

Jain Legend

Jain Dharma k  Maulika Itih sa

Author

 c rya r  Hast  Mala J  M.S

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Editors

(English Version)

Shugan C. Jain

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VOLUME 2

ABRIDGED

**Relating to Omniscient lords and knowers of the prior canons
(Part relating to Keval s & P rvadharas)**

Editorial

Jain Legend is the verbatim English translation of series of four volumes Jain Dharma kā Maulika Itihāsa (abridged) in Hindi edited by Sh. Gajsingh Rathod. The original voluminous Jain Dharma kā Maulika Itihāsa was authored by venerable Ācāryaśrī Hastīmala Jī M.S., the foremost ācārya of Sthanakavasi tradition of Jain congregation.

We have been extremely careful in maintaining the content of Jain Dharma kā Maulika Itihāsa (abridged) as it is without any changes / or adding comments by us so as to retain the authentic writings of Ācāryaśrī Hastīmala Jī M.S. Thus the English translation carries his scholarship and research over an extended period of over twenty years.

In this English edition, we have tried to keep some of the definitive terms of Jainism as they are and give their English equivalent (as much representative as possible) on the first occurrence and also listed at the end of this note. To appreciate their understanding and pronunciation, we have used diacritical marks for legendary names of persons / texts / places and the definitive Jain terms e.g. aṃga meaning the limb or part and commonly written as anga, etc.

We express my thanks to following translators and other support staff members for their contribution to bring out Jain Legend

- | | | |
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We request you, the august reader of this series Jain Legend, to please bring out any errors (spelling and the texts) and suggestions for improvement in language and choice of words to our notice for improving the next edition of this book.

Given below are the abbreviation, diacritical marks and some Jain definitive terms used in the books to enable the reader understand and enjoy the content and comprehend the same better.

Abbreviation:

V.N. Vira Nirvana: Calendar, starting after the liberation of Lord Mahavira.

M.S. Maharaja Sahib: Suffix used by Jains after the name of their preceptor / monk as a sign of respect / veneration.

Diacritical marks used

Ā	‘√k’	‘a’	like in <i>dark</i>
Ī	‘bʌ’	‘ee’ or ‘ii’	like in <i>steel</i>
Ū	‘Ā’	‘uu’ or ‘oo’	like in <i>school</i> or you
Ś	‘k²’	‘Sh’	like in <i>Shine</i>
ḍ	‘M²’	‘D’	like in <i>band</i>
Ṇ	‘.k²’	‘N’	like in <i>hand</i>
M	‘ka vuʌokj’		Short n, <i>nasal</i>
Ṭ	‘V²’	‘t’	like in <i>tea</i>
Ṣ	‘k²’	‘S’	like in <i>shut</i>
Ṛ	‘_’	‘Ri’	like in <i>Rishi</i>
Jñ	‘K²’	‘Gy’	like in <i>Vigyan</i>
Kṣ	‘{k²’	‘Sh’	like in <i>kshama</i>
h	‘% fol xʌ’	‘h’	

Jain definitive words used frequently

<i>Ācārya</i>	Preceptor monk and leader / head of a Jain congregation / group
<i>Āgama</i>	Scripture
<i>Avasarpini</i>	Half time cycle in which the happiness keeps on decreasing; the other half, Utsarpini has happiness increasing
<i>Bhaṭṭāraka</i>	Administrator monk; Yati and Śrīpujya are other words used by Svetambara Jains.
<i>Caityavāsī</i>	Temple dweller

<i>Caitya</i>	A place / thing having venerable sign / representation, e.g. footprint, name, idol, photo, auspicious sign like flag etc. generally a holy emblem / place.
<i>Dwādasāṃgī</i>	Twelve limbs of the scriptures bead on Lord Mahavira's sermons and composed by his chief disciples (<i>Gaṇadhara</i> s)
<i>Ekādaśāṃgī</i>	Eleven limbs of above except the 12 th called <i>Dṛṣṭivāda</i> (very voluminous and comprehensive).
<i>Gaṇa</i>	Group. A group of monks and sub division of congregation
<i>Gaccha</i>	Sub group. Sub division of <i>Gaṇa</i> .
<i>Kevalī</i>	Omniscient
<i>Kalyāṇaka</i>	Auspicious event in the life of a ford maker (five in number namely conception, birth, renunciation / initiation, omniscience and liberation)
<i>Lokāntika deva</i>	A type of celestial beings who will attain liberation after one more birth, i.e. whose worldly existence is almost at the end
<i>Mokṣa</i>	Salvation / liberation; Pure soul without any material karmas and body
<i>Nirvāṇa</i>	Liberation / salvation; Attainment of bliss
<i>Pūrvas</i>	Fourteen in numbers; Canons prior to Lord Mahavira; Contained in the 12 th limb as well.
<i>Śrāvaka</i>	Votary (male); Believer and practitioner of Jain ethical-spiritual code; Householder / laity are other synonyms used.

<i>Śrāvika</i>	Votary (female); Similar as votary
<i>Samgha</i>	Congregation
<i>Samavaśaraṇa</i>	Religious congregation / assembly of a ford maker
<i>Tīrthaṃkara</i>	Ford maker, Rejuvenator of the Jain creed 24 in present time cycle' Mahāvīra is the 24th Tīrthaṃkara.
<i>Upādhyāya</i>	Holy teacher, Monk, teaches scriptures to fellow monks.
<i>Varṣa</i>	Year /Annual

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From Publisher's desk Historical Contribution

During the past several decades, the absence of multifaceted and full-fledged series of authentic Jain History was much felt by the Jain community. With his strong determination, Jain Ācāryaśrī Hasī Mala Jī M.S., the great spiritual Guru of this century, had shouldered the responsibility of fulfilling this void. To successfully complete this task, he travelled extensively and collected various valuable scriptures, from different libraries, historical manuscripts and treasures of information on Jain Culture. Besides carrying out his daily duties as a monk and preceptor (ācārya), this diligent Yogi had spent his time in writing a series of scriptures depicting the historical significance of Jainism. Deeply inspired by him, the Jain History Committee started publishing these volumes since 1969-70.

During this period, the History Committee published the following: 1 Paṭṭāvalī Prabaṃdha Saṃgraha; 2 Ācārya Caritāvalī (History of Jain ācāryas); 3 Jain Dharma kā Maulika Itihāsa (Vol.1) Tīrthaṃkara Khaṃda; and 4 The three historical Tīrthaṃkaras (concluding part of Tīrthaṃkara Khaṃda). These four books were published and presented to enlightened readers.

The committee is ever indebted to ācāryaśrī for accomplishing the herculean task of compiling the Jain history, during which he had to face a lot of obstacles.

While releasing the Second Volume of the “Jain Dharma kā Maulika Itihāsa” to the readers, the committee feels that it would not have been possible for us to successfully complete the responsibility of publishing this Volume, but for the divine blessings of ācāryaśrī. Besides, the financial and hearty support rendered by the well-wishers relieved us from half of our burden. The first Volume details the history right from the first Tīrthaṃkara Vṛṣabha Deva up to the latest Tīrthaṃkara Mahāvīra. The third and fourth Volumes, depicting the history of about 1500 years are under publication. (Since published)

While going through the manuscripts of these two volumes, one feels that ācāryaśrī has magic spell not only in his speech but also in his

writings. We really wonder how he could have made a dry and complex subject like history, so simple, interesting and elegant. His works would definitely change the opinion of the readers who consider history a dry subject. The very presentation by ācāryaśrī makes the reader spell-bound and once started reading, he would not feel like parting with it.

The salient features of the present volume are as follows:

1. Narration of the prominent religious, social and political events and facts between V.N. years 1 to 1000.
2. Chronological History of Jain Saints.
3. The Analytical treatise about the gradual decline and degeneration of the twelve fold scriptures (Dwādaśaṅgī).
4. Subjective presentation of contemporary Religious Practices and History of Royal Dynasties.
5. Clarifications on complex issues of Jain history; Protest against the deep-rooted superstitions besides giving new interpretations on certain somber issues on Indian history
6. Magnificent description of unparalleled contribution of women folk as female monks (Śramaṇīs) and female votaries (śramaṇopāsikās) to Jain Tradition.
7. Presentation of an abstract and dry subject such as history in a simple, fluent and an easy-to-understand language.

And finally we sincerely express our inner gratitude with deep respect to worshipful / reverent Gurudeva Ācāryaśrī Hastī Mala Jī M.S., who, besides exceptionally contributing to the growth of the religion, made an everlasting contribution to the Jain society, by writing this great work on History.

Owing to the long time demand from enthusiastic readers, Samyagjñāna Pracāraka Maṃdala had come out with an idea to publish abridged versions of the four volumes of “Jain Dharma kā Maulika Itihāsa”. Subsequently, after the abridged version of the first volume, we now take immense pleasure in presenting the readers the abridged version of the second volume of the Series.

Thanks to the great efforts of Surat-based ascetic Śrī Jayavantbhai P Shah, BE (Civil) (Retired Superintendent Engineer Govt. of Gujarat),

who took up the task of summarization of the Hindi volume which enabled us to successfully bring out this English Version.

Śrī Shah, a staunch believer in “sāmāyika” (periodical contemplations on the self) and “svādhyāya” (study of the self in holy texts), has shown a wonderful combination of both these traits in abridging this volume. During his regular daily periodical contemplations (sāmāyika) rituals, he used to write a brief summary of the original volume, thus completing the great task. As a senior scholar, Shri Shah also teaches the monks and female monks. He had been awarded the First Prize for his performance in “An Open Test on Authentic Jain history” in Hindi. We heartily congratulate and express our gratitude for his dedication to the scriptures. His abridged Hindi version has been arranged and proof-read by Dr. Dilip Dhing. The English & Hindi abridged versions are edited by Śrī P.S. Surana, Advocate Chennai.

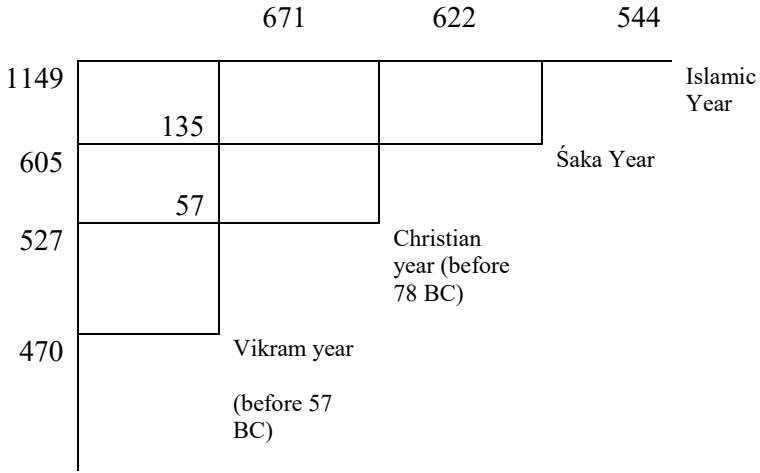
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Graphical representation of formulas for conversion of years



Veer Nirvāṇa or V.N. = (Vikram 470 Year, 527 BC, Śaka 605)

FORMULA FOR CONVERSION

To calculate Vira Nirvāṇa year	=	Vikram Year + 470
	=	Christian Year + 527
	=	Śaka Year + 605
To calculate Christian year	=	Śaka Year + 78
To calculate Vikram year	=	Christian Year + 57
	=	Śaka Year + 135

A solar year has about $365 \frac{1}{4}$ days, lunar year has about 354 days. Seven months would have to be increased, to compensate the difference of $213 \frac{3}{4}$ days occurring in a span of 19 years. Of the above years, the Christian calendar follows the solar year, whereas the other four follow the lunar year. Hence, after every 19 years, a particular Tithi falls on the same date. As there is no provision for increasing of the month in Islamic

calendar, according to their calculation, there will be a difference of one year for a span of every $32 \frac{1}{2}$ years.

V.N. (Vīra Nirvāṇa Year) started on the first day of Kārtika śukla (about November 1st). After 439 years, Vikram Year started from Caitra śukla 1 (about 1st April - V.N. 470). 526 years 2 months after V.N. i.e. in V.N. Year 527, Christian calendar started on January 1 (puśya śukla 1st). This is about 56 years 9 months from Vikram year, i.e. in the Vikram year 57. Śaka Year started 135 years after Caitra śukla 1 (around 1st of April). Hence Śaka Year started 604 years 5 months after Vīra Nirvāṇa, (i.e. 605th V.N.), 77 years 3 months after Christian year (i.e. 78th Christian Year).

Islamic year emerged during V.N. 1149, Vikram 672 Year, Christian Year 622 and Śaka Year 544 as 7 lunar months exceed in every 19 solar years.

Foreword

A thousand years of Jain history

Jain Dharma kā Maulika Itihāsa - Volume I, is presented to those who are fond of history. Volume I detail the history right from the first Tīrthaṅkara Vṛṣabha Deva up to the latest Tīrthaṅkara Mahāvīra.

We felt very happy that certain great scholars have read even the minutest details from a research point of view and have sent their doubts and valuable suggestions. Such an interest is really commendable.

Out of the exhaustive material published in the First Volume, enthusiasts have expressed doubts on only five topics, which are listed and answered here under:

Doubt 1: While discussing about the first Pāraṇā (breaking fast) of Lord Vṛṣabha Deva in Volume I, Lord Vṛṣabha Deva performed the breaking of the year long fast (Pāraṇā of Varṣa Tapa) on Vaisākha Śukla Tṛtyā is mentioned. Here the question arises that Lord Vṛṣabha Deva undertook only for two days fast (Belā tapa) along with initiation (Dīkṣā) on Caitra Kṛṣṇa Aṣṭamī and only on Vaisākha Śukla Tṛtyā of the second year, he performed first fast breaking (Pāraṇā) at the place of Śreyāṃsa Kumāra. Then, from Caitra Kṛṣṇa 8 to Vaisākha Śukla 3 of the following year, the penance was carried out for 13 months, 10 days. In that case, according to the legend “*saṃvacchareṇa bhikkhā laddhā usaheṇa loganāheṇa*” - ācāryas have described the first tapa of Lord Ādinātha as year long fast “*Samvatsara tapa*”. As the fasting was carried out for 13 months 10 days – and not for just 12 months, is it right to call it “*Samvatsara Tapa*”?

Clarification: As a matter of fact, this question is not new. This is a much debated question. “*saṃvacchareṇa bhikkhā laddhā usaheṇa loganāheṇa*” - this should only be considered as a common utterance. In a broad sense, since the additional number of days which extends to

over a year is not sizeable, it would have been mentioned as Samvatsara tapa, not taking into account those additional days. The duration of first *Tapa* of Lord is little over a year. Such a clarification is evident in “Harivaṁśa Purāṇa”.

From these references, it is apparent that Lord Vṛṣabha Deva had performed his first *tapa* for more than a year, however, practically, the additional days are considered secondary and referred to as Varṣa tapa only.

Doubt 2:

The second doubt relates to the wedding and renunciation of Brāhmī and Sundarī. Based on traditional values, it has been considered that both these sisters remained as celibate throughout their lives. According to the scriptures in Digambara tradition, it has been clearly mentioned that both of them were unmarried. However, books of Śvetāmbara tradition had given three different versions: 1. In Kalpasūtra, there is mention of not Sundari alone, but of both Brāhmī and Sundarī as the Chief female-monks (Sādhvīs) of three lakh female-monks (Śramaṇīs). Pramukhā Subhadrā of śrāvikā (female-votary) group also is mentioned here. From these references from Kalpasūtra, it is evident that both the sisters have taken the dikṣā together. 2. According to Āvaśyaka Malaya and “Triṣaṣṭi-śalākā-puruṣa-caritra”, et al. it is evident that Brāhmī renounced at the time when Lord Vṛṣabha Deva had established the religious order (Dharma Tīrtha). Sundarī also wanted to renounce at the same time, but Bharata had stopped her, saying that, once he becomes the Cakravartī Emperor, he would make her, his wife (Strī-Ratna). Bharata became the śrāvaka and Sundarī śrāvikā. 3. The third version is that prior to his taking initiation of monkhood (Śramaṇa Dharma Dikṣā), Lord Vṛṣabha Deva had performed the nuptials of Bharata’s sister Brāhmī with Bāhubali and Bāhubalī’s sister Sundari with Bharata. On attaining Kaivalya (omniscience), when Lord Ādinātha established the Dharma Tīrtha, with the permission of Bahubalī, Brāhmī renounced and joined

female-monkhood (Śramaṇī Dharma). At the same time, Sundarī wanted to renounce, but Bharata restrained her saying that she would become the chief queen, when he becomes the Cakravartī Emperor.

Clarification: The author of Harivaṃśa Pūrāṇa wrote that these two were calibate since birth and they remained unmarried. Similarly, author of Ādi Pūrāṇa also referred Brāhmī as a princess and it was also mentioned that both the sisters were unmarried. From this, it is obvious that both the sisters were celibates.

In fact, the third version of Śvetāmbara tradition arose out of the misunderstood word “*Dattā*”. Thus the misconception had been prevalent. It was not supported by any substantial evidence. After reviewing all Jain literature on this subject, it is evident that, none of the classics mentioned the marriage of Brāhmī or Sundarī. Here in this context, the difference between the marriage and engagement should be well understood.

While explaining the origin of the traditions of marriage and engagement, ācārya Malayagiri commenting on ‘Āvaśyaka Niriyukti’, wrote in his “Āvaśyaka MalayaVṛtti”:

“Vṛṣabha Deva’s marriage was performed; seeing this other people had started performing the marriages of their children. There is no further mention of marriage, after this reference. Then he proceeds elucidating the meaning of ‘Datti’ i.e., Vāgdāna (engagement). To put an end to the Yugala Dharma (marriage between twin brother and sister), the Lord had performed the nuptials of Bharata’s sister Brāhmī with Bāhubalī and Bāhubalī’s sister Sundarī with Bharata.”

Niryuktikāra and Vṛttikāra had expressed different opinions about the origin of the ceremonies of marriage and engagement, basing on which it is indisputably

evident that Lord had performed only the engagement of his daughters – Brāhmī and Sundarī – and not marriage.

Doubt 3: The third doubt has been expressed on the heavenly abode or salvation of the fourth Cakravartī Emperor. Sanata Kumāra. As per the philosophical tradition, Sanata Kumāra Cakravartī is supposed to have attained salvation. In Part 1 of this book, it is stated that Cakravartī Sanata Kumāra reached the 3rd heaven, also called Sanata heaven.

Clarification: The basis of what is mentioned in Part 1 of this book is Abhayadeva's commentary on Sthānāṅga Sūtra and ācārya Hemacandra's 'Triṣaṣṭi-śalākā-puruṣa-caritra'. Out of the four types of rituals leading to death (Anta Kriyās) described in detail in Sthānāṅga Sūtra, the summary of the third type is as follows:

The third type is '*mahākarma pratyaya antaḥ kriyā*' in which one performs continuous long lasting austerities, endures severe afflictions due to prolonged disease and ultimately gets liberation like Sanata Kumāra Cakravartī. Examples of Antaḥ Kriyās were cited from the point of view of present life (Tadabhava). Hence, it is appropriate to consider that Sanata Kumāra attained liberation (Siddha) in the same birth (bhava), because the third Antaḥ Kriyā and the Monk hood were attributed to him, and not to the one who was described by Ācārya Abhayadeva and Hemacandrācārya, who after spending valuable time in Heavenly abode (Devaloka), came to Mahāvideha Kṣetra and achieved salvation from monkhood there.

Keeping in view the words used in the original text on this subject in Sthānāṅga-Sūtra and analysing the pros and cons, it would be apt to regard that Sanata Kumāra Cakravartī had attained Mokṣa (salvation) in that life itself. According to the Digambara tradition also, the fourth Cakravartī Sanata Kumāra is considered to have

attained Mokṣa in this birth only.

Doubt 4: The fourth doubt is about the acquisition of Strī-Nāma Karma by monk Mahābala. In Volume 1, in the chapter of Lord Mallinātha, while introducing the pūrvabhava, it was written in page 126 as follows: “By performing such deceitful austerities, he acquired the Karma bondage that would result in being born as a woman (Strī-veda). Further due to his severe austerities on twenty reflections, he earned the Tīrthaṅkara-Nāma- Karma.

Here the doubt arises whether the jīva of Lord Mallinātha in his third birth (in the birth as Mahābala), acquired Strī-Nāma Karma after acquiring Tīrthaṅkara Nāma Karma or prior to it.

Clarification: If one properly analyses the original part related to it in Jñāta Dharma Kathāṅga, this doubt will be easily clarified as it is self-explanatory. In the original it is clearly written that King Mahābala along with his six childhood friends took initiation in Śramaṇa Dharma, studied eleven limbs scriptures (Ekādaśāṅgī) and travelled around, performing various tapas and sanctifying the soul. One day the seven saints had interacted among themselves and took a pledge that they would all perform similar type of tapas, together. As per their vow, they used to perform similar tapas like fasting (Upavāsa) etc. But before he became monk (Anagāra), Mahābala was a leader (Adhināyaka) while his six friends were followers (Adhinasta). Hence, Mahābala had a strong desire to be above the ordinary, to have a distinctive personality much above his friends. To fulfill this inner desire, Mahābala, against the vow they all took, had deceitfully performed special tapa, different (superior) from his other six monk-friends. As a result, his spiritual awakening (Samyaktva) became impure. Māyā (deceit) is the mother of Strī Nāma Karma; hence Mahābala acquired Strī-Nāma Karma (Strī-Veda).

In the first half of the fifth Sūtra of Jñātādharmā Kathāṅga, it is illustrated that Mahābala attained Strī-Nāma Karma, where as in the second part, it is clearly stated that he attained Tīrthaṅkara Nāma Karma by incessant practice of twenty reflections. From this it is evident that after taking the vow of self restraint (Samyama), in the initial phase of the practice of spiritual-exertion (sādhana), he first acquired Strī Nāma karma. Later on, while progressing further in the practice of spiritual purification, he had attained Tīrthaṅkara Nāma Karma by the incessant practice of the twenty causes / reflections.

This is well-founded fact because of the very reason that it was clearly written in the original scriptures which have been always considered as the most authentic ones. The second reason is that the spiritual-exertion, by which Mahābala attained Tīrthaṅkara Nāma Karma, was an exemplary one. It has been described that it is possible for a spiritual-practitioner (sādhaka) to attain Tīrthaṅkara Nāma Gotra Karma by incessant practice of just any one of the twenty causes mentioned in the scriptures. In spite of his ardent practice of all the twenty reflections, to say that by the slight mistake his Samyaktva got polluted does not seem to be logical or correct. From these facts, it can be concluded that monk Mahābala had attained Strī Nāma Karma before attaining Tīrthaṅkara Nāma Karma.

Doubt 5:

In the fifth and the last doubt, it was mentioned that the Lord Ariṣṭanemi himself revealed during his religious congregation (Samavasaraṇa) actual identities of the six monks, who came in three pairs, to Devakī for alms. But according to the reference cited in the first part of “Caupanna Mahāpurisa Cariyaṃ”, it is apparent that the six monks themselves revealed their identities to Devakī and this scriptural opinion was mentioned in a foot note. Does it not imply that the scriptural text was given secondary importance?

Clarification: As a matter of fact, if one attentively goes through the title and description of the first part where it was discussed about Anīkasena etc., six monka, then such doubts would not have arisen.

The entire subject matter was described under the title “Disclosure of the secret by Lord Ariṣṭanemi”. The very title itself reveals the scriptural opinion of the matter. Apart from this, complete evidence relating to this narration was presented with factual references from the scriptures. Also given is the descriptions made by the author of Triṣaṣṭi-śalākā-puruṣa-caritra. Before demonstrating any fact it is always a healthy tradition to present it from all the facets. Following the same healthy tradition, a reference of the author of “Caupanna Mahāpurisa Cariyaṃ” was cited in this context, which is a new phenomenon to majority of the learned. While presenting this side of the fact, it was categorically cautioned that the two instances where the versions were different, relevant notes were given to enlighten the scriptural opinions. The intellectual readers who had expressed their immense faith towards the scriptures and who showed an awareness to sustain the authenticity of scriptural doctrines deserve to be applauded.

Authentic historical basis

With a deep-felt desire to present an authentic Jain History from beginning to date, we have reviewed various canons, classics and other scriptures like Aṃga and Upāṃga, literatures, commentaries, later commentaries, critiques, interpretations, historical scriptures, repository of stories, chronological list of elder-monks (Sthavirāvalī), pontifical chronology (Paṭṭāvalī), Epics of Jain and Vedic traditions, various historical texts, scriptures on Buddhism, inscriptions, holy texts as well as all available data. While writing this scripture, all along, I made it a point not to give importance to the fantasies and baseless tell-tale stories and to present only the proven historical facts found in the ancient scriptures and archives. Likewise, the events woven in a prodigious way

do not find place in this book. The motive behind this clarification is that whatever is written in this book is authentic and is not without basis.

Main intention: Search for true facts only

In the field of history, only those events and statements are considered authentic which can be validated to prove their authenticity. We have obtained few important facts, which would prove certain accreditations untenable and hence unacceptable. By publishing them as it is we have tried to bring out the truths into limelight to refute the inferences of some scholars. It does not mean to hurt the sensitive feelings of any one. Our prime object is to present the actual facts to the readers without any bias or prejudice.

Administration of the congregation (Saṃgha)

Any organisation-whether it is religious, political, social, financial or cultural does need a systematic method to run it effectively. Irrespective of the different types of approaches, the two that are regarded as vital to run the organisation are the autocratic and democratic approaches.

In autocratic approach one person is chosen as leader and is given complete authority. In democratic approach, there is no significant difference between the officers and the subordinates and between persons belonging to higher and lower stratum.

The critical analysis of the history of Dharma Congregation of Lord Mahāvīra starting from the time of establishing his creed till date reveals the fact that from the very beginning this organisation has been run strongly and beautifully by a method which is neither pure autocratic nor pure democratic. After attaining Kaivalya, during his time as omniscient Lord Mahāvīra felt that a mixed approach should be designed with a combination of all the good qualities of both the autocratic and democratic approaches to run his organisation.

Lord Mahāvīra formulated the mixed approach to help his Dharma congregation gain everlasting benefits and to last forever under the controlled leadership of an individual who is dedicated to the congregation and its traditions, who has a sharp-wit and administrative capabilities, who is energetic, intelligent, diplomatic and efficient. Under

this approach, the arrangements were made in such a way that proper execution of them keeps Dharma congregation flawless and healthy traditions would continue.

In brief, it can be said that the approach was aimed at a controlled autocratic rule where there was neither a tinge of autocracy nor dictatorship. Though the approach gave allowance to the congregation to hold the reins under its control, the ideas and opinions put forward by members were given due respect. Decision was taken by the ācārya on any critical issue after long debates and group discussions by the members involved. His decision was final and binding to all.

After subjecting his many disciples to various tests, the ācārya would select his successor from among them, the one, who had all the virtues and whom he regarded as efficient. Then he would impart the knowledge he possessed, give training in all disciplines and make him worthy and capable enough to shoulder the responsibility of the congregation. Finally before completing his age, the ācārya would announce his successor to the congregation.

To run the organisation, Lord Mahāvīra designed a congregation – controlled autocratic procedural code. The ācārya is totally held responsible for the protection, progress and development and is empowered with power and authority subject to the control of the congregation. The basis of appointment of ācārya was not by election but by nomination. Only that monk could be nominated as ācārya, who had the following qualities:

1. He should be of perfect conduct and should also be able to encourage others to follow the path of perfect conduct.
2. He should be able to maintain total discipline in the congregation.
3. He should be capable of imparting the Knowledge of Canons and Canonical principles to the group of monks (male and female separately).
4. With the rare capability of pushing the group of spiritual-practitioners of the creed (Sādhakas) to continuous spiritual development and progress.

5. He should be a born-intellect, versatile, energetic, assertive and impressive personality, well cultured, pious, abstemious, flawless, honest, and forth right and should belong to a noble family.

Even today, all the Śramaṇa congregations of Jainism follow the age-old controlled autocratic administrative set up to run their organisations.

Post Liberation (*nirvāṇa*) administrative features of the congregation

It is an undisputable historical fact that Lord Mahāvīra's Dharma congregation has always remained as the most prominent, vast and universally acclaimed one in comparison with other Dharma congregations.

Jain literature is abundant with the description of different congregations existing before and after the nirvāṇa of Mahāvīra, which were huge in size and well accepted by people. Unfortunately, today barring one or two, all the other congregations have only namesake existence, without even any remnants of the past. On the contrary, the congregation of Mahāvīra, which was vast and popular, enjoys the same status even after the nirvāṇa of Mahāvīra.

Jain Dharma had encountered much turmoil. Famines of 12-year durations, political upheavals, class rivalries, and conflicts sparked out of religious bigotry etc., occurred in cycles which in due course were cleared-off. The upheavals that rooted out many other Dharma congregations could not root out the Jain congregation. Even in the midst of such calamities and conflicts how was Jain Dharma able to withstand and survive successfully? In-depth probing unearths some strong rationale. The first and foremost reason is that the Dharma was propounded by the omniscient. Hence, the constitution of the congregation was, from all points of view, well organised and well maintained. Discipline, stability of the association, meticulous planning were the unique and stable features of these associations. The second reason for its stability is the great principle of universal brotherhood which was closely connected with the welfare of all living beings. More than anything else, what protected this Dharma congregation from the worst calamities and troubles was the sacrifice, penance and infinite

spiritual power of the Heads of the Dharma congregation – the great ācāryas.

Classification of ranks in the congregation

Ranks were created taking into consideration that the monks (male and female) should remain strong in their practice and be united and disciplined, they should be dedicated to the continuous acquisition of knowledge and practice of elevation, and be involved in the propagation, glorification and development of Dharma, they should lead an unblemished life with self-restraint and control, and the congregation should run naturally in an efficient manner. With these objects in view the classification of ranks is mentioned in Sthānāṅga Sūtra and Bṛhatkalpa Sūtra. The ranks were: 1 Preceptor (ācārya), 2 Holy-teacher (Upādhyāya), 3 Preacher-monk (Pravartaka), 4 Elder-monks or elders (Sthavira), 5 Scholar-monks (Gaṇi), 6 Chief disciple of Tīrthaṅkara (Gaṇadhara) and 7 Supporting-monks or junior monks (Gaṇāvachchedaka).

Just like the monks, even female-monks obeyed the orders of the ācārya. Ranks similar to monks were also created for female monks (e.g. Pravartini Mahattarā, elder (Sthavirā) and Gaṇavachhedikā) were created to facilitate the spiritual life of female-monks and to see that their daily routine is carried out smoothly, to curb any unnecessary interaction between male and female monks and to ensure that they are in a position to lead their ascetic life perfectly like that of the monks. The attributes - physical, oratory and spiritual prosperity and the abilities of a person who holds the respective rank, their responsibilities, their sacred duties and the work to be carried out by them etc., as stated in the scriptures and ancient traditions, are discussed below:

Ācārya (Preceptor): In the Dharma congregation of Lord Mahāvīra, the ācārya was considered as the most respected one and of the highest order. Proper administration, protection, growth, discipline, unity and multi-faceted development etc. of the congregation lies on the shoulders of ācārya. In the entire Dharma congregation his decision and direction is considered as final and binding and respected by everyone. This is the reason why as the correct interpreter and orator of Lord Mahāvīra's preaching, the ācārya is considered like the Tīrthaṅkara himself and is the eye of the entire congregation.

The origin of the word “ācārya” is discussed in many scriptures and Canons. The substance of all that is that the one who is served humbly and devotedly by disciples who after understanding fully the canonical knowledge propounded by Lord Jinendradeva, intensely desire to put it into practice for spiritual development, is called ācārya.

It is said, One who is aware of the Sūtra s and their meaning, and possesses highly appreciable attributes, who serves as the pillar of the congregation and who is capable of keeping even the shadows of sorrows and grieves away from the congregation, who can explain the āgamas and their in depth meaning to the disciples is called an ācārya.

The one who follows, propagates and preaches the five types of conduct, i.e. Jñānācāra (Code of Knowledge), Darśanācāra (Code of Faith), Cāritrācāra (Code of Conduct), Tapācāra (Code of austerities) and Vīryācāra (Code of energy or vigour) and who is capable of making the monks adhere to these five ācāras is known as ācārya.

Scholarship is not the only criterion for conferring the designation of ācārya. His personality should constitute such a totality, that all the aspects of ascetic life should be impeccable. Daśāśrutakaṃdha Sūtra elaborates the special attributes of ācārya. It had described the eight virtues (Sampadās) of ācārya, namely:

1. Ācāra Sampadā (five ācāras of jñāna, darśana, cāritra, tapa and vīrya).
2. Śruta Sampadā (possessing scriptural knowledge)
3. Śarīra Sampadā (able-bodied - a sound mind in a sound body).
4. Discourse Sampadā (appropriate speech in line with āgamaic views).
5. Discourse Sampadā (appropriate interpretation of the scriptures)
6. Mati Sampadā (intelligent and sharp-wit)
7. Prayoga Sampadā (ability to put the knowledge into practice)
8. Saṃgrah Sampadā (accumulation of knowledge)

UPĀDHYĀYA (Holy-teacher): Jain philosophy is based on the simultaneous mix of knowledge and conduct. The right conduct along with right knowledge leaves behind the unique fragrance of purity. Just

as the right conduct pregnant with right knowledge is appreciable, similarly only that knowledge is meaningful and useful which results in right conduct.

In Jain congregation, the designation of Upādhyāya is next to ācārya in the hierarchical line. The main function of this rank is teaching. Upādhyāya teaches the scriptures to the monks (Śramaṇas).

Swādhyāya-Sūtra literature in the form of Dwādaśāṅgī, propounded by Lord Jina, had been narrated, described and compiled by scholars. The one who discourses these, is known as Upādhyāya (Upadeśa Śramaṇa). Sthānāṅga Vṛtti, describes Upādhyāya as Sūtradātā - the one who gives the teachings of Sūtras. It means that in order to maintain the clarity, purity, vividness stability and irrevocability of the original texts of the Sūtras, he imparts training, both from traditional and linguistic point of view to the Śramaṇas. This in turn greatly helps to keep the Āgamas intact.

To articulate the scriptures or rather to go through it syllable after syllable is not considered as reading at all. Anuyoga Dwāra describes sixteen types of adjectives – śikṣita, Jita, Sthita, Mita, Parijita, Nāmasama, Ghoṣasama, Ahīnākṣara, Atyakṣara, Atyāvidhyāsara, Askhalita, Amilita, Avyatyāmredita, Pratipūrṇa, Pratipūrṇa-Ghoṣa and Kaṇṭhoṣṭha vipramukta. Sūtra pāṭha had to be maintained undamaged and in tact in its original, pure form. Hence, even after so long a time, such vast Āgama literature remains as it was in the yore, without any change.

The original text of Sūtras forms the basis for the meaning or interpretation of it. So, all precautions are taken to maintain the original in its pure form, by giving a lot of importance to, and stress on studying with perfect pronunciation; and hence the origin of the separate rank of 'Upādhyāya', who takes care of all these things.

Pravartaka (Preacher): To provide assistance to the ācārya in fulfilling his responsibilities, to contribute to the progress and development of Dharma congregation, to ensure that the Śramaṇas adhere to the rules of the conduct and to guide them in their dynamic progress, the Pravartaka rank was created together with other ranks.

Pravartaka is concerned about and takes care of the activities of Gaṇa or Śramaṇa congregation. If they notice that any Śramaṇa has fervour for penance etc., the Pravartaks encourage the Śramaṇas to enhance these qualities. It is the duty of the Pravartaka to encourage a Śramaṇa whom he thinks fit to attain perfection in a particular discipline. Similarly if he finds a Śramaṇa unfit in any discipline, he has to advise him to avoid it. The ascetics apparently need a guide. The Pravartaka always tries to cheer up and boost the morale of the Gaṇa.

STHAVIRA: The rank of Sthavira is very significant in Jain congregations. Ten types of Sthaviras were described in Sthānāṅga Sūtra, the last three being - Vaya Sthavira, Śruta Sthavira and Paryāya Sthavira. These three ranks are connected with the Śramaṇa life. In normal usage Sthavira means 'aged' or mature. The one who is older in age is Jāti Sthavira. Sthānāṅga Vṛtti determines his age as 60. The one who is well-versed in Śruta Samavayāṅga āgama and in scriptures is called as Śruta Sthavira. Age is not the criterion for them; they could even be young. And Paryāya Sthaviras are those, whose initiation span (span of the renuncer life) is long. Vṛttikāra says that their span of initiation is 20 years.

