than nuns, because Acārya Prem Śūri objected to the initiation of sādhvīs, since their presence would inevitably cause the development of relationships between monks and nuns. One of Prem Śūri’s disciples, Acārya Jāśodev Śūri, successfully criticised this rule, by pointing to the unnecessary problems it creates when entire families want to renounce. Prem Śūri allowed him to start an order of nuns within his tradition, on the condition that he and his successors would be responsible for the supervision of the nuns, of which the main line of gacchādhipatīs should remain aloof. After the death of Jāśodev Śūri, his successor Rajendra Śūri is now responsible for the sādhvī section.

This group separated itself in 1995 under Prem Śūri from the tradition of Rām Candra Śūri (whose guru was Prem Śūri). In 1999, it was nominally reincorporated into the Rāmacandrasūri Sampadāya, but still maintains a separate existence. It is mainly active in Hālār, near Jāmnagar. In 2002 it had 26 mendicants, 4 sādhus and 22 sādhvīs (B. U. Jain 2002: 170, cf. 273).


Siddhi Śūri (1895–1959) was succeeded by Mēgh Śūri. One of his pupils was Bhuvan Vijay, the father and dīkṣā guru of the influential scholair Muni Jambī Vijay. In 1999, it had 250 mendicants, 30 sādhus and 220 sādhvīs (B. U. Jain 1999: 289), in 2002, 260 mendicants, 29 sādhus and 231 sādhvīs (B. U. Jain 2002: 240). The present gacchādhipati Rām Śūri has been selected, because he is the acārya with the highest monastic age (ibid.: 246).

Dev Śūri’s (1911–2002) predecessor was Merū Prabhā Śūri. The present head of the order is Acārya Suṣil Śūri. In 1999 this group had 543 mendicants, 138 sādhus and
Both the present ācārya Som Sundar Śrī and Jin Candra Śrī were initiated by Bhuvan Śekhar Śrī. In 1999, this group reported the figure of 80 mendicants, 8 sādhus and 72 sādhvīs (B. U. Jain 1999: 320), in 2002, 151 mendicants, 19 sādhus and 132 sādhvīs (B. U. Jain 2002: 268), but the figures are incomplete.
This group was started by Ānand Sāgar Śūri, a bitter opponent of Rām Candra Śūri, the leading monk of the Vijaya Śākhā in the twentieth century (cf. Cort 1999: 43): ‘Rāmendra Śūri (1895–1991) has argued that the scriptures should not be published at all, a view which found many partisans, while the other party followed the view that of Sāgarānanda Śūri (1875–1950), celebrated as the “uplifter of the scriptural tradition” (āgamodāhāraka), who advocated the publication of the scriptures but along with the old nīryukti and vyrtti commentaries’ (Dundas 1996: 90, cf. Banks 1992: 110). The group experienced frequent changes of leadership in the 1980s. In 1986, the leader was Devendra Sāgar, 1987 Cidānand Sāgar, 1990 Darsān Sāgar, who was succeeded by Sūryoday Sāgar, and Asok Sāgar in 2004–2005. The former sādhu Cītra Bhānu (Candra Prabhā Sāgar), who continues to inspire diaspora Jains in the US and the UK, was a member of this lineage from 1942 to 1970. In 1999, this group had 740 members, 150 sādhus and 590 sādhwīs (B. U. Jain 1999: 215), in 2002, 956 members, 136 sādhus and 820 sādhwīs (B. U. Jain 2002: 171). Its main agenda is currently the defence of the scientific accuracy of the canonical Jaina cosmography.

Buddhi Sāgar Śūri (1874–1925), a disciple of Ravi Sāgar and one of only four samvegī sādhu ācāryas in 1913 (Cort 1997: 125), popularised the defence of the protector god Ghanātākara amongst Gujarāt Jains, particularly in Mahudi near Vījāpur (Cort 1989: 406–407, 428–433, 2001: 91, 164–168). He was succeeded by Monogam Sāgar (?), Rudhi Sāgar, and Subodh Sāgar Śūri, who inspired the construction of the tīrthas Vījāpur and Mahesānā, where the tīrthankara Śimandhāra Śvāmī is venerated. Ācārya Padma Sāgar Śūri (born 1934), who inspired the construction of the Jain centre at Kobā near Ahmedabad, also belongs to this order. In 1999, this samudāya had 135 mendicants, 45 sādhus and 90 sādhwīs (B. U. Jain 1999: 316); for 2002 the figures are incomplete: 115 mendicants, 45 sādhus and 70 sādhwīs (B. U. Jain 2002: 264).

Cidānand Śūri’s predecessor was Ravi Vimal Śūri. He is now succeeded by Pradyumna Vimal Śūri. Figures are based on estimates. In 1999, it had about 51 mendicants, 6 sādhus and 45 sādhwīs (B. U. Jain 1999: 360), in 2002 approximately 49 mendicants, 4 sādhus and 45 sādhwīs (B. U. Jain 2002: 304).


In 1999, this group had 118 mendicants, 28 sādhus and 90 sādhwīs (B. U. Jain 1999: 340), in 2002, 127 mendicants, 27 sādhus and 100 sādhwīs (B. U. Jain 2002: 293). The ācārya position is the only administrative post of this group (B. U. Jain 1999: 252, n.4). In the year 2000, a group of three sādhus led by Muni Jay Ānand split off and founded a fourth Tristhit tradition (B. U. Jain 2002: 293). The most famous monk of the Tristhit Gaccha was Rājendra Śūri (1827–1906), who is renown as the composer of the Abhidhānārājendra Kośa.


Because of a dispute on proper ascetic conduct, this order split from the Tapā Gaccha in 1515 under Śādhu Ratna Śūri (Ratna Prabhā Vījāy 5, 2 1948–1950: 134). Although this group is sometimes considered to be part of the Tapā Gaccha, its sādhus do not use
'vijaya' or 'sāgara' as a suffix or prefix. The group does not have administrative posts and is the only order that is led by two monks: Muni Bhuvan Candra is currently responsible for the region of Kacch and Saurashtra, and Muni Vijay Candra for the region of Mumbai. Bhuvan Candra's predecessor was Muni Rām Candra. In 1999, this group had 74 mendicants, 9 sādhus and 64 sādhvīs, though numbers are incomplete (B. U. Jain 1999: 356), in 2002, 68 mendicants, 9 sādhus and 59 sādhvīs (B. U. Jain 2002: 301). Figures are incomplete. B. U. Jain 1999: 362 estimates a total of 28 sādhus for the year 1999, and 16 for the year 2002 (B. U. Jain 2002: 305). Cort's observations are inversely mirrored by R. K. Jain's 1999: 32 distinction between the charismatic 'individualistic, prophet-derived and sect-like character of the Digambara religious field as contrasted with the group-bound, "priest"-derived and church-like ambience of the Shvetambara religious field'; a distinction which deliberately ignores the institutions of the bhātāraka traditions. Cort 2001: 46 observed that subtle liturgical differences do not exist 'between samudāyas'. However, according to Muni Mukti Vallab Vijay of the Bhuvanabhānu Samudāya, four different lists of māryādās exist within the Tapā Gaccha. A leading monk of the Ramacandrāstrī Samudāya mentioned the figure of 64 differences in the rules and regulations of the samudāyas. A number of monks and nuns of other samudāyas confirmed these statements (personal communications, December 2004–January 2005). But more research is necessary to map out the details. Only if their samudāyas derive from the same lineage food is sometimes shared; for instance between the members of the Vallabhāsūri, the Keśarāstrī and the Dharmāstrī Samudāyas. Personal communication of monks and nuns of the Vallabhāsūri Samudāya and of the Ramacandrāstrī Samudāya in January 2005. In his will, Rāma Candra Sūri determined Mahodaya Śūri as his successor. But according to A. Luithle (personal communication, July 2005) the present gacchādhipati Hem Bhūsan Śūri was elected in an assembly of acāryas in 2003 after one year of dispute. Cf. Jacobi 1915: 270, Cort 1991: 669, n. 19. As evidence, the cases of the centralised orders of the A(n)cala Gaccha, the Ramacandrāstrī Samudāya, and the Svetāmbara Terā Panth may be cited, all of which have a large number of members. The contrast between the principles of pupillary descent and group organisation in Jain monastic traditions has been analysed in Flügel 2003b: 182–193. Personal communication, Ācārya Jay Sundar Śūri, Mumbai 23 October 2003. The term sthānakavāsi in its present meaning became only current in the context of the early twentieth century unification movement of the traditions of the pañcemuni. The dates given in the available sources are not matching up. See Flügel 2000: 46–48, in press. See Flügel 2000: 61–68 on the grades of the sāmāyika vow. Flügel 1995–1996, 2000, 2003a, 2003b, in press. Jaini 1979: 246f., n. 8 quotes the figure of 847 mendicants for the year 1977. Goonasekere 1986: 27 speaks of about c.900 for the year 1983. Cort 1989: 491, 96 calculates altogether 553 ascetics – probably for the year 1986. Shāntā 1985: 332, 341, 489 cites Terā Panth sources for the much higher figure of 1,757 ascetics for the year 1981, which broadly corresponds to Sangave's 1980: 323f. plausible figure of 1,900 Sthānakavāsī mendicants in the year 1946. B. U. Jain 2002: 65f. This is seen as a potential cause of conflict. Personal communication, Ratan Jain, Delhi 16 October 2004. This is in accordance with the scriptures. See Tāṇḍa 164b, Vav 10.15–17 and the Nīśaṇha Bhāṣa. On the issue of child initiation see also Balbir 2001.
DEMographic TRENDS in Jaina Monasticism

