
In the introduction of his recent Wörterbuch Ardhamagadhr-Deutsch (Vichtrach: Institut für Indologie, 2003, p. 10), the first dictionary of its kind, Klaus Mylius states that he had to resist the temptation to incorporate the entire technical vocabulary of canonical Jinism (Jainism). Although only selected words from a limited number of Jain canonical texts and glossaries of A. Weber, H. Jacobi, E. Leumann, W. Schubring, and others found their way into the book, the dictionary comprises more than 17,500 entries. It has been reviewed by J. Gippert (Archiv Orientalní 71, 4 (2003): 595–7), A. Esche (Asiatische Studien 57, 4 (2003): 927–29), M. Mayrhofer (Die Sprache 43 (2002/3) (2004): 120–121), K. R. Norman (Asiatische Studien 58, 1 (2004): 264–66), and others.

The aims of the author’s more modestly sized Wörterbuch des kanonischen Jinismus (Dictionary of Canonical Jinism) are not clearly stated. The text offers a selection of Jain technical terms and proper names from the Ardhamagadhr dictionary, while adding more extensive explanations of their meaning and indicating the sources in which they occur. The book has eight sections. After the preface, and a short introduction, an overview of the forty-five texts of the Mūrtipūjaka Svetāmbara ‘Jaina-canon’ is offered in form of an idiosyncratic list which, for no apparent reason, omits three Uvanga texts, one of the Painnas, and one of the Cheyasuttas, while including two extra-canonical texts (the Karmagrantha and the Pailmacariya) rather than, for instance, the ancient Isibhāṣīyām, whose vocabulary is closest to the oldest texts of the canon. Next comes an alphabetical table of abbreviations, which is followed by a rather eccentric ‘list of primary literature (editions, translations, studies)’ which, for instance, cites Acārya Sāgaranandasūri’s 1915 edition of the Āgamas not under his name, which is missing, but under the name of the place of its publication (Mehasana). The eclectic bibliography of secondary literature does not include titles already listed under ‘primary literature’. Many useful references such as Royce Wiles’ ‘The Bibliography of the Svetambara Canon’ (Jain Journal 35, 2 (2000): 53–81; 35, 3 (2001): 104–131) could have been added. The dictionary itself comprises 2,500 keywords with Sanskrit chāya and ‘definitions, respectively explanations’ (p. 1) in the style of an encyclopaedia. The selected words focus on the ‘Jaina dogmatics’, ‘hagiography’ and ‘philosophy’, but less on ‘cosmography’ and other areas where ‘reality is dominated by phantasy’ (p. 2). Because of the ‘incompatibility of the available editions’ (p. 2) only the names of the
original sources of individual lemmata are given without mentioning specific verse numbers. Occasionally, references to the relevant secondary literature are inserted. A welcome unusual addition is a separate index of the Sanskrit words at the end of the book. The dictionary was obviously collated at great speed and would have benefited from more extensive consultation. In this way the lacunae and minor mistakes could have been limited. The introduction claims without hesitation that the Svetambara canon of forty-five texts was redacted in 508 CE, though the debated conventional dates are CE 453 or 466 (p. 1). There is also no specific ‘school’ associated with another cited list of fifty-two canonical texts. Moreover, the use of the word Jinisten (p. 1) for the modern word Jains (Skt. Jina) sounds somewhat old fashioned. One wonders whether German Jains would recognise themselves if so addressed.

However, these are minor criticisms. Students of Indology and those who study Jainism from the point of view of Anthropology, History or the Study of Religions will welcome this extremely useful and informative dictionary, which is available in paperback. The author has to be congratulated for having accomplished within a short period of time what four generations of distinguished Prakrit scholarship in Germany failed to do. With his two dictionaries he has prepared the ground for a transformation of Jainology in the German-speaking world from an inaccessible ‘secret science’ of academic elites into a subject which can be easily learned and taught.

Peter Flägel


At present, only four textbooks in European languages can be recommended unreservedly to any student of Jainism. The oldest and still most comprehensive work is Helmut von Glasenapp’s Der Jainismus: Eine Indische Erlösungsreligion (Berlin: Alf Häger Verlag, 1925) which was belatedly translated into English under the title Jainism. An Indian Religion of Salvation (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas, 1999). Although it contains long chapters on the history of Jainism and the Jain scriptures, the presentation of Jain doctrine is synchronic. It is largely based on the Tattvārthasūtra of Umasvāti of the 4th Century CE, the only text which is accepted by most Jains. Yet, sources from all periods are used, under the assumption that the ‘essential aspects’ of Jain doctrine remained the same through the ages. At the time, Glasenapp’s chapters on Jain universal history and hagiography were original contributions. Their principal sources are the works of the Svetambara authors Hemacandra (12th CE) and Vinayavijaya (17th CE), though conscious attempts are made to give equal consideration to Digambara views throughout. The last chapters of the book provide a general depiction of Jain society and contemporary religious practices.

One decade after Der Jainismus, Walther Lehre der Jains. Nach den alten Quellen dargelegt (Berlin & Co., 1935) appeared, and a translation published in 1962 (The Doctrine of the Jains, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas, 1962/1977/2000) is the clear favourite of students, because of its lucid presentation and ample learnable detail of classical Jainism. In contrast to Schubring’s book, the text is not cyclical, focusing almost exclusively on canonical texts and thereby reflecting the unprecedented increase of information during the last decade. The value of the use of diacritics throughout the text was acknowledged by reviewers of the first edition. Originally, Jainism for the series Library of Religious Beliefs and Practices was based on the author’s monograph A History of Jainism, published in 1977, which was extensively revised and improved for this new edition. The result is a complete and concise presentation of the Jain scriptures, the fundamental texts of the religion, and general information about the history, contemporary life and future development of Jainism. Jainism for the series Library of Religious Beliefs and Practices is a welcome addition to the literature on Jainism and a valuable resource for students and scholars interested in the religion.