Sthavira Śramaṇas have their own greatness. They are staunch followers of Dharma, and are always alert and ready to spare their time and effort to help Śramaṇas stick to their path of Dharma, assisting them in their practice and strengthening their virtue of self-restraint. Usually Sthaviras aim at Saṃvigna liberation. They are soft-spoken and very tender at heart. If any monk either totally or partially neglects the rules and regulations that help to gain knowledge and build the conduct or fails to follow them regularly, immediately the sthavira reminds him of his duties, explains the importance of knowledge and conduct. To the monks, who are on the verge of fall, the sthavira explains the consequences of worldly / temporal and spiritual fall and not only brings him back onto the track but also stabilizes him on the Holy Path. This implies that Sthavira performs the great task of guarding the self-restrained life of Śramaṇas. He enjoys a prestigious position and goodwill in congregation. In brief, the Sthavira himself is unswerving and strong-natured in controlling the sensual inclinations. Besides he encourages the members to remain like that.

GAṆI (group leader or scholar par excellence): The ordinary meaning of Gaṇi is leader of a gaṇa (group of people) or a group of monks (male and female). That is why this word is used for ācārya also. But in this context, the word conveys a special meaning. One who is an unparalleled scholar, and who has the total scriptural knowledge was nominated as Gaṇi.

Even though the ācārya is supreme in congregation, it does not mean that he is the greatest scholar and the most erudite one, among the Śramaṇas of the congregation. Often these qualities are found in Gaṇis. So he can also address the ācāryas. If a ācārya is interested in learning the religious treatises, he is welcome to do the same from Gaṇis. This is an ideal example of how the knowledge and the knowledgeable are treated with respect.

GAṆADHARA: The literal meaning of the word is that the person who bears the responsibility of Gaṇa or Śramaṇa congregation, the leader, Lord or ācārya. According to Āvaśyaka Vṛtti, one who owns the doctrinal knowledge as conveyed by Tīrthaṅkara and composes the same as scriptures is a gaṇadhara.

Scriptural literature used this word mostly in two contexts. In the first, a Gaṇadhara is the chief disciple of the Tīrthaṅkara who compiles the doctrine preached by Tīrthaṅkara in the form of Dwādaśāṅga. He takes care of the different Gaṇis of their Dharma congregation. He gives discourses on scriptures to the Śramaṇas of his gaṇa. The Sūtras are their soul mates. In other words they are creators of Sūtras.

The word used in the second context is, (written in Sthānāṅga Vṛtti) as the one who alerts monks (Āryas) and Sādhvīs, that is to say, he always guides and inspires them in the path of asceticism and extends his cooperation in spiritual matters.

GAṆAVACHEDAKA: He is mostly associated with the administrative part, and helps to strengthen the congregation, extends support to it and provides a means to Śramaṇas to advance in their spiritual pursuit. He mobilises the necessary things for the Śramaṇa-life by travelling around to different places and by always making similar efforts.

He gathers the things necessary for the maintenance of a Śramaṇa's life and makes relevant arrangements. If we assess his position from this point of view, no doubt his position is one of great importance. As he successfully fulfils the responsibility of collecting the necessary things, the work of ācārya to that extent gets much reduced as far as the administrative work of the congregation is concerned. As such, the ācārya finds ample time for the progression of both the religion as well as the congregation and for related works.

SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS: Some special qualifications were perceived as essential to nominate a monk to these positions. Under extraordinary circumstances, provisions are also made to take any exceptional decision. It is useful to quote some of the aspects from the Vyavahāra Sūtra and Bhāṣya.

Designation	Minimum monkhood period	Minimum scriptural Knowledge	Special Qualification
Upādhyāya	3 years	Should know Ācārāṅga and Niśītha	Calm and composed, well-informed in scriptures and should be a scholar
Ācārya / Upādhyāya	5 years	Apart from the above mentioned, should know Daśāśruta Skaṇḍha, Bṛhat Kalpa & Vyavahāra Sūtra	Same as above
Ācārya / Upādhyāya / Pravartaka / Sthavira / Gaṇi / Gaṇadhara & Gaṇavicchedaka	8 years	Above mentioned + Sthānāṅga and Samavācāṅga	Same as above + Efficient in temperance, discourse, Prajñā, Saṃgraha and Upagraha and conduct should be flawless, taintless, pure and unblemished calm and composed and well-versed in scriptures.

ĀPAVADA (exceptions): A special point was mentioned in Vyavahāra Sūtra. Under exceptional circumstances a Śramaṇa who had undergone initiation for one day, can also be appointed as ācārya or upādhyāya. This was particularly mentioned considering the Nirudhavāsa Śramaṇas. The phrase “Nirudhavāsa Paryāya” is applicable to that Śramaṇa, who previously led the life of a Śramaṇa, but owing to his weaknesses diverted from the path. Though the person had lost control over senses, yet as he had spent a considerable amount of time as a saint and was genuinely inspired by the spiritual purification, if he once again becomes a Śramaṇa, then his past experiences as a Śramaṇa would prove beneficial for both himself and for the congregation.

Essence of the text

The present book deals with the history of Jain Dharma from V.N. 1 to 1000. It is written in such a manner that it leaves a deep impression in the hearts of the readers. Further the history stretched over a period of 1000 years after the nirvāṇa of Mahāvīra is classified into four ages so as to make it more interesting to all. They are: 1 Era of the omniscient (Kevalī era), 2 Era of the all canon knowing (Śrutakevalī era), 3 Having knowledge of ten prior canons (Daśa Pūrvadhara era) and 4 Era of having general knowledge of the prior canons (Sāmānya Pūrvadhara era).

1. Era of the omniscient (**Kevalī Era**): After the nirvāṇa of Mahāvīra both Śvetāmbara and Digambara sects had equally considered Indrabhūti Gautama, Ācārya Sudharmā and Ācārya Jambū as Kevalīs. However, there was difference of opinion between these sects regarding the time of these Kevalīs. The difference between individual and cumulative duration of the two sects of the three Kevalīs is as follows:

		KEVALĪ AGE		
		According to Digambara tradition		
KEVALĪ	According to Śvetāmbara tradition	According to Uttar Pūrāṇa & Bhava Pūrāṇa	According to Dhavalā, Śrutāvātāra, Śrutaskamḍha Harivaṃśa Pūrāṇa	According to Jambū Samiti Caritra (written

			Paṭṭāvalī of Nandī congregation	in apabhra ṃsa language) and Jambū Caritra (Sanskrit)
Gautama Swāmī	12 years	12 years	12 years	
Sudharmā Swāmī	8 years	12 years	12 years	18 years
Jambū Swāmī	44 years	40 years	38 years	18 years
Total	64 years	64 years	62 years	36 years

With the above table it becomes clear that according to the Śvetāmbara sect, a period of 64 years from V.N.1 to 64 is considered as Kevalī Period, whereas according to the scriptures (mentioned above) of Digambara tradition three different opinions are found. In spite of these different versions, the present Digambara tradition unanimously agrees that Kevalī period was extended up to 62 years.

In many authentic scriptures of Śvetāmbara tradition, substantial evidence has been brought to light proving that even during the existence of Indrabhūti Gautama, Ārya Sudharmā was considered as the first pontiff of Lord Mahāvīra. This topic is elaborately discussed in this text under the heading of Kevalī period. The gist is as follows:

1. During his own life time, omniscient Lord Mahāvīra appointed his eleven chief disciples as Gaṇadharas; He knew that Ārya Sudharmā had longevity of life; By saying “placing you in the rank of Pivot, I am giving orders of the Gaṇa” i.e. he, in a way, announced that Sudharmā would be his successor.
2. Some time after the nirvāṇa of Mahāvīra, in the same night, Indrabhūti Gautama had attained omniscience. The person who had attained omniscience could not be nominated as a pontiff.

The reason being, any pontiff follows and propagates the commandments, preaching, ideals and the doctrines of his founder religious leader and encourages others to follow them. However, the self-realisation and self-perception of an omniscient is so comprehensive that he is totally aware of the entire world (with its beings and objects) and perceives them in front of his very eyes. So, instead of quoting, “I am saying what Lord has said” he is in a position to claim, “I am explaining whatever I have realised”. In such a situation, while teaching and explaining the meaning of Dwādaśāṅgī, propounded by Tīrthaṅkara Mahāvīra to the group of ascetics, no omniscient can say that “Lord Mahāvīra has perceived like this, has realised like this and has said like this”. As he knows and perceives by himself, he says, “I am seeing in such a way”, “I know it this way” and “I am saying whatever I know and I perceive”. As such, the tradition of Śruta-paramparā (the system of handing down the scriptural knowledge, unbroken and unimpaired from generation to generation) started by the latest Tīrthaṅkara will no more remain as ‘Lord Mahāvīra’s tradition’, instead will be termed as Śruta paramparā of the Kevalī Gautama.

Taking into consideration the aforesaid facts, to sustain and carry forward the preaching of Lord Mahāvīra up to the end of the fifth epoch / time period (*Araka*), and to follow his instructions which lead the practitioners onto the path of elevation, Omniscient Gautama was not considered as the first Successor, instead Caturdaśa pūrvadhara and manaḥ paryavajñāni Sudharmā was considered as the first pontiff.

In the chapter dealing with Ārya Sudharmā, under the sub-heading “The Author of the present Dwādaśāṅgī” the topics of Dwādaśāṅgī are narrated in an elaborate and descriptive manner. Discrepancy between Śvetāmbaras and Digambaras regarding the authorship of Dwādaśāṅgī is also discussed in this chapter to the possible extent.

The unanimous opinion expressed in all the authentic scriptures of the Śvetāmbara sect undisputedly states that after Lord Mahāvīra clarified their respective doubts, Indrabhūti Gautama together with ten other gaṇadhara, took ‘initiation’ of Śramaṇa Dharma from Him. The same day, after attaining the knowledge of trio of reality (*Tripadī*) from the omniscient Lord and upon being conferred the rank of gaṇadhara, on the basis of the preaching of the Lord, they at first compiled fourteen Pūrvas

(Caturdaśa pūrvas) and later the remaining Dṛaṣṭivāda including Ekādaśāṃgī separately. Though the meaning of the Dwādaśāṃgī written independently by the eleven gaṇadharas (based on the preaching of the Lord Mahāvīra) is same, but the style is different.

Of the eleven gaṇadharas of Lord Mahāvīra, seven gaṇadharas had each one gana and thus seven Gaṇas; the eighth and ninth gaṇadharas together had one gaṇa; the tenth and eleven gaṇadharas together had one gaṇa. In this way, altogether, (7+1+1) there were nine gaṇas. Though gaṇadharas were 11, gaṇas were 9. As there are nine gaṇas so there are nine compositions of Dwādaśāṃgī. Except Indrabhūti Gautama and Sudharmā, the remaining nine gaṇadharas entrusted the responsibility of their gaṇas to Ārya Sudharmā during the lifetime of Lord Mahāvīra. They obtained liberation, observing the monthly practice of pious death (*Pādopagamana Saṃthārā*). Their seven gaṇas thus merged into Sudharmā's gaṇa.

Even Indrabhūti Gautama, 12 years after V.N., after entrusting his gaṇa to, Ārya Sudharmā, became Siddha, i.e. attained liberation.

Thus the disciples of ten gaṇadharas and their eight scriptural discourse (vācanās) compositions went into oblivion after the nirvāṇa of their respective gaṇadharas. As a result, the lineage of Sudharmā's disciples and his composition of Dwādaśāṃgī only survived.

Two different opinions are found in the scriptures of Dīgambara sect regarding the composition of Dwādaśāṃgī. In Sarvārtha Siddhi Vṛtti, which elaborates the Tattvārtha Sūtra, it is made clear that Dwādaśāṃgī was written by all the Gaṇadharas. The quote says, "Omniscient Tīrthaṃkara distributed his incomprehensible and unperceivable wealth of knowledge to his disciples through divine sound. With the newly gained knowledge through the preaching of Lord, and with the enlightened and enhanced intellects, the Śrutakevalī gaṇadharas, compiled scriptures which are called as Aṃga Pūrva Lakṣaṇa or Dwādaśāṃgī." According to the second opinion, Indrabhūti Gautama had written Dwādaśāṃgī in one muhurat on the very same day after listening to the meaningful discourses of Lord on Āgamas.

After analysing the facts of Śvetāmbara and Digambara sects, it can be concluded that Dwādaśāṅgī was the combined effort of all gaṇadhara, and was not composed exclusively by any one gaṇadhara; and in the period after the nirvāṇa, Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara ācāryas and also minimum Daśa Pūrvadhara ācāryas, from time to time, created need-based 12 limbed Āgamas which are all a collection from the pūrvamga of Dr̥ṣṭivāda.

Era of all canons knowing Monks (Śrutakevalī Era)

This period falls between V.N. 64 and 170. In this chapter the lives of five Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara (knower of the 14 prior canons) ācāryas who belonged to Śrutakevalī era are discussed. Though the number of ācāryas is same, their names are stated differently in the Śvetāmbara and Digambara sects. The important events during their life time are also discussed here.

This chapter is very significant in many aspects. Śrutakevalī Ācārya Bhadrabāhu went to heaven in V.N. 170 as per Śvetāmbara sect and in V.N. 162 as per Digambara sect. After V.N. 1000 there was another Bhadrabāhu with occult powers. Because of the similarity in name, probably the incidents from the life of that Occult Ācārya Bhadrabāhu got mixed up with the incidents from the life of Śrutakevalī Ācārya Bhadrabāhu. For this reason for a long time there have been several differences of opinion between the two sects. In this chapter, based on the ancient and not so ancient scriptures of both the sects, the differences of opinion between the two sects are resolved.

There is a heaven and earth difference of opinion as to how the Dharma congregation of Lord Mahāvīra was divided into two sects. According to Digambaras the division in the sect came into existence in V.N. 606 and according to Śvetāmbaras it was in 609.

The authors of Śvetāmbara Sect have expressed unanimous opinion about how and when the Digambara sect came into existence; at the same time, there is a disagreement among the Digambaras about how and when the Śvetāmbara Sect originated.

The enumeration of Devasena in his book “Bhāva Saṃgraha” about how Śvetāmbara sect came into existence, confirms the following:

1. An occult-powered ācārya named Bhadrabāhu stayed in Ujjain in Vikram 124 (594 V.N.).
2. He with his occult knowledge warned all the Śramaṇa congregations that severe famine would occur in the entire north including Avantī and would last for twelve years. So all the Śramaṇas should migrate from the north to more fertile areas.
3. All the ācāryas together with their respective congregations left north and migrated to some other places. A ācārya called Śānti reached Vallabhī Nagara in Saurashtra. Severe famine broke out even there too. The dreadful and unavoidable circumstances that arose due to the famine compelled Ācārya Śānti and the Śramaṇas in his congregation to take stick, rug and bowl, to wear white clothes and adopt lenient ascetics prohibited for Śramaṇas.
4. Wherever rest of the Śramaṇa congregations went, natural resources existed in abundance. Hence they adhered to the sacred and hard rituals of Śramaṇa and did not allow any degeneration in their conduct.
5. When the situation restored back to normalcy, Ācārya Śānti rightly advised his disciples to abandon stick, clothes and bowl, etc., to undergo expiation and to follow the hard old conduct for them. A disciple called Jinacandra became furious at this bitter truth laced command of Ācārya Śānti. Ācārya Śānti breathed his last, when Jinacandra in anger, hit him hard on the head with a stick
6. After taking the life of Ācārya Śānti, Jinacandra declared himself “ācārya” of the congregation and created new Śāstras of his convenience to suit his conduct.
7. There is no mention of either Bhadrabāhu, the Śrutakevalī, who according to the belief of Digambara sect attained heaven in 162 V.N. or Viśākhācārya, Rāmilla, Sthūlavṛaddha, Sthūlācārya and even the great emperor Candragupta. This entire description was dated to the period between Vikram 124 & 136 era (594 & 604 V.N.) and it was attributed to occult Ācārya Bhadrabāhu.

Now, after a thorough research, many other scholars of Digambara sect have also made it apparent that it was the second Bhadrabāhu and not the first one, who went down South.

After a comprehensive study of the Indian, Greek & World histories, in the chapter of Śrutakevalī Ācārya Bhadrabāhu and Daśa Pūrvadhara Ācārya Sthūla Bhadra, this fact is proven beyond doubt that Alexander invaded India in 325 BC (200 V.N.). Porasa and Candragupta encouraged Alexander to attack the mighty Nanda Kingdom.

It is finally proved by unanimously approved historical fact that during the period between 327 & 324 BC (200 & 203 V.N.) when Candragupta served as a common patriotic soldier, the ninth Nanda was the most powerful king of Magadha. Cāṅakya destroyed the Nanda dynasty in 312 BC (215 V.N.) and crowned Candragupta Maurya as the King of Pātaliputra.

Śrutakevalī Bhadrabāhu (156 to 170 V.N.) and Candragupta Maurya (215 V.N.) were not contemporaries. In 215 V.N., Nanda dynasty was completely destroyed and Maurya dynasty was established.

Bhadrabāhu the Śrutakevalī (170 V.N.) was 830 years before Bhadrabāhu, the occult (after 1000 V.N.). Because of the similarity of their names, not only the works of the occult powered Ācārya Bhadrabāhu, like Niryuktis, Uvasaggahara Stotra, Bhadrabāhu Saṃhitā, etc., but also some events of his life were also accredited to the life of Bhadrabāhu, the Śrutakevalī.

Out of five ācāryas of Śrutakevalī era, except the name of Bhadrabāhu, the names of the other four ācāryas are stated differently in both the sects.

Starting from Tīrtha Pravartana era till the early period of Ārya Susthita and Supratibaddha ācārya era, the Dharma congregation of Lord Mahāvīra was popular as Nirgraṃtha congregation. From the ācārya era of Ārya Sudharmā to the ācārya era of Ārya Bhadrabāhu - the Śrutakevalī, there was no mention of any Gaṇa. But after the departure of Ācārya Bhadrabāhu to heaven Bhadrabāhu, Godāsa Gaṇa, named after his first disciple Godāsa, came into vogue. According to Kalapa

sthavirālī, Godāsa Gaṇa had four divisions - Tāmālitiyā, Kodivarisiyā, Paṃduvaddhaṇiyā and Dāsī Khavvadiyā.

Godāsa, the chief disciple of Ācārya Bhadrabāhu went to South with his disciples, propagated and spread Jain Dharma.

1. Era of ten prior scriptures knowing monks (Daśa Pūrvadhara Era)

Daśa Pūrvadhara era extends from 170 to 584 V.N. (414 years). This chapter deals with the history of eleven Daśa Pūrvadhara ācāryas starting from Ārya Sthūlabhadra to Ārya Vajra, the epochal tradition that was started by Ārya Suhastī, Vācakavaṃśa tradition that came into existence under Ārya Balissaha. It also gives a brief gist of the list of ācāryas and the significant events that took place during their life time, the royal dynasties and invasions by foreigners etc., which occurred during these 414 years.

In this chapter a sincere effort is made to untie a difficult knot in the Jain-time-determination which, for the last one thousand years remained as a difficult problem for the intellectuals.

There has been unanimous belief in the Digambara sect that Bhadrabāhu, the Śrutakevalī passed away in 162 V.N. whereas according to Śvetāmbaras it was in 170 V.N.

This is a historical fact that Candragupta Maurya with the help of Cāṇakya overthrew the Nanda dynasty in 215 V.N., usurped the kingdom and crowned himself as the king of Magadha and founded the Maurya dynasty. If we consider that the Mauryan emperor Candragupta, was the laity or Śramaṇa disciple of Bhadrabāhu, then the time of demise of Śrutakevalī Bhadrabāhu should be pushed further by 10 to 20 years after the year 215 V.N. or else the time of the downfall of Nanda dynasty, and, the establishment of the Mauryan Empire should be taken at least 15 to 16 years backward from V.N. 162 or 170.

An objective analysis of the factors brings out the cause of how and why there is the difference of 60 years while determining the time.

Ācārya Hemacandra clearly mentioned that Bhadrabāhu, the Śrutakevali and Candragupta were contemporaries and that Bhadrabāhu passed away in 170 V.N. While stating that they both were contemporaries, he considered the time calculation of the ācārya – tenure but while considering the time calculation of the ruling kings, he completely forgot to take into account the 60 years of the reigning period of the ruler Pālaka. Thus, Candragupta who took over as Emperor in V.N. 215 was shown as having become the Emperor in V.N. 155 itself, 60 years earlier.

Thus when there are strong and substantial evidences to ascertain the historical fact, the tell-tale stories like making Candragupta the contemporary disciple (Monk or layman) of Śrutakevalī Bhadrabāhu, has no significance and are considered as baseless.

Era of Monks with general knowledge of prior scriptures (Ordinary Pūrvadhara Era)

According to the school of thought of Śvetāmbara tradition the period between V.N. 584 to 1000 is considered as an ordinary Pūrvadhara Era. This chapter brings into light the matters concerned with ten Vācanācāryas (discourse-ācāryas) from Ārya Revati Nakṣatra to Ārya Devārdhigaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa; epochal-ācāryas from Ārya Rakṣita to Ārya Satyamitra and group-ācāryas like Ārya Ratha Candra, Samantabhadra, Vṛaddhadeva, Pradyotana, Mānadeva, etc. Besides, this chapter tries to elaborate the significant facts like classification of Anuyogas (classifications of canonical texts), Śālivāhana Śāka era, Jainism getting divided into sects, different congregations in Digambara Sect, Yāpanīya congregation, origin of gacchas, Caityavāsa (Temple dwelling), Āgama Vācanās like Skandilīyā and Nāgārjunīyā, compilation of Āgamas in the last Āgamavācanā conducted in 980 V.N. in Vallabhī Nagara, lineage of Gurus of Ārya Devārdhigaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa, opinions of Digambaras about common Pūrvadhara era, comparison between Prajñāpanā Sūtra and ṣaṭkhaṇḍāgama. It also throws light on few significant facts like the confusion prevalent in the Digambara Sect about the determination or compilation of time of Prākṛta Paṭṭāvalī of Nandi congregation, etc.

Epilogue

The history of Jainism from 1 V.N. to 1000 V.N. is provided in this text. The text deals with ācāryas, Āgamas, monks (male and female), gaṇas, gacchas, families, sects and sub sects, laymen and rulers who turned into laity (male and female), the important religious and historical events that took place during the time of these ācāryas. Besides the dynasties that ruled the country, their lineage, revolts and foreign invasions are also discussed, depending upon the requirement either briefly or elaborately. The objects behind the presentation of these facts are:

1. To make the religious history more authentic and comprehensive by presenting the then contemporary religious and political events together.
2. To eliminate the confusion and chaos created or being created by the vested interests of historians by scrutinising the historical events in the light of canonical texts of Jainism.
3. Try to untie the knots of the history of Jain religion which, for various reasons got entangled, by conducting a comparative study of political history and canonical literature of Jainism.
4. To familiarise the readers with the good effects of the role of able and virtuous rulers who during their rule, contributed towards the all round development of the religion and the prosperity of the common man.
5. To make known about the bad result of the all round degeneration of the enslaved public and the religious decline during the regime of wicked rulers and foreign tyrants.
6. To establish and prove the fact from religious, social, financial and political perspective that only good rule or self disciplined good rule is the main key for all round development and progress. On the contrary, bad rule leads to poverty-accusation and is the progenitor of utter fall and degeneration.
7. To make every Jain citizen understand the essential duties, by adhering to which, the foundation for the establishment of strong development oriented welfare state is laid, failing which there is the threat of wicked rule and the country may fall into deep pit of degeneration.
8. In Indian History some periods were declared as dark ages because no source is available about the historical events of that

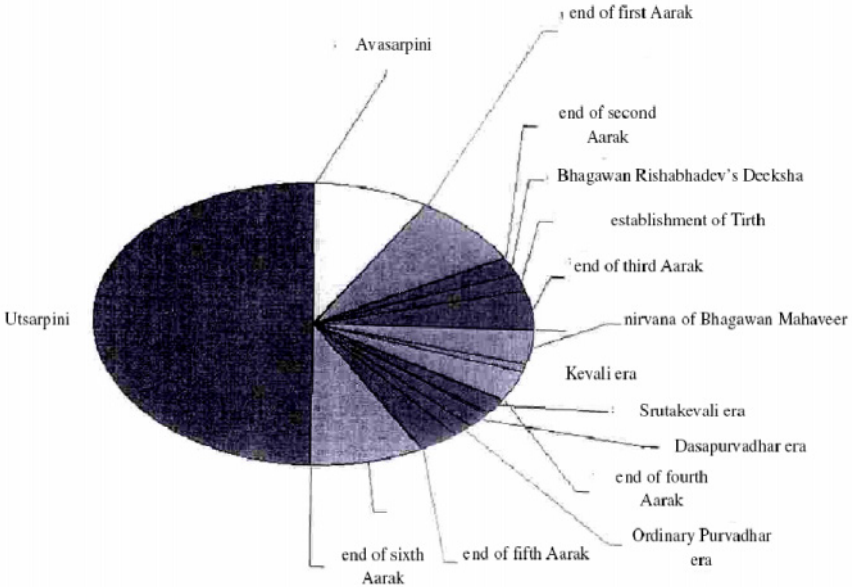
particular period. The effort is to connect these missing links of the Indian history by examining the then contemporary history from the canonical Jain literature and inscriptions etc., so as to come out with substantial proofs, thereby turning the dark ages into bright luminous ones.

9. In a freedom based good rule, under the cool shelter of righteous administration, the Kalpavṛkṣa (wish-fulfilling tree) of mundane and spiritual happiness and abundance sprouts, put forth foliage and bears flowers and fruits. In contrast under any tyrannical rule, the poisonous tree of disputes and differences takes root in the filthy mire. Living on such poisonous fruits, the man forgets his basic trait - namely humanity and behaves like a fiend. With a view that the readers should understand this fact, wherever necessary, together with the history of religion and religious leaders, the contemporary history is also described in this text. The mistakes of the past which proved to be detrimental to the mankind should, under no circumstances be repeated, by anyone in this spiritual country. This is our heartfelt desire in presenting the facts.

MAY PEACE PREVAIL

- Monk Hastimala

GOLDEN ERA



The time period between the first Tīrthaṃkara Lord Vṛṣabha Deva to the nirvāṇa of 24th Tīrthaṃkara Lord Mahāvīra is called as Tīrthaṃkara era of India (Bhārata). It can also be called the golden era of Bhārata - region.

On the whole, twenty four Tīrthaṃkaras existed in this golden era starting from Lord Vṛṣabhadeva to Lord Mahāvīra. They set up Dharma tīrtha (religious creed) during their time to protect the living beings from the age-old grief of sufferings in the 'karalakāla' (the terrifying time period) by enduring the vicious cycle of birth, old age, disease and death and uplifting them from the delusive familial bonds and worldly ties.

They preached friendliness, amiability, untainted pure love not only towards one another but also towards all living beings in the entire universe. They also advocated universal brotherhood and thus paved the way to real humanity. Basing on the heartfelt universal truths like

‘*Savve Jīvāvi Icchamti Jīviuṃ na Marijjuṃ*’ and ‘*Dhammo Maṃgala Mukīṭṭhaṃ Ahimsā Saṃjamo (Savve) Tavo*’ treat all the living beings as you treat yourself and *Ahimsā* (Non-violence), Self control & penance are the supreme spiritual virtues - they established casteless, creedless, classless and colourless society where amiability and love flows perennially not only over the mankind but also over the entire world.

Those compassionate Tīrthaṃkaras wandered from place to place, providing solace to, and uplifting the people who were burning under the scorching heat of familial bonds through their nectar-filled words that worked wonders like the first showers of rain and made them worthy enough to enjoy infinite happiness and reach the abode of Lords (Śivadhāma).

Era of the omniscient Lords (Kevalī era)

Indrabhūti Gautama

Nirvāṇa - 12 V.N.

Ārya Sudharmā

Tenure as a ācārya - from 1 to 20 V.N.

Ārya Jambū

Tenure as a ācārya - from 21 to 64 V.N.

Kevalī Era / Era of omniscient

As the time period from Lord Vṛṣabha Deva to the nirvāṇa of Lord Mahāvīra is considered as Tīrthaṅkara era, similarly the time span after the nirvāṇa of Mahāvīra, from 1 to 64 V.N. is considered as Kevalī era in Jain World and Jain history.

Nearly 2536 years ago on a dark moon night (amāvasyā) in the month of Kārtika (October end to November end) after midnight and in the early dawn Lord Mahāvīra obtained liberation. From that time onwards V.N. like A.D. in western calendar has come into existence.

Three most significant historical events had occurred during the first few days of V.N. are namely:

1. The same night Caṇḍapradyaota, the king of Avantī, who was of the same age as that of Buddha, passed away at the age of 58 (he was also born on the same day Buddha was born) and his son, Pālaka, succeeded the throne.
2. The first gaṇadhara Indrabhūti Gautama attained omniscience
3. The fifth gaṇadhara Sudharmā Swāmī was nominated as the first Pontiff of Lord Mahāvīra tradition.

Origin of Kevalī Era

In Bharata region, the Tīrthaṅkara era came to an end with the liberation of Lord Mahāvīra, the 24th Tīrthaṅkara and Kevalī era commenced. In this era, the Tīrthaṅkara's 34 auspicious attainments, the 35 auspicious forms of speech and the eight auspicious phenomena did not exist. During the righteous regime of Lord Mahāvīra, Indrabhūti Gautama turned out to be the eldest and worthiest amongst his disciples. However, since he could not work very hard to break the pre-bound attachment towards his Guru, he could not attain omniscience during the life time of Lord Mahāvīra.

The sun of pure knowledge had set as Lord Mahāvīra became free from all activities (Siddha), enlightened (Buddha) and liberated (Mukta). It

appeared as if the entire earth was enveloped with darkness. Fortunately, the sun of omniscience rose the same night within gaṇadhara Indrabhūti Gautama, once again transforming the world bright with the light of knowledge. Kevalī era commences with Indrabhūti Gautama. Hence his details have been discussed first.

Indrabhūti Gautama

Date of Birth	605 B.C.
Birth Place	Gobbara Village near Rājagṛha, the seat of power of Magadha Kingdom
Gotra (lineage or status) & Caste	Gautama Gotra and Brahmin
Birth Star	Jyeṣṭha
Father's Name	Vasubhūti Gautama. According to Digambara tradition, it is Sandilya
Mother's Name	Pṛthvī
Name of the middle brother	Agnibhūti
Name of the younger brother	Vāyubhūti
Education	Studied completely all the 14 types of knowledge viz., <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 4 Vedas - Ṛga, Yajura, Sāma & Atharva Vedas- 6 Vedāṅgas - Śikṣā, Kalpa, Vyākaraṇa, (grammar) Nirūkta, Chandas and Jyotiṣa (astrology)- 4 Upāṅgas - Mīmāṃsā, Nyāya, Dharma Śāstra and Pūrāṇa

He became an erudite scholar in all the above mentioned 14 disciplines.

Ācārya of Vedic scriptures and his disciples

In many Jain scriptures and literature it is said that Indrabhūti Gautama was a famous ācārya of great intellect and 500 students used to learn from him. The sequential time he spent on education and educating as a ācārya might be as follows: After the completion of his learning at the age of 25, he might have wandered for five years to various places and then might have defeated the scholars in scriptural discourses

(Śāstrārtha). It is probable that after achieving reputation, he became the ācārya of Veda-Vedāṅga. Hundreds of pupils approached him to learn, and during the twenty long years of teaching, a great number of students might have left the place as graduates and new students might have turned up. In such a situation the strength of students should have been more than 500. The figure of 500 seems to represent only those who were learning from him at a time regularly.

Married Life

Few ācāryas discussed the marriage of Sudharmā, but as far as Indrabhūti Gautama was concerned, all the sects are silent on this issue.

As Yājñakācārya

During the time when Lord Mahāvīra attained pure intuition and pure knowledge, Somila, the resident of Apāpā town, and a rich Brahmin organised a very significant Yajña. After a lot of entreaties, Indrabhūti, Agnibhūti, Vāyubhūti, Vyakta, Sudharmā, Maṇḍita, Mauryaputra, Akampita, Acala Bhrātā, Methāri and Prabhāsa agreed to go with him, for ministering the proceedings of Yajña. He, with due respect, took them to Apāpā, as they were universally acclaimed ācāryas in performing the Vedic rituals. He also invited a congregation of Brahmins and scholars to attend the Yajña ceremony.

Owing to his unparalleled knowledge, name and fame, Indrabhūti Gautama was appointed as the head ācārya to perform the ritual activities of the Yajña. Under his able supervision, the Yajña started with a great pomp and show and the Yajña hall echoed with Vedic hymns.

Suddenly, the eyes of all people present there, turned towards the blue sky. They were baffled seeing the illumination in the sky. Thousands of celestial planets appeared, radiating lustrous light like thousands of suns in the sky. When the people saw that the celestial planets were approaching towards the Yajña hall, their happiness knew no bounds.

Addressing Somila, Indrabhūti Gautama said, “Somila! We made the vision of Satyayuga (era of truth) manifest and materialise here! Indeed, you are very lucky! To accept our sacred oblations (purodāśa) Indra and

other celestial angels are coming to your Yajña in their celestial planets / vehicles.

With boundless gratitude gushing out from every cell of his body and rapt with ecstasy, Somila replied, “Lord! This miraculous boon is granted to me due to the grace and mercy of a competent ācārya like you.”

The hymns recited even more loudly than before and the reverberating sounds of “*Swāhā*”, i.e. to offer, echoed in the sky. It was not just thousands, but millions of eyes were witnessing the descent of celestial planets without even blinking.

Mean while the celestial planets crossed the Yajña-site and moved ahead. The sound of hymns reduced at once. Happiness was replaced with disappointment. The people with their grief - stricken eyes were looking enquiringly at Indrabhūti Gautama and the moving planes, in turns. An absolute silence prevailed there.

Indrabhūti in a tone mixed with amazement, disappointment and annoyance said, “Alas! Had the Celestial angels forgotten their way? Where are they bound towards leaving this great sacrifice? Despite our invitation through Vedic hymns, where are they headed to like in a trance? Someone please find out and let me know.”

After a while a few people approached Indrabhūti and said, “Oh Great ācārya! The omniscient Śramaṇa Lord Mahāvīra is camping in the near by Ānanda gardens. He has attained omniscience just a few moments ago. Hence the celestial angels are going to attend the religious discourse (Samavaśaraṇa) ceremony of Lord Mahāvīra.”

Indrabhūti became upset listening to it. His eyes turned into fire balls out of rage. He said in a loud angry voice, “Oh! What are you talking about? How can anyone else dare to claim himself omniscient in my presence? It looks like he is an imposter. He could even conjure and deceive the celestial angels to believe that he is an omniscient, and pay homage to him. As long as an omniscient like me exists, there cannot be any other omniscient. Behold! Before the very eyes of the angels and the asuras, firing challenging questions at him I will obliterate his fame and unveil his mask of omniscience.”

Indrabhūti could not digest his own people praising Lord Mahāvīra. He was agitated and said, “Indeed he is a very big fraud. I am baffled to see that he kept everyone in illusion. I cannot tolerate his claim of omniscience even for a moment, because I am just like the sun that never waits to dispel darkness. I defeated the greatest of the great scholars in philosophical discussions and silenced them forever, after all, what is he?”

Sometimes ego combined with arrogance makes the person so spiteful that it not only destroys him but at times becomes the reason for the destruction of the entire human society.

It was a very normal reaction for Indrabhūti to get momentarily carried away by his pride, as he had never in his life time, encountered a person superior to him. However, there was no trace of either prejudice or tenacity and self-righteousness within his heart and his inner conscience was free from all such qualities. He was keen to know the Truth and was liberal and receptive to accept the truth. This quality helped him in course of time to angle his unilateral personality into a gigantic personality of the times.

With his ego manifested to its fullest extent, Indrabhūti prepared to engage Lord Mahāvīra in a philosophical debate and headed towards the religious congregation / gathering (Samavaśaraṇa). He thought “By my fortune this debator has arrived here. I will certainly silence his tongue for ever”. With this thought, together with all his 500 disciples he approached the Samavaśaraṇa. Seeing the eight auspicious things / signs (*mahāpratihāryas*) and the splendid spiritual wealth of Lord Mahāvīra he stood stunned on the stairs and went on staring at him without even blinking. He started pondering, ‘Is he Brahmā, Viṣṇu or Śiva himself? Is he a Moon or Sun? Is he a Meru Mountain? No, he cannot be, for, they all do have some flaw in them. Somehow I am forced to feel that He is the last Tīrthaṅkara with an unblemished all virtuous character.”

At the very moment when Indrabhūti stood like a rock immersed in his deep thoughts, Lord Mahāvīra in a sweet voice, excelling the sweetness of ambrosia, addressed him with his Gotra name, “O! Indrabhūti Gautama, welcome. Being benevolent for yourself and others, your coming here is good and useful. Listening to it, Indrabhūti started

wondering, “How does he know my name? The very next moment, he assured himself, “Well, of course! Who is not aware of the famous Indrabhūti? Well, can a sun hide itself from the world? If he is able to reveal the most secret doubt lingering deep in my heart I will accept that he is omniscient. Or else he will forever remain insignificant to me.”