92 See Flügel forthcoming.

93 The resolution was taken on the 5–6 December 1932. See Jauhari 1946: 197.

94 Another source informs us that, at the time of Loṅkā’s death, the Loṅkācāca had 400 disciples and 800,000 lay followers (Prakāścandra 1998: 32).

95 Manohar Das was a disciple of Dharma Das. The two Amarmuni traditions continue his line today.

96 The following figures were given by Manilāl (1934) for selected smaller traditions in 1933: Khambhāt Sampradāya (15 mendicants: 6 sādhus and 9 sādhvīs), Cauthamala (Raghunāthā Dharmaśāsa) Sampradāya (18 mendicants: 3 sādhus and 15 sādhvīs), Ratnavamsā (Dharmaśāsa Sampradāya) (47 mendicants: 9 sādhus and 38 sādhvīs), Nānā Prthvirāja (Mevāra Dharmaśāsa Sampradāya) (43 mendicants: 8 sādhus and 35 sādhvīs), Kaccha Āṭh Koṭi Motā Pakṣa (53 mendicants: 22 sādhus and 31 sādhvīs), Kaccha Āṭh Koṭi Nānā Pakṣa (39 mendicants: 14 sādhus and 25 sādhvīs), Limbādi Gopāla Sampradāya (26 mendicants: 7 sādhus and 19 sādhvīs), Goḍālā Nānā Pakṣa (no sādhus and ‘some’ sādhvīs), Barvāḍa Sampradāya (24 mendicants: 4 sādhus and 20 sādhvīs).

97 The latest findings have been summarised by Degenne and Forcē (1999: 21): ‘Acquaintances form the largest, a virtual network that includes everyone the respondent has ever met. The average for this outermost circle is about 5,000 people. The circle of immediate contacts is far smaller. The average respondent has only 100–200 people he can contact to link himself up to a target stranger. He has regular talks with fewer than twenty people per week, subject to variation with age, sex, education and other sociodemographic criteria. Again, real confidants average only three’.

98 It is regarded as a sign of the laxity though if Jain mendicants deliberately maintain contacts, because this contradicts their vow to renounce the world.

99 For a comparable study in the context of Christian monasticism see Sampson 1969.

100 This argument is outlined in Flügel 2003b: 183.


102 See Flügel 2003a.


104 The change affected the sādhvīs first. Under Ācārya Rāy Cand (1821–1851) and Ācārya Jītmāl (1851–1881) only 58.44% and 57.1% of all newly initiated sādhus were Osvāls, but already 73.8% and 89.3% of all new sādhvīs were Osvāls. Under Kālū Ṛām, 89.7% of newly initiated sādhus and 95.3% of sādhvīs were Osvāls (Navratnamal 1981 II: 311, 322, III: 273, 291, X: 309, 325). This pattern still prevails. In 1985, 96.98% of the Terā Panth sādhus and 94.46% of the sādhvīs were Osvāls (Navratnamal XII 1985: 522f.).

105 A percentage of 58.6 of Ācārya Jītmāl’s ascetics came from Mārvār and Mevār and only 24.9% from the Thalī region. By contrast, only 29.7% of Ācārya Kālū Ṛām’s ascetics were recruited in Mārvār and Mevār, but 60.97% in Thalī. This pattern was perpetuated under Ācārya Tulsī. In 1985, 23.5% of his mendicants came from Mārvār and Mevār and 63.3% from Thalī (sādhus: 58.62%, sādhvīs: 65.35%)
The average number of initiated ascetics is one of the determinants of the status of an ācārya. On average, Bhikṣu initiated 1.13 sādhus and 1.3 sādhvīs per year, Kālū Rām 5.63 sādhus and 9.44 sādhvīs, and Tulṣī 4.84 sādhus and 11.13 sādhvīs between 1936 and 1981.

For a statistical analysis of the demographic structure of the Terā Panth order and the motives of renunciation in the year 2001 see Flügel forthcoming.

While his predecessors initiated on average c.20% of minors, Kālū Rām initiated 45.8% under age sādhus and 41.5% under age sādhvīs (Navaratnamal 1981: 309, 325). The Terā Panth has not yet followed the example of the Śhānakavāsi Śramaṇa Sāṅgha, which has officially raised the minimum age for initiation for both girls and boys from eight to fourteen.


On the Tāraṇa Svāmī Panth see Cort (in this volume). The Totā Panth and the Gumāna Panth, an eighteenth century splinter group of the Terā Panth, have not yet been studied systematically. For an overview see Sangave 1980: 51–54.


The following historical reconstruction is therefore necessary.

P. Śāstrī 1985b: 537.

No source is given.


No original sources of the tradition itself on its origins have been found so far. I follow John Cort’s 2002: 52f., 67–69 summary here.

Narendra Kīrti of Amer was bhattāraka between 1634 and 1665 (Premī, cited by Cort 2002: 52).

P. Śāstrī 1985b: 536, cf. p. 538 found the expression ‘terā – bhagavan āp kā panth’ not only in Joghrām (Joghrāj) Godika’s work, but also in Jñān Cand’s work Śrāvakācāra and in the Jaypur Pāṇḍit Pannālāl’s Terā Panth Khaṇḍan, where also thirteen practices are listed which the tradition rejected – opposing the use of fruits in pūjā, the worship of Padmāvatī and other gods and goddesses, etc. (ibid.: 539). For more references see P. Śāstrī 1992: 146–149.

Like the Śvetāmbara Terā Panthās, the Digambara Terā Panth pandīts exploit the ambiguity of the word terā panth. The two words terā and terah are homonyms: terā means ‘your’ and terah means ‘thirteen’. However, it seems the Śvetāmbara Terā Panthās prefer to interpret ‘your’ (terā) more in the sense of ‘the people’ rather than ‘God’. Cf. Buddhmal 1995: 69–76, Flügel 1994–1995: 123, n. 12, cf. p. 122, n. 9. It is likely that this wordplay is a religio-poetic topos that can be found in other traditions as well.

He refers to a newly found inscription from 950 CE which identifies the Balākāra Gaṇa with the Sarasvatī Gaccha and the Mālā Sāṅgha: ‘vī. samvat 1007 māsottamamāre phālgunamāre śuklapakṣe itihau caturthām buddhavāre śrīmālasaṅgha sarasvatīgaccha balākāragaṇa hākurasi dās prātiṣṭhām’ (in P. Śāstrī 1985b: 535), and – because the word śuddhāmānya is used in different contexts both for the Terā Panth and the Balākāra Gaṇa – concludes elsewhere that they are one: ‘terāpanth śuddhāmānya tathā mālasaṅgha kundakundāmānya balākāragaṇa sarasvatīgaccha ye donoh ek hain’ (P. Śāstrī 1992: 146).