As these thoughts were crossing his mind, Lord Mahāvīra said. “Gautama, you have a doubt about the existence of the soul. You think that the soul is invisible, unlike the body of a being. You believe that what is not visible does not exist at all in the world. This type of doubt popped up in your mind as you failed to understand the inner meaning of the Vedas properly. Come and listen, I will explain the real meaning of the verses (Riccas) of Vedas to you.”

Indrabhūti felt bewildered when Lord Mahāvīra revealed in clear words his reticent doubt that which he never expressed to anyone. He was once again lost in deep thinking. “How is he aware of my closely guarded secret that I never shared with anyone so far”? Except the omniscient who else can probe into the feelings of the heart? By any chance am I standing in front of an omniscient?”

Indrabhūti’s mind was still busy in deep thoughts. Just then, the knower of all thoughts and feelings, Lord Mahāvīra’s majestic voice echoed in his ears, “O Indrabhūti! As I am an omniscient I am able to see the soul. You too can. The object that had nurtured this doubt in your heart about its existence is in fact the soul itself.

The soul can also be seen by you. Characteristics like the feeling of Citta (mind, reason and ego), Cetanā (consciousness), Sanjñā (name), Vijñāna (Knowledge), Upayoga (usefulness), doubt, inquisitiveness, happiness, sorrow etc., the nature to always try to stay away from grief and sorrow, craving to live a happy long life etc. are found clearly in the soul and are visible. Thus the existence of the soul is self-evident. Where is the need to find other evidences when the presence of the object itself proves its existence? Emotions, desire, doubt, happiness, sorrow are formless and so are not visible to the physical eye. In the same way, the soul is also formless and hence is not visible to the physical eye. Each and every individual feels his present, past and future activities in this manner, “I

am listening”, ‘I listened’, ‘I will listen’. In these, the echo of ‘I’ convinces the person about the existence of his soul”.

Perceiving the doubt in Indrabhūti’s heart regarding the canonical literary evidence, Lord Mahāvīra cleared it immediately, “Gautama! The root cause for your doubt is because you did not understand the underlying meaning of Vedic Ṛcās.

“Ne ha vai śarīrasyasataḥ priyāpriyayārepahatirasti aśarīraṃ vā vasam te priyāpriye na sprśataḥ ” and “Swargakāmo yajeta”

From the above sentences of Veda, the existence of soul is proved.

On the other hand, “*Vijñānadhana yevaitebhyo bhutaibhyaḥ samutthāya tānyevānu vinaśyati, na pretya samjñāsti*” explains the echo of soul and body.

Both these statements were considered by you as contradictory to one another. And hence, your doubt about the existence of the soul arose. Gautama, you did not understand the meaning of the last sentence of Veda. Let me explain it to you”.

The real meaning of Vijñānaghana

The soul (*ātmā*) is the embodiment of knowledge & philosophy and is termed as Vijñānaghana. Ātmā, the epitome of knowledge when it looks at the objects, say like, pot and cloth, it acquires the knowledge about them. When its attention gets diverted to other objects like trees, fruits, flowers and so on, it loses its previous knowledge and retains the new one. It means the newly acquired information replaces the old one and the process continues. The soul does not get lost. It is the knowledge; rather the information that it first received that gets substituted by the information acquired later. Thus, the chain continues forever; acquisition and loss and once again acquisition of knowledge by soul keeps continuing; hence there is no question of the soul getting lost.

The real meaning of Pretya (past knowledge)

“Na pretya Saṃjñāsti”: Lord Mahāvīra explained the meaning of this Vedic sentence, “seeing the pot the soul comprehended its utility, which means that it acquired the knowledge relating to pot. Afterwards at the sight of the cloth, the attention of soul is diverted to it from the pot. To be precise, as soon as the pot disappeared from the sight, its knowledge also got lost and the soul starts thinking about the utility of cloth and acquires knowledge relating to it. With the newly acquired knowledge of the cloth, the old “Pretya” - the past knowledge of a thing - vanishes.

Knowledge actually is not the Dharma of body because knowledge exists irrespective of the presence or absence of an object. Just like pot is different from cloth similarly knowledge is entirely different from body. Since pot and cloth are two different objects, just as in the absence of pot, the cloth remains and in the absence of cloth the pot remains, in the same way, in the living state even while the objects are absent their knowledge exists while in the dead body there is no knowledge even though the objects may be present. So the body and soul are two different entities. Body is the container of the soul whereas the soul is the contained. The knowledge of utility, emotions, doubts etc, is the characteristics of the soul and is formless. However, the body has a form. The traits of a form cannot be formless. That is why the formless attributes like knowledge, etc do not belong to body, but they do belong to soul. Though the soul spreads to all organs and sub-organs of the body, it is different from the body.

Doubt regarding the doctrine of one – Soul

“There are no different souls in the world; there is only one soul that spreads vast, just like the sky.” This doubt arose in the heart of Indrabhūti. Clearing his doubt Lord Mahāvīra said in a pleasant tone, “Indrabhūti, a clear sky appears same to everyone. People are not able to see the sky in many different or unique or singular forms. The sky is one. Similarly, there may seem to be only one soul in all the beings in a single form without its multiple identities, peculiarities and exceptionalities. But no such equal form or single form is found in the bodies of living beings. The most important thing is that the characteristics of one living being are entirely different from that of other. So it is apparent that all

the beings do not possess the same soul, instead different souls. When the characteristics differ, it does imply, rather it proves that the souls also differ.

Today, many living beings suffer with pain and many living beings are happy. This difference is seen so clearly, proves that, there is no single soul spread like a sky, but in numeral different souls. The main attribute of soul is consciousness. In all living beings, this activity appears at small or large levels and of different types & in different manifestations. Due to the difference in the level of conscious activity like high-low and best-worst, found in each living being, the number of souls in the world is infinite.

In reality the soul is an immortal and eternal substance. The souls in the living beings of the world, on seeing the pot or cloth acquire the respective knowledge related to their conscious activity. This proves that the soul has the power to acquire knowledge. Similarly, on acquiring the knowledge of the cloth the previously acquired knowledge of pot is lost. This proves that the soul has the power to loose / spend. But, in both the situations, whether acquisition or loss, the existence of eternal soul persists. That is why soul is considered as having the property of persistence. Because of the characteristics of acquisition and loss of knowledge, the soul appears as if it is either present or lost. Never the less, the fact is that it is immortal, indestructible and persistent'.

Thus condemning the doctrines of five basic elements (Pañchabhūtvāda), Tajjīva-taccharīvāda and monism (Ekātmavāda), Lord Mahāvīra with his majestic divine sound (dispelling darkness through his words) giving substantial evidences, explained the existence of soul to Indrabhūti Gautama and obliterated all his doubts.

Listening to his sacred voice not only removed the doubts from Indrabhūti's mind but filled it with unimaginable, inexpressible, overwhelming spiritual bliss and ecstasy

Change of Heart

Indrabhūti prostrating on Lord's feet and expressing everlasting gratitude through his eyes, uttered in a voice choked with emotion, "Oh, Lord! I totally surrender myself to Thee."

The magnificent words of Omniscient Lord Mahāvīra quenched the thirst of Indrabhūti Gautama - the truth seeker and the seed of spirituality already sown in his sacred, serene, peaceful heart suddenly sprouted, put forth foliage, bore flowers and fruits.

As he was left with no delusion over the past importunities, and strictly adhered to truth which he had cast in his life, the moment he got enlightened, he dedicated everything on to the lotus feet of Lord Mahāvīra, without any second thoughts, and firmly decided to get initiated at his feet.

He prayed with folded hands, "Oh! My Lord! I have full faith in you. I am willing to lead the rest of my life at your pious feet. So please include me in your auspicious Dharma and sanctify me by initiating in Śramaṇa monkhood".

The compassionate Lord Mahāvīra with nectar filled words "*Ahāsuham, Devāṇuppiyā!*" directed Indrabhūti to do whatever he felt was right. Indrabhūti, together with his 500 disciples, decided to follow the footsteps of his Guru on the spiritual path.

While Indrabhūti Gautama was aspiring to be initiated as a Monk, Lord Mahāvīra, listening to the former's inner prayer and passion, knew that he will become his first Gaṇadhara. In 557 BC, 500 BC in the month of Vaiśākha on 11th Śukla, Lord himself made Indrabhūti Gautama his chief disciple and gave Sarvavirati Śramaṇa initiation, i.e. total detachment / renunciation and acceptance of five major vows (Pañca Mahāvrata).

After hearing the news that Indrabhūti along with his 500 disciples, became the disciples of Lord Mahāvīra, in due course Agnibhūti, Vāyubhūti, Ārya Vyakta, Ārya Sudharmā each with 500 disciples, Maṇḍita and Maurya Putra, with their 350 students each, and Akampita, Acala Bhrātā, Metārya and Prabhāsa with their 300 disciples each, came

to the Samavaśaraṇa of Lord Mahāvīra. They got totally convincing answers from Lord Mahāvīra to all their deep rooted unexpressed doubts. They and their students pulled their hair from their heads and became 'Nirgrāṃthas' as per the procedure.

Listening to just one preaching of Lord Mahāvīra who had the ability to make the eternal truth appealing to them, the eleven ācāryas who were renowned for their knowledge in Veda-Vedāṅgas and their 4400 students grasping the true form of Dharma took initiation from Lord and became Śramaṇas.

After establishing the four-fold Tīrtha namely monks (males, females) and votaries (males and females) Lord Mahāvīra preached the law of origination (Utpāda or Uppanneivā) law of destruction (Vyaya or Viḡameivā) and law of permanence (Dhrauṡya or Dhurveivā) to Indrabhūti Gautama, Agnibhūti and other nine chief disciples. Thus explaining the tri-part nature of reality 'Tripadi' he imparted them with the knowledge of nature of verities (Tatvas), i.e. how all beings in this universe undergo these three stages simultaneously, their nature and form and its total knowledge.

Explaining the Tripadi in brief, he said:

Utpāda: When a substance gets a new state / mode without losing its original form, then it is called the Utpāda (origination) of that mode (paryāya) of the substance.

Vyaya: The destruction of previous state / mode during origination of new from by the substance is called Vyaya (desctruction).

Dhrauṡya: Even during the stages of Utpāda and Vyaya, the substance retains its original nature and attributes, it is known as Dhrauṡya (permanence).

For example, consider a piece of necklace of gold. A bangle is made out of it by melting it. It means production of a bangle took place and necklace was lost, however the gold continue to exist. In both these cases, (either necklace or bangle), the existence of gold is permanent (Dhrauṡya).

Similarly the soul takes the form of a human being or a celestial body or an animal. Taking any of these forms by soul may be considered as origination (Utpāda); it is entering into a new body by foregoing the previous body on death; is known as Vyaya; however, soul is present in both the cases. So soul's existence is eternal. In Utpāda and Vyaya the outcome or mode of the substance is more important whereas in the stage of Dhrauvya the original nature of the substance is important.

Under the influence of the Divine and sacred words of Mahāvīra and due to the highest austerities performed in their previous births, Gautama and other 10 scholars who were initiated together became proficient in the entire ocean of Śruta jñāna in a flash. At first, they compiled fourteen prior scriptures (Pūrvas). These are:

Utpādapūrvā	Agrāyaṇīpūrvā	Vīryapravādapūrvā	Astināstipravādapūrvā
Jñānapravādapūrvā	Satyapravādapūrvā	Ātmāpravādapūrvā	Karmapravādapūrvā
Pratyākhyānapūrvā	Vidyānupravādapūrvā	Kalyāṇavādapūrvā	Prānāvāyapūrvā
Kriyāvādapūrvā	Lokabindusārapūrvā		

These very vast fourteen Pūrvas were compiled prior to of the twelve canons (Dwādaśāṅgī). That is why they are called as Pūrvas. Canonical scriptures (Aṅgaśāstras) were compiled after the compilation of the Pūrvas.

Śvetāmbara literature does not mention whether or not the father of Indrabhūti was present during his initiation. Most of the ācāryas of Digambara sects are also silent in this regard. But according to the Digambara poet 'Rayaghu' who wrote the life of Mahāvīra in Apabhraṃśa language, Indrabhūti's father Śāṃḍilya attended the initiation ceremony of his son.

The Śvetāmbara and Digambara sects have difference of opinion about the initiation of Indrabhūti Gautama. According to Śvetāmbaras, Indrabhūti took initiation on Vaiśākha Śukla 11, the day after Lord

Mahāvīra attained omniscience, whereas Digambaras opined that it was on Śrāvaṇa Kṛṣṇā Pratipadā - 66 days after Mahāvīra attained omniscience. However, according to 'Gautama Caritra' written by Maṇḍalācārya Dharmacandra, Lord Mahāvīra attained omniscience on the evening of Vaiśakha Suda 10, and after three hours Indrabhūti was initiated as a Monk (Śramaṇa).

Indrabhūti Gautama was designated as the Gaṇadhara. This was his last birth. To receive the designation of Tīrthaṃkara, it is clearly mentioned in the canonical literature (Āgama) that the practitioner should have practiced vigorously one or more causes / reflections, out of the 16 or 20, to become a Tīrthaṃkara. But what virtuous activities and practices are to be performed by the practitioner to achieve the rank of a Gaṇadhara were not described in Āgama literature.

However Āgama and other literatures of Jainism consider a Gaṇadhara next to the universally acclaimed Tīrthaṃkara. To obtain this honorable post, a spiritual-practitioner should undergo only a relatively less hard Spiritual-exertion and should come out best, proving his worth.

A group of monks who belong to similar discourses is known as Gaṇa and the monk who administers this group is known as Gaṇadhara.

The eleven chief disciples of Lord Mahāvīra, after listening to *Tripadī* from Lord, compiled it in three '*niśadhāyas*' (to ask after humble salutations), the fourteen Pūrvas and they were known as Gaṇadharas.

The meaning and interpretation given by Lord Mahāvīra was compiled in the form of Sūtras (scriptures) by Indrabhūti and other Gaṇadharas which came to be known as Dwādaśāṃgī.

Then the obvious question arises that if Lord Mahāvīra had eleven Gaṇadharas under him, how is it that there exist only nine groups of monks (Gaṇas).

The fact is that the scriptural discourse (Śāstra Vācanā) of eleven Gaṇadharas was only of nine types. The first seven Gaṇadharas including Indrabhūti had different sermons (Vācanās), and each was counted as one separate Gaṇa. But the eighth and ninth Gaṇadharas (Akampita and

Acalabhrātā) had same Vācanā and hence was considered as one Gaṇa. Similarly tenth and eleventh Gaṇadharas, Methārya and Prabhāsa, had same Vācanā. Thus, based on the similarity of Vācanā, out of the last four gaṇadharas, two each had one same Vācanā. Hence there are eleven gaṇadharas, but only nine Gaṇas.

After the eleven chief disciples compiled the 14 pūrvas, Lord Mahāvīra designated them as Gaṇadharas.

Commentators wrote that Ārya Sudharmā had more longevity compared to other gaṇadharas, and that he would take the Dharma – congregation forward, Lord Mahāvīra gave the responsibility of the gaṇa (gaṇa ki anujñā) to Sudharmā. And out of substance, attributes and modes, he gave command of the creed ‘anujñā of Tīrtha’ to Indrabhūti, i.e., he designated Indrabhūti as the leader of Tīrtha and Sudharmā as the leader of gaṇa.

Jain literature is full of evidences which, reestablishes the fact that except Sudharmā the rest of gaṇadharas lived short and handed over the administrative responsibility of their gaṇas to Sudharmā, and attained liberation.

The supreme personality of Indrabhūti

Wealth, pomp and show and high position do not make a person great. A person becomes great by his personality. Describing the personality of Indrabhūti in Bhagavatī and Upāsaka Daśāṅga it is said:

Monk / Ārya / Aṇagāra Indrabhūti, the senior most monk of Lord Mahāvīra was the bearer of, Ugratapa, Dīptatapa, Taptatapa and Mahātapa. He was merit - meritorious and a celibate since birth. He was detached towards the body, had acquired special powers due to practice of penance which he tried to conceal, a knower of fourteen prior canons (Caturdaśa Pūrvadhārī) and a master of the four types of knowledge. He also acquired attainments like Sarvādhāra and Sannipāta. He was very brilliant also. He used to sit erect, neither at a distance nor close to Lord Mahāvīra and the head bent down in humility. He never diverted his concentration from the lotus feet of Lord. He was a practitioner (Sādhaka) of self-restraint and made his soul pure with penance. Though he was a

very great scholar he was the great devotee of his Guru and was an ‘ideal disciple’.

According to Upāsaka Daśā Sūtra he was always engaged in periodical fasting of two days each. His humility was so praiseworthy that whenever he wanted to clarify his doubts, he would get up from his place, would approach Lord Mahāvīra, perform three circumambulations and salute him, then sitting at a short distance, with folded hands, would humbly ask the question. To put it in a nutshell, he was the treasure house of all the virtues like hailing from a respectable family and a noble caste; he was able bodied, humble, wise, virtuous, full of brilliance, etc.

Previous births of Indrabhūti Gautama

In Śvetāmbara literature the authors of canons clearly mentioned that there had been a loving relationship between Lord Mahāvīra and Gautama even in their previous births. It is described in Bhagavatī Sūtra that Śramaṇa Lord Mahāvīra told Indrabhūti Gautama, “Gautama! There has been relationship between you and me in our many previous births. From a long time you are connected to me with an amiable knot, and remained my praise-worthy and familiar follower; sometimes born as celestial angels and at times in a human form. It does not end even after this birth and both of us after death we will ever remain together with identical forms, without any difference, never to separate and always to stay together”.

As per the above description given in Bhagavatī Sūtra, it is evident that Lord Mahāvīra had been associated with Indrabhūti from many births. In one of his (Lord Mahāvīra) previous births as Tripṛṣṭha Vāsudevā, Indrabhūti was born as his charioteer. Except this there is no description in Śvetāmbara literature about any other birth.

View of the two sects regarding the first pontiff of the creed

According to Śvetāmbara sect Ācārya Sudharmā was the first successor of Lord Mahāvīra’s creed while in all the well known literature of Digambara sect it is expressed that Indrabhūti Gautama became the first pontiff after the nirvāṇa of Lord Mahāvīra. But in their earliest classical scripture ‘Loka Vibhāga’, the same view as that of Śvetāmbaras is

expressed that Ārya Sudharmā became the first pontiff after the nirvāṇa of Lord Mahāvīra and not Indrabhūti Gautama.

Indrabhūti's practice for nirvāṇa (liberation / salvation)

Indrabhūti Gautama took the initiation of Śramaṇa monkhood from Lord Mahāvīra at the age of 50. He became scholar in Caturadaśa Pūrva on the very first day of his initiation. Serving Lord continuously for 30 years with humility and devotion, he travelled to the villages propagating the virtue and glory of Jainism. 30 years after his initiation, on the day of nirvāṇa of Lord Mahāvīra on Kārtika Kṛṣṇā Amāvasyā, in Pāvāpurī; while contemplating on the true nature of the soul and obliterating obscuring Karma, he attained omniscience. After this he travelled far and wide for 12 years as an omniscient and spread Jainism. In 12 V.N. he realized that the time had come for him to leave his body. So at Guṇaśīla Caitya in Rājagṛha, he took the vow of fast unto death. Fasting for one month he went into Samādhi at the age of 92. Even today his auspicious name is taken with lots of respect by one and all and it creates joy and happiness in their hearts.

Ārya Sudharmā

Ārya Sudharmā Swāmī was born in 607 BC at Kollāga Village in Videha Pradeśa, in Uttara Fālgunī nakṣatra. His father's name was Dhammilla and mother's name was Bhaddilā. He was a Brahmin and his Gotra was Agni Vaiśyayana. Dhammilla was a very renowned scholar in Veda-Vedāṅgas. As a student, Sudharmā learnt the four Vedas (Ṛga, Sāma, Yajura and Atharva Vedas), 6 vedāṅgas (Sikṣā, Kalpa, Vyākaraṇa, Nirūkta, Chanda and Astrology), and 4 upāṅgas (mīmāṃsā, nyāya, Dharma śāstra and Pūrāṇa) thoroughly. He started teaching after becoming a distinguished (Pāragāmi) scholar. At a time 500 students studied under him serving him with great devotion. This proves the fact that apart from being a good scholar, he was also prosperous.

Despite his immense knowledge in all the scriptures he used to feel some kind of inferiority, emptiness and incompleteness in his knowledge. He was always searching for the truth. When he first saw Lord Mahāvīra, a ray of hope emerged in his heart and he knew that his feelings of void, emptiness and incompleteness would be completely removed by Lord Mahāvīra.

An enthusiastic desire arose in his heart, when Sudharmā came to know that Indrabhūti, Agnibhūti, Vāyubhūti and Ārya Vyakta, who earned name and fame as the best scholars, took initiation in Śramaṇa monkhood from Lord Mahāvīra after their doubts were clarified. "Why shouldn't he approach the omniscient Lord Mahāvīra and find answers to his long pending doubts?" Immediately he went to Samavaśaraṇa together with his 500 students. He prostrated himself with devotion at the feet of Lord.

Lord Mahāvīra addressing him with his Gotra's name said, "Ārya Sudharmā! There is a doubt in your heart. Will a human being or an animal take the present form and the same type of body even in his future births? Supporting and logically substantiating your doubt, you convince yourself that if Jowāra (a type of coarse grain) is sown in a field, naturally Jowāra crop grows and if wheat is sown, obviously it yields wheat crop only. It is not possible to sow Jowāra grain and get wheat or vice-versa. Oh! Innocent Sudharmā! Your doubt is not proper because whatever good or bad karmas a being performs with his trikaraṇas

(doing, asking others to do and approving others doing) and three types of activities, 'triyogas' (by body, speech & mind) depending upon the nature of those karmas, either he gets meritorious or demeritorious birth, body, happiness and sorrow, wealth or calamity, union or separation in future births. This cycle keeps going till the soul destroys all type of karmas - meritorious or demeritorious attain liberation / salvation.

After being born in a particular destiny (yoni), if one does karmas the effects of which make him deserve to be born in the same yoni, he may take birth in the same. But this is a false notion if you think that one person always takes births in the same yoni.

Listening to the answers to his doubts, which till then existed deep within his heart, Sudharmā was dumb-founded. He was totally convinced with the logical and reasonable answers of Lord Mahāvīra. Overwhelmed, Sudharmā and his 500 students took initiation into Śramaṇa monkhood and surrendered themselves at the lotus feet of Lord Mahāvīra.

As soon as he listened to the Tripadī from Lord Mahāvīra he metamorphosed into a treasure of unfathomable knowledge. At first he compiled fourteen Pūrvas and then Dwādaśāṅgī i.e. Ācāraṅga etc. Ekādaśāṅga literature that is available now, is believed to belong to the Vācanā of Sudharmā.

At the age of 50, Sudharmā was initiated by Lord Mahāvīra; he practiced self control and performed penance. He served the master for 30 years, obeyed his orders and did lot of service to the Gaṇa. After the nirvāṇa of Lord Mahāvīra, he became the first pontiff of congregation. He served as the successor ācārya for twenty years and had run the congregation efficiently. In 12 V.N. after the nirvāṇa of Indrabhūti, he destroyed the four obscuring Karmas and attained omniscience. He served the congregation as it's Head for 9 years as an omniscient. Thus, for a total 20 years he did invaluable service to the congregation of Lord Mahāvīra.

In the last phase of 20 V.N., in 508 BC in Guṇaśīla Caitya of Rājagṛha, as a result of one month of observing Saṃthārā (Pādopagamana), at a ripe age of 100 years, he attained the last and most important object of his life i.e., salvation.

Why Sudharmā Swāmī alone was made successor of Lord Mahāvīra's creed?

Lord Mahāvīra attained liberation on Kārtika Kṛṣṇā Amāvasyā in 528 BC. The same night Indrabhūti Gautama obtained omniscience. The very next day Dharma congregation declared and nominated Ārya Sudharmā as the first Successor of Lord Mahāvīra. The three-fold reasons are as follows:

1. Thirty years before his nirvāṇa, on the very day of the establishment of Tīrtha, Lord Mahāvīra foresaw the longevity & ability of Sudharmā and gave him order for the Gaṇa which the Caturvidha congregation knew very well.
2. Caturvidha Tīrtha also knew that during the lifetime of Lord Mahāvīra itself, the nine omniscient gaṇadhara – Agnibhūti and other. Attained nirvāṇa. One month before their nirvāṇa they entrusted their respective Gaṇas to Ārya Sudharmā, knowing that he is a Gaṇanayaka and Dīrghāyu (with long life).
3. Apart from these two well-known facts, after the nirvāṇa of Lord Mahāvīra, the senior most and the best disciple Indrabhūti had all the abilities to hold the office of pontiff. But the same night he attained omniscience and hence he could not succeed Lord Mahāvīra. The reason being, the successor has to carry forward and implement the teachings, preaching, and principles of his predecessor. Keeping all that in mind, he had to propagate and convey the message to the people and had to see that the followers obey and carry out His orders. However, an omniscient possesses the knowledge about all the beings of the world. Whatever he says or commands is based on his omniscient knowledge and is not based on the doctrines and commandments of the preceding ācāryas.

Ārya Sudharmā, at the time of nirvāṇa of Lord Mahāvīra, was not an omniscient, but an eminent scholar and knower of the fourteen Pūrvas. Hence he had the authority to quote Lord and say that Lord had counseled in that manner, or, I am repeating exactly what Lord said so on and so forth. Whereas, as Indrabhūti had attained omniscience on the very night after the nirvāṇa of Lord he could not have said that he was

emulating or following his predecessor. He could have said that, “In my opinion”, “I can say that”, “it appears to me”, and the like.

In such scenario, to keep the tradition of scriptures propounded by Lord Mahāvīra intact, i.e. in their original form, Ārya Sudharmā was preferred to be the first Successor rather than Indrabhūti Gautama who already became omniscient by then.

Available Ekādaśaṃgī - Ārya Sudharmā’ discourses (Vācanā)

Ekādaśaṃgī that is available in the present times is the vācanā (or discourse) of Ārya Sudharmā. Evidences are available in the Āgamas which strengthen this fact. Some of them are as follows:

The very first sentence of Ācāraṃga Sūtra “*sūyaṃ mei āusaṃ teṇaṃ bhagavayā evamakkhāyaṃ*”, which means Oh! Long Live (Jambū!), I heard, Lord Mahāvīra saying this. With the framing of this sentence it is clear that the Guru who is uttering this to his disciple had heard the same from his Guru, Lord Mahāvīra.

As in Ācārāṃga Sūtra evidences are available even in Aṃga Sūtras like Samavāyaṃga, Sthānāṃga, Vyākhyā-Prajñapti etc. and external canons (Aṃgabāhya) Sūtras like Uttarādhyayana, Daśa Vaikālika. Ārya Sudharmā narrates to his disciples starting with the same sentence, “*sūyaṃ me āusaṃ teṇaṃ bhagavayā evamakkhāyaṃ*”, It is somewhat clearer in the beginning of Anuttaropapātika Sūtra and Jñātādharmā kathā:

“*teṇaṃ kāleṇaṃ teṇaṃ samaeṇaṃ rāyagihe nayare, ajja suhammassa samosaraṇaṃ ... parisā padigayā*” ||2||

“*Jambū jāva pajjuvāsā evaṃ payāsī jaiṇaṃ bhaṃte I Samaṇeṇaṃ jāva saṃpatteṇaṃ aṭṭhamassa aṃgassa aṃtagaḍadasāṇaṃ ayamaṭṭhe paṇṇatte, navamassa ṇaṃ bhaṃte Aṃgassa anuttarovavāīya samaṇeṇaṃ jāva saṃpatteṇaṃ ke aṭṭhe paṇṇatte*” ||3||

“*Taeṇaṃ se suhamme aṇagāre Jambū aṇagāraṃ evaṃ vayāsī – evaṃ khalu Jambū Samaeṇaṃ jāva saṃpatteṇaṃ navamassa aṃgassa aṇutarovavāīya dasāṇaṃ tiṇṇi vaggā paṇṇattā*” ||4||

Having so many queries, from time to time, Ārya Jambū asked his Guru Ārya Sudharmā, “How did Śramaṇa Lord Mahāvīra explain the meaning of a particular doctrine? Giving reply to his question Ārya Sudharmā said, ‘Āyuṣamāna Jambū! I heard explanation given to certain Aṃgas by Lord Mahāvīra’. He explained certain canons, certain chapters, and sections like this.

This type of convention of imparting the Āgamika knowledge to his disciple Jambū is also found in other Sūtras. From the very first lesson of Nayadhamma Kahao, it becomes apparent that the text Aṃga Śāstra available in the present times is compiled by Ārya Sudharmā.

The aforesaid facts indisputably prove that like any other Gaṇadharas, even Ārya Sudharmā too compiled Dwādaśāṃgī based on the instructions in the teachings of Lord Mahāvīra. The rest ten Gaṇadharas entrusted their respective gaṇas to him and obtained nirvāṇa. Hence his Dwādaśāṃgī became popular and only that text is available now. Dwādaśāṃgī written by other Gaṇadharas got extinct sometime after the nirvāṇa of Lord Mahāvīra.

Introduction to Dwādaśāṅgī

Preface of Dwādaśāṅgī is found in Samavāyāṅga and Nandi Sūtra. In the ancient literature of both the sects the sequence of Dwādaśāṅgī is given as follows:

1 Ācārāṅga, 2 Sūtrakṛtāṅga, 3 Sthānāṅga, 4 Samavāyāṅga, 5 Vyākhyāprajñapti, 6 Jnātādharma-kathā, 7 Upāsaka Daśā, 8 Aṃtagaḍa Daśā, 9 Anuttaropapātika Daśā, 10 Praśna Vyākaraṇa, 11 Vipāka Sūtra and 12 Dṛṣṭivāda

1. Ācārāṅga

The following topics are discussed in detail in Ācārāṅga: the rules and regulations of conduct for monks (Śramaṇa community), Gocarī (alms begging tours), Vinaya (reverence to elders) the fruits of vinaya like obliteration of Karma, Kāyotsarga (relaxation), posture of meditation, sitting-standing, sleeping, walking, roaming, food, water, restrictions regarding possession of essentials, finding out about right food / water etc., and reverence to the implements, self-study, Pratilekhana etc., five carefullnesses (samīti), three restraints (guptis), unblemished bed, amenity, bowl, implements, clothes, austerities, host of vows, fasting, resolutions (abhigraha), Ācāmla etc., the five as i.e. jñānācāra, darśanācāra, caritrācāra, tapācāra and Viryācāra and tapa during the study of Aṃgopāṅga – all are properly explained.

In a sequential point of view, Ācārāṅga stands first in Aṃgas. It is called as Prathama Aṃga as it is the vital Ācāra (conduct) of Śruta puruṣa (Monk / Saints).

It is said that Ācārāṅga has 2 divisions (Śruta skaṇḍhas), 25 chapters (Adhyayanas), 85 topics (Uddeśanakāla) and 85 sub topics (Samuddeśanakālas). Ācārāṅga consists of 18000 verses. 85 topics and 85 subtopics are taken into consideration. 25 Adhyāyānātmaka Ācārāṅga has totally 85 topics for both the Śruta skaṇḍhas. The contents were written in both text and verse forms. So the Ācārāṅga is considered as text and verse Aṃga Śāstra. At present the number of verses in Ācārāṅga in form of two Śruta skaṇḍhas is 2500. Verses (gāthās)

The first Śruta skañḍha of Ācārāṃga is Nava Brahmācārya and it has the following nine chapters: 1 Śāstraparijñā, 2 Lokavijaya, 3 Śītoṣṇīya, 4 Samyaktva, 5 Lokasāra, 6 Dhūta, 7 Mahāparijñā, 9 Vimokṣa and 10 Upadhānaśruta.

In the ninth Adhyāyanātmaka first Śruta skañḍha five types of Ācāras (kinds of conduct) - jñānācāra, darśanācāra, caritrācāra, tapācāra and Vīryācāra are described.

Thus, in the first Śruta skañḍha, there are nine chapters and 51 topics. As Mahāparijñā chapter and its seven topics were lost, only 8 chapters and 44 topics are available now.

In the first Śruta skañḍha of Ācārāṃga, philosophical and fundamental matters are discussed. So Sūtra style was adopted. In the second Śruta skañḍha, the behavior of monks from each and every aspect had to be edified. So the adopted style was simple and easy to understand.

As Mahāparijñā, the seventh chapter of the first Śruta skañḍha of Ācārāṃga Sūtra was lost only two Śruta skañḍhas, 24 chapters and 78 topics are available now.

The text advocates the true and ideal humane doctrines like universal brotherhood and describes them in a lively manner. So Ācārāṃga's reputation is not restricted to Dwādaśāṃga only but it has also gained a prominent and high place even in all Dharma Śāstras.

Were the two Śruta skañḍhas of Ācārāṃga compiled by gaṇadharas or not? If the number of the verses is 18000, does the number indicate combined number of both the Śruta skañḍhas or does it just imply the first Śruta skañḍha's only? Do Nīśītha and other Cūlikās belong to second Śruta skañḍha or not? The derivations are:

1. The two Śruta skañḍhas of Ācārāṃga were written by Gaṇadharas during the time of compilation of Dwādaśāṃgī. In Āgamas, the number of verses of Ācārāṃga was given as 18000. This naturally implies that the two Śruta skañḍhas of Ācārāṃga together have 18000 verses, but not just the first Śruta skañḍha.

2. A conclusion was derived by the authors of Niryukti etc. on the basis of the fact that basically the second Śruta skandha consists of Paṃcacūlās (five sections) and was written after the composing of canons period by the elder-monks. Secondly, attributing that all the 18000 verses belong to the first Śruta skandha and ascribing the status of the original Ācārāṃga to it, is baseless, fictitious and inconsiderable as it does not have any evidence either in Āgama as or in other literature.
3. The opinion prevalent in present times about the nature of the second Śruta skandha is that it was divided into four sections. As it was not supported by any Śāstras, the opinion should not be taken into consideration. Ācārāṃga never had or has a section. From the period of Āgama scriptures till the establishment of Chedasūtra of Niśītha, the twentieth Prābhṛta, which was known as Ācāra, of the third Vāstu of ninth Pūrva, might have been considered as the Cūlikā of Ācārāṃga. In course of time that Prābhṛta was enshrined as Niśītha Chedasūtra and from then onwards Niśītha was considered as the Cūlikā of Ācārāṃga. In spite of all these phenomena the number of verses of Prābhṛta was never considered as included in the verses of Ācārāṃga or in the verses of Niśītha.

Status and significance of Ācārāṃga

Right conduct is the instrument which helps to elevate life, and forms the bedrock for spiritual-exertion (Sādhanā) and in turn is a path to monks. Hence, Ācārāṃga enjoys an esteemed status in Jain literature.

It describes the quality of non-existent (Asat) which is a hindrance in the attainment of Mokṣa, imparts the knowledge of existent 'Sat' which is very helpful and valuable for attaining Mokṣa, and counsels to sacrifice and abandon the Heya (worthy of giving up) and to embrace the conduct of Upādeya (worthy of practicing). From this point of view, Ācārāṃga occupies the most prominent place and hence it was given the first place in the preface to Dwādaśāṃgī in Samavāyaṃga and Nandi Sūtra.

The authors of Niryukti explained that Ācārāṃga propounded the ways and means to attain salvation and this is the essence of Pravacana

(sermon of omniscient or doctrine). So it was granted with the first place in the listing of Dwādaśāṃgī.

All the Tīrthaṃkaras of the remote past preached the principles of Ācārāṃga. The present Tīrthaṃkaras who reside in Mahāvīdeha also first follow and preach Ācārāṃga and later the remaining eleven and the same procedure will also be followed by the Tīrthaṃkaras of future generation. Even Gaṇadhara also compile, following the same convention. This illustrates the supremacy of Ācārāṃga.

Āgama literature provided many substantial evidences that only the sage who was well-versed in Ācārāṃga was considered fit to become Upādhyāya (holy teacher) or ācārya (holy preceptor). It was compulsory for monks and female monks to study Ācārāṃga. Besides, a provision was also made to give a minor punishment to those who study other scriptures without thoroughly studying Ācārāṃga, which was four months of repentance (Prāyaścita). Apart from this, both Monks and Female monks who could not gain the knowledge of Ācārāṃga were not assigned any responsibility (position in the congregation). These facts reveal the status enjoyed by Ācārāṃga.

2. Sūtrakṛtāṃga

Sūtrakṛtāṃga is the second Āgama of the Dwādaśāṃgī. Allotted the second place after the Ācārāṃga, it is said in Samavāyāṃga that this Āgama deals with the tenets of Jainism and other religions, soul and non-soul objects, merit-demerit, Karmic influx (āsrava), spiritual path (Samvara), dissociation of karma (Nirjarā), bondage (Bandha) liberation (Mokṣa) etc. and beneficial preaching to the newly initiated persons. It consists of the debates of 108 Action oriented (Kriyāvādī) doctrines, 84 Inaction (Akriyāvādī) doctrines, 76 Ignorance (Ajñānavādī) doctrines and 32 Humility /veneration (Vinayavādī) doctrines. Thus, it discussed about 363 other doctrines. Analysing and reviewing all these doctrines, it is concluded that non-violence is the keystone of any religion and is the best attribute.

Sūtra kṛtāṃga has 2 Śruta skaṇḍhas. The first Śruta skaṇḍha has 16 and the second has 7 lectures; in all 23 chapters, 33 topics, 33 sub topics and 36000 verses.

After the 23rd chapter, the text portrays the debate between Indrabhūti Gautama and Pāśrvaṇatya Paiḍhālaputra. It also illustrates how Pedalaputra renounced the Cāturyāmīdharma (with four major vows) and took up Pañca-mahāvratā (five fold major vows) Dharma after listening to the enlightened preaching from Indrabhūti Gautama.

Sūtra kṛatāṅga virtually serves as a guide for spiritual-practitioner to acquire philosophical knowledge. Studying, analysing, recollecting and Nididhyāsana of this Āgama are a must for a sage. This Āgama encourages implementing the high spiritual principles in life, to abandon all other beliefs, practice humility, which is the highest virtue, and to lead an ideal ascetic life. From a philosophical point of view, this Āgama brought into light the then way of thinking in an impressive manner. The beautiful and substantive analysis of spiritual subjects presented in this text with examples & illustrations, helps to understand the pattern of Indian life, philosophy and spirituality.

3. Sthānāṅga

Sthānāṅga occupies the third place in Dwādaśaṅgī. A compendium of topics like self-same (Svasamaya), non-self same (Parasamaya), Svapara - Ubhayasamaya, Jīva-Ajīva, and Loka-Aloka are discussed in this canon. It consists of one Śruta skandha, 10 chapters, 21 topics, 21 sub topics and 72000 verses. The available text of this Sūtra has 3770 verses.

This Sūtra describes certain events that occurred after the nirvāṇa of Mahāvīra, from second to sixth century. To arrive at an opinion that therefore the Sthānāṅga was not written by a Gaṇadhara, but by some later ācārya, is not justified at all. On this, two points are to be specially considered. The first being, great knowledgeable author of the Sūtra, predicted some of the future events well in advance. For example, in the ninth place of Sthānāṅga, the life of Mahāpadama, the future Tīrthaṅkara of the next Utsarpiṇi Kāla has been described. The second point is that during the Āgama Vācanā, Skandilācārya and Devārdhigaṇī recorded as the Āgama text what was earlier traditionally kept in memory (Śruta – Paraṃparā). It is possible that, while recording, the essence of the original text was safely retained and some essential addition might have been made keeping in view the occasion / time.

Various places / tenets (sthānas) of the religion are dealt with in a numerical order from one to ten in this volume. Sthānāṅga is considered as very significant owing to its in-depth subject matter and 'Nayajñāna' (the knowledge of view points). The Koṣa-style (compendium) adopted in this text is of great use and thought-provoking. The Spiritual-practitioner who is able to understand the profound meanings of this text is called Śruta Sthavira.

4. Samavāyaṅga

This occupies the fourth place in Dwādaśāṅgī. It comprises one Śruta skandha, one chapter, one topic, only one sub topic and 144000 verses. The text available now has only 1667 Slokas. All the elements of the living souls (Jeev), of three lokas - earth, heaven and the nether world, classified on the basis of Dravya (substance), Kṣetra (land or region), Kāla (time) & Bhāva (thought or mode) are arranged in numerical groups from one to infinity and introduced in an important manner. The multitude of topics included are philosophical theories, matters related to Tīrthamkaras, Gaṇadharas, Cakravartīs and Vasudevas, subjects like Bhūgarbha (geology), Bhūgola (geography), Khagola (astronomy), interesting facts of sun, moon, stars and planets etc. Thus it provides very useful material.

In Samavāyaṅga, Jīva (living being), matter (Pudgala), principle of motion (Dharma), principle of rest (Adharma), space (Ākāśa) etc. are described under the category of substance (Dravya); similarly conditions of celestial angels, human beings, animals and purgatory etc., were classified under Kṣetra; under the heading of time (Kāla) were pit measured period (Palyopama), ocean measured period (Sāgaropama), etime cycle of ascending happiness (Utsarpiṇi), time cycle of decreasing happiness (Avasarpiṇi), Pudgala-Parāvartana etc. Jīva-bhavas (modes or thoughts) such as knowledge (Jñāna), intuition (Darśana), and energy (Vīrya) etc., Ajīva Bhava are categorized varṇa (colour), gaṇdha (smell), rasa (taste), sparśa (touch) / Guru Laghu (heavy & light) etc.

After discussing elaborately from first Samavāya till the infinite, at the conclusion, the contents of all the twelve Aṅgas have been summarised under the title of "gaṇīpiṭaka".

The description of Samavaśaraṇa and the Kulakaras of past Utsarpiṇi and Avasarpiṇi, and Kulakaras and their wives of the present Avasarpiṇis of Bharataḥṣetra in Jambū dwīpa, and twenty four Tīrthaṅkaras of the present Avasarpiṇi were also elucidated.

Necessary information about the Cakravartīs, Baladevas and Vāsudevas and mere names of Prativāsudevas were given. Prativāsudevas were not considered as and catergised under great people in Samavāyaṃga.

After this, appears the detailed description of twenty four Tīrthaṅkaras of present Avasarpiṇi of Airāvata region in Jambū dwīpa, seven Kulakaras of future Utsarpiṇi of Bharata region, ten Kulakaras of future Utsarpiṇi of Airāvata region and the twenty four Tīrthaṅkaras Baladevas and Vāsudevas of future Utsarpiṇi Kāla of both Bharata and Airāvata regions and the names of Prativāsudevas were given.

Each and every Samavāya, every Sūtra, every topic in itself is like a repository of knowledge which provides valuable information to the researchers and to the seekers of knowledge. At the conclusion, the contents of all the Aṃgas have been summarised and this last part is known as Abridged Jain Pūrāṇa. If Samavāyaṃga is evaluated from the perspective of ultimate knowledge (Vastu Vijñāna), Jain doctrines, theories and Jain history, it can definitely be considered as a significant Śrutang.

5. Vyākhyāprajñapti

Also known as the Bhagavatī Sūtra, it is regarded as the fifth Aṃga and deals with the tenets of Jainism like Jīva, Ajīva, Jīvā-jīva, Svasamaya, Parasamaya, Svapara-samaya, Loka-Aloka and , Lokāloka in an elaborate manner. This scripture consists of one Śruta skaṇḍha, 111 chapters, 10,000 topics, 10,000 sub topics, 36,000 questions and answers and 2,88,000 verses. It is a paradigm of the description, representation and exposition of the reflections expressed by Lord Mahāvīra.

‘Adhyayana / chapter’ of Vyākhyāprajñapti is famous as ‘śataka’. The present text extends to 41 śatakas, of which 8 śatakas and 105 Avantarās are śatākatmakas. Thus the combined figure of śataka and Avāntara śataka is $(41-8) + 105 = 138$ and the number of Uddeśas is 1886. In

comparison with other Aṃgas, this is a bulky Aṃga. Presently the complete verse has 15751 ślokas. Vyākhyāprajñapti is also called Viyāha Pannati, Vivāha Pannati and Vibāha Pannati.

The 5th Aṃga - Vyākhyāprajñapti is in the form of questions and answers – Lord Mahāvīra replying to the questions of Indrabhūti Gautama. This voluminous text is available in a dialogue form. According to Vṛttikāra Abhayadeva the number of questions and answers is given as 36,000. Out of these, many of the questions and answers are very short while many are very lengthy. For example, the entire 15 śataka is an answer to the question about Maṃkhaliputra Gośālaka.

Elaborate information about the life of Lord Mahāvīra, his disciples, devotees, the followers of other faiths, and their beliefs is available in this text. The amount of information about Gośālaka found in this text is not found in any other text.

Apart from this, the two fierce wars ‘Mahā śilākaṇṭaka’ and ‘Rathmūsala’ between the kings Kūṇika and Ceṭaka were described in graphic detail. According to this text, 74 lakhs and 96 lakhs soldiers respectively were killed in these two great wars from both sides.

The classification of plants provided in 21st and 23rd śatakas of Vyākhyāprajñapti is unparalleled. Thus, this text is extolled as the storehouse of knowledge that provides information about a plethora of topics, which, from the perspective of Jain doctrines, history, geography and politics, is very much significant. The text is applauded as the key to spiritualism. It also described elaborately the then cultural, social and political conditions, in an unbiased way.

6. Jñātādharmakathā

The Sanskrit name for ‘Naya Dhamakaho’ is jñātādharmakathā. It is the sixth text of the Aṃga series. The text narrates religious stories, citing examples. It deals with a multitude of topics like - the cities, gardens, auspicious instalation (Caityas), forests, kings, parents, Samavaśaraṇas (holy conference / congregation hall), Dharmācāryas (religious preceptors / leaders), religious parables, mundane and spiritual prosperity, luxury (Bhoga), sacrifice (Parityāga), Pravrajyā (initiation),

severe austerities, achieving pious death (e.g. Paryāya Saṃlekhanās, Bhakta Pratyākhyāna, Pādogagamana, svargagamana (going to heaven)), birth in high family, enlightenment, last-rites (Antaha) of Meghakumāra etc. It also describes about spiritual-practitioners who, though got initiated into the humility – dominated best path of Lord Mahāvīra, while following the vows, became weak, laid-back and discouraged, gave into sensual pleasure and violated the primary and subsidiary vows. This Aṅga also consists of the life of those forbearing spiritual-practitioners who though encountering worst situations, never deviated even a little, from the path of abstinence.

It has two Śruta skaṇḍhas. The first Śruta skaṇḍha has 19 chapters and the second has 10 groups (Vargas). The two together have 29 topics 29 sub topics and 5, 86,000 verses. The present available text has 5500 verses. The life of people during the regime of Pārśvanātha, different births and rebirths, the then traditions and conventions, boat-relating, things of comfort, mode of imprisonment, administration of a kingdom, cultural, economic, social and religious conditions etc. are discussed in a picturesque manner.

7. Upāsaka Daśā

As the name suggests ‘uvāsagadasāo’, the seventh Aṅga describes about the ten devotees (layman – householders). Its chapters are also ten, and so the name is appropriate.

It has 1 Śruta skaṇḍha, 10 chapters, 10 topics and 10 sub topics. It comprises of thousands of verses. Presently the quantity of this Āgama is 812 verses (ślokas).

Its ten chapters describe the life of individual votaries like Anand et al. pertaining to different castes and professions.

The names of ten householders mentioned in ten adhyayanās are as follows:

1 Ānanda Gāthāpati, 2 Kāmadeva, 3 Culañipitā, 4 Surādeva, 5 Culla Śataka, 6 Kuṇḍakaulika, 7 Kumbhakāra Śakadālaputra, 8 Mahā Śataka, 9 Nandinīpitā, and 10 Sālīhīpitā.

All these upāsakas described in the scriptures are householders following the twelve vows (Vratas). Except Mahāśataka, all others had only one wife each. For 14 years each of them abided the holy vows meant for the householder and during the fifteenth year, with an intention to get closer to asceticism (Śramaṇa dharma), they entrusted the household responsibilities to their eldest sons, while still in the garb of a householder, slowly & steadily relinquished all their previous possessions and finally as a mendicant (Śramaṇabhūta), by thought, word and deed (Trikaṛaṇa) and controlling all the three types of activities (Triyoga), they practised spiritual-exertion (sādhanā) to renounce their sins.

The practice of Ānanda went on without any hurdles, but the other upāśakas - right from Kāmadeva to Śakadālaputra, had impediments (upasarga) by celestial beings while Mahā Śataka had impediments by a woman. All of them had followed the votary (Śrāvaka) Dharma up to twenty years and attained good death and good next life (sadgati) and in their very next birth they would be born in Mahāvīdeha and attain liberation (Mokṣa).

This seventh text, which enumerates the household duties of śrāvakas and śrāvikās (men & women votaries) expediently, is helpful for every householder. If every householder tries to adhere to the virtuous deeds, illustrated in this text, then it could be a boon for mankind.

8. Aṃtagaḍadaśā

The eighth text is Aṃtagaḍadaśā or Antakṛta daśā. This consists of one Śrūta skandha, 8 Vargas, 90 chapters, 8 topics and 8 sub topics and limited discourses. There are about thousands of verses. Presently, this Aṃga Śāstra is of 1900 verses. These are divided into eight sections which have 10, 8, 13, 10, 10, 26, 13 and 10 chapters respectively. As the present Sūtra describes the state of practice of spiritual purification by practitioners, who ended the cycle of their birth and death, it is named as Antakṛta daśā.

In the first two sections of Antakṛta daśā, the practice of spiritual purification of eighteen princes of Vṛṣṇi lineage like Gautama, etc. is described. It is stated that the twenty three virtuous people, described in

the thirteen chapters of the third section and ten chapters of the fourth section, were the princes of Śrī Vāsudeva, Śrī kṛṣṇa, Śrī Baladeva and Śrī Samudravijaya. In the fifth section, it is stated that just like princes, even princesses can attain liberation by the practice general spiritual-exertions (Saṃyama sādhanā). The queens of Śrīkṛṣṇa like Padmāvati, and daughters-in-law have also obtained knowledge of the eleven Aṃgas in the monkhood of 20 - 20 years and by enduring Strict spiritual austerities (Tapaścaryā), they could come out of all the sorrow of life and attained liberation. The sixth section describes sixteen practitioners of different categories in Lord Mahāvīra's reign. The period of practice of twenty three queens of a like Nandā, Nandāmatī, Kālī, and Sukālī etc. are described in the twenty-three chapters of seventh and eighth sections.

The specialty of the Antakṛta daśā Sūtra is that it describes the lives of only those who will attain liberation in the same life span (Tadabhava Mokṣagāmīs). A large number of men & women from royal families gave up their wealth and limitless luxuries and proceeded towards renunciation, which can be stated as the victory of spiritualism over materialism.

9. Anuttaropapātika Daśa

Anuttaropapātika Daśa is the ninth Aṃga in the series of Dwādaśāṃgī. It comprises of one Śruta skaṇḍha, 3 chapters, 3 topics, 3 sub topics and a limited discourses and thousands of verses. At present there are 192 verses in this Sūtra.

This Aṃga covers the history of such great personalities, who have, after immense penance and practicing pure self-restraint (Viśuddha Saṃyama), passed away, attained the highest degrees of celestial beings in Anuttara Vimānas (intermediary life to attain liberation in next birth). Born again as humans, they would attain liberation after perfectly practicing the right conduct (monkhood).

The 33 chapters in the three sections of 10, 13 and 10 respectively, contain brief descriptions of 33 historical personalities. Of these 33 great personalities, the first Jālī Kumāra etc. are 23 were the sons of Śreṇika, ruler of Magadha Kingdom.

10. Praśna Vyākaraṇa

This is the tenth Aṃga in the Dwādaśāṃgī. It contains 108 questions, 108 unasked questions and 108 questions on questions (Praśnāpraśna). All subjects covering the sacred conversations of Vidhyātīśaya, Nāga Kumāra, Suparṇa Kumāra and Yakṣa, et al. with serious practitioners, are described in this.

It has 1 Śruta skaṇḍha, 45 topics, 45 sub topics, 1000 verses, limited discourses and many verses.

The present available text is divided into two sections. In the first section, 5 gates / causes of influx (Āsrava dwāras) and in the second section 5 causes of stoppage of influx (Saṃvara dwāras) are expounded. A systematic explanation of five sins like violence etc is found in Āsrava dwāras; and the five vows like non-violence, etc is in the Saṃvara dwāras.

To obtain a thorough knowledge about five Āsrava dwāras, (Violence, untruthfulness, stealing, sex and possessions) and five Saṃvara dwāras (Non-violence, Truth, Non-stealing, celibacy and non-possession), one must read and memorise the two Śruta skaṇḍha of Praśna Vyākaraṇa. It is equal to a great treasure for the philosopher.

11. Vipāka Sūtra

It is the 11th Aṃga. It has 2 Śruta skaṇḍha, 20 chapters, 20 topics, 20 sub topics and numerous verses, limited discourses and numerous verses. The present available text has 1216 verses. The main aim of this text is to enlighten about the retribution for good or evil actions.

It has two sections – Painful result (Dukha Vipāka) and Pleasuable result (Sukha Vipāka). Kārmika law is a prominent and significant doctrine of Jain Dharma. This text is very useful to cite the examples about kārmika law.

The first part (Dukha Vipāka) narrates about such ten persons, who due to their evil deeds had to undergo many hardships and could get themselves relieved from the hardship.

The second part enumerates the happy lives of 10 princes Subāhu, Bhadrānandī, etc. In their previous birth they all offered pure food to a monk with pure thoughts, and as a result they were born into high class families and attained liberation with blissful serious practice.

12. Dṛṣṭivāda

This is the 12th and the last Aṅga of Pravācanā Puruṣa. All the philosophies, doctrines and viewpoints (Nayas) of the World were described as well as Samyaktva and other doctrines or philosophies were elaborated.

This text is totally lost and so it is now not available anywhere. In 170 V.N. after the demise of Śrūtākevalī Ācārya Bhadrabāhu, Dṛṣṭivāda started to decline and by 1000 V.N. it was totally lost. The original script is totally lost and the meaning is almost lost.

Ten names of Dṛṣṭivāda are given in the Sthānāṅga Sūtra. They are:

1 Dṛṣṭivāda, 2 Hetuvāda, 3 Bhūtavāda, 4 Tathāvāda,
5 Samyaktva, 6 Dharmavāda, 7 Bhāṣāvicaya, 8 Pūrvagata,
9 Anuyogagata and 10 Sarva Prāṇa Bhūta Jīva Satva Sukhāvaha

According to Samavāyāṅga and Nandī Sūtra, Dṛṣṭivāda has five divisions. They are:

1 Parikrama, 2 Sūtra 3 Pūrvagata, 4 Anuyoga, 5 Cūlikā.

The third part of Dṛṣṭivāda, namely, the Pūrvagata part is considered relatively voluminous and significant. It has the following fourteen Pūrvas. They are as follows:

1 Utpādapūrvā, 2 Agrayaṇīyapūrvā, 3 Vīryapravāda,
4 Astināstīpravādapūrvā, 5 Jñānapravādapūrvā, 6 Satyapravādapūrvā,
7 Ātmāpravādapūrvā, 8 Karma pravādapūrvā,
9 Pratyākhyānapravādapūrvā, 10 Vidhyāṇupravādapūrvā,
11 Avandhyapūrvā, 12 Prāṇāvāyapūrvā, 13 Kriyāvālapūrvā and
14 Lokabīṇḍusārāpūrvā

Ārya Jambū

(Second omniscient pontiff of Lord Mahāvīra's creed)

After the nirvāṇa of the first successor of Lord Mahāvīra, Ārya Sudharmā, his chief disciple Ārya Jambū became the second ācārya of the Dharam congregation in 507 BC, or 20 V.N.

Among the successors of Lord Mahāvīra, Ārya Jambū has become a great and capable ācārya. In his prime youth, abstaining from the rich & vast worldly pleasures available to him, Jambū Kumāra voluntarily chose the thorny path of renunciation. This in itself is an exceptional and phenomenal example, which is seldom found in any other history of the world. Ārya Jambū was considered as the last omniscient and liberated soul of the current Avasarpiṇi (descending) times from Bharata region.

Sixteen years prior to his nirvāṇa, Lord Mahāvīra stayed in a garden called Guṇaśīla in the city of Rājagṛha. Throngs of people walked towards the Samavaśaraṇa (Divine Pavilion) to listen to his sacred preaching. To obtain sight (Darśana), to offer salutations and to listen to his discourses, even Śreṇika, the Emperor of Magadha attended the Divine congregation with great enthusiasm, along with his courtiers and kith and kin. Śreṇika was astonished when he heard the divine sounds and watched the assemblage of the celestial angels. Out of curiosity he enquired about this. The Lord replied, "Rājārṣi Prasanna Candra has attained omniscient knowledge."

Showering five types of auspicious rains, the celestial beings commemorated the event of Prasanna Candra's attainment of omniscient knowledge. Later they arrived at the Samavaśaraṇa to have Mahāvīra's sight. They paid homage to Lord Mahāvīra by touching his Lotus Feet. Amongst the celestial angels, Vidyunmālī with his beauty and radiance, not only excelled all other angels, but also appeared as the most powerful, blissful, pleasant and attractive one. Emperor Śreṇika asked Lord Mahāvīra, "O Lord of the Universe! Who is this most graceful and powerful angel? What virtues did he possess to have this radiant and breath-taking beauty?"

Lord Mahāvīra replied, “O King, in this Magadha district once an Rāśtrakūṭa called Ārjava lived in a village called Sugrāma. He had two sons, Bhavadatta and Bhavadeva by his wife Revati. No sooner had he entered into his early youth, Bhavadatta became world-weary and took the vow of Śramaṇa from a ācārya called Susthita. He travelled to distant places, cities and villages with his Guru and practiced restraint over the senses.

Once one of the disciples of Ācārya Susthita took his permission and together with some other Śramaṇas set to his village to encourage his younger brother for initiation into the Monk order. But by the time he reached his village, his brother was already betrothed. So he could not give initiation and had to return back without fulfilling his mission. In course of discussions, Monk Bhavadatta told to the fellow monk, “If your brother heartily likes you and has true love of a brother, having seen you after a long time, he would have definitely come running after you.”

This statement of Bhavadatta monk was misunderstood by the fellow monk as an attack on brotherly relations and said, “Beloved monk, it is easier said than done. If you have so much confidence in your brother, then why don’t you get him to renounce?”

Bhavadatta monk said, “If ācārya Śrī goes towards Magadha District once, then within no time you will see my younger brother in a monk’s garb.”

Incidentally, Ācārya Susthita who was traversing along with his disciples reached Magadha district. Seeking the permission of his Guru, Monk Bhavadatta had also been to his village along with a few monks. All his associates and acquaintances were very happy to meet Monk Bhavadatta. They provided them with faultless food and felt very grateful. Just Prior to Bhavadatta’s arrival to meet the members of his family, Bhavadeva was married to Nāgilā, the daughter of Nāgadatta and Vāsukī. The message of his elder brother Bhavadatta’s auspicious arrival was received when Bhavadeva was adorning his newly-wedded bride Nāgilā, who was surrounded by her friends, with vermilion and other ornaments. He immediately set off to meet him and seek his blessings.

Bhavadeva reached his elder brother Bhavadatta as fast as he could, and rejoicing with ecstasy bowed his head at his brother's feet. Bhavadatta Monk handed over a vessel full of ghee to Bhavadeva and along with his fellow Śramaṇas, he left towards his monastery. Bhavadeva, his kinsfolk and other villagers went behind the saints to bid farewell. After seeing them off up to a certain distance, the kinsfolk and the villagers who were returning, asked Bhavadeva also to return. Bhavadeva thought, "How can I return without the consent of my brother?" and instead of turning back, he kept following Bhavadatta. After going a little ahead from the village, Bhavadeva got an idea, that if he starts a conversation with his brother it is quite possible that his brother might ask him to return home.

Thus when Bhavadeva was talking to his brother, Bhavadatta kept answering in only monosyllabic words like 'Yes' and 'I know'! In the course of the conversation, they soon crossed the village boundary and came quite ahead and within no time were in the presence of ācārya Śrī.

Looking Bhavadeva in the costume of a bridegroom, Ācārya Susthita asked, "Why is this charming youth here?"

Bhavadatta answered in an assertive voice, "to renounce!"

Ācāryaśrī turned to Bhavadeva and asked, "Is it really so?" Thinking that his brother might be treated with disdain if he declines, Bhavadeva bowing his head in a consenting manner, said "Yes, Lord!"

Bhavadeva was then right away conferred the monk Dīkṣā by ācāryaśrī. His feet which were set for a luxurious life a few moments before, have now moved onto the path of renunciation. All the Śramaṇas exclaimed that Ārya Bhavadatta did what he said.

In due course of time, Monk Bhavadatta took to meditation along with fasting and discarded the mortal body and became a deity like Saudharmendra.

Even after Bhavadeva took initiation, he was always thinking about his wife. Although outwardly he observed sainthood, inwardly in his heart, dwell his beloved wife. He would think of her over and over again.

After Bhavadatta left for his heavenly abode, Bhavadeva had a strong desire to see Nāgilā. Just like how water gushes out of a broken dam, he rushed towards his village Sugrāma, without even taking the permission of his elderly monks. Reaching close to his village, he rested near a temple for a while.

Sometime later a woman belonging to a respectable family came there along with a Brahmin lady. She bowed to Bhavadeva monk. Bhavadeva monk asked the woman as “Śrāvike! Are Arjava Rāṣṭrakūṭa and his wife Revati alive?”

The woman replied, “Revered Monk! It has been a long since they departed from this world.”

Hearing this, the monk’s face was covered with the dark clouds of gloom. After a few moments of silence and deliberation, he asked with slight hesitation, “O righteous one! Is Nāgilā, the wife of Bhavadeva alive?”

The woman was taken aback listening to this question. She looked at the monk and had a notion that the monk could probably be Bhavadeva himself.

She questioned, “How do you know Ārya Bhavadeva and what is you doing here alone?”

Bhavadeva replied, “I am Ārya Ārjava’s younger son Bhavadeva. As per the wishes of my elder brother Bhavadatta, without even the consent of my newly-wedded wife and with reluctance, I shamefully renounced. Lest name is taken among the despicable, I came here with the motive of fulfilling my long-lasting desire of taking a look at the lotus-face of Nāgilā. O respectful lady! I am sure that you recognize Nāgilā. How is my Nāgilā? How charming is she? And how does she look like?”

The Female-votary said, “She just looks exactly like me. There are no distinctive characteristics in both of us. But I could not understand one thing. All the while, you have been observing the holy monkhood (Śramaṇācāra). Now, why do you now want to meet Nāgilā?”

- Bhavadeva: Immediately after our wedding I have left her and went away.
- Female-votary: Because of the favourable results of your past good deeds, you did very well to accept asceticism.
- Bhavadeva: Does Nāgilā lead an ideal life of a female-votary by being virtuous and pious?
- Female-votary: Nāgilā not only follows the idealistic female-votary life but also encourages many other women to do the same.
- Bhavadeva: I constantly think of her; does she do the same?
- Female-votary: In spite of being a monk, you have forgotten your responsibilities; however, unlike you Female-votary Nāgilā is sincerely following the path of Spiritual-exertion, which enhances her spiritual progress. She constantly & Strictly adheres to the high values of a female-votary and performs severe austerities, drinking the nectar of preaching of great 'Monks and Female monks', she carries out ritualized confession (Pratikramaṇa), accepting not to repeat flaws in future (Pratyākhyāna) etc., in order to uproot the chronic disease of birth and death and to attain liberation.
- Śrāvike! I would like to see my Nāgilā once with my own eyes.
- Female-votary: Oh Great Monk! What purpose would it serve from this impure thought? What is there in the physical appearance? You have already seen me. There is no difference between me and her. I am Nāgilā and Nāgilā is me.
- Bhavadeva: Then tell me the truth O pious Female-votary! Are you Nāgilā?

Female-votary: Reverend Sir! Yes, I am Nāgilā, who took the vow of complete celibacy and whose body is nothing but flesh, blood, bone and other impurities.

Bhavadeva looked at Female-votary Nāgilā without blinking his eyes and stood silently like a picture. Female-votary Nāgilā said, “Mahātmā! This life is like a bubble, destructible in a second. If you Devī ate from Śramaṇa Dharma, your life would be like an endless journey; and hence, get back to your senses. Return to your Guru and repent for your sins (Prāyaścitta) and strictly adhere to the five Mahavratas. By observing austerities and self restraint eventually you will wash out all the Karma and will successfully attain imperishable, infinite and eternal bliss.

Just then the son of the Brahmin lady who accompanied Nāgilā came there and vomited the rice pudding he ate a little while ago. The Brahmin lady said to her son, “This rice pudding is very delicious and sweet; and so eat the rice pudding you vomited”.

Hearing this, Monk Bhavadeva said, “O Righteous Lady! What are you asking the child to do? A person who eats back the vomited food is considered to be very mean and repulsive.

On this comment, Nāgilā told the monk, “Mahātmā! Analyse yourself. Aren’t you trying to eat the vomited food? You have come all the way to enjoy this disowned body made of flesh, blood and bones. If you don’t mind, may I ask you a question? Don’t you feel ashamed of yourself for entertaining the very thought of abdicating the path of renunciation to which you have been attached for so long? If any honour is still left in you, what ever ascetic principles you followed outwardly, at least now follow them wholeheartedly. Go back to Ācārya Susthita and cleanse yourself of the frivolous thoughts that entered your mind.

By the valuable and analytical words of Nāgilā, the clouds of delusion that had engulfed the heart of Bhavadeva were cleared and the darkness of ignorance got dispelled with the light of knowledge of conscience.

Bhavadeva expressed his heart-felt gratitude to Nāgilā and went back to Ācārya Susthita, redeemed for his faults and got engrossed in severe penance. After following the Śramaṇa Dharma for many years, having

taken Samādhī, he became a deity in Saudharmendra. Nāgilā too took initiation into monkhood under her religious teacher, practiced self restraint and attained heavenly abode (Devagati).

Sāgaradatta and Śivakumāra

After completion of his life in Saudharma world, the soul of Bhavadatta got liberated from there and was born to Yaśodharā, the chief queen of Samrāta Vajradatta the emperor of Puṇḍarīkiṇī Nagara of Puṣkalāvātī Vijaya in Mahāvīdeha region. In due course, chief queen gave birth to a beautiful boy, with propitious characteristics. During pregnancy, she had a desire to take a bath in the sea; hence, he was named Sāgaradatta. After attaining youth, he was married to a number of beautiful, respectable princesses.

On a winter day, Prince Sāgara sat along with his wives in the portico and was enjoying the beauty of nature. At that time the sky was covered with dense clouds. Within a few seconds, a gust of wind blew away the clouds. At the sight of the formation and disintegration of the clouds within such a short time right in front of him, made him realise that life is also ephemeral and he became completely averse to the worldly life. The very next day he along with many of his family members approached Abhayasārācārya and took initiation into monkhood. By rendering services and studying Śāstras, he engaged himself in severe penances. As a result, he obtained clairvoyant knowledge (Avadhijñāna).

After completion of celestial age (Devāyu) in Saudharma Devaloka, the soul of Bhavadeva was born again as the son of Queen Vanamālā and King Padmartha of Vītaśoka Nagara of Puṣkalāvātī Vijaya. He was named as Śiva Kumāra. After attaining youth, Śiva Kumāra was married to many princesses and was enjoying all the luxuries like those in a heavenly abode.

Wandering through various cities, monk Sāgaradatta reached Vītaśoka Nagara. Prince Śiva Kumāra also went to meet the monk. After listening to the sermons, Śiva Kumāra asked the monk, “Reverend Śramaṇa! From the instance I saw you, why am I feeling jubilant and ecstatic? Are we related in our previous births?”

With his clairvoyant knowledge, monk Sāgaradatta recollected and said, “Śiva Kumāra! In your previous third birth, you were my younger brother Bhavadeva. You have forsaken your newly-wedded wife and renounced reluctantly, just to please me. You have followed the vows of Śramaṇa and on completing your life, you have been fortunate to become a god in Saudharma heaven. Even there, we were very dear to each other. Due to the attachment in those two births, you still have the same affection towards me in your heart”.

Prince Śiva Kumāra became ecstatic and bowed his head with respect and spoke in a sweet voice, “O Lord! Whatever you said is a fact. In this birth also I would like to renounce. I want to progress in the spiritual path by practising religious austerities and by serving you. Kindly wait here until I return taking the permission of my parents.”

Monk Sāgaradatta said, “O blessed one! It is better not to delay a holy deed.”

Immediately Śiva Kumāra went to the palace, and expressed his inner desire to his parents, “O my dear parents! Today I met a clairvoyant monk and I became aware about my previous births. I am totally vexed with this world. I would like to become a monk. Hence, permit me to renounce and help me progress in my spiritual attainment”.

King Padmartha and queen Vanamālā were thunderstruck and dumbfound listening to the words of their son and requested him not to renounce.

Even after lot of persuasion and entreaties, Śiva Kumāra could not get the consent of his parents. Hence, he abdicated all sinful and worldly activities with aversion; he sat still like a monk in the palace itself. His parents, kinsmen and distinguished citizens tried to convince him by all means, but in vain. No one could break his firm resolution. King Padmartha was very sad. Finally, he requested a very discerning votary named Dṛḍhadharmā and narrated the entire incident and said, “O reverend soul! Using your wit, some how or the other you must convince the prince to break the fast and gift us a new lease of life.

The son of a merchant, Dṛḍhadharmā approached the prince and explained that he cannot be free from karma without taking in food and water for a long time. Without food and water, the body will perish within a short time. It is necessary to have at least the required amount of food and water, for sustenance so that you can pursue the ascetic life for long and in turn helps you to successfully wash out all karma. Therefore, it is better for you to carry on with your ascetic life having the minimum required food and water, staying at the palace home, until you get permission from your parents for your renunciation.”

“Where do you get blemishless food and water in a palace?” the prince asked, for which the votary replied “From now on, I would bring you pure food, water and clothes, obtained from my alms and like a disciple to a great monk like you, I shall provide you with all the necessary services.

Agreeing to the votary’s proposal and reinforcing his firm decision, Śiva Kumāra said, “O virtuous votary! You have advised me to take food and water to sustain my body; hence life long I will perform penance of two-two days of fasting and even on the day of breaking fast, I will carry on the ācāmla vrata (eating dry & tasteless food once a day).

Thus Śiva Kumāra and votary Dṛḍhadharmā agreed to listen to one another and adhered to their vows.

Despite staying in the palace Śiva Kumāra with detachment led a life performing severe austerities like a great saint for twelve years and breathed his last in deep meditation (Samādhi). He was born with great brilliance, in the fifth Brahmdeva Loka as the deity, Vidyunamālī with a long life of ten Sāgaropama years like that of Brahmendra.

After narrating the four previous births of Ārya Jambū to the emperor Śreṇika, the omniscient Lord Mahāvīra said, “O king of Magadha! Vidyunamālī Deva is the same soul of Bhavadeva. On the seventh day from now, he completes his age as a deity and will come into the womb of Dhāriṇi W/o the chief merchant Rīṣabhadatta, in this very same Rājagrha only. In due course she will give birth to this son and he will be named as Jambū Kumāra. Though married, he will remain a celibate. The very next day after his marriage, abdicating the riches he would become

an ascetic together with his newly wedded eight wives, and his parents, in-laws, and Prince Prabhava, and his 500 companions.

Jambū Kumāra will be the last omniscient and the last one to attain salvation in this Avasarpiṇi age in Bharataḷṣetra. And after that, in this Avasarpiṇi age there will be none else who would attain the liberation.

After listening to the details about Vidyunamālī regarding his previous and future births from the omniscient Mahāvīra, everyone bowed to him and went to their respective places.

Parents of Ārya Jambū

Śreṇika, the king of Magadha was a just and devout king, loved by one and all. In Rājagṛha, the capital of Magadha, there lived a very wealthy businessman named Ṛṣabhdatta. He inherited justly earned vast riches. He was a very kind-hearted, generous, and abiding to his vows, able, truthful, humble person and a scholar. His wife was Dhāriṇī. She was a sweet tempered and very pious lady. Both of them had faith and devotion in the doctrines of Jainism. Though blessed and happy in all aspects of life, they always felt the void of not having a child, which filled them with sorrow. The pain and agony of Dhāriṇī, being a lady, was more. At the very same time, Ācārya Sudharmā, the fifth Gaṇadhara of Lord Mahāvīra came to Vaibhavgiri. People crowded to venerate him. Even Ṛṣabhdatta and Dhāriṇī too started for Vaibhāragirī to venerate of Sudharmā Swāmī. On the way they met a Nimittajña (occult ācārya) Votary called Jasamitra, who was a friend of Ṛṣabhdatta.

When Dhāriṇī expressed her deep desire to beget children, he said, “Your wish will be fulfilled now. You will beget a very brave & great son who will be the last omniscient of Bharata region. However, there is a small hitch for it to happen, which will be eliminated by worship of a deity.

After listening to the prediction by Jasamitra, Dhāriṇī’s heart was enthralled with ecstasy. Talking to Jasamitra she arrived at the garden along with Ṛṣabhdatta where Sudharmā Swāmī camped. All bowed their heads in reverence and saluted him. They all took their seats and listened to his sermon.