On the presumed special relationship with the Parvār caste see particularly P. Śāstrī 1992: 114–149.
DEMOCRATIC TRENDS IN JAINA MONASTICISM

124 ‘bispanth arthāt visampanth – terhāpanth jinmat men mānya nahti’ (Jaina Nibandha Ratnavalī, in P. Śāstrī 1985b: 538). The word was apparently coined by Jīnendra in his Jīnānand Śrāvakācāra which is cited by P. Śāstrī with approval (ibid.: 244). 
125 Like the Terā Panthīs, the Tārana Panthīs also venerate ‘true’ ascetics. See Tārana Tārana Svāmī 1933, P. Śāstrī 1985c, and J. E. Cort (in this volume). 
127 Jhaeveri’s 1914: 1418–1424 community census counted altogether 450, 584 Digambaras in 1914. For detailed numerical data on Jain castes from this census and the Śvetāmbara Directory of 1909 as well as the Colonial Indian Census see Sangave 1980: 119–121, 124–130. 
128 Sangave 1980: 52. This estimate may be too high. According to P. S. Jaini (personal communication), the distinction was totally unknown in South India and is even now rejected by most. 
130 Cf. Cort 2002: 62. Earlier, the now extinct ‘heterodox’ Kāśṭhā Śaṅgha was associated with the Agravāls in Rājāsthān (K. C. Jain 1963: 72), and the Māla Śaṅgha, which was dominant in Western India between the fourteenth and the nineteenth century, primarily with the Khandelvālas (and Parvārs) (ibid.: 73, 103). Both in South India and in North India, close relationships developed between Digambara gacchas and certain jātis or gotras. An important factor for the success of the Terā Panth amongst specific Digambara caste communities seems to have been the long term absence of the institution of the bhātṛāraka as a caste guru. Sangave 1980: 318 notes that in the 1950s ‘the Hummāda Mevādā, Narasiṅgapurā, Khandelvālā, Saitavāla, Chaturtha, Pañchama, Bogāra, Upādhyāya, Vaiśya and Kshatriya castes have their separate Bhattārakas while the Kathanerā, Buḍhelā, Agravālā, Golaṭvā, Jaisavāla, Nevi and Hummāda (from Mahārāshtra) castes have no Bhattāraka system at all. Besides in some castes like Paravāra, Bannore, Dhākāda and Bagheravālā the Bhattāraka system was prevalent formerly but now it is extinct’. 
131 Glasenapp 1925: 357 reported that the contrast was so big that the followers of one ‘sect’ do not visit the temples of the other. However, through an unrepresentative survey amongst the Jain laity Sangave 1980: 299 found that ‘among the persons who do not know about their divisions the Digambaras form a larger proportion than the Śvetāmbaras. Besides, it has been stated that there are no such divisions among the Digambaras at present’. 
132 ‘The Bispanth-Terāpanth division is not found in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu or southern Mahārāshtra’ (Cort 2002: 70, n. 3). 
134 Cort 2002: 65 contrasts the lack of organisation of the Adhyāṭma movement with the ‘organisational foundation’ of the Terā Panth which is still influential. However, the organisational capacity of the local temple- and library trusts of the Terā Panthīs is insignificant compared to the old institutions of the bhātṛāraka traditions and in particular the (trans-) regionally organised Śvetāmbara sects. 
137 See Deo 1956: 360ff. for a beginning.
We have seen that the Sthānakavāśīs also use the terms *samudāya*, *saṅgha* and *vamsa*. According to Hoernle 1891: 342 ‘āmnāya’ – ‘succession’ – is a synonym of *kula*, as is the term *santāna*. *Anvaya* – ‘line’ – can also be used as a synonym. Sangave 1980: 299 presents a less convincing picture of the organisational levels of the Digambara bhattāraka traditions (*saṅgha*, *gana*, *gaccha*, *śākhā*) than Johārāpuraka 1958, whose book is still the most detailed study to date.

Johārāpuraka 1958: 19 noted that the writings of Kunda Kunda were ‘certainly some cause of unease’ between some of the late medieval bhattārakas of the Sena Gaṇa. Allegedly, the 52 *pattā* Bhattāraka Vir Sena (died 1938?) had a great belief in Kunda Kunda’s Samayasāra (ibid.: 35, n. 20). Many *pattāvalis* of the bhattāraka traditions present Kunda Kunda conventionally as their ancestor, for instance the Balātākāra Gaṇa (ibid.: 44, 71, n. 24).


The third leader of the Nandi Saṅgha was apparently Kunda Kunda (Padma Nandin), who is cited as the ancestor of today’s Sarasvati Gačcha of the Nandi line (*anvaya*) which identifies itself with the Balātākāra Gaṇa of the Mūla Saṅgha and calls itself Kundakundānaya (Hoernle 1891: 342, 350f.). The early dates for Kunda Kunda have been questioned by Dhaky 1991: 190, and the artificial link to Kunda Kunda by Johārāpuraka 1958.


Schubring 2000: § 30, p. 63 cites in this respect also Indra Nandin’s sixteenth century work Nitisāra and the nineteenth century *pattāvalis* translated by Hoernle 1891, 1892.

See M. U. K. Jain 1975: 126–128 for the complex (putative) internal divisions of the Mūla Saṅgha, whose history in South India has not been analysed.


Rāja Šekhara writes in his *Śaṅgasaṃuccaya* 21–25 (*c.1350*): ‘In the Kāsthāsaṅgha, the broom is ordained to be made of the yak’s tail. In the Mūlasaṅgha, the brush is made of peacock feathers. The broom has never been an issue in the Māthura Saṅgha. The Gopyas sweep with peacock feathers; their greeting is “dharmar labhā”. The rest greet with “dharmar vrddhī”. The Gopyas declare release for women. The three Saṅghas other than the Gopya declare that women cannot attain it. Neither the other three nor the Gopyas hold that an omniscient takes food; There is no release for one wearing a monk’s garb, though he keep the vow well’ (tr. by Folkert 1993: 363). Schubring 1964: 224 mentions that both the Yāpaniya and the Kāsthā Saṅgha taught that women can reach salvation.

The view that the North Indian Kāsthā Saṅgha is ‘heterodox’ and the Mūla Saṅgha ‘orthodox’ is nowadays – after the disappearance of the Kāsthā Saṅgha – expressed by Bisa Panthīs and Terā Panthīs alike, which both claim descent from the Mūla Saṅgha. See P. Sāstri 1985b.


Glasenapp 1925: 355.


The tradition was first mentioned in Deva Sena’s Darśanasāra. There are two versions of its origins. According to the prevalent version it was founded in the year 753 CE (? Vikram Saṃvat: 696 CE) in the village Nāṇḍed (Nandiya) in the region of modern Bombay by Acārāya Kumār Sena I of the Pañcāstūpa Saṅgha (Kumārasena II lived around 955). Kumār Sena was a reformer who insisted on the observation of the ‘sixth...
DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS IN JAINA MONASTICISM

\textit{anuvrata’}, that is, no consumption of food and drink after dark, and on the performance of atonements in accordance with the Digambara Āgamas. A later and less popular (and convincing) version relates that Acārya Lohā I from the Nandi Saṅgha Gaṇa founded this tradition some 515 years after Mahāvīra. He converted 125,000 members of the Agravāla caste in Agrohā near Hisār, and used wooden (kāśṭha) images for the pūjā ritual (this story contradicts other legends narrating the origins of this caste). The use of wooden images was strongly opposed by the older Digambara traditions, because it begins to rot after being bathed with milk and water during the traditional paṭīca kalyāṇaka pūjās. The tradition was also known under the name Gopaccha Saṅgha, because the munis used whisks made of the hair of cow tails rather than peacock feathers (Glasenapp 1925: 356, Varnī 1998 I: 320f.). According to Joharāpurkara (1958: 211), the name Kāṣṭhā Saṅgha derives from the name of a village near Dillī. From the fourteenth century internal divisions are reported, and at the end of the seventeenth century four distinct branches, such as the older Maṭhura Gaṇca, were established, with important seats in Ārā (Bihār), Hisār (Hariyānā), Surat (Gujarāt), Gaṅgiyar (Madhya Pradeś) and Kārāṇjā (Mahārāṣṭra) (ibid.: 6f., 210–212). The acāryas and bhāttārakas of this tradition produced important literary works (cf. ibid.: 238–247). The Kāṣṭhā Saṅgha seems to have continued at least till the early nineteenth century and maybe into the twentieth century (cf. Glasenapp 1925: 356, Dundas 2002: 124 citing Col. Tod).