Later R̥ṣabhadatta and Dhāriṇī returned to their house. Dhāriṇī started worshipping Anāghṛta Deva (who was R̥ṣabhadatta's younger brother in his previous birth) as the family was closely associated with him. She observed 108 ācāmla vrata to please Anāghṛta Deva.

As foretold by Śramaṇa Lord Mahāvīra to Śreṇika, the king of Magadha exactly on the 7th day, Vidyunamālī descended from Brahmaloḁa and entered the womb of Dhāriṇī Devī. Late night, Dhāriṇī in her dream rather in a state of semi-consciousness, saw a beautiful lion cub, and sweet-adored and fine coloured plum fruits (Jambū), etc.

Immediately she woke up and in a happy mood described her dream to her husband.

Just like the one, who is blind by birth experiences happiness when he suddenly gets sight, R̥ṣabhadatta experienced the same kind of happiness, hearing his wife's dream. He said to Dhāriṇī, "Devī! As foretold by Lord Mahāvīra, you will beget a chivalrous son".

As the pregnancy progressed, the interest of Dhāriṇī Devī towards religious and spiritual matters also progressed, as an auspicious soul was growing in her womb.

In due course Dhāriṇī gave birth to a lovely son who had radiance like the sun which permeated the entire mansion of R̥ṣabhadatta with happiness. Befitting their financial status and riches, R̥ṣabhadatta generously gave alms to his followers, kinsmen, beggars and destitute that eradicated poverty from their lives forever. The ceremony continued for twelve days with great pomp and show. Then at an auspicious time the naming ceremony was celebrated. As Dhāriṇī Devī had seen rose-apple fruits (Jambū) in her dream and as he was born by the grace of Anāghṛta Deva, the king of Jambū Dwīpa, he was named as 'Jambū'.

Sometime after Vidyunmālī Deva's descent from Brahmaloḁa, his four wives¹ also on completion of their age in Dev lok were born in Rājagṛha as the daughters of wealthy merchants. Their names and their parents' names are as follows:

¹ nymphs of the first devaloka who were engaged as attendants in fifth devaloka

	Name of the Daughter	Name of the Father	Name of the Mother
1	Samudraśrī	Samudrapriya	Padmāvati
2	Padmaśrī	Samudratta	Kamalamālā
3	Padmasenā	Sāgaradatta	Vijayaśrī
4	Kanakasenā	Kuberadatta	Jayaśrī

Approximately at the same time four more girls were also born in Rājagṛha in affluent families. Their particulars are:

Name of the Daughter	Name of the Father	Name of the Mother
Nabhasenā	Kuberasena	Kamalāvati
Kanakaśrī	Śramaṇadatta	Suṣeṇā
Kanakavati	Vasuṣeṇā	Vīramati
Jayaśrī	Vasupālita	Jayasenā

Jambū Kumāra grew under the able care of five able nurses like a sapling of Kalpavṛkṣa that grows gradually. At proper age he studied under an efficient and scholarly teacher and before attaining youth he became master in all arts and disciplines.

Even the aforesaid eight girls also entered into youth. Being associated with Jambū Kumāra from their previous births, when the young women listened to his famous incidents, they in their hearts decided to marry him. The respective parents came to know the desire of their daughters. They were immensely happy and approached the parents of Jambū Kumāra, asking his son's hand for their daughters. Rṣabh-datta and Dhāriṇī gave their consent happily.

Jambū's disinterest in householder's life:

During those days Ārya Sudharmā together with his group of disciples went to Guṇaśīla Caitya in Rājagṛha. Listening to the good news of Ārya Sudharmā's arrival, Jambū Kumāra's happiness knew no bounds. He immediately went in a swift chariot which was suitable for the sacred occasion to serve Sudharmā Swāmī. With deep veneration and ardent devotion he paid homage to Sudharmā Swāmī and seated himself in the religious congregation. Addressing the religious congregation, Ārya

Sudharmā commenced the philosophical discourse. Explaining the significance of human birth in his teaching, he said, “Brothers! Lord Mahāvīra is the well wisher of the entire world; by following his principles, souls can successfully cross the ocean of delusion. Therefore, mankind should take advantage of this opportunity. A wise man is he who, realising that age, youth, sensual pleasures, wealth and body are perishable, follows the path of - the three gems (Ratnatṛyī) i.e. Right Knowledge (Samyaka Jñāna), Right faith (Samyaka Darśana) and Right Conduct (Samyaka cāritra)

By practicing these three gems, with devotion, one can try to attain eternal happiness. The one who does not understand this truth, or despite understanding, if he is bound by the delusive bonds and out of negligence and lethargy does not follow the three gems, will not progress in the path of spiritual elevation. He keeps wandering helplessly in the dreadful forest of births and deaths undergoing immense grief and sorrow.

Listening to the poignant preaching of Ārya Sudharmā, Jambū Kumāra felt a sense of detachment. He went close to Ārya Sudharmā and prostrated at his feet and said in a humble tone, “Swāmī! I learnt the true nature of Dharma from you. I found it very interesting and blissful. A deep interest and reverence arose in my heart on the Dharma you have preached. After taking the permission of my parents, I want to be initiated at your feet and uplift myself.”

Ārya Sudharmā said, “Oh! Blessed one! Take up that task which brings you happiness. Never hesitate or delay to commence a good deed”

Jambū Kumāra once again paid homage to the spiritual Guru, climbed on to the chariot to return back to his mansion. At the entrance to the city there were so many chariots, vehicles, etc., that blocked the way. Fearing that he would be late, he ordered the charioteer to enter into the city through another gateway. The charioteer turned the chariot and headed towards another entrance.

Harsh oath:

At the entrance, in order to kill the enemies, large boulders and other destructive weapons were hung from strong ropes. Seeing them from a

distance, Jambū Kumāra thought, “If any one of these weapons falls on my chariot, I may die without taking the vows, which will result in an unfortunate birth”.

The moment this thought passed in his mind, he ordered the charioteer to turn back to Guṇaśīla Caitya. The charioteer obeyed his order and turned the vehicle. Within moments the chariot reached the destination. Jambū Kumāra got down from it, went straight to Ārya Sudharmā and after bowing down to him, said, “I want to remain celibate all my life”.

Giving into his repeated entreaties, Swāmī bestowed him the oath of celibacy. After taking the oath he offered salutations with great reverence to Ārya Sudharmā and returned to his mansion.

Expressing his desire to renounce the world to his parents

Immediately after reaching the courtyard of the mansion Jambū Kumāra got down from the chariot and went straight to his parents. He bowed in front of them and said, “O Parents! Today I happened to listen to Ārya Sudharmā’s sermons propounded by Lord Mahāvīra”

His mother Dhāriṇī, blessing him with happiness in life, said in an affectionate tone, “Son, you are lucky. With the veneration (Darśana (to see), Vandana (to pay obeisance), and Namana (to bow in veneration)) and also by listening to the speech of the great spiritual master, you not only sanctified your eyes, head, ears and conscience, but also made your life worthwhile.”

Jambū once again said, “O Parents! Swāmī’s discourses opened the door of my heart, and I realised my duty and my true path. A strong desire to attain eternal liberation devoid of birth, old age, death, grief and disease aroused in my soul.

To confront against the attack of enemies and to protect the city in critical situations, boulders and cannons etc were placed at the city gate. When I saw them today a thought passed into my mind that by chance if any boulder or a cannon ball falls on me, I may have an untimely death without any vow. Hence I went back to Sudharmā Swāmī and took an oath to follow lifetime celibacy. I firmly decided that I would take vows

of renunciation from Swāmī and try to attain the ultimate reality – salvation / liberation. Please permit me to take the initiation.”

When they heard that their one and only beloved son wants to renounce and remain a celibate all life, both R̥ṣabhadatta and Dhāriṇī were astounded as if a thunderbolt fell on them and they became unconscious for sometime. When they regained consciousness, with tears rolling down their cheeks, they uttered these words in a pitiable tone, “Beloved Son! You are the only one to fulfill our soul’s desires. Without you our life will become impossible. You listened to the sermons of Swāmī Sudharmā as propounded by Lord; this is indeed a virtuous deed. Our ancestors were also staunch followers and devotees of Jainism; however we never heard any one of them ever sought initiation. All of a sudden what remarkable event occurred today, which inspired you to take this decision?”

Jambū Kumāra: “Reverend parents! There are many people in the world who after passage of a long time realise their duties, while there are others who are quick in arriving at a decision. Giving an example Jambū Kumāra told the parable of the son of a wealthy and distinguished merchant (Śreṣṭhiputra)”.

After narrating the parable Jambū Kumāra told, “Just as that Merchant’s son received the essence and led a blissful life for a long time; similarly I too chose the much treasured essence (monk hood) from the sermons of Swāmī and desire to acquire infinite, immortal salvation of the soul. Hence please allow me to take up the path of renunciation and help me achieve my aspiration.”

The way Jambū Kumāra presented the facts, citing meaningful examples, his parents realised, given any circumstances Jambū Kumāra would not remain a householder. Despite the realisation, out of immense affection towards their son, they entreated him to lead the life of a householder for some more time, “Dear son, for the time being you forsake the thought of renunciation. The next time when Ārya Sudharmā Swāmī visits this place, then you definitely take initiation from him”.

Jambū Kumāra: “Reverend parents! If I renounce now I will definitely be able to achieve my goal. How can we rely on time? So, considering my interest please permit me now itself to take to saint hood”.

Once again Ṛṣabhdatta tried to convince his son, “Son! Owing to the virtuous deeds of your past life, you were born with all the comforts and luxuries in hand. So, first enjoy all the worldly pleasures to the heart’s content and thereafter take initiation”.

Jambū Kumāra: Dear parents! Because of my very young age, I am still confined to the allurements of eating rich and tasty food only. Sensual pleasure is limited to the tongue, i.e. to taste different types of delicious food, and so I can easily liberate myself of this delusion. But if I get involved in sensual pleasures of all the five organs, I will fall a prey to a miserable and wretched death and will be caught in the whirlpool of worldly bonds and undergo endless suffering. I am scared of the misfortune of the cycle of birth and death. Please let me renounce the world.”

Listening to his son’s words his mother, Dhāriṇī got anxious and was convinced that her son would surely embrace the path of renunciation. Weeping bitterly she said, “Beloved son! It has been my long cherished desire to behold you in the costume of a groom. If you fulfil my long-standing desire, I shall also take the initiation together with you”.

Jambū Kumāra: Oh! Mother! If that is your wish, I shall abide by it and act accordingly. However, there is one condition. On the auspicious day when your heart-felt wish is fulfilled, you should no longer stop me from taking initiation.

A rejoiced Dhāriṇī took a breath of relief as she found a ray of hope to angels her son’s mind. She contemplated that when one girl is more than enough to distract great Mokṣa; with eight most beautiful and most virtuous brides, Jambū would certainly be attracted towards sensual pleasures and be lured by their charm and beauty.

In a joyful tone, she said, “Son! Your wish will be fulfilled. We have already given our word to marry you to eight brides belonging to merchant families, who are most good looking and are endowed with all

the good qualities. All the eight merchant families are believers of Jainism and affluent. I shall send a word to all of them.”

That very instant R̥ṣabhdatta sent a message to the eight merchants, through his trustworthy messengers. In his message, he also made it clear that Jambū Kumāra will become a monk as soon as the marriage ceremony is over. He also requested them to arrive at a decision on the matter and send their reply after thoroughly analysing the pros and cons.

The eight merchants were shocked to listen to Jambū Kumāra’s decision of renunciation immediately after marriage. They were discussing the matter with their wives as to how to find a solution to this dilemma.

Even the eight daughters of the merchants heard the message. All of them expressed their decision to their parents, in clear and firm words, “You have already promised us to him. According to dharma, he alone is our husband. We will follow him in whatever path he chooses, even if it is full of thorns and difficulties it becomes the noblest path for us too. Please do not deliberate further on this matter”.

Listening to the firm resolve of their daughters, the eight merchants sent their consent through the messengers. Wedding preparations started on both the sides.

Marriage of Jambū Kumāra

On the auspicious day, the groom Jambū Kumāra sat on a magnificently decorated elephant, which was as beautiful as that of a celestial vehicle. Jambū Kumāra, being the only beloved son of the wealthiest R̥ṣabhdatta, all the people of Rājagṛha Nagara dressed in beautiful clothes, gathered to see the groom and his party. In the wedding costume, the bright and dazzling Jambū Kumāra reached the brides’ place. The ceremony was performed following all the rituals of marriage. The marriage ceremony of Jambū Kumāra was performed with all the eight brides simultaneously with their eight parents giving extravagant clothes and jewellery, myriad of gold coins to their son-in-law as dowry. The groom with his eight brides returned to his mansion. On the happy occasion of their son’s wedding, Sresti R̥ṣabhdatta and Dhāriṇī Devī liberally and generously

gave away money and other objects to their kith and kin, friends, and dependents and to the handicapped.

At nightfall, Jambū Kumāra entered into the beautifully decorated bedroom with all his eight brides. In the centre of his spacious room there were nine artistic chairs closely arranged in a circle. Jambū Kumāra sat in the centre and in a soft gentle tone asked them to take their places. Being the first meeting with their consort, smiling sweetly and with innumerable yearnings mounting in their hearts, hesitating, and feeling somewhat shy, the eight brides sat on either side of their husband.

Inspiring the wives

The environment, though, extremely charming, sweet and intoxicating, failed to stir the soul of Jambū Kumāra. He sat like a lotus in water, unperturbed, completely detached, indifferent, and free from all the sins and was detached.

Breaking the silence, Jambū Kumāra addressing his wives said, “Oh! Pious souls! You know that tomorrow at dawn I will renounce the world and accept the path of liberation. You may wonder why in prime youth, when one is expected to enjoy all worldly pleasures, I decided to walk on a path devoid of all comforts, relinquishing the affluent life. In order that within short time you can understand the correctness of my decision. First of all I want to make it clear that a person who is inclined towards the familial sensual pleasures will find happiness in them only as long as his heart is wrapped in ignorance, because of the unawareness of fundamental principles. As soon as he understands the tenets of living beings and non living beings (*Jīva-Ajīva*) etc., the ignorance that pervaded the heart vanishes; he becomes a knower of truth and his consciousness arouses. At that moment there is no place for sensual pleasure and wrong direction.

By the grace of Sudharmā Swāmī, I have obtained knowledge of fundamental principles. Hence I look upon sensual and all worldly pleasures as hazardous as poison and so worthy of renunciation.

In reality, all these pleasures are transitory. The happiness one derives from these is not only momentary but also causes infinite sorrow, grief,

which in turn flings one into the unending cycle of birth and death. The poisonous tree of life bears fruits of birth, old-age, disease, sorrow, torment and ultimately death – all sorrowful fruits.

Sneaking in of Prabhava (and his 500 band of robbers)

While Jambū Kumāra was imparting spiritual knowledge to his wives, a notorious robber called Prabhava, together with his 500 band of robbers sneaked in, to rob the house of R̥ṣabhdata.

Using the magic art of putting one to sleep ‘Avasvāpinī Vidyā’, he put all the inmates of the house into a deep sleep and opened the locks of all the doors using the Art of opening locks (Tālodghātinī vidyā). The fellow-robbers of Prabhava removed the precious stones and ornaments of R̥ṣabhdata and his guests; as they prepared to leave the place, Jambū Kumāra, in calm and majestic tone addressed the robbers and said, “Oh! Robbers! How can you steal the wealth of our guests?”

As he uttered these words, the 500 thieves stood motionless in the same place and in the same position like statues. Prabhava was perplexed as to why his Avasvāpinī Vidyā was not effective on Jambū Kumāra. He went close to Jambū Kumāra and asked, “Oh! Son of a Śreṣṭhi! I am Prabhava, the eldest son of Vindya Rāja, the King of Jayapura. I want to be your friend. Please teach me the art to immobilise (Stambhinī) and breaking free (Mochinī Vidyā). I shall teach you Avasvāpinī and Talodghatini Vidyas in return.

Precepts to Prabhava: Jambū Kumāra said, ‘Prabhava! At dawn I shall renounce all the wealth and family to become an ascetic. I have nothing to do with these sinful arts. As such, I am unaware of any such occult ācāryas. I believe that ‘Panca Parameṣṭhī (the five auspicious beings) mantra is the greatest of all mantras.

Prabhava was stupefied by the detachment of Jambū Kumāra and by his unswerving decision to renounce all the wealth. He entreated him not to renounce the riches equal to that of Kubera, (the Lord of wealth) and his newly-wedded brides whose beauty excelled the beauty of celestial angels. Further he advised him to opt for an ascetic life at an old age after fully enjoying the worldly pleasures.

Substantiating his views, Jambū Kumāra, with great skill, gave this sermon to Prabhava; listening to which Prabhava and his companions expressed their desire and asked permission to renounce as well. Taking Jambū Kumāra's consent, they left the house to seek the permission of their parents.

Discussion with the wives

Samudraśrī et al., his eight newly wedded wives tried their best to stop the detached Jambū Kumāra from the path of temperance and requested him to enjoy the riches and comforts inherited by him. They cited eight fables to support their standpoint. In reply Jambū Kumāra also narrated eight parables contradicting the poignant eight fables narrated by his eight wives. The discussions between Jambū Kumāra and his wives are very inspiring, interesting and informative. Besides they open the inner eye that has been enveloped by the ignorance and delusion. His newly wedded wives gave examples and put forth logical arguments trying to entice him towards the worldly pleasures.

Jambū Kumāra replied with interesting instances, illustrating the hollowness of life, transient nature of the pleasures and the dreadfulness of mundane existence. After listening to his gospel and inner beliefs, the eight wives not only gave up alluring him towards comforts, instead they, who were as delicate as flowers, came out of delusion and were prepared to take up the severe path themselves. They humbly bowed down to him and requested, "Sir! Due to your grace we have been blessed with true spiritual insight. Now we do not have the slightest attraction towards the comforts of life. The world started appearing like a huge furnace with blazing fumes. Following your footsteps, we want to annihilate all our karma and are anxious to obtain eternal bliss. We realise that the path you have selected to tread upon is the right path for us too. We, out of ignorance, tried to distract you of your path. Please forgive us and permit us to become ascetics along with you and make the worldly pursuit of marriage, meaningful.

After getting the consent of Jambū Kumāra, his eight wives sent a word to their parents that they will also take the oath of asceticism together with their husband at dawn.

The shocked parents at once reached the mansion of Jambū Kumāra. The time was then three hours past midnight and there was only one hour to dawn.

Sermon to the family

In accordance with his daily routine, Jambū Kumāra went to his parents after his sermon to Prabhava along with his band of robbers, and to his wives. He humbly offered them respectful greetings to them and to his in-laws who were also sitting there. Giving their blessings Ṛṣabhādatta asked his son about his decision, in an affectionate tone.

Jambū Kumāra: “Father! To uplift our soul, I and your eight daughters-in-law are determined to take Śramaṇa initiation at dawn with your kind permission. We are just waiting for your consent. Without any hesitation or delay, please permit us to renounce.”

Awakening them from delusion, Jambū Kumāra said in a calm, sweet but firm tone, “Just like a sea is filled with alkaline water bodies; the sea of world is filled with infinite physical and mental sorrows and agonies. As a matter of fact there is no substance that provides you with happiness. Deluded in happiness and in sorrow, anticipating happiness the beings engrossed in sensual pleasures, misconstrue the grief-filled happiness as real happiness. On licking the sharpened edge of the sword wetted with honey one might get engrossed or carried away by momentary happiness of its taste, but what about the immense pain of a slit tongue that it leaves behind? The same is hundred percent true even with worldly sensual pleasures. Apart from this, the immense agony of being in the womb is beyond comprehension. That agony is worse than hell and it is more intense than a burning inferno. The world is full of sorrow; happiness is found no where even for namesake. If there is any slight desire in your heart to relish true happiness, you too accompany me at crack of dawn and walk along the path of salvation.”

The words touched their heart, aroused their inner conscience and opened their eyes. They suddenly experienced a wondrous glow in their hearts. As soon as they realised that the world is a mirage, all the eighteen decided to take initiation.

Initiation of 528 individuals with Jambū Kumāra

As dawn set in, the news of Jambū Kumāra renouncing all his riches equal to that of Kubera, along with his parents, eight wives, in-laws and also joined by the notorious robber Prabhava and his band of 500 robbers ($2+8+16+1+500 = 527$) for taking initiation, spread in the entire Rājagṛha like wildfire. Eager to see the grandeur of initiation into monkhood, throngs of men and women hastily finished their morning chores and wore the best of clothes and ornaments.

In the midst of melodious sound of various musical instruments, Jambū Kumāra together with his parents climbed into the palanquin which was to be borne by 1000 men. With the triumphed cheers and melodious music the renunciation journey started. The crowd that had witnessed the marriage procession just a day before, assembled everywhere on the streets to watch the ascetic journey of Jambū Kumāra. Just as the dark clouds of Śrāvaṇa and Bhādo pour down the showers, similarly Jambū Kumāra poured down the showers of precious stones and gold continuously. He donated most of his wealth for the welfare of the people and discarded the movable and immovable property in the same way as the snakes shed-off their skin.

Even the king of Magadha, Kūṇika, along with his four-fold army and courtiers came to witness the renunciation ceremony of Jambū Kumāra. At the same time Prabhava arrived with his companions. The king Kūṇika asked Jambū Kumāra whether he could be of any service to him. Jambū Kumāra said, “Oh! King! Please pardon whatever grave mistakes Prabhava committed in the past. Last night he came to rob our house. Today he is accompanying me to take up the path of restraint”. The king replied, “I forgive all his mistakes. He can take the initiation without any interruption.”

The procession of Jambū Kumāra moving through all the main streets of Rājagṛha, reached the garden at the outskirts where Sudharmā Swāmī camped with his entourage of disciples. After completion of all the rituals that have to be carried out prior to the initiation into asceticism, Sudharmā Swāmī according to the rules laid down in the scriptures of Jain Dharma, initiated Jambū Kumāra, his parents, the eight wives, their parents, Prabhava and his 500 companions. Thus Jambū Kumāra giving up 990 million gold coins and his eight precious wives became an ascetic

together with 527 inquisitives (Mumukṣas). After the initiation, Sudharmā Swāmī brought Jambū Kumāra's mother, his eight wives and their respective mothers under the command of Ārya Suvratā (female ascetic head), while Prabhava and his companions were made as the disciples of monk Jambū Kumāra.

After all these formalities, addressing the new Śramaṇa and Śramaṇīs, Sudharmā Swāmī said, “May you be blessed with a long life, Śramaṇas and Śramaṇīs! The courage you have shown to break the strong chain of sensual pleasures is really praiseworthy. You have accepted asceticism as courageously as a lion, with the same courage like a lion; you should strictly follow asceticism throughout your life. This in turn hastens your march towards salvation. Always realise that every moment of your life is very precious and so avoid laziness completely; perform each and every task in your life discerningly, which in turn protects you against sins. As a matter of fact, laziness is the biggest enemy of an ascetic. Even knowers of the fourteen prior scriptures (Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara), practitioners adorned with commonkcation body (Spiritual-practitioners who are Āhāraka labdhi possessors), telepaths (Manah paryavajñānī) and the great detached spiritual-practitioners also, when influenced by laziness, continue to wander as human beings, animals, hell beings & celestial beings in the sorrowful world.

All the newly initiated ascetics listened to time-honoured gospel of their Guru Sudharmā Swāmī and undertook to follow it. In addition to acquiring knowledge and observing penance, they staunchly followed the principles and rituals of Śramaṇa Dharma both in letter and spirit.

The great intellectual Jambū Kumāra was continually engaged in the service of his Guru. With complete concentration, devotion and hard work, he learnt the Sūtra s, their interpretation, and the analysis of the entire Dwādaśāṅgī.

Ascertaining Jambū Kumāra's time of birth and liberation (Nirvāṇa)

In the light of the aforesaid facts it becomes clear that Jambū Kumāra was born in the 14th year after Lord Mahāvīra became an omniscient.

Seven days before Jambū Kumāra's descent, King Śreṇika asked Lord Mahāvīra, "Lord! After whosenirvāṇa, will omniscience cease to exist permanently in Bharata region?"

Mahāvīra said, "Behold! Vidyunmālī Deva, who was surrounded by goddesses and who is as radiant as Brahmendra, will descend from Devlok on the seventh day from this day. He will incarnate as the son of a wealthy merchant Rīṣabhadatta in your city Rājagṛha, and he will be the last omniscient of this Avasarpiṇi Kāla in Bharata region.

If we analyse the facts in the light of this conversation, Jambū Kumāra might have been born during the 14th year of the attainment of omniscience of Mahāvīra. He might be 16 at the time of nirvāṇa of Lord.

Ācārya Hemaçandra in the appendix clearly mentioned that Jambū Kumāra attained nirvāṇa, 64 years after Lord's nirvāṇa.

So it is apparent that Ārya Jambū Kumāra got initiated at the age of 16, followed the path of monkhood for 64 years and attained nirvāṇa when he was 80 years old.

Lord Mahāvīra attained nirvāṇa just a few months before the initiation of Jambū Kumāra. Śvetāmbara and Digambara literature are aplenty with this type of references.

Jambū Kumāra was born during the lifetime of Lord Mahāvīra, the omniscient, 24th Tīrthaṅkara. Indrabhūti Gautama, at the time of initiation of Jambū Kumāra, was already an omniscient. Ārya Sudharmā Swāmī became an omniscient 12 years after Jambū Kumāra's initiation; and Jambū Kumāra himself obtained omniscience 20 years after his own initiation. But with the nirvāṇa of Jambū Swāmī the sun of omniscience forever set from Bharata region in this Avasarpiṇi Kāla.

Liberation of Jambū Swāmī

Jambū Swāmī was born in 543 BC (16 years before V.N.). After living with his parents for 16 years, he took initiation and spent 20 years in the service of his Guru, acquiring knowledge, performing penance and practising temperance. On completion of V.N. 20, he was nominated as

the second successor of Lord Mahāvīra. Jambū Swāmī attained omniscience after he became a ācārya. Doing good to all the people with his infinite knowledge, infinite vision and virtuous conduct, he remained as the second successor of Lord Mahāvīra for 44 years as ācārya. At the end, appointing Ārya Prabhava as his successor, at the age of 80 in V.N. 64 (463 BC) Jambū Swāmī attained liberation / salvation.

Extinction of 10 terms

After the nirvāṇa of Jambū Swāmī, the following terms were lost in Bharata region.

1. Knowledge of reading Mental modes (*manah paryaya jñāna*)
2. Clairvoyance of superior type (*paramāvadhi jñāna*)
3. Pulākālabdhi
4. Commonkaction body (*āhāraka śarīra*)
5. Ladder of spiritual purification emanating from destruction of karmas (*Kṣapaka śreṇi*)
6. Ladder of spiritual purification emanating from subsidence of karmas (*Upāśama śreṇi*)
7. Monk living like the Jina (*Jinakalpa*)
8. Three types of Caritra, i.e. purity of non injury (*Parihāravisuddha*), subtle passion (*Sūkṣmasamparāya*) and perfect (*Yathākhyātācāritra*)
9. Omniscience (*Kevalajñāna*)
10. Liberation (*Muktigamana*)

All these ten distinct spiritual powers have become extinct after the nirvāṇa of Jambū Swāmī.

Both the Śvetāmbara and Digambara sects consider that Jambū Swāmī was the last omniscient. Thus Kevalī era ended in V.N. 64 with the nirvāṇa of Jambū Swāmī.

Kings and their dynasties during the era of omniscient Lords

On the basis of the historical events that occurred sequentially, it is clear that in ancient times, the relation between the rulers and the ruled was mostly very pleasant and deep. Like the ruled, even the rulers also

contributed for social, cultural, financial and spiritual development of the society. There is a lot of evidence in the literature confirming the fact.

In ancient times, even the kings toiled hard and gave their full support, wherever it was necessary, on par with the subjects, in all the activities of Jain Dharma starting right from its initial development to propagation, glorification and progression. The following dynasties were prominent in the Kevalī era of V.N. 1 to 64:

1. Śīśunāga dynasty in Magadha
2. Pradyota dynasty in Avantī
3. Paurava Rājavam̐sa in Vatsa (Kausāmbī) and
4. Cedi dynasty in Kaliṅga.

Era of all canons knowing (ŚrutaKevalī) era

V.N. 64 TO 170

ĀCĀRYAS OF ŚRUTAKEVALĪ ERA

ĀCĀRYA PRABHAVASWĀMĪ

(TENURE AS ĀCĀRYA - V.N. 64 TO 75)

ĀCĀRYA SAYYAMBHAVASWĀMĪ

(TENURE AS ĀCĀRYA - V.N. 75 TO 98)

ĀCĀRYA YAŚOBHADRASWĀMĪ

(TENURE AS ĀCĀRYA - V.N. 98 TO 148)

ĀCĀRYA SAṂBHŪTAVIJAYA SWĀMĪ

(TENURE AS ĀCĀRYA - V.N. 148 TO 156)

ĀCĀRYA BHADRABĀHUSWĀMĪ

(TENURE AS ĀCĀRYA - V.N. 156 TO 170)

ŚRUTAKEVALĪ (all canons knowing) era

Śrutakevalī Era commenced with the completion of Kevalī Era in 64 V.N. The one, who is perfectly - versed in & propounder of all scriptures (Dwādaśāṅgī) i.e. Śruta like an omniscient / Kevalī, is known as Śrutakevalī. In canonical literature a Śrutakevalī possesses the same capability as that of a Kevalī in the interpretation and analysis of the principles like Jīva and Ajīva etc.

According to Śvetāmbara sect, Śrutakevalī Era extended from V.N. 64 to 170 and the names of Śrutakevalīs of that time period are as follows:

PrabhavaSwāmī	64 to 75 V.N.
Sayyambhava Swāmī	75 to 98 V.N.
Yaśobhadra Swāmī	98 to 148 V.N.
Samhūtavijaya Swāmī	148 to 156 V.N.
Bhadrabāhu Swāmī	156 to 170 V.N.

In most of the literature of Digambara sect and in the Paṭṭāvalīs, Śrutakevalī era is considered to have started in V.N. 62 and stretched up to V.N. 162 and hence the era extended over a span of 100 years. As per their text, the names and the tenures of 5 Śrutakevalīs are as follows:

Viṣṇunandi a.k.a. Nandi	62 to 76 V.N.
Nandimitra	76 to 92 V.N.
Aparājita	92 to 114 V.N.
Govardhana	114 to 133 V.N.
Bhadrabāhu-I	133 to 162 V.N.

3. ĀCĀRYA PRABHAVA SWĀMĪ

Ācārya Prabhava Swāmī was the third Pontiff of Lord Mahāvīra and was the successor of Jambū Swāmī. He remained as a householder for 30 years, followed by 64 years as an ordinary monk and 11 years as epochal-ācārya serving the Jain religion. His total tenure as a monk was 75 years and he lived up to the age of 105 years. He left for the heavenly abode in V.N. 75.

Prabhava Kumāra was the eldest son of the Kṣatriya King Vindhya of Jayapura kingdom, situated at the foothills of Viṃdhyācala. He belonged to Kātyāyana Gotra. He was born in BC 557 (30 years prior to V.N.) in Jayapura in Viṃdhyā Pradeśa. His younger brother was Suprabha. Both of them were brought up with lot of love and care befitting their noble birth.

When the adolescent Prince Prabhava turned 16, his father was displeased with him for some reason. Out of anger, he Stripped Prince Prabhava off his imperial right and declared his younger son as his successor.

Bandit leader Prabhava

Prabhava was deeply hurt and depressed as he was denied of his hereditary right. Displeased with his father, he left Rājagṛha and headed towards the dense and dreadful forests near Viṃdhyā Mountains and started living there. The bandits living in the Viṃdhyā forests, seeing the courageous and young prince, established friendly contact with him. Prince Prabhava would accompany them in all their robberies. Looking at his bravery and courage, the gaṃg of bandits made him their Leader. Bandit Leader Prabhava, now with a gaṃg of 500 robbers was everyday plundering major towns and villages in broad daylight. The more he became successful in his robberies, the more ambitious he became. To fulfill his high ambitions, he learnt and became proficient in “opening the strongest locks skill” and “putting others to deep sleep skill”. With his powerful gang of bandits and his knowledge of these two arts, Bandit Leader Prabhava would enter into the houses of the rich of the major towns without any apprehension and without shedding even a drop of

blood, he would successfully rob them off their immense wealth. The terror of the thieves and their Bandit Leader Prabhava spread all-over.

Conversation between Jambū and Prabhava

The incidents of Prabhava entering Ṛṣabhadatta's mansion to rob, the transformation of the thieves under the influence of Jambū Kumāra were already discussed earlier in this volume. Subsequently Prabhava with lot of affection said in a gentle voice, "Jambū Kumāra! You are self - enlightened. But still I would humbly like to say something. In this world, women & wealth are two nectar like fruits unattainable even to celestials fortunately you are blessed with both these fruits. Enjoy them as you wish till you are fully content. The learned do not appreciate the sacrifice of the luxuries which are at hand, in anticipation of the unknown bigger happiness hidden in the abysmal future. You are at an age where one enjoys all the worldly pleasures. I fail to understand how the thought of untimely forsaking all your luxuries and renouncing entered into your mind. A person, who relished all the worldly pleasures to his heart's content, and who has arrived at old age, sacrifices and embraces Dharma, then the correctness of the sacrifice is understandable."

Listening to this, Jambū Kumāra said, "Prabhava! That which you consider a luxury, is like a drop of honey, which is insignificant, worthless and ephemeral, the consequences of which would be very painful".

Prabhava asked, "Brother! What is this drop of honey?" In reply Jambū Kumāra narrated the tale of drop of honey to Prabhava.

Episode of drop of Honey

With the intention of amassing wealth, a merchant along with many other merchants set out to travel extensively. There was a poor simpleton also with him. While travelling he reached a forest. There a gang of robbers tried to loot them. The poor simpleton was scared to death and somehow managed to escape. After running for some time, he noticed that a fierce wild elephant was chasing him. In order to save his life, he looked around for a secure place. His eyes fell upon a banyan tree nearby. To

hold on to the branch of the tree, he went to a well close by, leaped and caught hold of the branch of tree.

He felt reassured that he was safe for some time. Holding on to the branch he looked around and glanced into the well. He noticed that in it was a gigantic python, brandishing its tongue and looking at him ravenously. Close by, at the four corners of the well, were four other snakes, rather small in size, staring at him with open mouths. His whole body started shivering out of fear. He lifted his head and saw that there were two rats, one black and the other white, on the same branch that he was hanging on to. They were gnawing the branch with great speed.

Witnessing all this, he felt certain that his life was in complete peril and there was no escape for him from this grave situation. Recognizing his footsteps, the elephant also reached the well and started shaking the tree vigorously. On the tree was a huge bee hive. The disturbed bees started biting all over the man's body. His whole body was burning in pain due to the unbearable agony. He felt as if the very god of death was dancing right in front of him; he trembled in fear.

Just then a drop of honey from the bee hive fell into his mouth. Even in that agonising and perilous situation also, he was carried away by the sweet taste of honey and felt happy and considered himself lucky.

Exactly at that time, one flying celestial (Vidyādhara) was passing by in the sky. He saw the man hanging from the branch into the well, surrounded by calamities on all sides. He sympathised with the man and said, "O Human being! Hold my hand. I will pull you out of this well and take you to a safe place free from all misfortunes".

Hanging from the branch and still in the calamitous situation, he replied, "Wait for some time. Look, the drop of honey is about to fall into my mouth".

The compassionate Vidyādhara offered again and again to grasp his hand and take him out of the situation. However, in spite of being trapped in difficulties, the man came with the same reply, "Wait for some more time; let me indulge in the taste of one more drop of honey".

In spite of the immense agony that the man was undergoing, he could not come out of the delusion of tasting the droplets of honey. Tired of waiting for a long time, Vidyādhara understanding the man's delusion finally gave up his efforts to pull him out and returned to his heavenly abode. The man undergoing all sorts of sufferings, finally miserably died.

Jambū Kumāra said, “Prabhava! The man in this story represents a worldly soul; the dense forest stands for the world; the elephant is the inevitable death; the well resembles the births of mortals and celestial angels; the merchant resembles to desires of the World; the python denotes hell and animal World; the other four snakes are the four deadly passions that lead to perdition - anger, pride, delusion and greed; the branch of the tree stands for life span of every being; the white and black rats symbolise the bright and dark fortnights of the lunar month gnawing the branch of life with their sharp teeth which represent day and night respectively; the tree stands for non-restraint and wrong belief which binds the soul to karma; the drop of honey represents the transient pleasures of the five senses; the bees stand for innumerable maladies of the body and finally Vidyādhara is the Guru who uplifts the grief-Stricken mortals from the well of mundane existence”!

Jambū Kumāra then questioned Prabhava, “Now tell me Prabhava, under such circumstances, how much happiness or sorrow the man hanging in the well was experiencing?”