153 This is again mentioned in Surendra Kirti’s work Dānavīra Manikacandra of 1690. See M. U. K. Jain’s (1975: 112–126) extensive description of the sub-divisions of this tradition.

154 According to both the Dārsanāṣastra (Glasenapp 1925: 356), and the Subhāṣita Ratnasamudra of Acārya Amitagati II (993–1026 CE), the founder of the Maṭhura Gaṇca was Muni Rām Saṇa, who became acārya in 896 CE; but he is not mentioned in the paṭīval of the tradition (Varnī 1998: 321f.). He originally belonged to the Kāṣṭhā Saṅgha and rejected both the use of peacock feather and cow hair whisks (pičchī or piččī). His tradition was therefore called Nispaccha Saṅgha. He demanded from his disciples the explicit rejection of other gurus, and argued that salvation can only be reached through meditation on the true self (ātma dhyāna) following the teaching of Kunda Kunda rather that Bhūtabali and Puṣpadanta’s Śaṭkhandāgama (Dārsanapāhuda and Dārsanāṣastra, ibid., Schubring 2000: § 30, p. 62). Until its demise sometime in the nineteenth or twentieth century, the main seats of this gaṇca were in Hisār (Rājasthān), Gaṅgiyar, and Senāgiri (Madhya Pradeś) (Joharāpurkara 1958: 6f., 238–247). Its followers belonged mainly to the North Indian Agravāla caste (ibid.: 13).

155 Bāgāda is a region near Chittor (M. U. K. Jain 1975: 118). Certain branches of the tradition may have predated the formation of the Kāṣṭhā Saṅgha (cf. ibid.: 118–120). It was also called Punnāta Gaṇca, with reference to its place of origin in Karnātaka, or Lāḍābāgāda Gaṇca, with reference to its centre in Gujarāt. It is mentioned in inscriptions between the seventh century and fifteenth century and maintained important seats in Māṣār (East India) and Kāraṇjā (Mahārāṣṭra) (Joharāpurkara 1958: 6f., 257–262). Its followers belonged mainly to the Baghervāl caste (ibid.: 13).

156 This tradition is mentioned only in two sources of the tenth and fifteenth century (Joharāpurkara 1958: 6f., 263). It apparently re-joined the Lāḍa-Bāgāda Gaṇca (M. U. K. Jain 1975: 120).

157 This tradition (also: Vidyā Gana and Rāmasena-Anvaya) was founded in the fifteenth century in the village Nandītaṭ – the modern Nānδed/Mumbai. It came to an end in the early nineteenth century. One of its main seats was Sojītrā in Gujarāt (Joharāpurkara 1958: 6f, 293–299). Its followers belonged mainly to the Hūmāda caste (ibid.: 13). The founder of this tradition appears to have been Ratna Kirti (M. U. K. Jain 1975: 125).
The tradition is first mentioned in the praśasti of the Uttarapurāṇa of Guṇa Bhadra's disciple Loka Sena (898 CE) and in inscriptions of the ninth century and of the sixteenth century. It started with Candra Sena, Ārya Nandini and the famous scholastic Vīra Sena (816 CE), the author of the Dvālā Tiṅā of the Śaṭkhaṇḍāgama, and is famous for the many important Digambara philosophers such as Samanta Bhadra and Siddha Sena Divākara in its ranks. It had/has seats in Kāraṅjā (Akola, Berara) and Kolāpur (still existing) in Mahārāṣṭra. The tradition was occasionally called Sūrasthāgaṇa and may have been popular in Saurāṣṭra during a certain period. The last bhattāraka of this tradition was apparently Vīra Sena, a great believer in Kunda Kunda's Samayasāra, who died sometime between 1850 and 1938 (Joharāpurakāra 1958: 6f., 26–38, cf. Upadhye 1948, M. U. K. Jain 1975: 84–88).

The tradition is first mentioned in inscriptions of the tenth century, most of them in Kārṇāṭaka. Its branches had seats in Ajmer, Bāṅpur, Cittāur, Jaypur, Jēhrahāt, Nāgaur (Rājasthān), Ater, Gvālīyari, Senāgiri (Mālvā), Īḍar, Surat (Gujārāt), Bāṅnapur, Jēhrahāt, Malakhed and its sub-branches Kāraṅjā and Lāṭūr (Mahārāṣṭra). See Joharāpurakāra 1958: 6f., 44–47, and the lineage diagram p. 209. The seats had special links to particular local castes, such as the Hūmaḍ caste in Surat, the Lāmek caste in Ater, the Parvār caste in Jēhrahāt and the Khandēvlā caste in Dillī and Jaypur (ibid.: 12). From the tenth (Sāstrī 1985b: 535) or the fourteenth century (Joharāpurakāra 1958: 44) the tradition was known under the names Sarasaṁvatī Gaccha, Vāgeśvāri Gaccha, Bhārati Gaccha, Sāradā Gaccha. The original name seems to have been Balaṅgā Gana (ibid.: 44, cf. M. U. K. Jain 1975: 88ff.) and Nandi Saṅgha (Hoernle 1891: 350, 1892: 73). In Kananda Balagāra (bālegāra) means bangle-maker (a caste name) which was transformed into Skt. balatkāra or ‘force’ according to A. N. Upadhye. I am grateful to P. S. Jaini for this information. Joharāpurakāra 1958: 71–78. The tradition was established in the late fourteenth/early fifteenth century. The nineteenth and last paṭṭa of this branch was Devendra Kirti, who died in 1916 (ibid.: 76f., n. 29). The Lāṭūra Sākha split off this line in 1675 (ibid.: 77). Two samādhīs have been built for bhattārakas of this tradition (M. U. K. Jain 1975: 90, n. 80).

Joharāpurakāra 1958: 86–90. See the picture of Bhaṭṭāraka Viśāl Kirti (died 1891) and of his successor who was also called Viśāl Kirti and enthroned in 1914 (ibid.: 89f.). The seat in Lāṭūra is revered by the Saitavā Jains (M. U. K. Jain 1975: 94, n. 92). According to Tuschen (1995: 23), it became defunct only recently.

This tradition started the bhattāraka tradition by introducing the custom of wearing clothes in public. The main seats of this now defunct line, which was first closely connected with the Baghēvlā caste and later with the ‘Hūṃḍa’ and Brāhmaṇ castes were Surat etc. in Gujarāt, Ajmer, Dillī and Jaypur. After the death of Padma Nandini in 1493, the Uttra Sākha branched out into the Īḍar, Surat and Dillī-Jaypur Sākkhas (Joharāpurakāra 1958: 93–96, cf. M. U. K. Jain 1975: 94–96).


In 1477 the Bāṅnapura Sākha split off the Īḍara Sākha. The last bhattāraka was apparently Devacandra (1730–1748). See Joharāpurakāra 1958: 166–168. According to M. U. K. Jain 1975: 105 a splinter group of the tradition still prevailed in South India in 1975 (?).
Among the great Jaina tirthankaras, who lived in the first millennium BCE, the most prominent was Mahavira, the 24th and last tirthankara of the Jaina tradition. His life is said to have been divided into three parts: the ascetic (sāmghikā), the period when he was a layman, and the period when he was a monk. He is believed to have lived for 1300 years and to have attained liberation (moksha) at the age of 100.

Mahavira is said to have been a son of a hereditary king of the Mavala clan. He was born in a place called Vaishali, near the city of Shravasti, which was part of the kingdom of Magadha. Mahavira was the son of Shrenika, a learned and righteous man, and of Tapasvini, a woman of noble birth. His father was a member of the royal family, and his mother was a member of the prominent family of the Mathuravarnas.

Mahavira is said to have been a great teacher and a reformer of the Jain religious tradition. He is said to have taught a path of asceticism and renunciation, which he called the "Great Lieu" (mahavijaya). Mahavira is said to have taught a philosophy called "Jainism," which is characterized by a belief in the non-violence of all living beings, and a belief in the importance of meditation and the chanting of mantras.

Mahavira is also said to have been a great poet and a writer. He is said to have written several important books, including the "Jaina Sutras." These books are said to have been written in Sanskrit, and are said to have been translated into several other languages, including Pali and Prakrit.

Many of the stories and teachings of Mahavira are recorded in the "Jaina Sutras," which are said to be the foundational texts of the Jaina tradition. The "Jaina Sutras" are said to contain the teachings of Mahavira, and are said to be the most authoritative source of information about his life and teachings.

Mahavira is said to have been a charismatic and popular leader, and he is said to have attracted a large following of disciples, who were known as the "Jaina SIDDHAS." Mahavira is said to have been a great leader and a great teacher, and he is said to have been a great reformer of the Jaina tradition.

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According to Bhaṭṭārakas, the search for a worthy muni, or a layman who can become a mahāsannadhi is: ‘is se sāph mālām hotā hai kai, bhaṭṭārakast vāstav men grhaṭha naḥṭi hai, muni tathā ācārya hain’ (ibid.: 28). Joharapurkar, interviewed by Shāntā 1985: 186, n. 99, emphasised that even today’s bhaṭṭārakas continue to accept five ‘mahāvratas’ (effectively anuvratas), not only four as often mentioned in the literature, for instance in Flügel 2003a: 8. According to Carrithers 1990: 151, ‘the method of succession was derived not from any Jain prescriptions but from the usages of local polity’. This impression is echoed by the views of the bhaṭṭārakas Jīna Sena and Laksṇī Sena (personal communication 2–4 January 2004).


According to Pārśurāmarāṣṭriya Bhaṭṭāraka Samāj, the name of the first bhaṭṭāraka of the Sena Gaṇa was Vīḍyā Sāgar and the first mathas were established in Dīllī, Kolhāpura, Jīnākāśī (Tamil Nādu) and Penagonḍa (Andra Pradesh) — the mathas of his associates. Personal communication, Kolhāpura 4 January 2005. V. Sāstri 1932: 5–7 gives the line of succession of Vīḍyā Sāgar, whose samādhi is in Akhvāt/Zīlā Cikōḍī. It comprises some munis, but ends with Bhaṭṭāraka Vidyā Mān (r. 1904 ff.), whose conduct is unfavourably contrasted with Muni Sāntī Sāgar’s.

205 The current seat was established in the tenth century and derives its descent from the
Associated with the Bog

204 Associated with the Caturtha caste (ibid.), ‘the only caste among the Jainas
Traditionally associated with the Up
A

203 Also called Jinak
Associated with the Pañcama caste (ibid.), and governed by Bha

202 Traditionally associated with the Up
a

201 Associated with the K
u

200 Associated with the K
j

199 Associated with the K
198 The seat was established in the eighth century and belongs to the M

197 Personal communication by the Jain Bhavan in Bangalore 31 December 2005 and by
Bhaṭṭaraka Jina Sena, Nāndanī 2 February 2005, who seems to be the only bhaṭṭaraka
who currently has a disciple, Brahmaṇaṅ Śravha Sena. According to Tuschen 1997:
23, the seats of Bhaṭṭaraka Viśālakīrti in Lāṭūr in Mahārāṣṭra (traditionally associated
with the Saitavāḷa caste) and Bhaṭṭaraka Yaśakīrti in Pratāpaṅgār in Rājasthān (traditionally
associated with the Narasiṅhapura caste), which are mentioned by Sangave 2001: 135, are now defunct. This would leave only nine bhaṭṭarakas. For the names of more than thirty-six old bhaṭṭaraka seats see Joharāpurkara 1958: 6f., M. U. K. Jain
1975: 131, Sangave 2001: 134. In addition to the seats that can be linked to specific
traditions, Joharāpurkara 1958: 6f. mentions a number of other, now equally defunct,
seats in Eastern India (Ārā), Gujarāṭ (Navasārī, Bhadaṇārī, Khambhāṭ, Jāmbūsārī,
Ghoğhā), Māḷvā (Devgarh, Dhārā Nāgarī, Lālitpur, Māhuā, Dūṅgarpūr, Indaur,
Sāgavāḍā, Aṭer) and Mahārāṣṭra (branches in Riddhipur, Bāḷūpūr, Rāmāṭek, Nāṇed,
Devagiṅ, Paithan, Śrīrād, Vant, Vairāṭ, Vaphāḍ, Malayakhed, Kāryajatīkpur, etc.).
There is currently no information on the old seats in the Paṁjāb, only on various seats in Dillī. Apart from Merath and Hastināṇpur, there are no bhaṭṭaraka seats reported from Uttar Pradeś. Sangave 2001: 134 mentions the additional seats of Jehraḥāṭ, Kesārīyaji, Mahāvīrī (Rājasthān), Sonāgīrī (Māḷvā), Bhanpur, Sojīrāṭ, Kalol (Gujarāṭ), Nāgpur, Nāndānī (Mahārāṣṭra), Narasiṅhapura (Karnāṭaka), Svādī in Sondā (Karnāṭaka) and Melasītīmūra, that is Jinakāṇcī (Tamil Nādu).

196 See Sangave 2001: 136. In 1875–1876, Bühler 1878: 28 visited a bhaṭṭaraka in Delhi,
who was accompanied by ‘ascetics (who are called paṇḍitis)’. Bühler described the
bhaṭṭarakas he had met during his travels as ‘very ignorant’. This statement was still
echoed by Sangave 1980: 321f. 100 years later. See Cort (in this volume p. 299 n.9)
on the Canderī seat of Bhaṭṭaraka Devendrākīrti.

195 The seat is associated with the Caturtha caste (ibid.), ‘the only caste among the Jainas
which follows agriculture as the main occupation’ (Sangave 1980: 96), and is governed
by Bhaṭṭaraka Cārūktīrī II, who is a non-Shetty (Śresṣṭhi) Jain, were not of that caste. There is a Trust comprising
members of all three local castes (Shetty, non-Shetty, Upādhāya) who selected the
current bhaṭṭaraka (on suggestion of Bhaṭṭaraka Cārūktīrī of Śravanabelagolā).

204 Associated with the Bhaṭṭaraka Lalitkīrti (Tuschen 1997:
A

203 The seat is associated with the Caturtha caste (ibid.), ‘the only caste among the Jainas
which follows agriculture as the main occupation’ (Sangave 1980: 96), and is governed
by Bhaṭṭaraka Jina Sena. The seat has three other mathas under its administration, in Kolhāpura, Tedāl and Belgārīv – and in the past also in Dillī.

202 Traditionally associated with the Upādhāya caste (ibid.). According to P. S. Jaini
(personal communication), the last two, including the current Bhaṭṭaraka Cārūktīrī II,
who is a non-Shetty (Śresṣṭhi) Jain, were not of that caste. There is a Trust comprising
members of all three local castes (Shetty, non-Shetty, Upādhāya) who selected the
current bhaṭṭaraka (on suggestion of Bhaṭṭaraka Cārūktīrī of Śravanabelagolā).

201 Also called Jinakāṇcī. Associated with the Kṣatriya and Vaiśya castes and governed by
Bhaṭṭaraka Lalikīrti (ibid.).

200 Associated with the Paṅcama caste (ibid.), and governed by Bhaṭṭaraka Laksmti Sena I
(I add Roman numbers to distinguish bhaṭṭarakas with the same title). The seat has two other mathas under its administration, in Hostrū-Belgarīv and Rāybhāg, and is associated with the Sena Gaṇa matha in Dillī, Jinakāṇcī and Penagonda (Śiṁhanagaddī in Narasiṅhapurāpurā). For Laksmti Sena’s works see for instance Sangave 2003.

199 Associated with the Kṣatriya caste (ibid.), and governed by Bhaṭṭaraka Lalitkīrti.

198 The seat was established in the eighth century and belongs to the Mūla Śaṅgha
Kundakundān-gayā Nandī Śaṅgha Sarasvatī Gaccha Balāṭkāra Gaṇa (Tuschen 1997:
28). It is associated with the Bogāra caste (Sangave 1980: 318, 2001: 137) and gov-
erned by Bhaṭṭaraka Devendrākīrti.