Prabhava thought for a moment and replied, “While dangling on the well for a long time waiting for the drop of honey to fall into his mouth was the only thing that gave him some amount of happiness; other than that, everything else around him was only frightful & sorrowful.

Jambū Kumāra said, “Prabhava! The same is pertinent to the joys and sorrows of human life. Surrounded by all kinds of fears, where is the real happiness for that man in the well, even for namesake? In such a situation, the drop of honey that gave him pleasure can be portrayed as his imaginary happiness, but not real”.

Jambū Kumāra questioned Prabhava yet again, “Prabhava! Seeing a person stranded in the midst of such pitiful and calamitous situation, if

any benevolent person comes forward and says, “O miserable mortal! Hold my hand; I will pull you out of this wretched place”, will this grieving person want to be rescued or not?

Prabhava replied, “Of course he would want to be rescued”.

Jambū Kumāra then said, “If a person engrossed in the delusion of relishing the drop of honey, out of ignorance says that he should first be allowed to savour its taste and get thoroughly satisfied, and then only be pulled out, then, he will not be freed from sorrow because, in this way he will never be satiated. The moment the branch that he is holding on to, is completely gnawed by the rats, he will fall to his death, into the mouth of the python.

Prabhava! After understanding the truth about existence, I will not delay even a minute to come out of the well of mundane life.

Acknowledging the truth of the facts illustrated by Jambū Swāmī, Prabhava asked, “Whatever you said is true; however, what grievous situation are you in that you are willing to abandon all your dear ones, who love you more than life itself, in such an inopportune moment?”

The enormous suffering of the World: Jambū Kumāra replied, “Prabhava! Is staying in the womb a normal suffering? An enlightened person, who is aware of the pain of being in the womb, does not require any other reason to be detached from life and to renounce”. Saying this, Jambū Kumāra narrated the incident of Lalitāmga in relation to the agony of being present in the womb.

Incident of Lalitāmga

“Long time ago, a king by the name of Śatāyudha ruled over the kingdom of Vasantpur. One day, one of his queens, Lalitā, saw a handsome youth. At the very first sight itself, she was totally enamoured by him and yearned for his association. She sent her trustworthy maid and gathered all the information about him. She got to know that the youth was Lalitāmga, the son of a merchant called Samudrpriya and that he too resides in Vasantpura. She sent a love letter to him, through her maid.

The maid who is a master in the art of deception and beguile, somehow manifested the youth in front of the queen. Lalitāṅga and the queen, without any fear, indulged themselves in sensual pleasure. One day the king was informed about the illicit affair of his queen and Lalitāṅga. He started to investigate the truth in this matter. The shrewd maid got to know about it. So as to save herself and her queen, the maid pushed Lalitāṅga in to hollow cesspool (a well in which dirty water is poured). Confined and stuck in the filthy, foul-smelling well, Lalitāṅga felt remorse about his frivolity and stupidity and started thinking, “Oh Lord! If for once I am able to come out of this predicament by some means, I will once and for all give up these sensual pleasures, whose repercussions bring nothing but agony”.

Taking pity on Lalitāṅga, the maid would throw sufficient leftover food into the well. Lalitāṅga would eat that food and drink the filthy water from the well and quench his pangs of hunger and thirst.

Soon rainy season set in and filled the well with water. Some workers opened the conduit of the well in order to clean it. Immediately, under the forceful pressure of the gushing water, Lalitāṅga was swept out of the drain and landed in a far-off corner. Being in the covered and filthy well for a long period of time, Lalitāṅga fell unconscious when exposed suddenly to the fresh air. Seeing him unconscious near the well, many people gathered around. When she heard of the unconscious youth, even Lalitāṅga’s wet-nurse arrived there. She immediately recognised her long lost Lalitāṅga and brought him back home. After prolonged treatment, Lalitāṅga recovered back to health with great difficulty”.

Concluding the story of Lalitāṅga, Jambū Kumāra said, “Prabhava! Lalitāṅga in this story symbolises the mortal soul; the sight of the queen is human birth; the maid is desire, the access into the palace, fulfillment of desire and the entry into the filthy well are the signifiers of the stay in the womb- the leftover food stands for the food eaten and digested by the mother; emerging out of the well resembles childbirth and services rendered by the wet-nurse depicts the nourishment for the body that facilitates in ripening karma. Explaining thus, Jambū Kumāra asked Prabhava, “Now let me know Prabhava, in case the queen once again invites Lalitāṅga to her palace, will he accept her invitation”?

In a firm tone Prabhava said, “No! Never! After going through such hellish times, he will never even turn his head towards that side”.

Jambū Kumāra said, “Prabhava! There is a chance that out of ignorance and deluded by the enticing sensual pleasures, he may once again accept the queen’s invitation. However, I have understood the meaning of bondage and liberation; hence, I shall never get caught into the web of love and hatred that is the root cause for the cycle of birth and death and for the mundane existence of life”.

To this Prabhava replied, “O blessed soul! Whatever you said is in fact the truth; nevertheless, listen to my humble request. A husband should perform his worldly duties towards his wives with love and care. As a matter of fact, this is a moral obligation of every husband. So accordingly spend considerable amount of time with your eight wives and then proceed towards an ascetic life. That would be befitting”.

Eighteen kinds of relationships

Jambū Kumāra replied in a calm and composed manner, “Prabhava! There is no hard and fast rule in this world that you will have the same mother or the same wife in your next life with whom you are associated in this birth. It is possible that your mother in this birth might have been your sister, wife or daughter in your previous birth. In addition, your husband may be born as a son; a father as a brother or in any other form of relationship. Depending upon one’s good or bad deeds, a soul gets incarnated as a woman, a man or a eunuch. In such a situation, how can one lead a spousal life with a woman who could have been one’s mother, sister or daughter in one’s previous lives”?

Prabhava said, “O great soul! It is nearly impossible to know the relationships of the previous births; therefore, the relationships of the present birth – father, son, husband, wife, etc - are taken into consideration and they alone are important”.

In reply Jambū Kumāra said, “This sort of debate arises out of ignorance. In spite of being able to discriminate between good and bad, ignorance either instigates a person to do all the wrong things or indulge in sensual pleasures or even hanker for possession of things”.

Jambū Kumāra continued his explanation, “Prabhava! Forget about past lives. I will recount an incident where in the same birth, many relationships are formed and how a calamitous chain of events occurred due to one’s ignorance”.

The narration about Kuberadatta and Kuberadattā

“Once there lived a courtesan Kuberasenā in the city of Mathura. When she became pregnant for the first time, she had a severe pain in her stomach. A physician was summoned. After examining he said, “She is carrying twins and hence is feeling inconvenient. There is nothing to worry”.

Kuberasenā’s mother tried to convince her to get rid of the pain by taking some medicine and terminating her pregnancy. But Kuberasenā did not agree. In due course she gave birth to twins – a son and a daughter. She named them Kuberadatta and Kuberadattā respectively.

One day Kuberasenā’s mother said, “Because of your children you will lose your patrons. Therefore it is better that you should abandon them at some deserted place”.

After being repeatedly pressurised by her mother to abandon the children, Kuberasenā finally gave in. She got made two finger-rings with the names of children engraved on them. When the children were eleven days old she put the rings in a thread and tied them around their necks. She then placed each child in a small boat-shaped wooden basket along with a bundle of precious stones and set them afloat at night in the river Yamunā.

The two baskets drifted and reached Sauripura by dawn. There two wealthy merchants came to bathe in the river. They noticed these two floating baskets and immediately pulled the baskets out of the river. They felt very happy to see the two children, the rings with their individual names engraved on them and the bundle of jewels. After discussing with each other, they took one child each to their respective homes. The two merchants and their wives brought up the children as if their own with love and care, providing them with all comforts; they were imparted with education and made able.

When both the children attained youth, the parents thought that the two children were suitable for each other and got them married with great pomp and show. The very next day, when playing the traditional game of dice, the friends of Kuberadatta interchanged Kuberadatta's and Kuberadattā's rings with each other. Kuberadattā noticed that her ring was exactly like that of Kuberadatta's. She was curious and surprised that the make of the rings was exactly the same and there was not even a slight difference in the script of the names also. She thought that there must be some very strong reason behind this. Trying to recollect the past, Kuberadattā started thinking, "So far I never heard of any of our ancestors with this name; besides I am not experiencing any intimate feeling towards Kuberadatta, which a wife should normally feel towards her husband".

She was convinced beyond doubt that there is some deep secret behind all this. With this thought in her mind she placed Kuberadatta's ring back on his finger, where her own ring was already there.

Seeing the similarity of the two rings, the same doubt cropped up even in Kuberadatta's mind. He returned Kuberadattā's ring to her and took his own ring and approached his foster mother. Binding her under oath he asked her, "Beloved mother! Tell me the truth, who am I? And how did I get this ring? Even Kuberadattā has the same type of ring with the same letters engraved on it".

The mother narrated the entire incident revealing that in reality he was not her own son and that her husband found him in a basket along with a bundle full of precious stones and the ring.

After listening to the entire matter, Kuberadatta was clear in his mind that Kuberadatta was his own sister. With remorse he complained, "Mother, knowing pretty well that we were siblings, why did you carry out this indecent and dishonourable act of getting us married?"

The merchant's wife also repented. She said, "Son! Even though we knew the truth, we proceeded with the immoral deed, blinded by delusion. But do not grieve. You are guilty of just getting married and did not commit any sin. Let bygones be bygones. I will send back

Kuberadattā to her parents' house. You make a trip to other places for some time. After you come back, I will get you married to another girl.”

Soon Kuberadatta's mother sent Kuberadattā to her parents. Taking enough money with him Kuberadattā left for another town.

Upon reaching her parental home, Kuberadattā also bound her mother under oath, and asked about her and the ring. The mother also told the same story.

Listening to the entire incident, Kuberadattā was filled with contempt towards the world. She approached a Pravartinī Female monk, took the oath of asceticism and following the five vows without fault, she started wandering from place to place along with the Female monk. Taking the permission of the Pravartinī, she kept with herself the ring that filled her with aversion.

Leading a chaste life and practicing severe penance she acquired knowledge of previous births plus clairvoyance after few years. With her insight, she perceived that her brother Kuberadatta and their mother Kuberasenā were unknowingly leading a married life. She was much shocked and pained about the contemptible and pathetic condition of the world. She thought, “Out of ignorance man commits so many absurdities”. She took permission of the Pravartinī and arrived at Mathura along with some nuns to preach Kuberadatta and Kuberasenā. She sought a suitable place and stayed at Kuberasenā's residence. Kuberasenā bore a child from Kuberadatta. Kuberasenā would bring her son often with her, while visiting Kuberadattā.

In order to enlighten Kuberadatta and Kuberasenā, Kuberadattā started talking to the child sweetly from a distance, “You are my brother, my husband's brother, my son, my co-wife's son, my nephew and my uncle. Dear child, your father is my brother, husband, grand father, father-in-law and son too. Dear boy! I am going to reveal one more hidden truth to you. She is my mother from whose womb you were born, she is also my mother-in-law, co-wife, my brother's wife, my grand mother and daughter-in-law”.

Hearing to all this, a shocked Kuberadatta bowed to the Female monk and asked, “O Female monk! Why are you uttering all these

contradictory statements? Are you under illusion? Or, are you just uttering these meaningless words merely for the enjoyment of the child?"

She replied, "Whatever I said is nothing but the truth. I am your sister Kuberadattā to whom you got married and this woman is our mother".

Kuberasenā and Kuberadatta were stunned and stared at her in disbelief.

Then Kuberadattā narrated all the incidents that she perceived through her yogic insight and she also recounted about the rings which were engraved with their names.

After listening to the truth, Kuberadatta felt aversion towards his life. He condemned himself and said in a sad tone, "Alas! How did I do this impossible, improper and unscrupulous deed"? Deeply aggrieved by his blunder, Kuberadatta gave away all his wealth to the child. He bowed to the Female monk in reverence and said, "You have opened my eyes and benefitted me greatly. I will spend the rest of my life in self-realisation".

Saying this Kuberadatta left home. He went to a Sthavira Śramaṇa and took initiation into monkhood and started leading a life of an ascetic, attained Samādhi and incarnated as a celestial being.

Kubersenā also followed Female-votary Dharma and led a pious life staying at home. Kuberadattā went back to serve her Pravartinī".

After narrating the story Jambū Kumāra asked Prabhava, "Now tell me, after the three of them came to know the entire truth, will they be lured by sensual pleasures again?"

Prabhava replied, "Never!"

Jambū Kumāra reiterating his decision to renounce, said, "Out of ignorance any one of them – Kuberasenā et al. may again involve in sensual pleasures, but as I came to know from my Guru, the unpleasant consequences of such frivolous activities, even the slightest desire towards such pleasures never arises in my mind."

Prabhava bent his head in veneration and said, "O reverend soul! Will there be any human being who does not get awakened after listening to

your detailed narration with such facts and illustrations? However, I would like to say one word. Usually, one acquires wealth after great struggle and efforts. You have immense wealth. Remain as a householder for at least one year to enjoy this fortune, derive pleasures befitting the six seasons and put your wealth to a good cause by helping the poor and the needy. Then I would also take initiation together with you”.

Jambū Kumāra said, “Prabhava! The learned say that the purpose of wealth is best served when donated to the deserving, but not by indulging oneself in transitory pleasures. Having spoken thus Jambū Kumāra narrated the incident of a cowherd, who misused his wealth.

The incident of the Cowherd

In Aṃga district (Janapada) there once lived many rich cowherds who had innumerable cows and buffaloes. Once, a very powerful and well-equipped gang of robbers attacked the place. Along with the loot that they plundered, they also abducted a very beautiful young lady who had a son. While decamping from the place, the bandits left the child behind in the village itself and with the intention of selling the woman they took her to Campa town and sold her to a whore.

Who had made necessary arrangements to train the young woman in music, dance and in the skills of prostitution. Within a few years the young woman became proficient in all the three. The older prostitute would charge one lakh rupees to those who wished to spend one night with this talented young woman.

Mean while the deserted son of the young woman also reached adolescence. One day, he came to the town of Campā carrying many cartloads of ghee to sell in the market. After selling the ghee, he noticed that many young people were reveling in the music and dances in the brothel houses and were engrossed in all types of promiscuous activities. A thought crossed his mind that what other purpose will all his riches serve, if he does not philander with the best of the beautiful prostitutes. So, in order to pick one for himself he started looking at all the beautiful prostitutes there, one after the other, and finally came to that cowherd’s wife who became a prostitute. He was completely taken in by her beauty,

gave her the amount she demanded and saying that he would return in the night, went back to his carts.

In the evening, he took bath and wearing beautiful clothes and ornaments started for the prostitute's residence. Incidentally, a deity who witnessed all the events, out of compassion, wanted to prevent the cowherd-youth from this dreadful sin. She took the form of a cow with a calf and sat in the middle of the street. While going to the prostitute's house, one of his feet got smeared with faces lying on the road. The youth rubbed his foot against the back of the calf there. Talking in a human voice the calf asked its mother, "O mother! What sort of a man is he, rubbing his feet smeared with filth against my body?"

The cow also replied in a human voice, "Young one! Do not be angry with this mean and wretched person; he is going to have sex with his own mother. It is no surprise if a degraded person like him rubs his dirty foot against your body". Uttering these words, the cow and the calf vanished.

Listening to the animals talk in a human voice, the youth was not only astonished but also felt that there must be some authenticity in their words. He reckoned that the bandits had abducted his mother; and it is quite possible that she might have become a prostitute. After mulling for some time, he decided to go to the prostitute and find out the truth.

With this intention in his mind, the youth arrived at the prostitute's house. The skilful harlot offered him tasty and delicious food and drink and was about to entertain him with her dance and music.

The youth said, "Leave all this and first let me know who you are and where do you reside"?

The harlot replied, "O young man! Talk about your interest in me and my characteristics because of which you were attracted towards me and paid a hefty sum. What will you gain by knowing me and my whereabouts?"

The young man said, "Have faith in me. In fact, I will be benefited by knowing your complete details, and nothing else. Pray tell me the truth without any hesitation and without concealing anything".

The woman thought for a while and mentioned the names of important people from her paternal side and in-laws side. She also narrated how she was abducted and sold by the dacoits to the older prostitute.

Ashamed of himself, the youth bowed down at her feet and said, “Oh Mother! It’s me -your unfortunate son from whom the robbers separated you. By the grace of God, both of us have been saved from committing an abhorrent sin”.

Later on, the youth paid a huge amount as demanded by the old prostitute and took his mother with him to his town.

After narrating the episode, Jambū Kumāra asked Prabhava, “Had he not been cautioned by the deity, in what way he would have used his money?”

Prabhava said, “In the most shameful and condemned way”.

Jambū Kumāra then asked one more question, “Prabhava! After being known about their filial bond, do you think that at any point of time, the young lad will desire to make love to his prostitute-turned mother?”

Prabhava immediately replied, “Never, not even in his wildest dreams”.

Jambū Kumāra said, “The one who is enlightened by listening to the preaching of the omniscient can save himself from committing any kind of immoral and obnoxious deeds, but not the one who is infatuated by senses and ignorance. In fact it is only by acquiring knowledge that one can get rid of all types of sorrows and miseries”.

This time, Prabhava saluted to Jambū Swāmī with veneration and said, “Swāmī! Complying with the worldly law, beget a son and please your ancestors. The ancestors are benefitted through obsequies offered by a son. Sagacious persons say that the one who is freed from the debt of a father (by continuing the lineage by begetting a son) lives in heaven after his death. An old adage says that the person who is devoid of a son has no salvation; he will not get a place in heaven”.

Jambū Swāmī replying to Prabhava’s artifice said, “Prabhava! Whatever you said about getting free from the indebtedness of the ancestors by

begetting a son is not at all true. At times, the son with an intention to do good to his father who is dead and incarnated in other form, does more harm than good with his deeds; in fact the father who is reborn in other form does not obtain any type of bliss or tranquility from the actions of the son of his former life. This is so because one reaps the fruits of one's own karma—good actions yield happiness and bad-sorrow: one does not enjoy the fruits of someone else's actions. Under any circumstances, after the death of the father, whatever the son does to please the soul of his father, neither pleases the father nor gives him peace. It is evident that by feeding the Brahman on a death anniversary of a person, a friend living in another village does not get satisfied; then how can a soul living in other world be satisfied by performing rituals in this world? The truth is, instead of giving happiness to the father, the libation by a son may cause his death, for if he is reborn as ant, he may die when the son accidentally sprinkles water on it while performing obsequies”.

“I will tell you an incident about the irrelevance regarding the worldly law of begetting a son: -”.

Episode of Maheśwaradatta

Long time ago, in the city of Tāmralipti, there lived a merchant by name Maheśwaradatta. Samudradatta, his deceitful and greedy father died and was reborn in the same city as an ox. Unable to bear the sorrow of her husband's death, Maheśwaradatta's mother also died and was born as a female dog in the same town.

Having no elderly persons in the house to stop her, Maheśwaradatta's young wife Gāṅgilā lived as she wished, with complete free will and without restraint. One day she was drawn towards a handsome youth and she invited him to her house at night. After dusk, Gāṅgilā waited for her beloved at the doorstep. After some time, the paramour, dressed in beautiful costumes and ornaments and carrying weapons, came to Gāṅgilā. Incidentally, at the same time, Maheśwaradatta also came to the same place where both the lovers were meeting. Afraid for his life, the paramour insidiously attacked Maheśwaradatta with his sword to kill him. But Maheśwaradatta skillfully saved him from the stroke and struck the man and injured him with his sword. The injured paramour walked a few steps, faltered and fell down. Repenting for his sinful deed the paramour thought, “A wretched person like me got instantly what I

deserve for my improper actions!” Contemplating on his actions, he peacefully breathed his last and entered into the womb of Gāṅgilā. Soon he was born as a son to Gāṅgilā. In this way, the paramour who was the enemy of Maheśwaradatta became his beloved son. Maheśwaradatta loved him more dearly than his own life.

In course of time, Maheśwaradatta bought a buffalo to perform his father’s libation as per the family customs. Incidentally, the buffalo he bought for the purpose was his father, reborn. He killed the buffalo and served its cooked meat as food to the guests of the ceremony. The next day, Maheśwaradatta was eating the meat with liquor, with great relish. He was offering pieces of beef to his son (the soul of paramour) who sat on his lap simultaneously beating his mother who was sitting nearby, reborn in the form of a dog, with a stick. Just then a Saint came to Maheśwaradatta’s house, seeking alms.

The Saint saw Maheśwaradatta eating the beef, mollycoddling his son and beating the dog. With his clairvoyance, the monk knew the reality and thought to himself, “Oh! How ironic ignorance is! Due to ignorance this human being is not only carrying his enemy on his lap, but also beating his mother and offering libation by killing the soul of his father on his death anniversary, relishing it and also offering it to others.” Saying aloud, “Oh, what an outrageous action!” he turned back from the entrance itself.

Maheśwaradatta wondered as to why the monk turned back from the door itself without taking any alms, and just saying “Oh what an outrageous action!” He thought that he should know the reason from the monk and set out in search of him and reached the place where the monk stayed. Saluting the Saint Maheśwaradatta asked him why he uttered those words and left without taking alms.

The monk replied, “Sir! It is inconceivable for Śramaṇas to take alms from the house of those who consume meat and from those who lack respect. Eating meat is absolutely violent and repulsive and hence we do not receive alms from households where non-vegetarian food is consumed. Moreover in your house

Without completing the sentence the monk remained silent. Maheśwaradatta bowed his head at the feet of the monk and pleaded him

to divulge the truth. Then the Saint narrated him the entire account of Maheśwaradatta's father, mother, the paramour, buffalo, bitch and the son, which he had known through clairvoyance.

Maheśwaradatta said, "Lord! Whatever you said is true. But would you please present some proof to confirm these facts?" The monk said, "Take the bitch to your storehouse, there she will gain the knowledge of her previous birth and will dig in the courtyard with her paws and would unearth an urn filled with jewels."

As suggested by the monk, Maheśwaradatta took the bitch to his storehouse. The moment they entered the room, she recollected her previous birth and dug out the urn filled with jewels.

When the monk revealed and proved the hidden secret with evidence, Maheśwaradatta felt averse to the world. He took initiation of Śramaṇa Dharma from the same monk and reformed himself.

Explaining the inference of the incident, Jambū Kumāra said, "Prabhava! This is the present situation of the ethos. Only those souls engulfed in the darkness of ignorance have a penchant for unacceptable deeds and would abstain from the acceptable. But those people, whose heart is filled with the glow of knowledge, would never show inclination towards such deeds. This world is filled with sorrows; the soul which experiences it, should try to abandon all delusions and put all its efforts and persevere to attain liberation."

Curious to understand real happiness, Prabhava asked Jambū Kumāra the last question, "Sir! What is the difference between materialistic and spiritual happiness?"

Jambū Kumāra replied, "Prabhava! The happiness of liberation is indefinable and unparalleled. It never gets disrupted even for a moment and hence is endless happiness. It is limitless and not bound by time and space; hence it is eternal and imparts happiness several multitudes more than the happiness of even celestial beings. It cannot be explained and hence extremely indescribable."

"The so-called materialistic happiness is in fact not happiness; it is an illusion of happiness and is transitory. A human being, while enjoying food, drink, anointment etc. assuming them to be happiness, in reality

invites only sorrows. It was well said by experienced elders that in pleasure are the fears of disease.”

Jambū Kumāra narrated an episode of a merchant to illustrate how one fantasises happiness in sorrow.

The merchant’s episode

Once, a merchant with cart loads of goods was travelling to other lands along with a caravan. On the way he reached a dense forest. To facilitate his transactions while on the way, he took a bag laden with loose angels and coins and kept it on the back of a mule. By the time they reached the forest somehow the bag of coins broke open scattering the coins on the way. When the merchant became aware of this, he stopped all the carts and started picking up the scattered coins with the help of his servants. The guards of the merchants said to him, “Why are you risking millions of your money for the sake of a few coins. There is constant danger of being attacked by the thieves here in the forest. So let us move the carts fast”.

The merchant did not heed the fitting advice of the guards. He said, “The profits in the future are unpredictable. In such a case, it is unwise to neglect the money I have now.” So saying he once again got busy in picking up the coins.

Leaving behind the merchant and his cart along with his loads, the rest of the merchants and the guards of the caravan proceeded further. The merchant continued picking the coins. Soon a gang of robbers noticed that he had no guards to protect him. They attacked him and looted all his money.

Jambū Kumāra said, “The men swayed by the frivolous and so called nominal pleasures, tend to desert the efforts to obtain Mokṣa. They keep wandering ceaselessly in this world drowned in the sea of unhappiness and sorrow, just like the merchant who for the sake of handful of coins lost his millions”.

Introspection of Prabhava

The facts and arguments presented by Jambū Kumāra in a benevolent way opened the inner eye of Prabhava. A kind of excitement aroused in

his heart. Fountain of thoughts gushed out in his subconscious mind. He thought, “On one hand, Jambū Kumāra who is extraordinarily radiant and delicate, serene than the moon, attractive and charming, with wealth equivalent to that of Kubera, and having eight wives whose beauty excels the beauty of celestial angels and who are embellished with all the virtues, a palatial mansion and other luxuries which he had inherited without any efforts, is giving up everything as if they are insignificant like a blade of grass and moving ahead towards liberation; In contrast, I on my part, with my 500 companions, have been day and night involved in the contemptible deed of plundering the hard earned money and wealth of others. I have made the lives of many people miserable. Alas! I picked up immoral, anti-social and despicable activities like looting, robbery etc and accumulated innumerable sins. My future life would definitely be a horrible, miserable and gloomy one.”

How horrible and daunting would the results of his bad deeds be? The very thought made Prabhava shudder. He, at once decided firmly that he would forsake all types of sinful deeds, gave up all luxuries and sensual pleasures and would genuinely try to reform his future and uplift himself.

Thus resolving in his heart Prabhava bowed at the feet of Jambū Kumāra and with folded hands said, “Sire! You are my Guru and I am your disciple. You showed me the path to salvation. I am firmly determined to become an ascetic renouncing the world and to serve you till the end of my life. Please accept me as your disciple.”

Jambū Kumāra in a tone of acceptance said, “All right.”

The moment Jambū Kumāra uttered the word of acceptance all the 500 companions of Prabhava who turned motionless became free. Prabhava ordered his men to return all the looted money. Taking the permission of Jambū Kumāra, he, along with his companions then set out for Jayapura to take the permission of his father to become a monk.

Initiation of Prabhava and his Spiritual-exertion

Prabhava went home and took the permission of his parents. The very next day, along with his 500 companions he came to Sudharmā Swāmī. Jambū Kumāra and his 26 kinsmen, Prabhava and his 500 men got initiated into monkhood from Ārya Sudharmā. Thus the leader of bandits

became the leader of ascetics. Some authors opined that Prabhava took initiation sometime after the initiation of Jambū Kumāra but there is no substantial evidence to prove this fact. Prabhava was 30 years old when he took initiation. Whether he was married or not, there is no mention of it in any text.

After initiation Prabhava thoroughly studied all the 11 Aṃgas and 14 Pūrvas from Sudharmā Swāmī and Jambū Swāmī. He performed severe austerities, and in the blazing flame of penance he started burning his bad karma like firewood. Serving Ārya Sudharmā he followed the Śramaṇa Dharma. In V.N. 64, Prabhava was made ācārya by Jambū Swāmī. After the nirvāṇa of Jambū Swāmī, Prabhava Swāmī took over as Pontiff. He not only elevated himself in the spiritual path but also served the congregation, following the principles of Lord Mahāvīra with unflinching faith and devotion, and glorified Jainism setting an example for others by his conduct as a Pontiff of that time

Contemplation about the successor

One day, at night Ācārya Prabhava Swāmī was deep in meditation. The rest of the ascetics were fast asleep. After his meditation in the middle of the night he reflected on the issue of his successor. He was perplexed as to whom the responsibility of a successor should be entrusted to administer the large congregation efficiently as per the guidelines of Lord Mahāvīra. He mentally recollected all the ascetics of the congregation and visualised them to be his successor; but much to his dismay, he could not find anyone fit to the rank. Then he started thinking of the people outside the religion who are eligible to run the congregation. With his intuition he found out that Sayyambhava Bhaṭṭa, a staunch Brahmin of Vatsa Gotra, a resident of Rājagṛha and who was engaged in performing the sacrificial rites, was proficient in all aspects to run the congregation.

The next day, Prabhava Swāmī, the leader of Gaṇas wandering along with his disciples reached Rājagṛha. After reaching there, he ordered two of his disciples, “Śramaṇas! Both of you go to the Yajña being performed by Sayyambhava Bhaṭṭa and seek alms from him. If the Brahmins there refuse to give alms to you, recite this verse in a pleasant voice and come back:

“Aho kaṣṭamahō kaṣṭam, tattvaṃ viñāyate na hi!”

It means – Alas! It is a matter of great sorrow; it is a pitiable thing that the reality (real truth) is not known here.

Receiving these instructions from Prabhava Swāmī, the two disciples immediately set out for Rājagṛha to seek alms. They reached the vast Yajña site and begged for alms. As foretold by Prabhava Swāmī, the Brahmins at the Yajña hall refused to offer ‘yajña receipts’ as alms to them.

Then as foretold by Prabhava Swāmī, the monk named Yugal in a loud voice recited the aforementioned verse and returned back.

When, Sayyambhava Bhaṭṭa who sat near the yajña-altar performing the rites listened to the verse recited by Yugala, he started reflecting over it. He very well knew that the Jain Śramaṇa never tells a lie under any circumstance. So, innumerable doubts regarding the real truth started triggering in his mind. With the countless questions rising in his inner mind, Sayyambhava Bhaṭṭa felt as if he was attacked by a storm of apprehension. He approached his teacher who was performing the Yajña and asked, “O best of the priests! What is the real form of tattva (reality / verity)”?

The teacher said, “Sir, the essence of the real knowledge is that the Vedas are the essence of heaven and salvation. The scholars who are fully aware of this knowledge say that there is no real truth other than Vedas.”

Sayyambhava Bhaṭṭa in an angry tone said, “Tell me the truth, what is the real truth or else I will separate your head from the shoulders.” Uttering these words he drew the sword from the sheath.

Staring at Sayyambhava Bhaṭṭa in awe, standing in front of him with a sword in his hand like Lord Yama, the teacher thought that it is impossible to save him without telling the truth. So he confessed that the Dharma propounded by Lord Mahāvīra is the real truth and the real Dharma and that he should learn about it from Ācārya Prabhava.

Learning about the Truth, Sayyambhava Bhaṭṭa was very pleased. He gave away all the sacrificial material to the high priest and presented himself in front of Prabhava; prostrating at Ācārya Prabhava's feet, Sayyambhava Bhaṭṭa requested him to impart him the knowledge that leads to salvation.

Ācārya Prabhava with authenticity explaining the greatness of right faith with non-violence, truth, non-stealing, celibacy and non-possession, said that they are the real truth, real knowledge and real Dharma. The one who spurns the worldly pleasures, follows and practices these tenets will be freed from birth, old age, death once for all and attains eternal happiness.

Learning about the virtuous path through the preaching of Prabhava, Sayyambhava Bhaṭṭa immediately took initiation as a Śramaṇa from Prabhava Swāmī. The preaching to Sayyambhava Bhaṭṭa by Prabhava Swāmī proves that the great ācāryas of Jainism not only endeavoured for their own self-realisation but also paved the way for the welfare of the future generations, by incessantly trying to stabilise & strengthen the Śramaṇa tradition which showed the right way.

Ārya Prabhava attains heaven

The leader of bandits Prabhava took initiation at the prime age of 30. Up to the age of 64, he practised severe austerities and after that for 11 years, he led the Śramaṇa congregation as its Pontiff. During that period he uplifted not only himself but also helped others. Such examples are very rare to be found in the history of the world. Eventually at the age of 105, the great ācārya envisaged that time has come to leave his physical body. So he declared Sayyambhava Bhaṭṭa, his disciple, as his successor. Subsequently he observed fasting and departed for heavenly abode in 75 V.N. at the age of 105.

Viewpoint of Digambara Sect

The opinion expressed by Digambaras in the texts and Paṭṭāvalī is that after the nirvāṇa of Lord Mahāvīra, Ācārya Viṣṇu succeeded Ācārya Jambū Swāmī, and not Ācārya Prabhava. In the most regarded scripture of Digambara sect, Uttara Pūrāṇa, (chapter 76) it is mentioned that Jambū Swāmī's disciple was a monk called 'Bhava' whereas Paṃdit

Rājamala mentioned 'Prabhava' as Jambū Swāmī 's disciple in his 'Jambū Caritam'. It is also mentioned in this text that few days after the nirvāṇa of Jambū Swāmī, due to be Devī lament by the demons, Vidyuccara and the dacoit prince Prabhava and his 500 companions who were initiated into the monastic life, died and became deities. Apart from this no information is available about Prabhava in two texts.

Of Ārya Prabhava and Ārya Viṣṇu (also known as Nandi) who became the ācārya of Dharma congregation, after Ācārya Jambū Swāmī is a delicate, significant and knotty issue. Both Digambara and Śvetāmbara sects agree about chronology of pontiffs after the nirvāṇa of Mahāvīra up to Jambū Swāmī. Controversy about whether Indrabhūti Gautama was the first successor or not is not of much significant as the difference of opinion among the authors is trifling. If Digambara sect opines that Indrabhūti Gautama was the first successor, the Śvetāmbaras going a step further, bestow upon him a much higher esteem and position. However, the difference of opinion between the both groups sparks about the question of the successor of Jambū Swāmī. The controversy starts from naming different ācāryas like Viṣṇu (also known as Nandi), Nandimitra, - Aparājita and Ācārya Govardhana so on and so forth. In the end, both the schools unanimously agree that Śrutakevalī Bhadrabāhu ācārya was the last 14 - Pūrvadhara ācārya. The controversy between both the camps, once again continues after Ācārya Bhadrabāhu and no further consensus is found. With the passage of time, both the schools have expressed somewhat closer opinion regarding the period of Ārya Maṃkṣu, the Guru of Yati Vṛṣabha and that of Nāgahasti.

Considering the difference of opinion about the name of the successor after Ācārya Jambū Swāmī, many scholars are of the view that the seeds of separation of Jainism into Digambara and Śvetāmbara might have sown because of this issue. However, both the camps straight away deny this hypothesis. In spite of the difference in the names of ācāryas after Jambū Swāmī, neither of the schools is willing to accept that, the bifurcation of the Dharma congregation of Lord Mahāvīra took place after the nirvāṇa of Jambū Swāmī.

In light of the above mentioned facts, it is clear that to bring out an amicable clarification is not an easy task. Lot of research has to be done

in this regard. The points which are helpful in research work are presented below: -

1. In the scriptures of Digambara School, it was mentioned that Viṣṇu Nandi was the successor of Jambū Swāmī but nowhere is it clearly mentioned whether he was the disciple of Ācārya Jambū Swāmī or of somebody else.
2. The scriptures of Śvetāmbara elaborately discuss about Prabhava Swāmī, the successor of Jambū Swāmī; whereas Digambara scriptures do not provide any details about Ārya Viṣṇu.
3. Digambara scriptures mentioned the name of Prabhava. Whereas nowhere in the ancient scriptures of Śvetāmbara the name Viṣṇu as the successor of Jambū Swāmī was mentioned.

It is hoped that the scholars of both the sects strive hard to study the matter thoroughly and throw enough light on this issue.

Ācārya Sayyaṃbhava

After Lord Mahāvīra's third successor Prabhava Swāmī, in 75 V.N. Ācārya Sayyaṃbhava became the fourth Pontiff. He was a great scholar and a Brahmin of Vatsa lineage. At the age of 28, impressed by the sermons of Ācārya Prabhava Swāmī, he got initiated into Śramaṇa Dharma, leaving his young wife behind.

Seeing the young wife left helpless, the townspeople grieved, "None else in the world can be as hard-hearted as Bhaṭṭa Sayyaṃbhava to leave behind a young, beautiful and chaste wife and embrace an ascetic life. At least if she had a son, she would have led her life with some hope and support and her life would not have been so arduous.

Bālarṣi (Child Monk) Maṇaka

The day Sayyaṃbhava took initiation, the same day the women in the neighbourhood asked his wife, "Sarale! Do you hope that you have the light of the Bhaṭṭa family in your womb?"

The demure face of Sayyaṃbhava's wife blushed like a rising sun, who trying to conceal her face in her sari, answered them with a little smile in the then prevalent language, "Maṇagaṃ" (Maṇaka) which means - Yes! There is something.

The news spread at lightning speed from ear to ear, to the kinsmen of Sayyaṃbhava Bhaṭṭa and to the town-dwellers and everyone was delighted and felt contented.

The birth of a son in the Sayyaṃbhava family at that time was like a sprinkling of the nectar of hope in the distressed life of his mother. The word she said "Maṇagaṃ" announced his arrival into this world; hence the boy was named "Maṇaka". His mother showered lot of affection and fulfilled her responsibilities both as a father as well as a mother in upbringing him.