197 Personal communication by the Jain Bhavan in Bangalore 31 December 2005 and by
Bhaṭṭaraka Jina Sena, Nāndanī 2 February 2005, who seems to be the only bhaṭṭaraka
who currently has a disciple, Brahmaṇaṅ Śravha Sena. According to Tuschen 1997:
23, the seats of Bhaṭṭaraka Viśālakīrti in Lāṭūr in Mahārāṣṭra (traditionally associated
with the Saitavāḷa caste) and Bhaṭṭaraka Yaśakīrti in Pratāpaṅgār in Rājasthān (traditionally
associated with the Narasiṅhapura caste), which are mentioned by Sangave 2001: 135, are now defunct. This would leave only nine bhaṭṭarakas. For the names of more than thirty-six old bhaṭṭaraka seats see Joharāpurkara 1958: 6f., M. U. K. Jain
1975: 131, Sangave 2001: 134. In addition to the seats that can be linked to specific
traditions, Joharāpurkara 1958: 6f. mentions a number of other, now equally defunct,
seats in Eastern India (Ārā), Gujarāṭ (Navasārī, Bhadaṇārī, Khambhāṭ, Jāmbūsārī,
Ghoğhā), Māḷvā (Devgarh, Dhārā Nāgarī, Lālitpur, Māhuā, Dūṅgarpūr, Indaur,
Sāgavāḍā, Aṭer) and Mahārāṣṭra (branches in Riddhipur, Bāḷūpūr, Rāmāṭek, Nāṇed,
Devagiṅ, Paithan, Śrīrād, Vant, Vairāṭ, Vaphāḍ, Malayakhed, Kāryajatīkpur, etc.).
There is currently no information on the old seats in the Paṁjāb, only on various seats in Dillī. Apart from Merath and Hastināṇpur, there are no bhaṭṭaraka seats reported from Uttar Pradeś. Sangave 2001: 134 mentions the additional seats of Jehraḥāṭ, Kesārīyaji, Mahāvīrī (Rājasthān), Sonāgīrī (Māḷvā), Bhanpur, Sojīrāṭ, Kalol (Gujarāṭ), Nāgpur, Nāndānī (Mahārāṣṭra), Narasiṅhapura (Karnāṭaka), Svādī in Sondā (Karnāṭaka) and Melasītīmūra, that is Jinakāṇcī (Tamil Nādu).

196 See Sangave 2001: 136. In 1875–1876, Bühler 1878: 28 visited a bhaṭṭaraka in Delhi,
who was accompanied by ‘ascetics (who are called paṇḍitis)’. Bühler described the
bhaṭṭarakas he had met during his travels as ‘very ignorant’. This statement was still
echoed by Sangave 1980: 321f. 100 years later. See Cort (in this volume p. 299 n.9)
on the Canderī seat of Bhaṭṭaraka Devendrākīrti.
seats left until the head of the Deśiya Gana, Bhattāraka Cāruktīri of Śrāvanabelagolā, created three more bhattāraka seats: in Karmātaka Kambadahalli/Nagamangala (Bhattāraka Bhāmukūrti), and Kanakagiri Matha in Maleyur (Bhattāraka Bhuvanakūrti), and in Tamil Nādu Tiruvannamalai (Bhattāraka Dhavālakūrti). Apart from the Hūmachā Matha, and the Svādī Matha in Sondā which is governed by Bhattāraka Bhattākālanka, all bhattāraka seats are presently under the authority of Lakṣmī Sena of Kolhāpura for the Sena Gana, and of Cāruktīri of Śrāvanabelagolā for the Deśiya Gana.

207 Many casts of the Jains were founded by ācāryas and/or bhattārakas. The most important Śvetāmbara castes are the Osāls and the Śrīmāls. Of the Digambara Kāsthā Saṅgha, the Nandītāt Gacch leader Rām Sena founded the Narasinhapura caste, his pupil Nemi Sena the Bhattāpurā caste, and the Ratnākar caste was apparently founded by Devendra Kīrtī I. Of some Digambara castes the exogamous subgroups (gotra) or/and their dasa and bisa sub-categories are associated with different branches of the main bhattāraka traditions. The Baghervāla caste was partly founded by the Mula Saṅgha ācārya Rām Sena (25 gotras) and partly by the Kāsthā Saṅgha ācārya Lohā (27 gotras). The Nāgaur branch of the Balātkāra Gana commanded the following of several gotras of the Kahnēlāvāla caste etc. (Joharāpūrkāra 1958: 13).

208 The bhattārakas of the Humāda, Narasinhapura and Kahnēlāvāla castes until recently selected their own successor (Kalor, Narasinhapura), while the bhattāraka of the Saitavāla, Caturtha, Paṇcama, Upādhyāya, Bogāra, Vaiśya and Kṣatriya castes were chosen by the representatives (paṇcā) of these castes (Sangave 1980: 319f.). The only exception is the influential seat of Śrāvanabelagolā, whose bhattāraka is since 1931 chosen by a committee of lay followers which is selected by the Government of Kārmātaka (ibid., Tuschen 1997: 33). Sangave 1980: 319–321 found that only the bhattārakas of the Humāda caste could be removed by their followers in the past. Although they preside over a particular caste, the bhattārakas do not need to be member of the caste and ideally represent all Jains. Lakṣmī Sena of Kolhāpura, for instance, was born in Tamil Nādu into the Saitavāla caste, but presides over the Paṇcama caste.

209 In 1945, the Land Sealing Act of Kārmātaka led to the acquisition of most landholdings of the bhattārakas by the government in exchange for monetary compensation, whose ownership is in many cases still disputed in the courts between the Digambara laity and the bhattārakas.

210 According to Shāntā 1985: 134f., the munis apparently entirely disappeared in the seventeenth century.

211 Shāntā 1985: 134f. A modest revival of the institution of the bhattāraka was triggered recently because of the desire to spread Jainism across the borders of India and because of a renewed interest in community education. In response to modern demands, the bhattārakas made themselves accessible to members of other castes than their own and created – without much success – a common institutional platform in 1969 and arranged the first bhattāraka sammelan (Sangave 2001: 143), which was followed by several others.

212 Carrithers 1989: 150. In 1926–7, Rāvijī Sakhārām Doṣi, in G. P. Jauhart, in V. Śāstri 1932: 7f., and G. P. Jauhart of the Akhil Bhāratavārṣiya Digambara Jain Mahāsābhā (ibid.: 56f.), emphasised the need to re-introduce the munis to North India to propagate true religion (’jain dharma kta yathārtha tathā utkṛṣṭa prabhāvanā’), and unity amongst all Digambara societies in India (ibid.: 84–86).

213 Most Kahnēlāvālas live in North India, where no bhattāraka seats exist anymore.

214 Some of the first disciples of Śānti Sāgar, such as Vīr Sāgar and Candra Sāgar, were Kahnēlāvāls. See D. Śāstri 1985.

215 S. C. Jain 1940: 3f. In the twentieth century, after an earlier failure of transregional sect-caste associations, a number of Digambara Jain caste associations were established with the intention of reforming the Digambara community and creating
transregional solidarities amongst geographically dispersed North Indian castes with a dominant Digambara Jain membership. The Jain Khandelvâla Mahâsabhâ, for instance, which was founded in 1920, is today organised into 15 prântas, or regions. Other examples are the Baghervâl Jain Mahâsabhâ and the Jain Padmâvati Porvâl Mahâsabhâ. Similar organisations which strive to establish independent sect-castes are relatively rare among Svetâmbara Jains, whose transregional organisations are usually founded exclusively on religious criteria (Kâsâlîvâl 1992: 14f.). Cf. R. K. Jain 1999: 67.

216 The anti-printing movement called itself Śâstrâ-Mudrâna Virodhî Andolana: ‘Murder threads were made against those involved in printing, and printing shops were blown up’ (Sangave 1981/2001: 62).

217 At the time, Jain castes were generally divided in at least two ranked sections: the lower dasa and the higher bîsa sub-castes. The following social reforms were advocated by the Pariṣad: 1. child widow remarriage (bâla-viśhâvatâbhiva); 2. marriage across caste boundaries; 3. allowing members of dasa families to participate in the pûjā pâtha, etc., within a society where mixed dasa-bîsa marriages were practised; 4. abolition of death feasts (marâna bhôjana); 5. abolition of excessive feasts and gift-giving at pratiṣṭhâ ceremonies (new pratiṣṭhâ pâtha: as a rule only old images should be consecrated); 6. raising the status of women through the foundation of womens’ institutions (S. C. Jain 1940: 3f.).

218 Kâsâlîvâl 1992: 11f. In 1902, the influential Bhâratarṣvârya Digambara Jain Tîrtha Kṣetra Kâmêti (BDJTKK) was founded by Manîkcand Hirâcand Jauhari (1851–1913) in Bombay as a sub-committee of the Mahâsabhâ. It became independent on 24 November 1930 and still has its office in the Hirâbâg Dharmaśâlâ compound in Mumbai, owned by the Jauhar family trust. For administrative reasons, it divided India into six zones. Another national association, the Digambara Jain Mahâsâmîti, was set up in 1974 by Sâhâ Sânti Prasâd in New Delhi for the promotion of Digambara unity during the year celebrating Mahâvîra’s 2500th death day. In contrast to the Mahâsabhâ, which is composed of individuals, it is organised in the form of a ‘Jain samâsad’, or parliament, that is, on the basis of regional representatives (Kâsâlîvâl 1992: 12f.). However, after the death of its founder, the organisation failed to deliver and is now defunct. In 1983, the Kundakunda-Kahnhâ Tîrtha Raksâ Trust was founded in order to promote the worship of Kânji Svâmî (who declared himself to be a Digambara Têrâ Panthî) in his putative reincarnation as the tirthânâkara Sûrya Kirti. This was in 1985 vigorously opposed both by the Mahâsabhâ, whose patron saints were Muni Dharma Sâgar and Áryikâ Jîân Mâtâ in Hastinâpur, and by the Mahâsâmîti, whose patron saint was Muni Vidyânând in 1985. However, the main representatives of the Mahâsâmîti, the Sâhû Jain family (Times of India) and Premcand Jain (Jayna Watch Co.) in Delhi, had once supported Kânji Svâmî and failed to join the united front against the Kânji Panth supporters at Sôngad (R. K. Jain 1999: 114–117). The Meerut Court decided on the 6 December 2000 that Kânji Panthîs are not Digambara Jains (case no. 9/91, quoted by N. K. Jain, Jain friends@yahoogroups.com, 21 June 2001). Both the Mahâsabhâ and the Mahâsâmîti are dominated by Khandelvâls. A rival organisation to the Tîrtha Kṣetra Kâmêti, the Jaina Samrâkṣan Mâheca, was recently set up in Jaypur, in order to protect old temples from partial demolition and reconstruction under instructions of modern munis.

219 V. Sâstrî 1932: 5 lists a number of ‘nigrantha bhattârakas’ for the beginning of the nineteenth century. See Carrithers 1990: 148f. and Cort 2002: 71, n. 8 for further references on the so-called nirvânas svâmanis, who did not travel much and seemed to have dressed themselves in public.


221 Ibid., citing Digambara Jain 9, 1: 18–23, ed. Mûlcand Kiśandâs Kâpadiyâ, Surat.

385
Eternal lights in the form of oil-lamps can be found at a variety of samādhī mandiras for Digambara muniś; for instance at the Vimal Sāgar Samādhi Mandira in Madhuban.

This is emphasised in a proclamation by C. R. Jain 1931, Ghoshal 1932.

The original announcement of G. P. Jauhar was published in 1926 in the journal Jaina Bodhakā. It was reprinted by V. Śaṅkra 1932: 46–48, whose book gives a detailed account of this momentous pilgrimage.

One should assume that the visit to Mount Śīkhar would have helped the pending court cases between Digambara, Śvetāmbaras, and the Government concerning the control of the site.


Ibid.

For one view of the resulting structure, see Kāsālīval 1998: n.p.

D. Śaṅkra 1985, Rājkul Jain 2003: 213–221. Dates were converted with the computer program of M. Yano and M. Fushimi: http://ccnic15.kyoto-su.ac.jp/yanom/pancanga


Āryikās never receive foods in their hands nor in a standing posture, and apparently do not perform keśa luṇcana.

The aīlakas, kṣullakas and kṣullikās are also called tyāgīs. See R. K. Jain 1999: 80. Similar debates on the status of women are known from early on (Jainī 1991). According to some early medieval Digambara scriptures, at least some medieval Digambara or Yāpanīya traditions also formed a four-fold saṅgha, with nuns being recognised as mendicants rather than as laypeople (Schubring 2000: § 30, p. 61).

Personal communications by different Digambara śrāvakas.

This is emphasised in a proclamation by Ācārya Vimal Sāgar 23 October 1993, reprinted in Brahmacārīnī Mainābāt Jain 1996: xv, which requests the laity to mediate the ‘foolish’ disputes between the two lineages with reference to the common Agamas: ‘samājī kā kartavya hai kā kis kā vīvād na karke donōm ācārya paramparā ko aṅgam sammat mānakar vātāya se dharma prabhāvān kareṁ.’ The writings of Ādi Sāgar were published by B. M. Jain 1996.


His death memorial is in Madhuban at Sammet Śīkhara.
The desire to become an ṛcārya and the abolition of the once prevalent practice that an ṛcārya can be enthroned only after the death of his predecessor have contributed to the creation of many splits and independently roaming ṛcāryas (personal communication by Nitrāj Jain, 12 June 2003).


Vīr Sāgār ‘Solapur’ is said to have been close to Kāṇṭhī Śvāmī’s views, though his interpretation of the texts was slightly different.

This line is also claimed by the bhāṭāraka of Hūmāchā today.

Copade 1936.


According to Dhaky (1991), this is because of ‘the profound reverence and a very false notion as regards the antiquity of Kundakundācārya’ (ibid.: 203, n. 30).


Personal communication of Nitrāj Jain, 16.6.2003.

Including, occasionally, demolishing old temples in order to replace them with new ones.

The Agravāla Digambaras, who are dominant in the Pañjāb and in U.P., belong also to mixed Hindu-Jain caste.

Critics ask: ‘Why only cows?’

‘vītārāg sādhu kā koṃ panth naṁtī hotā’ (P. Ģāstrī 1985b: 540).


Saletore 1940: 124.

For information on the contemporary Digambara ascetics I wish to thank in particular Dr. A. Jain, Dr N. L. Jain, Nitrāj Jain and Manish Modi.


In 2002, only Ācārya Vidyā Sāgār provided complete data to B. U. Jain 2002: 324.

For 1996, B. U. Jain 1996: 326 gives the following sums, which differ from the detailed information on individual ascetic groups in his own text: 36 ācāryas, 143 cāturmāsā places, 352 munīs, 305 āryikās and a total of 657 mendicants. For want of additional information, I was unable to check the extent of the inaccuracy of the figures. I met Muni Anand Sāgār, who is now an upādhyāya, in 1981. He was then alone and apparently still is. In 1992, I observed that the group of Kunthu Sāgār had in all 34 ascetics, 18 munīs, 3 kṣullakās, 2 aīlakās and 11 āryikās, a figure which seems to corroborate B. U. Jain’s numbers for 1987. The subsequent decrease in numbers can be explained by Ācārya Kanak Nandi’s separation from Kunthu Sāgār in the early 1990s. My third example shows that the true number of ascetics must be much higher. Ācārya Rāyaṇ Sāgār who is not included in the table, is listed by B. U. Jain as a single individual
without mentioning the number of ascetics accompanying him. In 1999, his group had 8 members: 1 ācārya, 1 upādhīya, 4 munis, 1 ailaka and 1 ksullaka.

The word saṅgha is used for groups of two and more ascetics.

On the definition of these categories as ‘novices’ see Carrithers 1990: 153, Flügel 2001: 76f.

There is no equivalent female category because ailakas (elaka) can wear only one loin cloth, which is not considered to be proper for women.

The word ‘group’ is not really applicable.

It happens that individuals, though initiated by other munis, are counted under the name of their new ‘ādhikṣā guru’ after changing to a new saṅgha. Personal communication by Niraj Jain, June 2003.

The accuracy of the data is confirmed by the identical names in A. Jain’s lists.

The chosen successor, who is called yuvācārya among the Śvetāmbaras.

The titles have been given to only nine monks by the ācāryas Sanmati Sāgar (ācāryakalpa and bālācārya), Kunthu Sāgar (ācāryakalpa 2x, and ailācārya), Ajit Sāgar (ācāryakalpa), and Sumati Sāgar (ailācārya) (A. Jain 2001: 11).

For their names, see B. U. Jain’s and A. Jain’s publications.

This is evident in the mixed composition of the ācāryas’ groups documented by A. Jain 2001: 1–11. See also Zydenbos 1999: 296f.; who cites questionable estimates that no more than 10–15 Digambara saṅghas, headed by an ācārya, exist.