Like the moon in the second phase, the boy Maṇaka grew up and entered into his eighth year; he played with the boys of his age and at the same time studied well. Right from the beginning the boy, Maṇaka was an

affectionate and polite child. One day he asked his mother, “My dear mother! I never saw my father, please tell me who is my father and where he is?”

His mother trying hard to control the budding ocean of tears bravely said, “Child! Your father had taken initiation of Śramaṇa Dharma when you were in my womb. I brought you up as a single mother. Son! Just like you have not seen your father, your father also has not seen you yet. Your father is Sayyaṃbhava Bhaṭṭa. When you were in my womb, he was performing a Yajña. At that time, two Jain Śramaṇas arrived there. He was carried away by their words and sacrificed me and the household and took renunciation as Jain-Śramaṇa. This is the reason why your father and yourself have not met or seen each other”

Hearing the entire story about his father, the boy Maṇaka yearned to see his father Sayyaṃbhava Ācārya and so one day taking the permission of his mother set out to go and meet his father.

During those days, Ārya Sayyaṃbhava along with his group of disciples was wandering through various villages and cities and happened to come to Campāpurī. Incidentally, the boy Maṇaka who was roaming here and there in search of his father reached Campāpurī. In fact if one has a strong and true aspiration he eventually achieves it.

Because of his past good deeds Maṇaka’s desire was fulfilled. Outside the city, he saw a monk who came to attend the nature’s call to excrete. Maṇaka thought to himself, “He must definitely be a fellow-monk of my father” and felt very cheerful. He went closer to the monk and courteously bowed to him. The monk was also fascinated to see the handsome lotus-eyed boy and looked at him very affectionately. Looking at each other, they both spontaneously felt the waves of happiness rippling.

After the boy saluted him, the monk affectionately asked in a choked voice, “Son! Who are you? Who is your father? Where were you coming from and where are you going?”

The boy Maṇaka replied in a sweet voice, “Holy one! I am from the city of Rājagrha, and the son of Sayyaṃbhava Bhaṭṭa, a Brahmin of Vatsa

Gotra. My name is Maṇaka. When I was in my mother's womb, my father left all his worldly belongings including my devoted mother and took renunciation. After wandering various cities and villages in search of my father I have come here. Swāmī! If you know the whereabouts of my father please let me know where he is. If I meet him once, I will take renunciation from him and serve at his holy feet."

Hearing such words from the boy Maṇaka, what emotions might have crossed the mind of Ārya Sayyambhava, cannot be comprehended, unless one experiences the same.

As solemn as an ocean, Ārya Sayyambhava with great composure said in a friendly tone, "Long live Son! I know your father. He is in no way different from me, neither in soul nor in body. You can regard me as him and take initiation from me"

Maṇaka remained with the Saint and the latter brought him along towards the monastery (upasray).

After coming to the monastery (where the Monks live temporarily), when Maṇaka came to know from the other monks that the Saint whom he accompanied with to the Upāshraya, is none other than Ārya Sayyambhava, without outwardly expressing his overwhelming joy, he was delighted in his heart. With overwhelming devotion and ecstasy he fell on the feet of his father and prayed, "Lord! Kindly initiate me into Śramaṇa monkhood immediately, now I cannot stay away from you."

Seeing the burning desire in the boy Maṇaka, Ārya Sayyambhava granted him vows of celibacy and sell restraint from all sinful activities as per Śramaṇa Dharma. Maṇaka, who was a playful boy till yesterday, has taken to the true path of liberation today as a child - monk. The impact of the virtuous deeds of previous births is such that it neither needs advice nor inspiration.

Composition of Daśavaikālika

After taking initiation, when Maṇaka totally surrendered himself to Sayyambhava, the latter started thinking about the spiritual elevation of Maṇaka. Using his meditative power he foresaw that the child – monk Maṇaka has only six months to live. Within such a short span of time

how will he become a scholar in right knowledge and right conduct and how will he elevate himself spiritually? While contemplating over this issue, it occurred to Sayyambhava that under exceptional circumstances, a transcendental scholar of ten Pūrvas can abridge the essence of these texts for the benefit of either himself or for others. Sayyambhava felt that he has a justifiable cause as ‘Maṇaka’ was soon going to leave this world and thought of doing something for his benefit. So he decided to take the essence of the ‘Pūrvas’ and compose a Sūtra (collection of aphorisms on Jain canons).

Resolving thus, Sayyambhava took the essence of different Pūrvas and composed a Sūtra of ten chapters. Maṇaka was then approximately 8 years old. After 72 V.N., in 73 V.N., the Sūtra was written during the life time of Prabhava Swāmī. As the Sūtra was concluded during twilight, it was named as Daśavaikālika. Ācārya Sayyambhava himself made Maṇaka read the text and practice contemplation on them. Monk Maṇaka with his humility, obedience and quest of knowledge, within a short time, became the true worshipper of right Knowledge and right conduct.

When Ārya Sayyambhava saw the imminent death of Maṇaka drawing near, he appropriately made him perform the essential final activities like self criticism of current flaws (ālocanā) etc. which will benefit him in his final journey. Monk Maṇaka also within a limited time of just six months observed Śramaṇa Dharma sincerely and reached heaven after his death. The short life of Maṇaka and his sudden death after practicing Spiritual-exertion for a brief period, naturally filled Ācārya Sayyambhava’s heart with emotional grief and tears rolled down from his eyes. When the ascetics noticed the languid and tear-filled face of Sayyambhava, they were surprised and enquired him in humility, “Lord! We never saw a glimpse of sorrow on your face till today; what is the reason for tears in your eyes today? There must be some strong reason for an absolute ascetic like you who is free from sorrow to be struck by grief. Please clarify our doubt.”

In answer to their query, Ārya Sayyambhava, disclosing their father and son relationship to the ascetics said, “At a very small age this child ascetic practiced pure conduct with right knowledge; he left the world when he was half way through his Spiritual-exertion. Hence I was overcome with tears. Had he lived for some more time, he would have successfully completed his Spiritual-exertion”.

When the ascetics came to know that Maṅaka was his son they felt remorse and said, “Sir! Why did you keep this a secret that you and Maṅaka were father and son? Had we known earlier, we too would have benefitted serving the son of our Guru.”

Ārya Sayyambhava replied, “O Ascetics! Had you known earlier that Maṅaka was my son, you would not have accepted his services; and in turn because of your love and affection, he would have been deprived of the benefits of serving elders like you? So do not regret for this. Considering the little life span of the child monk, I extracted the summary of the Pūrva Scriptures and conceived a small scripture to facilitate him into right knowledge and right conduct. As the purpose is achieved, I now want to expunge terminate this Daśavaikālika Sūtra and assimilate it back into the Pūrva scriptures.

Hearing Ārya Sayyambhava words, the Mokṣa and the congregation politely requested, “O Venerable one! The Śāstra you have created for the sake of Monk Maṅaka is helpful even today for less intelligent Monks and Female monks to gain knowledge of right conduct; and we are sure that it would also cater to the needs of similar Monks and Female monks of the future and enable them to easily understand and practice the self-restraint dharma. Hence we request you to retain it as it is and not to terminate this scripture.”

Yielding to the request of the congregation, Ārya Sayyambhava retained the “Daśavaikālika Sūtra” in its original form. Even today the Monks, Female monks, Votarys and Female-votarys are enjoying the fruits of his grace and boon by studying Daśavaikālika Sūtra and by progressing in the spiritual path.

The ten chapters of Daśavaikālika Sūtra are not meant for only attaining Mokṣa; it kindles the transcendental light in the life of every Spiritual-practitioner. The gist of the most significant spiritual principles propounded by him in ten chapters is as follows:

1. In the first chapter named ‘Druma Puṣpaka’ he explained the Dharma as the doctrines of non-violence, self-restraint and penance. Ācārya Sayyambhava abridged this vast doctrine / principles of the Jain philosophy into five verses thus filling the ocean into a vessel.

2. In the second chapter ‘Śrāmaṇaya Pūrvaka’ he propounded some internal and external means of controlling the mind that tries to go astray from asceticism.
3. In ‘Kṣullakācāra’, the third chapter he gave a list of 52 deeds that are not to be performed by an ascetic.
4. In ‘Ṣaḍjīvanikāya’, the fourth chapter he briefly discussed the six types of jīvas (empirical souls) and suggested their protection.
5. In the fifth chapter ‘Piṇḍaiṣṇā’, in two Uddeśakas, he discussed about the rules of diet and the rules to be followed by the ascetics for taking alms.
6. In ‘Dharmārtha Kāma’ the sixth chapter he discussed about the conduct to be followed by the ascetics and explained about the 18 places that should be avoided by an ascetic.
7. In the seventh chapter ‘Discoursea Śuddhi’ he explained the categories of the spoken words and language and warned the Mokṣa to be wary of untruthful and blemished language and advised to adhere to truthful innocent and unarmful language.
8. In the eighth chapter ‘Ācāra Praṇidhāna’ he classified the rules of conduct of the Mokṣa.
9. In Vinaya Samādhi, the ninth chapter, he imparted knowledge about humility in four Uddeśakas, and 1. Vinaya Samādhi, 2. Śruta Samādhi 3. Tapa Samādhi and 4. Ācāra Samādhi, along with four reasons for Samādhi are discussed.
10. In the tenth chapter, ‘Sahbhikṣu’ - he explained who deserves the life of a monk, how to attain salvation, what is its medium, etc.; the ideal life of an ascetic is analysed in essence, with limited vocabulary.

Apart from the Niryukti written by occult Ācārya Bhadrabāhu Swāmī (different from Śrutakevalī Bhadrabāhu) on Daśavaikālika, other

remarkable commentaries are also available on it even in the present times.

The way the analysis of self-righteousness is presented in its totality, in a beautiful and organised manner in this text, cannot be seen in any other text.

After thoroughly studying & analyzing all the scriptures, Ācārya Sayyaṃbhava composed this canon that occupies a very important place in Jain literature.

Monk Maṅaka made it a point to read and contemplate the text in his daily routine. Thus within a short period of time he could practice perfectly the conduct of a monk which is very difficult to observe and progressing in the spiritual path in an astonishing way he finally reached heaven.

Ācārya Sayyaṃbhava attains heavenly abode

Ācārya Sayyaṃbhava was initiated into Jainism in 64 V.N., when he was 28 years old. He was an ordinary monk for 11 years and for 23 years he remained as Pontiff and served the congregation with utmost sincerity. When he became aware of his approaching death, he declared Yaśobhadra, his Chief disciple as his successor Pontiff and by observing fasting died while in meditation (Samādhi) in 98 V.N., at the age of 62.

The viewpoint of Digambaras According to the religious texts and Paṭṭāvalīs of Digambaras, the name of Nandimitra is seen in the place of Ācārya Sayyaṃbhava. In the Digambara Scriptures, however, there is no introduction of even Ācārya Nandimitra.

ĀCĀRYA YAŚOBHADRA SWĀMĪ

Ācārya Yaśobhadra Swāmī succeeded Ācārya Sayyaṃbhava as the fifth Pontiff after Lord Mahāvīra. Detailed information is not available about his life. Whatever little information is available from Nandi Sthavirāvalī and chronology of Pontiffs is briefly discussed below:

He was born in an orthodox Brahmin family of Tuṅgiyāyana Gotra, who performed Yajñas. As soon as he had completed his studies and stepped into adolescence, he was fortunate enough to be associated with a pious soul like Ācārya Sayyaṃbhava. The sermon of Sayyaṃbhava filled with self restraint and detachment awakened his sleeping soul and freed him from delusions. He, at the young age of 22, severing all the delusive family ties, took initiation from Sayyaṃbhava & became a monk. Serving his Guru, practicing knowledge and meditation for 14 years, he mastered the 14 Pūrvas. In addition, he took the permission of his Guru and carried out many types of penance and strictly observed the conduct of self restraint.

In 98 V.N. after Ācārya Sayyaṃbhava attained heavenly abode, he headed the congregation as Pontiff. He held the office for 50 years and propagated the preaching of Mahāvīra far and wide. In 148 V.N. he announced Saṃbhūtavijaya and Bhadrabāhu as his successors, observed Samādhi and attained heavenly abode.

Ācārya Yaśobhadra Swāmī during his regime, with his powerful preaching converted many great yogic scholars into Jainism. This is an example of his analytical intelligence that two disciples like Saṃbhūtavijaya and Bhadrabāhu became 14 – Pūrvadhara Śrutakevalīs under his able teaching and guidance.

Ācārya Yaśobhadra Swāmī remained as a householder up to 22 years then took initiation and remained as an ordinary monk for 14 years. He served the Jain order for 50 years as Pontiff. At the age of 86, in the year 148 V.N., he passed away.

After the nirvāṇa of Lord Mahāvīra, from Sudharmā Swāmī to Ācārya Yaśobhadra there was the tradition of a single ācārya in the Jain Order. Ācāryas like Discourse-ācārya and others, who lived in the congregation,

were also under the control of a Pontiff. Ācārya Yaśobhadra maintained this tradition perfectly, as long as he was the head of the congregation. This is his distinct trait.

Opinion of Digambaras

In the Digamabara scriptures and Paṭṭāvalī, Aparājita is described as the third Śrutakevalī ācārya instead of the third Śrutakevalī Ācārya Yaśobhadra. However no note-worthy information is available about him also.

Śrī Saṃbhūtavijaya

After Yaśobhadra Swāmī, Śrī Saṃbhūtavijaya and Bhadrabāhu Swāmī became the sixth Pontiffs of Lord Mahāvīra.

Not much information is available about Ācārya Saṃbhūtavijaya. Only this much is known that he was a Brahmin of Maḍhara Gotra. In Pontifical chronology of Tapagacha about his name it is written like this: “*Padhasamūdayo-pacharatha Saṃbhūthethi Śrī Saṃbhūtavijaya Bhadhathi.*” Ācārya Śrī Saṃbhūtavijaya was born in 66 V.N. He led a family life up to the age of 42. He was impressed by the sermons of Ācārya Yaśobhadra and was initiated into the ascetic life of a Śramaṇa in V.N.108. Leading a faultless and virtuous life of a Śramaṇa, he thoroughly studied ‘Dwādaśāṅgī’ under the able guidance of Ācārya Yaśobhadra and acquired the position of a Śrutakevalī. He served the congregation as a normal monk for 40 years and was elevated to the rank of a ācārya in 148 V.N. He led the organisation in an efficient manner up to V.N.156. He was well versed in the 14 Pūrvas and rich in divine powers of speech, and hence could convert numerous people immersed in worldly pleasures, into the path of sacrifice and asceticism. Sensuous layman Ārya Sthūlabhadra was also his disciple, who is reckoned as the first and foremost among great yogis. According to chronology of elders (Sthavirāvalī), the names of his male and female Sthavira disciples are as follows:

Male Disciples:

1 Nandanbhadra 2 Upanandanabhadra 3 Tīsabhadra 4 Jasabhadra
5 Sumanabhadra 6 Maṇibhadra 7 Puṇyabhadra 8 Sthūlabhadra 9 Ujjumā
10 Jambū 11 DīrghaBhadra and 12 Paṇḍubhadra

Female Disciples:

1 Jakkhā 2 Jakkhadiṇṇā 3 Bhūyā 4 Bhūyadiṇṇā 5 Seṇā 6 Veṇā and
7 Reṇ, all the seven were the sisters of Ācārya Sthūlabhadra.

In the year 156 V.N. he realized that he was nearing death; he underwent fast and attained Samādhi and went to heaven.

Here it is noteworthy that starting from Ārya Sudharmā, the first Successor of Lord Mahāvīra to Ācārya Yaśobhadra i.e. up to the fifth Pontiff, the tradition of being led by “one” ācārya was prevalent in the Śramaṇa congregation. Remaining ācāryas like Discourse-ācārya, etc., performed their duties under the auspices of a single successor ācārya. But Ācārya Yaśobhadra, breaking the convention declared both the Śrutakevalīs - Saṃbhūtavijaya and Bhadrabāhu as his successors. Why did he opt for two ācāryas as his successors instead of one? There is no substantial explanation for this. However it can be assumed that as the size of the congregation increased in multiples, to facilitate the smooth administration of the vast congregation, he might have opted for two ācāryas, where, one would look after the internal matters and the other would take care of external issues. Thus he had laid the foundation for the custom of two ācāryas.

It is indisputably proved that Ācārya Saṃbhūtavijaya remained as ācārya, the prime head of the organisation from 148 to 156 V.N. and only after his demise Ācārya Bhadrabāhu took the reins into his hands. In spite of two ācāryas being nominated, the congregation was run by Ācārya Saṃbhūtavijaya from 148 to 156 V.N. and by Ācārya Bhadrabāhu from 156 to 170 V.N. So it is untenable to presume that the seed of differences was sown during that period.

Digambara tradition

According to the Digambara School, Ācārya Govardhana was considered as the fourth Śrutakevalī. However, there is no noteworthy introduction of him in any of their scriptures and texts.

Ācārya Śrī Bhadrabāhu

Bhadrabāhu was the seventh Pontiff. He was born in a Brahmin family of congregation Gotra in 94 V.N. in Pratiṣṭhanpura. He spent 45 years with the family as a householder and after that in 139 V.N. he was initiated into Nirgrāṃtha Śramaṇa monkhood by Ācārya Yaśobhadra Swāmī, the 5th Pontiff. Serving his great & learned Guru, he concentrated & learnt Dwādaśāṃgī and became a Śrutakevalī. In the year 148 V.N. at the time of demise, Ācārya Yaśobhadra Swāmī appointed him also as the ācārya of the congregation together with Śrī Saṃbhūtavijaya. During the period from 148 to 156 V.N. under the leadership of his elder co-disciple Ācārya Saṃbhūtavijaya, apart from teaching the canonic literature to Śramaṇas, he greatly served the congregation.

After Saṃbhūtavijaya, the sixth Pontiff departed for heaven, he took complete charge of the congregation in 156 V.N. He did a great service to the congregation by composing the four Cheda Sūtras.

Many subsequent ācāryas have believed that this last Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara Ācārya Bhadrabāhu wrote commentaries for the following Sūtras: (1) Ācārāṃga (2) Sūtra kṛatāṃga (3) Āvaśyaka (4) Daśavaikālika (5) Uttarādhayana (6) DaśaŚruta skaṇḍha (7) Kalpa (8) Vyavahāra (9) Surya Prajñapti and (10) Ṛṣibhāṣita, considered as a person with great occult ācārya powers, he is also ascribed with the creation of Upasargahara Stotra, Bhadrabāhu Saṃhitā as well as Vasudeva Caritra consisting of 1,25,000 verses. This will be discussed further wherever the context demands. Ācārya Bhadrabāhu Swāmī imparted the knowledge of ten pūrvas, minus two topics, along with its meaning, and the last four Pūrvas in its original text without meaning to the virtuous Śramaṇa Ārya Shthūlabhadra and thus saved the ancient knowledge from being lost.

Ācārya Bhadrabāhu was a great ascetic, a wonderful religious teacher, a transcendental scholar in all the canons, and a great yogi of his time. For 12 years, he practiced intense yoga in the form of Mahāprāṇa-dhyāna. In Indian history, examples of such extensive yoga Spiritual-exertion are seldom found. From 156 to 170 V.N., for 14 years, during his tenure as the ācārya of the congregation, he travelled far and wide, spreading the message of Lord Mahāvīra and extolled Jainism in all aspects.

The importance of Bhadrabāhu in Jain order

Both the Digambara and Śvetāmbara wings of Jainism accept Bhadrabāhu as the 5th and the last Śrutakevalī. Due to his services to the congregation, and to the sacred scriptural knowledge of Jainism Bhadrabāhu secured a very high place for himself in Jain history. For those desirous of attaining salvation, the scriptures composed by him are like beacon of light for more than 23 centuries till date. For his selfless work to the congregation and his invaluable scriptures, he is considered as one of the torch-bearers in the Order of Lord Mahāvīra, and is greatly cherished and deeply regarded. Many ācāryas & scholars have appreciated his services.

Different opinions about Bhadrabāhu

Last Śrutakevalī, Ācārya Bhadrabāhu occupies a prominent place in Jain history. In some of the religious texts of Digambara sect, it is mentioned that the division into Śvetāmbaras and Digambaras occurred in Jainism during the last phase of Ācārya Bhadrabāhu's life. From this perspective also, his life is of historical importance in Jain religion. There is no doubt a difference of opinion exists between these two sects regarding Bhadrabāhu's life. But his life sketch related scriptures of both the sects reveal an amazing fact that there is no unanimous opinion about his life even among the different authors of Śvetāmbara sect and among the different authors of Digambara sect as well. Studying the texts of both the schools in regard to the life history of Ācārya Bhadrabāhu, an objective reader finds out that probably the events in the lives of two to three different persons bearing the same name might have got mixed up and attributed to and included in the life history of the All canon knowing (Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara) Ācārya Bhadrabāhu. A comparative study of the texts written by the succeeding ācāryas with the texts written by the preceding ācāryas clearly brings out the fact that some of the succeeding ācāryas have included some events in the life sketch of Bhadrabāhu, out of their own imagination.

A comparative study and analysis of the texts is not only helpful for the research scholars and for those who have passion for history, but it also aids in bringing forth the true historical facts into light. With this

intention, whatever data is available in the scriptures of both the schools about Ācārya Bhadrabāhu is given below.

Life before initiation into monkhood

Even though Ācārya Bhadrabāhu's life before he took initiation is discussed in both Śvetāmbara and Digambara texts, they do not corroborate with the facts and the chain of events that occurred in his life. In such a scenario, the only thing one can talk about the household life of Ācārya Bhadrabāhu with certainty is that he was born in 94 V.N. He was a Brahmin of Prācina Gotra and at the age of 44, impressed by the sermons of Ācārya Yaśobhadra was initiated in monkhood.

Śvetāmbara traditional information

Information about the post-initiation life of Bhadrabāhu is available in brief in scriptures like Titthogāliya Painnā, Āvaśyaka Cūrṇi, etc. His life prior to his initiation into monkhood is described in modern texts like Gacchācāra Painnā in the commentary of 82nd stanza, in Prabaṃdha Cintāmaṇi and in Prabaṃdha Kośa written by Rājasekhara Sūri etc. which is as follows: -

According to Titthogāliya Painnā

The following information is available in the ancient scripture of "Titthogāliya painnā" written approximately in the early 5th century of Vikram era:

Jasabhadra, who was gifted with all virtuous attributes, was the disciple of Ācārya Sayyambhava. Śrī Saṃbhūta, who was born in a noble family, was the disciple of Jasabhadra. And then, with wide forehead, long arms and handsome Śrī Bhadrabāhu held the office as the seventh Pontiff. He was also well known as Dharmabhadra. He was a Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara. He practiced yoga for 12 years and composed the Cheda Sūtras.

During that period due to severe drought, central India was struck with famine. With the intention that there should not be any slight violation in the observance of vows, or they should not acquire new Karma, some of the religion-fearing ascetics took the strenuous vow of fast unto death

and through Saṃlekhanā (ritual death by gradual fasting and overcoming all passions) died in Samādhī. The rest of the monks migrated to other places especially coastal areas or places near to the rivers & sea and wandered with detachment. Ācārya Bhadrabāhu went to Nepal and there he engaged himself in Yoga Spiritual-exertion. When the famine was over, the remaining monks returned to Central India.

After the aforesaid incident, the following events are mentioned in Tithogaliya Painna:

At the time of the first discourse and writing of Āgama in Pāṭalīputra, the congregation sent a group of ascetics in the service of Ācārya Bhadrabāhu at Nepal with a prayer to teach the knowledge of 14 pūrvas to the ascetics. At first rejection of the congregation's prayer by Bhadrabāhu and ultimately yielding to the command of the congregation to impart the discourse to Sthūlabhadra etc., Sthūlabhadra's flaunting of knowledge to his sister ascetics like Yakṣa etc. in Pāṭalīputra because of which Bhadrabāhu's firm resolution not to teach the last four Pūrvas; appeal by the congregation to Bhadrabāhu to forgive Sthūlabhadra and its persuasion to instruct the four Pūrvas, Bhadrabāhu's disclosure of the reasons as to why he decided not to teach the last four pūrvas to Sthūlabhadra and eventually Bhadrabāhu giving discourse on the text of the last four pūrvas to Sthūlabhadra etc. All these incidents will be discussed appropriately in the chapter of Sthūlabhadra Swāmī.

Āvaśyaka Cūrṇi

Out of the aforesaid facts mentioned in Tithogāliya Painnā some are discussed in Āvaśyaka Cūrṇi in a very brief manner. In other Śvetāmbara texts-Gachācāra painnā, (Doghaṭṭhivṛti), Prabhaṃdha Cintāmaṇi, Prabhaṃdha Kośa, Guru Paṭṭāvalī and Gaccha Paṭṭāvalī etc., Ācārya Jayabāhu is introduced in the form of two brothers Bhadrabāhu and Varāhamihira - sometimes in similar manner and at times in different manner.

In the scriptures of Digambara sect, information on Ācārya Bhadrabāhu is given on the basis of 'Bhāvasaṃgraha'. The gist is as follows:

Through the stanzas of Bhāvasaṃgraha, Ācārya Devasena made his belief very clear that in Vikram 124 years (594 V.N.) Ācārya

Bhadrabāhu had forewarned the Jain community (congregation) of a 12-year-famine and counseled the monks to leave Ujjain (Avantī) and to migrate to other distant places. Following his advice a ācārya called Śānti and his several disciples migrated to Vallabhīpurī in Sorāṭha Deśa and started living there. There, under calamitous conditions resulted due to the famine, Śānti Ācārya and his disciples were compelled to use blanket, stick, clothes and vessels and started eating at the place of the householders. When the situation returned to normalcy, Ācārya Śānti advised his disciples to revert back to their original blemishless Digambara traditions. But the disciples straightaway rejected his command. So Śāntācārya reprimanded them for they went against the principles propounded by Lord Mahāvīra. Enraged on this, his chief disciple struck him on head with the stick. As a result, Śāntācārya died. After his death, in the Vikram 136 year, (V.N. 606) his disciples composed new scriptures to suit their less-Strict conduct and established a new sect called Śvetāmbara.

Thus in V.N. 606 the first difference of opinion into Śvetāmbara and Digambara began. This is commonly accepted opinion of Digambara sect. Hence the above mentioned opinion of Devasena may be considered as ‘opinion 1’ of Digambara sect. But in other texts of Digambaras like ‘Bḥata Kāthā Kośa’ written by Ācārya Hariṣeṇa and ‘Bhadrabāhu Caritra’ written by Ratna Nandi and Mahāvīra Carita written by Rayadhū, the life of Bhadrabāhu was illustrated in different forms.

From different texts of Digambara School it is apparent that five ācāryas with the same name of Bhadrabāhu existed at different times:

1. The last Śrutikevalī Ācārya Bhadrabāhu and the 8th Pontiff who attained heaven in V.N. 162.
2. 29th Pontiff Ācārya Bhadrabāhu, also known as Yaśobāhu, was well-versed in eight Aṃgas and whose tenure is believed to be from 492 to 515 V.N.
3. First Aṃgadhara Ācārya Bhadrabāhu whose tenure was estimated near 1000 V.N.
4. According to the Paṭṭāvalī of Nandi congregation Balātkāra Gaṇa, Ācārya Bhadrabāhu whose tenure was mentioned as V.N. 609 to 63.

5. Nimittagña (occult Ācārya) Bhadrabāhu who existed after the eclipse of Ekādaśāṃgī. According to the author of Śruta skandha, his time was estimated as the third century of Vikram. Because, his name was mentioned after the eclipse of Ekādaśāṃgī in V.N. 683.

After profound analysis of the facts mentioned above, not only historians but even normal students also will derive the conclusion that these are all based on rumours, legends and folk tales. Actually these facts are not backed up by any substantial evidence. Many evidences to refute the above facts are found in Digambara sect itself. One of the strong and solid proofs among them is the inscription of Pārśvanātha Bastī which was engraved in 522 Śaka era, i.e. Vikram 657 years and 1127 V.N. The following names are mentioned in it: Gautama, Lohārya, Jambū, Viṣṇu, Deva, Aparājita, Govardhana, Bhadrabāhu, Viśākha, Proṣṭhila, Kṛttikāya, Jaya, Nāga, Siddhārtha, Ghṛtiṣeṇa and Buddhila. After citing these 16 ācāryas, the name of the occult Ācārya Bhadrabāhu is mentioned among their succeeding ācāryas, describing that he with his power of cognition intimated the congregation about a future twelve year famine, after which the congregation migrated towards the south.

Confusion due to similarity in name

Just because of the similarity in the names of the mothers of Gaṇadhara Mandita and Mauryaputra, many ancient scholars and Ācārya Hemacandra, the author of Āvaśyaka Cūrṇi etc. described Mauryaputra as the younger brother of Mandita and further stated that even before the birth of Lord Mahāvīra, the tradition of widow remarriage was prevalent in some places in India, among high-caste Brahmin families. Similarly, regarding Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara Ācārya Bhadrabāhu who held the office from 156 to 170 V.N., and who is the author of Cheda Sūtra is confused with Bhadrabāhu who lived during 1032 V.N. (427 Śaka eras) and who was the brother of Varāhamihira. How and when this confusion, which was prevalent from many years, had originated in the minds of scholars cannot be ascertained clearly.

The author of Cheda Sūtra - Śrutakevalī Bhadrabāhu

This fact is now being unanimously accepted by all the scholars that the author of the Cheda Sūtra was indisputably, the Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara

Ācārya Bhadrabāhu only. Though there was no mention of the author anywhere in Cheda Sūtra, at the beginning, middle or at the end, yet on the basis of the writings of the succeeding authors, it is evident from their commentaries that the author of the Cheda Sūtra s is undoubtedly the Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara Ācārya Bhadrabāhu only.

The commentator of Daśa Śruta Skaṇḍha at the beginning of the commentary wrote “I salute the author of Daśa Śruta Skaṇḍha, Kalpa and Vyavahāra Sūtra, who is the last Śrutakevalī Maḥṛṣi Bhadrabāhu of congregation Gotra”.

Both the authors of Niriyukti and Paṃcakalpa Mahābhāṣya, described Ācārya Bhadrabāhu as the author of Daśa Śruta, Kalpa and Vyavahāra Sūtra s. In the Pancakalapa Bhāṣya, he was credited with the writing of even Ācārakalpa i.e. Niśītha Sūtra.

Thus, it is evident that the last Śrutakevalī Ācārya Bhadrabāhu, without any doubt, was the author of the Cheda Sūtras.

Śrutakevalī Bhadrabāhu is not the author of Niriyukti

Now the foremost question arises whether Śrutakevalī Ācārya Bhadrabāhu was the author of the ten Niriyuktis or was it some other ācārya by the same name.

As a matter of fact, the seventh pontiff of the Jain order, Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara Ācārya Bhadrabāhu is different from Naimitik Bhadrabāhu, the author of presently available Niriyuktis. To prove that these two different great personalities are one and the same, few scholars cited the references of the ancient ācāryas. Except for Śāntācārya, the scholars who considered that Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara Ācārya Bhadrabāhu was the author of Niriyuktis did not present any argument in support of their stand. They simply stated that Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara Ācārya Bhadrabāhu Swāmī was the author of Niriyuktis.

Śāntācārya, supporting his standpoint that only Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara Bhadrabāhu was the author of Niriyukti, put forward the argument that Bhadrabāhu in his commentary of Uttarādhyayana mentioned the names and events of great souls of much later period. Based on the above, one should not have misgivings that the commentary on Uttarādhyayana was

not written by Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara Ācārya Bhadrabāhu Swāmī but by somebody else or the examples were included later in the text by someone else, because, Ācārya Bhadrabāhu Swāmī being a Śrutakevalī, could see through the past, present and future and so was able to cite the names of succeeding ācāryas and events related to them.

The following arguments uphold the stance that Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara Bhadrabāhu Swāmī cannot be the author of Niryukti:

1. Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara Bhadrabāhu is not the author of Niryuktis; had he been its writer, he would not have saluted, addressed and praised his disciple Ārya Sthūlabhadra as ‘Lord Sthūlabhadra’.

In the first stanza of Dasa Śruta Skaṇḍha Niryukti, the author offered his salutations to Bhadrabāhu Swāmī in the following verse:

*Vaṃdāmi Bhadrabāhu, pāiṇaṃ carimasagala suyanāṇiṃ|
Suttassa kāragamiṃ dasāsu kappe ya vavahāre || 1||*

In Cheda Sūtra s the Dasa Śruta Skaṇḍha is famous as the first composition of Śrutakevalī Bhadrabāhu and for this reason the author of Niryukti in his commentary on Dasa Śruta Skaṇḍha offered salutations to Śrutakevalī Bhadrabāhu.

In the commentary (Niryukti) to Uttarādhyayana Sūtra, the commentator honoured Ācārya Sthūlabhadra by giving him the Title of Lord and praised him in the following manner:

*Bhagavaṃpi thūlabhaddho, tikkhe caṃkammio na uṇa chinno|
Aggisihāye vuttho cāummase na uṇa daddho ||*

After going through this stanza of Niryukti even a person with an average intelligence will also derive a conclusion that if Śrutakevalī Bhadrabāhu was the author of this text, he would not have compared his disciple with or saluted him as the Lord himself.

2. The second evidence to support the fact that Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara Ācārya Bhadrabāhu Swāmī is not the author of

Niryuktis is that, in the stanzas Nos.762, 763, 773 and 774 of Āvaśyaka Niryukti it is mentioned very clearly that till the tenure of Vajra Swāmī, 584 V.N. (Vikram 114 years), the Kālika Sūtras were not divided into separate expositions (Anuyoga). After Vajra Swāmī, Ārya Rakṣita who was revered by even celestial beings, keeping in view the ensuing odd times, and with the intention to facilitate the weak retentive faculty of his scholarly disciple Durbalikā Puṣyamitrā, had classified the Sūtra s into four types.

According to the Paṭṭāvalīs, Ārya Rakṣita's departure to heaven was dated to 597 V.N. The Sūtras were divided into four expositions between 584 and 597 V.N. So it is neither possible nor wise to hold a view that Śrutakevalī Bhadrabāhu mentioned the division of the Sūtra s, as he went to heaven in 170 V.N. itself.

3. In the stanzas Nos. 764 to 769, 773 to 776 of Āvaśyaka Niryukti, the ācāryas of post Śrutakevalī Bhadrabāhu period - Sthavira Bhadrugupta the teacher of Vajra Swāmī, Ārya Siṃhagiri, Śrī Vajra Swāmī, Ācārya Tosaliṅgputra, Ārya Rakṣita, Phalgu Rakṣita etc. are mentioned with details of connected events, and salutations were offered many times to Vajra Ṛṣi. So Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara Ācārya Bhadrabāhu Swāmī should not be confused with the author of Niryuktis. Because he would not have ever offered humble deferential salutations in this way time and again, to the ācāryas of distant future.
4. The 498th stanza of Piṇḍa Niryukti discusses about Ācārya Pādalipta Sūri; the incidents pertaining to Ārya Samita Sūri - an uncle of Vajra Swāmī, the Śramaṇa initiation of Brahma Dwīpaka ascetics and the origin of the branch of Brahma Dwīpaka are described in 503rd to 505th stanzas. These stanzas describe the ācāryas who came much later than Śrutakevalī Bhadrabāhu and the events that took place during their times.
5. The events that took place in the life of Kālikācārya, who succeeded at a much later time after Śrutakevalī Bhadrabāhu are

described in stanza No. 120 of the commentary on Uttarādhyayana Sūtra.

6. One strong evidence, which proves that the Niryuktis available in the present time were not written by Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara Ācārya Bhadrabāhu is that in the commentary of Uttarādhyayana Sūtra (Akāmamaraniya) the author, clearly mentioned that he was not a Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara.

*Savve yeye dārā maraṇavibhatī vaṇṇiyā kamaso |
Sagalaṇiṇṇe payatthe, jiṇa cauddasapuvvi bhāsanti ||*

Which means that, I have explained in sequence the doors related to death? In fact, only the omniscients and Caturdaśa Pūrvadharas are capable of describing the complete and minute details.

If the author of Niryukti was a Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara, he would not have written the statement that only the omniscient and Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara can describe the objects completely in minor detail. This stanza of Niryukti itself is self evident that the author of Niryukti was not Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara Bhadrabāhu but some other ācārya with the same name.

7. That Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara Ācārya Bhadrabāhu Swāmī is not the author of Niryuktis is proved by the seventh evidence, that in the 778 to 783 stanzas of Āvaśyaka Nivrutti, the details pertaining to the “seven Ninhnavaś” (non-believers) that existed between the 14th year of Lord Mahāvīra’s discourses and upto 584 years after his nirvāṇa, and even the origin of Digambara sect in 609 V.N. are given. If the Niryuktis were written by the Śrutakevalī Bhadrabāhu who went to heaven in 170 V.N., then the events that took place in V.N.Y 609 would not have been mentioned in that at all.
8. Similarly, in stanza nos. 164 to 178 of Uttarādhyayana Sūtra Niryukti (4th chapter) the seven Ninhnavaś (non-believers) and the origin of Digambara sect are described in a more detailed way than that of Āvaśyaka Niryukti.