The other bigger saṅghas are those of Ācārya Dharma Sāgar’s successors Abhinandan Sāgar and Vardhaman Sāgar, Deś Bhūṣān’s successors Bāhubali Sāgar and Subal Sāgar, and Vimal Sāgar’s successor Vīra G Sāgar. Cf. A. Jain 2001: 1–11.

The accuracy of the data is confirmed by the identical names in A. Jain’s lists. Through the comparison with the names listed by B. U. Jain (2002) the independently roaming groups of munis and āryikās under the command of Vidyā Sāgar can be clearly identified. In 2001 the saṅgha had 188 members: 63 munis, 10 ailakas, 113 āryikās and 2 ksullakas. The changes between 2001 and 2002 are minimal: in 2002 the group had 3 more divisions of altogether 2 more independently roaming munis, but 2 members less in the ācārya’s group, 4 āryikās less, and 2 ksullakas less (A. Jain 2001). The munis were divided into 17 divisions: the ācārya’s group, with 39 members (38 munis including the ācārya and 1 ailaka), and 16 other groups of altogether 25 munis. In addition, 1 unit of 2 ailakas roaming together, and 7 ailakas and 2 ksullakas wandering alone. The 113 āryikās were divided in 17 divisions, which altogether represented 23.6% of all 72 divisions of Digambara nuns.

The word ‘group’ is not really applicable.

R. K. Jain 1999: 80 describes these ‘tyāgits’, or renouncers, as regionally oriented ‘priests’ which can be compared to the bhāttārakas, a hypothesis which still needs to be tested.

According to B. U. Jain 1999: 372f., Vidyā Sāgar’s order is the only mendicant group where the āryikās do not spend cāturāṃśa at the same location as the munis.

Six groups of altogether forty seven āryikās spent cāturāṃśa Kāraṇā in Mahārāṣṭra (B. U. Jain 2002: 310).


Zydenbos 1999: 295. Svarna Matī (1), Viṣuddha Matī (1), and Ananta Matī (1) are listed by D. Sāstrī 1985: 555, 567.

It happens that individuals, though initiated by other munis, are counted under the name of their new ‘ādhikṣā guru’ after changing to a new saṅgha. Personal communication by Niraj Jain, June 2003.

388
286 D. Śāstrī 1985: 569.
291 This is one of the biggest difference between Digambara ācāryas and bhaṭṭārakas as well as Śvetāmbara ācāryas.
292 See also Zydenbos 1999: 297.
293 This is the oldest method amongst the modern muni saṅghas according to Ācārya Puṣpadanta (personal communication Mumbai 24 October 2003).
295 An estimated figure of 10% was cited to me, which may be exaggerated.
296 The data are too unreliable to attach much significance to specific changes, such as the diminishing percentage of male mendicants.
297 See Fohr’s article in this volume.
299 These percentages do not reflect a similar share of the Jain laity, for which no reliable data are available. Many Digambaras are affiliated to reformist lay traditions without separate ascetic orders. The regional, caste and class background of the ascetics also varies. Most of the ascetics of the Śramaṇa Saṅgha and the independent Sthānakavāśī traditions stem from the Osāvl and Srimālī castes in Rājasthān, Madhya Pradeś, Mahārāstra and the Paṇḍā, but also from southern India (Shāntā: 1985: 333). The Gujarāṭī Sthānakavāśī traditions and the Tapā Gaccha groups recruit their ascetics almost exclusively in Gujarāṭ and amongst the Gujarāṭī population in Mumbai, the Kharatara Gaccha and the Śvetāmbara Terā Panth in Rājasthān, and the Digambara groups mainly in Karnātaka and Madhya Pradeś, to name only the most important mendicant traditions. The average size of the itinerant groups in 1999 was 4–5 in all four traditions (Muṛtipuṭṭaka 4.6, Sthānakavāśī 4.2, Terā Panth 5.69, Digambara 5.05).
300 The comparison is only meaningful because of the ‘improvement in reporting of religion’ in the censuses after 1971 (M. K. Jain 1986: 35). The doubling of the absolute number of Jains recorded in the censuses of 1951–1971 (which is not matched by the mendicant population) is generally interpreted as an effect of under-reporting during the colonial period. If this is true, then it must be concluded that – relative to the total population of India – the number of Jains is continually declining.
301 A variant of this approach is M. Spiro’s theory of renunciation as a psychological defense-mechanism, which has been applied to the Jain case by Goonasekere 1986: 179f.
302 This figure more than doubles, if nuns and novices are included. See Bechert 1973: 580f.
303 The 2000 edition of the Vatican’s Annuario Pontificio, gives for 1998 the figure of 57,813 monks and 814,779 nuns (ratio 1: 14). The monastic population as a whole represented 0.086% of all Roman Catholics. Overall numbers are declining, especially the population of nuns, which was 990,768 in 1978: http://www.sspxasia.com/Countries/World/NewsArchive.htm
304 For data confirming this for the Terāpanthī see Flügel forthcoming.
305 ‘Socioeconomically troubled families, especially those of the middle classes, often seek relief from their frustrations and insecurities by becoming religious’ (Goonasekere 1986: 123).
306 Vallely 2002: 197 tried to solve the problem through re-definition: ‘Within the order, desire to belong to the group, or attraction to a charismatic leader, is not treated as a
At the moment, the increased mobility of the laity compensates only for the migration of families of renouncers are more supportive than in the past (Mumba 2003). An investigation of the self-reported motives of Terā Panth mendicants showed, however, that ‘religious’ reasons were more prevalent amongst sadhus rather than sadhvis (Flügel, forthcoming). Jay Sundar Sūri’s disciples Prem Sundar Vijay and Harṣad Vijay explained the increasing number of (male) mendicants with the increasing wealth of the Jain community, which now can afford to lose valuable workforce and to feed a growing community of materially dependent mendicants. Apparently, nowadays families of renouncers are more supportive than in the past (Mumbai 1 November 2003).

In a personal conversation, the Tapā Gaccha acārya Jay Sundar Sūri stated that men believe in ‘heroism’, while women are ‘more impressionable, more spiritual’ (Mumbai 23 October 2003). An investigation of the self-reported motives of Terā Panth mendicants showed, however, that ‘religious’ reasons were more prevalent amongst sadhus rather than sadhvis (Flügel, forthcoming). Jay Sundar Sūri’s disciples Prem Sundar Vijay and Harṣad Vijay explained the increasing number of (male) mendicants with the increasing wealth of the Jain community, which now can afford to lose valuable workforce and to feed a growing community of materially dependent mendicants. Apparently, nowadays families of renouncers are more supportive than in the past (Mumbai 1 November 2003).

Most but not all sadhvis come from Jain families, while an increasing number of sadhus are recruited from non-Jain tribal communities who seek material improvements through the association with the Jains. An unresolved difficulty for this interpretation is that, for reasons of tradition, educational opportunities are limited for Mūrtipūjaka sadhvis.

In the decades since Independence, with the rise in the age of marriage and the increase in health standards, this [widows becoming sadhvis, P.F.] has changed. Most Jain women are now married when they are in their early or mid 20s, and so even if they become widows they most likely have had children. Having to raise the children means that becoming a sadhvi is less of a realistic option for a widow. Changing social attitudes toward widows also makes it less likely that a Jain widow feels that she has little choice but to become a sadhvi. . . Today the vast majority of sadhvis have never been married; becoming a sadhvi is now seen as an alternative vocation to that of a housewife (Cort 1989: 111f.).

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By 1982, nine acāryas alone had initiated some 300 ascetics (munis, aīlakas, kṣullakas, āryikās, kṣullikās): Śānti Sāgar (20), Vīr Sāgar (23), Śīv Sāgar (28), Dharma Sāgar (61), Vidyā Sāgar (18), Deś Bhūṣan (33), Mahāvīr Kīrti (24), Sanmati Sāgar (26), Vimal Sāgar (65) (D. Sāstrel 1985).

At the moment, the increased mobility of the laity compensates only for the migration from rural to urban locations and abroad.

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DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS IN JAINA MONASTICISM


DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS IN JAINA MONASTICISM


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PETER FLÜGEL


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DEMOCRATIC TRENDS IN JAINA MONASTICISM


397