9. In the stanzas of Daśavaikālika Nirvyukti and Ogha Nirvyukti, both Kālika Saṃbhūtavijaya lika Sūtra and Ogha are incorporated in CaraṇaKaraṇānuyoga. The division of Sūtras into expositions (Anuyogas) had taken place between V.N. 590 and 597. Accordingly after the demise of Śrutakevalī Bhadrabāhu, during the intermediate period of 420 to 427, Ārya Rakṣita splitted them into expositions.
10. Śrutakevalī Bhadrabāhu was not the author of Nirvyuktis. This view can once again be proved by the following example from a stanza in Dasa Śruta Skaṇḍha Nirvyukti:

*Egabhaviye ya badhāue ya abhimuhiya nāma goye ya |
Ete tinni vi desā, davvammi ya poṃḍrīyassa ||46||*

Three instructions of the substance (dravya Niḥṣepa) were analysed in this stanza. According to the commentator of Bṛhatkalpa sūtra there are three different beliefs among these three Sthaviras - Ārya Maṅgū, Ārya Samudra and Ārya Suhasti.

Conclusion

The elaborate analysis that is substantiated with many literary and historical evidences proves that these Nirvyuktis were not written by Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara Bhadrabāhu, but were written by some other ācārya with the same name.

Who is the author of Nirvyuktis?

After thus proving that Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara Bhadrabāhu is not the author of the now available Nirvyuktis, the question that arises next is, who is the author of these Nirvyuktis? Before bringing out an answer, we have to first determine in all how many ācāryas were there with the same name Bhadrabāhu and which period they belonged to.

According to the literary evidences of both the Digambara and Śvetāmbara traditions and inscriptions, it is obvious that there were many persons with the name Bhadrabāhu. According to Digambara sect there were five ācāryas with the name Bhadrabāhu at different times. Whereas,

as per the texts of Śvetāmbara sect, there were only two ācāryas with the name Bhadrabāhu, of which one is Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara Bhadrabāhu and the other, occult Ācārya Bhadrabāhu. The following folk tale about occult Ācārya Bhadrabāhu is quite famous:

*Pāvayaṇī 1, dhammakahī 2, vāī 3, ṇemittio 4, tavassi 5 ya, vijjā
6, siddho 7, ya kai 8, atteva pabhāvagā bhaṇiyā ||1||*

*Ajjarakkha 1, nandiseṇo 2, sirigutta viṇeya 3, bhaddhabāhu 4 ya
Khavaga 5, jjakhavuḍa 6, samiyā 7, divāyaro 8, va ihāharaṇā || 2||*

Among the eight influential, occult Ācārya Bhadrabāhu was considered as the fourth influential ācārya. From the ancient times, there has been a unanimous opinion in the Śvetāmbara sect that the four Cheda Sūtras - Daśa Śruta Skaṇḍha, Kalpasūtra, Vyavahāra Sūtra and Niśītha Sūtra, the Āvaśyaka Niryuktis etc., the ten Niryuktis, Uvasaggahara Stotra and Bhadrabāhu Saṃhitā, these 16 texts in all were written by Bhadrabāhu Swāmī (earlier in this book). Out of these 16 the four Ched Sūtra s were written by Śrutakevalī Bhadrabāhu is already proved with evidences. In such circumstances, the rest 12 texts might have been written by occult Ācārya Bhadrabāhu, because in Śvetāmbara literature, except for these two, there is no mention of a third Bhadrabāhu.

In the ancient scriptures of Śvetāmbara sect, as Bhadrabāhu and Varāhamihira were described as siblings, the information about them is given together. Hence if the period of Varāhamihira is decided it automatically resolves the period of Bhadrabāhu.

In the end of his text ‘Paṃcasiddhāntikā’, Varāhamihira wrote a sloka, and mentioned that it was written in 427 Śaka era. On the basis of this, it can be certain that alongwith Varāhamihira, occult Ācārya Bhadrabāhu must have lived around 427 Śaka era (vikram 562 year and 1032 V.N.).

A profound analysis of these facts makes it clear that the biographies of Śrutakevalī Bhadrabāhu who held the ācārya rank between 156 to 170 V.N. and Bhadrabāhu, the great occult ācārya (Naimittika) who lived around 1032 V.N. were in course of time mixed up with each other and in the process all the events of both their lives, were attributed to the first Bhadrabāhu alone, completely forgetting the second one. The confusion, that Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara Bhadrabāhu was the author of the Niryuktis

and the Saṃhitās cropped up, as the incidents in the lives of both these ācāryas were clubbed together. When once the misconception is clarified, it becomes very clear that Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara Ācārya Bhadrabāhu was the author of Cheda Sūtras and occult Ācārya Bhadrabāhu the second, was the author of Niryuktis, Upasargahara Stotra and Bhadrabāhu Saṃhitā.

Significant political & historical events of Śruta kevali era

Important Dynasties: In 60 V.N., after Udāyī, the King of Śīsunāga dynasty, Nandvardhana ascended the throne of Pāṭalīputra. The kings of Pāṭalīputra, right from Nandivardhana to the last King Dhananda are described as ‘Navanandas’ in both Jain literature and in other literature.

At the commencement of Śrutakevalī era, the first Nanda was already ruling over Pāṭalīputra since four years. The details of the nine Nandas as their respective period of rule as given in the brief introduction of ‘Duṣṣamā Śramaṇa congregation Stotra’ are as follows:

S.No.	Ruler	Reigning Period		Ācārya and the tenure of ācārya
		V.N.	Years	
1.	Nanda First (Nandivardhan)	60 - 71	11	Ārya Jambū 4 years + Ārya Prabhava 7 years
2.	Nand Second	71 - 81	10	Prabhava 4 years + Sayyambhava 6 years
3.	Nand Third	81 - 94	13	Sayyambhava 13 years
4.	Nand Fourth	94 - 119	25	Sayyambhava 4 years + Yaśobhadra 21 years
5.	Nand Fifth	119 - 144	25	Yaśobhadra 25 years
6.	Nand Sixth	144 - 150	6	Yaśobhadra 4 years + Sambhūtavijaya 2 years
7.	Nand Seventh	150 - 156	6	Sambhūtavijaya 6 years
8.	Nand Eighth	156 - 160	4	Śrutakevalī Bhadrabāhu 4 years
9.	Nand Ninth (Dhanananda)	160 - 215	55	Śrutakevalī Bhadrabāhu 10 years + Sthūlabhadra 45 years
		Total	155	

From the above table it is clear those four years before the commencement of Śrutakevalī era, Nandivardhana, the first Nanda started ruling over Pāṭalīputra; and by the end of Śrutakevalī era in 170 V.N., Dhanananda, the ninth Nanda had already completed 10 years of his reign. This implies that 45 years after Śrutakevalī era, the 155 years' regime of the Nandas came to an end and Candragupta Maurya became the emperor of Pāṭalīputra.

From 64 to 170 V.N., stretching to a span of 106 years of the Śrutakevalī era, only the Nanda Kings held power. Nandivardhana, the first Nanda conquered many kingdoms and expanded both his power and the boundaries of his kingdom. During the regime of Nandivardhana the kings of Avantī, Kauśāmbī and Kaliṅga accepted his sovereignty and became the vassal kings of Magadha.

Upakeśa gacha (congregation)

According to Upakeśa gaccha Paṭṭāvalī, etc., Ācārya Ratnaprabha Sūri observed rainy season halt in 70 V.N. in Upakeśa Nagara (Osiā) and made the kṣatriyas of that region into Oswals.

Mañiratna, the Vidyādhara king, came to Bhinnamāla to pay reverences to Ācārya Svayamprabha Sūri of the Pārśva tradition. After listening to Ācārya Svayamprabha Sūri's sermons, he handed over the crown to his son and took initiation. Along with him 500 other vidyādharas also took initiation. After initiation, Ācārya Svayamprabha Sūri renamed him as Ratnaprabha Sūri.

In 52 V.N. monks Ratnaprabha Sūri was made ācārya of the congregation. Wandering from place to place he reached Upakeśa Nagara.

At that time, he had to face many hardships as there was not a single householder in the town who followed Jain Dharma. As they could not receive any alms, he and his disciples did penance (starved) for days together. In spite of these hardships he decided to observe rainy season halt (Caturmāsa) in Upakeśa Nagara along with his 35 disciples. He sent the remaining disciples to Koraṅṭa and other towns and villages asking them to observe Rainy season halt there.

After the completion of Rainy season halt, Ratnaprabha Sūri and his disciples could not get food and water, yet, facing the situation with equanimity, they incessantly kept practicing their Spiritual-exertion. A few days after Rainy season halt, Utpala, the son-in-law of King Trailokyasiṃha of Upakeśa Nagara was bitten by a deadly poisonous snake. As all the efforts to save his life were in vain, he was taken to the burial ground for cremation, believing him to be dead. There, when the 'Carṇodaka' (water touching the feet) of Ācārya Ratnaprabha Sūri was sprinkled on his body, the poison got expelled and thus he was blessed with new life. The grief Stricken royal family and the entire city once again was filled with joy and happiness.

Influenced by this astounding event, the king, ministers, kinsmen and citizens etc., in great numbers, adopted Jainism. As they were all the dwellers of Osiā, these novices of Jainism were termed as 'Oswal' and they became famous with the same name. It is said that Ratnaprabha Sūri made 1, 80,000 non-Jains as Jains and in 84 V.N. left for heavenly abode.

It is said that after Ratnaprabha Sūri followed by consecutive ācāryas like Yakṣadeva Sūri and others, the Upakeśa gaccha ācārya tradition continues in the same way, uninterruptedly.

Disciples of Ācārya Bhadrabāhu

Ācārya Bhadrabāhu had four chief disciples. They are:

- (1) Sthavira Godasa
- (2) Sthavira Agnidatta
- (3) Sthavira Yajñadatta
- (4) Sthavira Somadatta.

All of them belong to Kāśyapa Gotra. Godasa Gaṇa originated from Sthavira Godasa. It consisted of the following four branches:

- (1) Tamilitiyā
- (2) Kodivarisiā
- (3) Panduvadhaniyā (Pondavadhaniya)
- (4) Dasi Khabbadiā

**Era of ten prior canons knowing monks (Daśa Pūrvadhara era)
(V.N. 170 TO 584)**

Pontiffs of ten prior canons knowing monks era

8. Ācārya Sthūlabhadra

Tenure V.N. 170 - 215

9. Ācārya Mahāgiri

TENURE V.N. 215 - 245

10. Ācārya Suhastī

Tenure V.N. 245 - 291

11. Ācārya Guṇa Sūmdara

Tenure V.N. 291- 335

12. Ācārya Śyāma (Kālakācārya I)

Tenure V.N. 335 - 376

13. Ācārya Śāṃḍilya (Skāṃḍila)

Tenure V.N. 376 - 414

14. Ācārya Revatūmitra

Tenure V.N. 414 - 450

15. Ācārya Dharma

Tenure V.N. 450 - 494

16. Ācārya Bhadragupta

Tenure V.N. 494-533

17. Ācārya Śrīgupta

Tenure V.N. 533 - 548

18. Ācārya Ārya Vajra

Tenure V.N. 548 – 584

Era of ten prior canons knowing Monks

With the heavenly abode of Ācārya Bhadrabāhu, the last Caturadaśa Pūrvadhara, in V.N. 170, the Śruta kevalī era ended leading to the beginning of the era of ten prior canons knowing monks (Daśa Pūrvadharas). Śvetāmbara tradition considers that the Daśa Pūrvadhara era stretched from V.N. 170 to 584, a span of 414 years, whereas according to Digambara sect, it is between V.N. 162 to 345, lasting for 183 years.

8. Ārya Sthūlabhadra

Birth	V.N. 116
Initiation	V.N. 146
Ascend to pontiff chair	V.N. 170
Heavenly abode	V.N. 215
Household life duration	30 years
Ordinary monk tenure	24 years
Tenure as pontiff	45 years
Total longevity	99 years

After Ācārya Bhadrabāhu, the last Śrutakevalī, Ācārya Ārya Sthūlabhadra became the eighth pontiff. The name of Ārya Sthūlabhadra, who won over Kāmadeva, the god of love and sensual pleasures, is taken first among the rare human beings.

Inspired by the unique victory of Ārya Sthūlabhadra on sensual pleasures, many poets have composed poems on his life history in many languages. The life of Ārya Sthūlabhadra sets a unique example of a combination of extremes - romance and detachment. It is impossible for a person staying in a place that brings disgrace and suspicion on one's character, to come out immaculately. But Ārya Sthūlabhadra, even after living continuously for four months in the house of Kośa, the most beautiful concubine of that time, stayed completely platonic and proved that the impossible can be made possible.

Birth and Parents

Ācārya Sthūlabhadra was born in V.N. 116 in an orthodox Brahmin family that staunchly believed in Jain Dharma and was respected by

kings. After the demise of Udāyī, the Emperor of Magadha, the ancestor of this family, “Kalpaka” was appointed the Prime Minister of the Magadha kingdom by the first Nanda. Since then, i.e. from the tenure of the first Nanda until the ninth Nanda, the head of the same Brahmin family always graced the post of the Prime Minister. The name of the Prime Minister of the ninth Nanda was Śakaṭāra or Śakadāla. Ārya Sthūlabhadra was the son of this Brahmin Śakadāla of Gautama lineage. The name of Sthūlabhadra’s mother was Lakṣmī Devī.

The Prime Minister Śakadāla was a high standing politician of his times, an educationist and an efficient administrator. During Śakadāla’s tenure as the Prime Minister, the boundaries of Magadha kingdom grew remarkably and the revenues of the treasury increased tremendously.

Thus Sthūlabhadra belonged to such a prominent ministerial family. Sthūlabhadra’s younger brother was Śrīyaka. Yakṣa, Yakṣadinnā, Bhūtā, Bhūtadinnā, Saiṇā, Maiṇā and Raiṇā were their seven sisters. The revered minister Śakaṭāra made necessary arrangements for the education of his two sons and seven daughters and made them proficient in all branches of learning.

Life with Kośa

Even after becoming an outstanding scholar, the young Sthūlabhadra was unaware of sensual pleasures. To provide the detached Sthūlabhadra practical training and to draw him towards household life, the Minister Śakaṭāra sent him to a shrewd concubine named Kośā. Within a few days of their acquaintance, both the teacher Kośā and the student Sthūlabhadra were so captivated by each others’ attributes, that even a moment’s absence from one another made them feel lifeless. This mutual attraction eventually reached to such an extent that for about 12 years they were so extremely fond of each other, that they had never seen any face other than that of their servants.

Śrīyaka would accompany his father to the court of the ninth Nanda and help him in the royal duties.

Contention of Vararuchi

Under the direction of the intelligent and capable Śakaṭāra, Nanda’s reign was running smooth, just like how an automatic machine moves on

its own. Be it small or big, the way Śakaṭāra handled the stately issues, reflected his vibrant personality.

Seeing the impressive splendor of Śakaṭāra, a scholar named Vararuchi started feeling jealous of him. Gradually, Vararuchi became a strong opponent of Śakaṭāra. With the intention of creating an image for himself in the hearts of the people and the king, through his profound learning, Vararuchi recited novel poems in praise of the king every day. By doing so, he thought of gaining prestige and amassing wealth. But as Śakaṭāra did not utter even one word in praise of Vararuchi, Nanda too neither appreciated his poetry nor offered any gifts. Consequently, Vararuchi understood the situation. After a lot of deliberation, he decided to impress Lakṣmī Devī, the literary expert wife of Śakaṭāra, with his poetry. With the elegance of his poetic words, Vararuchi pleased Lakṣmī Devī and appealed her to recommend Minister Śakaṭāra for compliments for his poetry in Nanda's court. Subsequently Lakṣmī Devī requested her husband to praise Vararuchi's poetry in the court and see that he gets some financial benefit. As insisted by his learned wife, the next day Śakaṭāra praised the poetry of Vararuchi in the court. As a result, Nanda was pleased and presented Vararuchi 108 gold coins in appreciation of his poetry.

Everyday Vararuchi used to recite his novel poems in the court of Nanda and would in return immediately get 108 gold coins from the treasury of the Magadha King Nanda. This continued for a long time.

Prime Minister Śakaṭāra felt the need to curtail the expense of such a large sum from the coffers every day. So one day he told Nanda that the poems recited by Vararuchi were not his original compositions, instead he was presenting the works of some other poets. He further added that those poems can even be recited by his seven daughters Yakṣā, Yakṣadinnā etc. and the same can be demonstrated the next morning itself.

King Nanda was quite surprised at this. The next morning the seven daughters of Minister Śakaṭāra were made to sit behind a curtain in the court. Vararuchi recited 108 new verses in the court in praise of Mahārāja Nanda. The entire court was surprised when Yakṣā, the eldest daughter of Minister Śakaṭāra, recited all the 108 verses that were recited by Vararuchi. Then, one after the other, Yakṣadinnā, Bhūtā, Bhūtadinnā,

Saiṇā, Maiṇā and Raiṇā, got up and recited all the verses of the poem in front of the king. In fact, his seven daughters were eka pāṭhī (remembering any prose or poetry of any length by just listening once), dwīpāṭhī (ability to remember by listening twice), tripāṭhī, Catuspāṭhī, pañcapāṭhī, ṣaḍpāṭhī and saptapāṭhī respectively. The entire court was in bewilderment. All the eyes were looking at Vararuchi in hatred. The reputation of all his scholarly knowledge was reduced to rubble within minutes. Vararuchi felt humiliated and ashamed.

With just one ploy of the Minister, Vararuchi lost all his reputation. A fire of vengeance burst in the heart of Vararuchi. By fair means or foul, he decided to restore his lost honour by taking revenge on Śakaṭāra. After much deliberation, he came up with a scheme.

The Mysterious spectacle

After making necessary arrangements to successfully accomplish his mission of taking revenge on Śakaṭāra, Vararuchi, through his disciples proclaimed to the people of Pāṭalīputra, that in the early hours of a specific day, he would recite his self-composed verses in praise of River Gaṃgā and that Gaṃgā, pleased, would present him with 108 gold coins with her own hands. On that particular day, much before sunrise, a large number of people gathered on the banks of the Gaṃgā. Vararuchi took bath in the Gaṃgā and in a high tone invoked her. By sunrise, thousands of men and women saw that suddenly from the currents of the Gaṃgā, a hand of a woman came up, gave a bag in the hands of Vararuchi and disappeared back into the Gaṃgā. When he opened the bag in the presence of all and counted the gold coins, they were exactly 108 in number. The applause of the people there echoed in the skies. The word spread all over, like thunder. Within few days the glory of Vararuchi spread far and wide.

One day king Nanda expressed his desire to Śakaṭāra that he too would like to see the miracle with his own eyes.

The Prime Minister Śakaṭāra entrusted the work of finding the factual truth to one of the most efficient and skilled secret emissary. Through him Śakaṭāra came to know that Vararuchi goes to the Gaṃgā at night and places the bag of gold coins in a contrivance hidden in the river and

the next day he presses the contrivance with his feet and obtains the bag, thus fooling the common people.

After knowing this, the next night Śakaṭāra got the bag of gold coins that Vararuchi kept, removed by his spy.

The next day before sunrise itself, a large crowd gathered near the banks of the river Gaṃga. At the appropriate time, Mahārāja Nanda, the king of Magadha along with his Prime Minister and other officials reached the river bank. Vararuchi took bath in the river and then started invoking Gaṃgā. After the invocation, as usual Vararuchi pressed the contrivance with his foot. All of a sudden a hand came out of the waves of Gaṃgā, but it was totally empty. There was no bag of gold coins. Vararuchi dived into the river and searched for the bag of gold coins in the water, but in vain. He stood silently with his head bent.

“Here is your bag of 108 gold coins, which you have deposited last night in the river.” Saying these words, the Prime Minister Śakaṭāra kept the bag of gold coins in Vararuchi’s hand. Vararuchi experienced much more pain than death itself, at the sight of the abhorrence and the repulsion in the eyes of the people. He was so abashed that his deception was caught that he did not step out of his house for several days. Holding Prime Minister Śakaṭāra responsible for his mass insult, Vararuchi spent days and nights trying to find some weakness of Śakaṭāra to take revenge on him.

One day, through a maid of Śakaṭāra, Vararuchi came to know that Prime Minister Śakaṭāra, on the eve of his son Śrīyaka’s marriage, had ordered beautiful and expensive insignia like umbrellas, etc and custom-built, state-of-the-art destroyer weapons to offer as a gift to Mahārāja Nanda.

Conspiracy of Vararuchi against Śakaṭāra

To take his revenge on Śakaṭāra, Vararuchi considered the information he got as the most appropriate one to plan a future conspiracy. He wrote a verse, the summary of which is as follows: “Mahārāja Nanda doesn’t know what Prime Minister Śakaṭāra wants to do. After killing Nanda Śakaṭāra wants to make his son Śrīyaka, one day the king of Magadha.”

He mobilised a group of young boys (in the age group 6 to 10) by offering sweetmeats, etc. and made them by-heart the above-mentioned

śloka. He then asked them to recite it again and again in high tones in all the streets, markets, crosses, play grounds and gardens, etc. Thus the secretive sloka was echoing at all the public places of Pāṭalīputra. Resonating from all four sides, the sloka reached king Nanda. Nanda was shocked; never the less, he was totally confident that Śakaṭāra, under any circumstances, would not do such a heinous deed. However, to find out the truth, he sent a reliable person to find out in detail the activities at the minister's residence. The person reached the residence of Śakaṭāra without any delay. At that very time, incidentally, the umbrella, sword, and the newly made arms & ammonktious which were brought to be gifted to Nanda, were being kept in the newly built artillery room. The confidant of Nanda immediately rushed back and narrated in detail whatever he had seen there. Nanda then waited for Śakaṭāra.

At the fixed time, Śakaṭāra appeared in front of Nanda and bowed to him. In spite of much effort, Nanda could not control his anger; he looked at Śakaṭāra wrathfully and turned his face away from him.

Saving the family by sacrificing self

Nanda's knit eyebrows and angry looks were a tell tale sign to Śakaṭāra that some treacherous conspiracy against him had succeeded. He at once returned home and said to Śrīyaka, "Son! Someone had plotted a conspiracy against me and convinced King Nanda that I am no longer loyal to him. Under these circumstances, it is possible that our entire family may be wiped out at any time. Hence, in order to save our family, I order you to follow my instructions. When I bend my head with respect and bow in front of Nanda, without any second thoughts, you with your sword cut my head, separating it from the body and displaying your complete loyalty towards the King, say: 'The disloyal, even if he is our father, has to be slain immediately,'. This is the only way to save our family, else total destruction is inevitable".

As Śrīyaka was not prepared to take up this heinous act, Śakaṭāra giving solace said, "During the impending crisis, if you are unwilling to follow my instructions, it will be helping the enemies to succeed in their motives. When bowing before the king, I shall put aconite poison in my mouth. In such a situation even if you sever my head, you will not be affected by the sin of killing your father. Hence before Nanda slaughters

our entire family, you have to cut my head to save our family. Honour my word and save our dynasty”.

Śakaṭāra, along with his son Śrīyaka went to the palace, stood in front of Nanda and bent his head in salutation. Śrīyaka immediately took off the sword and in a single stroke, cut off the head of Śakaṭāra. This unfortunate event happened in V.N. 146.

Nanda became impetuous and in a surprised tone asked, “Son! Śrīyaka! What have you done?”

In a grave tone, Śrīyaka said, “Lord! When you have ascertained that the Prime Minister is a traitor, I have discharged my duty as a servant”.

Nanda became speechless and was looking intently at Śrīyaka. Later he performed the final rites of his late Prime Minister amid royal honours. Nanda then requested Śrīyaka to take charge as the Prime Minister of the Magadha kingdom.

Śrīyaka, with humility said, “O king of Magadha! My elder brother Sthūlabhadra is as competent as my father. Hence I request you to offer him the post of Prime Minister. From the past 12 years he has been staying at the residence of the concubine, Koṣā.

The Post of Prime Minister

As asked by Śrīyaka, King Nanda sent his senior officials and invited Sthūlabhadra with due honour to the palace and requested him to accept the post of Prime Minister. To arrive at a decision, Sthūlabhadra sat in the Aśoka Garden of the Palace and started contemplating. Even though Sthūlabhadra was all the while staying with the concubine Koṣā and spending his life enjoying the physical pleasures, his prudent inner mind was completely alert. Sthūlabhadra thought, “The royal authority and grandeur unnecessarily pushed my godly father towards premature death; taking up the same authority and powerful post of a Prime Minister cannot give me happiness. It is quite possible that one day I too may end up in the same situation. Under such uncertain situation, it is better that I choose that wealth and power which will keep me happy forever and which is everlasting.

The deep thinking made Sthūlabhadra despise all the worldly pleasures, the mundane affairs and bondages. The understanding of this reality changed the direction of the life of Sthūlabhadra. He thought to himself, “The post of a Prime Minister is undoubtedly a high position, but this is ultimately slavery, servility and dependence. A bonded person cannot experience happiness even in his dreams. A slave will never get even a moment to think of his own pain or pleasure, as he will always be completely engrossed in the thoughts of his service to the king, kingdom and the people. In spite of mentally and physically serving the king and his kingdom, with dedication and without sparing any pains, yet there is constant fear of confiscation and of death. At the expense of so much energy, what you get in return is equal to a cipher. Therefore, the wise instead of wasting their energy just for the benefit of the king, should make good use of it for the beneficence and purification of one’s soul.”

Thinking so, Sthūlabhadra soon came to a decision. He made up his mind to relinquish all the empty pleasures of the world and work towards strengthening his own soul. Immediately he plucked out five handfuls of hair from his head, made a whiskbroom from the threads of his bejeweled blanket and in the robes of a monk, went to the court and stood in front of King Nanda and said, “O King! After deep thought, I have decided that it is not the position of the Prime Minister which increases worldly delusions that I need, instead, what I need is a harmless straw mat for renunciation. I want to practice detachment and not attachment.”

After conveying the above, Sthūlabhadra headed out of the king’s palace. The entire royal council including King Nanda was stunned at the unexpected decision of Sthūlabhadra.

Initiation of Sthūlabhadra

Sthūlabhadra instantaneously forsook the palatial mansion, the divinely beautiful Koṣā and all the opulence, just like how a snake sheds off its skin. He dissociated himself from the body, wealth and kinsmen and with total inclination towards renunciation, reached the outskirts of the city, where Ārya Saṃbhūtavijaya was seated, bowed to him with respect and took refuge at his feet and in V.N. 146, he took the Śramaṇa initiation.

Apart from strictly following all the vows of an ascetic, he served his Guru with humility and also served the older Śramaṇas, and through penance burning his Karma, Monk Sthūlabhadra studied the scriptures with great enthusiasm and concentration from his Guru Saṃbhūtavijaya.

When Sthūlabhadra left the palace, Nanda appointed Śrīyaka as the Prime Minister of Magadha. The skilled politician Śrīyaka, like his father Śakaṭāra, administrating wisely started contributing for the all-round development of the kingdom. The King Nanda respected the young Prime Minister just as he respected the late Prime Minister Śakaṭāra.

The toughest self-imposed challenge of Sthūlabhadra

On the other hand, Sthūlabhadra, living in the close proximity of his revered Guru and persistently working hard day and night, learnt and mastered the entire Ekādaśāṃgī (eleven limbs of canons).

As monsoon season set in, three other disciples of Saṃbhūtavijaya approached him and expressed their desire to take up formidable vows. All the four disciple disciples wanted to observe the four months long fast. Besides the first disciple wanted to meditate near the mouth of the lion's lair the second one wanted to meditate in a standing posture near the hole of a snake with poison in his sight, and the third disciple wanted to meditate sitting on the wall of a well.

When Ārya Saṃbhūtavijaya listened to the tough vows that the disciples intended to take up, he contemplated and felt that they are capable of accomplishing them and so he gave them, his consent.

At that juncture, Ārya Sthūlabhadra, bowing at the feet of his Guru with folded hands in reverence, expressed his desire that he would want to stay for four months in the picture chamber of the courtesan Kośā amidst many attractive murals that provoke the senses, eat rich and delicious six-course meal and still continue his asceticism without any diversion and without violating the Strict principles of celibacy. Using his powers of cognition Ārya Saṃbhūtavijaya comprehended that Sthūlabhadra would be successful in this challenging vow. Hence Ārya Saṃbhūtavijaya granted him the permission to stay in the picture chamber of Kośā.

Taking the permission of their Guru, the four disciples walked towards their respective desired and chosen places. The first three disciples started their fasting and meditation at the places they selected.

Ārya Sthūlabhadra also arrived at Kośā's mansion. Being informed of the arrival of Sthūlabhadra with whom she had been associated for a long time, and whom she treasured more than her own life, Kośā came running to him with her hands folded in welcome. She, in her mind thought that as Sthūlabhadra's disposition is very delicate by birth, so he has come back forever, as he is oppressed by the burden of his spiritual vows. She smiled at him and welcomed him with sweet words.

Ārya Sthūlabhadra said, "Oh female-votary! Permit me stay in your picture chamber for four months."

Kośā overwhelmed with joy said, "Lord! The picture chamber is entirely at your service. Please stay in it and make my life worthwhile."

Ārya Sthūlabhadra who had full confidence in himself entered the chamber and sat down. Kośā offered the tastiest six-course meal (Madhukari) to him during his customary alms begging. After retiring from the meal, Kośā dressed in the most attractive manner, presented she before him, bowed to him and said in a beguiling tone, "O! Treasure of my life! Please shower your nectar-like loving smiles at your beloved one, who is burning in fire of your passion and rejuvenate her".

Monk Sthūlabhadra remained completely dispassionate and silent.

Realising that her entreaty to fulfil her sensual desire had no effect on Sthūlabhadra, her hurt feminine pride rose to its full. Kośā, using all the wiles of a woman on Sthūlabhadra, with her infallible glances, various charming and alluring gestures, agonising screams which touch the heart, by becoming unconscious, weeping, thus repeatedly performing many tricks and ploys, tried to attract him towards her. All of the charming and provocative gestures of Kośā went waste and did not even get her at least a single side-glance of the strong-willed ascetic Sthūlabhadra. The more she tried to distract and bring him out of his holy path and seduce him with her actions and gestures, the more he progressed in his concentration and in achieving perfection in his meditation. She served him delicious food to eat and incited him to enjoy the sexual pleasures,

everyday, by adopting new methods and techniques to somehow attract him towards her. However, Ascetic Sthūlabhadra did not swerve even a little from his holy path and with total control over the senses continuously advanced on the path of spiritual attainment. Ultimately, when the four months were closing in, Kośā astonished by Ārya Sthūlabhadra's remarkable ability to control his senses, conceding her defeat, ceased all efforts to attract him. She knelt before his feet and reproached herself and begged for forgiveness.

Thereupon, listening to Ārya Sthūlabhadra's discourse, Kośā expressed her deep faith in the religion and she took initiation into Female-votary-Dharma from him and served him with a pious heart.

After four months, the first three disciples blemishlessly accomplishing their vows came back to their Guru. Ācārya Saṃbhūtavijaya rose a little from his seat and welcoming them said, "Welcome to you, "O Monks who performed arduous penance!"

When Ācārya Saṃbhūtavijaya saw Ārya Sthūlabhadra returning from the mansion of Kośā, the courtesan; he at once got up from his seat and greeted him saying, "O noble monk who attained the unattainable! Welcome to you".

The three disciples were jealous of Sthūlabhadra as he was given a greater welcome and more honour. The envious disciples talked among themselves, "Ārya Sthūlabhadra is the son of a minister, so our prejudiced Guru addressed him as "*Duṣkaraduṣkarakārī*" (one who attained the unattainable) and showed him more respect. If by staying in a luxurious mansion and relishing six-course meals, one acquires such a title, then let us in the next monsoon season, definitely do the same and achieve the same title".

Thereafter, Ācārya Saṃbhūtavijaya with his disciples wandered other places. For eight months he visited many lands and uplifted many souls. Soon the monsoon season approached once again.

Competition against Sthūlabhadra

The disciple, who meditated near the lion's cave, for four months in the previous monsoon season, approached the Guru and with all humility,

expressed his desire and begged for permission to stay in the courtesan Kośā's picture chamber, eating delicious meal, everyday for four months. It was not hidden from Ācārya Saṃbhūtavijaya that the disciple was taking this vow out of jealousy towards Sthūlabhadra. After using his powers of cognition, he said, "Son! You abandon the very thought of performing such extremely difficult vow. Only Sthūlabhadra has the strong will power to fulfil such a vow".

The disciple was adamant. "O Guru! This is not a tough vow for me, moreover it is very easy. I will definitely take up this vow".

Ācārya Saṃbhūtavijaya again explained to him not to have such false courage, but blinded by envy, the disciple did not heed his advice and refuting the advice of his Guru, the disciple walked towards the courtesan's mansion.

When Kośā saw the disciple arrive at her mansion, she at once understood that he had come to spend the four months there, as he had bred jealousy against Ārya Sthūlabhadra. Thinking that he should not get trapped in these mundane worldly affairs, effort to protect him was necessary. With this thought in mind, Kośā bowed to him and asked, "O monk! Of what service can I be to you?"

"O gentle one! I too like Ārya Sthūlabhadra want to stay in your picture chamber for four months. So permit me to do the same".

Kośā's teaching a lesson to the disciple

Kośā gave him the permission to stay in the picture chamber and served him with the tasty meal. In the afternoon, in order to test the monk, she dressed herself in the most attractive and seductive attire and entered the picture chamber. Kośā did not even have to make any attempts at seducing the monk. Just one glance of the gorgeously dressed nymph-like beauty, made the monk desperate, and he like an accustomed beggar, started beseeching her. After a stomach full of six course meal, just the sight of a beautiful woman made him blind with lust.

In order to protect the monk from falling into a fathomless, blind well of lust, she demanded money from him. "Expecting money from a person

like me is like trying to extract oil from sand. Take pity on me and fulfil my desire”, said the monk.

Intelligent Kośā said in a decisive tone, “O great soul! A monk may break his vow, but a courtesan never breaks her traditional rules. If you still want to fulfil your desire, I can give you a solution. The King of Nepal Kṣītipāla used to donate bejewelled blankets to novice monk. Go there and get the blanket for me”.

Blinded by lust, the monk at once proceeded to Nepal. He did not even think for a moment that Mokṣa are prohibited to wander during the monsoon season. To quench the thirst of his burning lust, he crossed thick forests inhabited by wild animals and insurmountable mountains and eventually reached Nepal. There he obtained the bejewelled blanket from the king. He folded it and hid it in a hollow bamboo stick. Pleased with his achievement, he started his return journey to Pāṭalīputra.

The monk presented himself with greedy eyes, expressing his hankering, gave her the blanket which he obtained after great struggle. Kośā wiped her feet with the blanket and threw it in the gutter.

Seeing the fate of the blanket which he acquired with unceasing efforts and facing many obstacles, he expressed in a sad and surprised tone, “O dove-eyed one! You have thrown this extremely precious blanket into the filthy gutter; you are a very foolish woman”.

Kośā immediately replied, “O monk! Like an imbecile, you are worrying about the blanket but you are least bothered about your conduct – jewel which you are willing to ruin by falling into the filthiest deep mire of worldly pleasures”.

When the monk listened to Kośā’s reprimanding moral preaching, the shadow of lust that had engulfed his mind immediately disappeared. He felt remorse at his degeneration. He expressed his gratitude to Kośā for her timely guidance and for saving him from sinking into the ocean of material existence.

Thereafter, the monk left the house of Kośā & stood in front of Ācārya Saṃbhūtavijaya. Truthfully narrating the tale of his decline, he asked for

his forgiveness. In addition, to eradicate the impurities he accumulated; he received the appropriate punishment and purified himself.

The three disciples in unison praised Ārya Sthūlabhadra and declared that he is eligible to be decorated with the great title of “*Duṣkaraduṣkarakāraka*” (accomplishing the unattainable).

Aversion of Śrīyaka

The seven daughters of Śakadāla, Yakṣā, Yakṣadinnā, Bhūtā, Bhūtadinnā, Sainā, Mainā and Rainā, just like their brother Sthūlabhadra, after the demise of their father, became disinclined towards the world, and they too took initiation. For his immoral conduct, Varuruchi also had to end his life in a befitting manner, by drinking molten tin. Seeing such strange outcome of one’s own deeds, Śrīyaka also spurned the world. After serving as a Prime Minister of Magadha for seven years, he too took initiation as a Jain monk in 153 V.N., from Ācārya Saṃbhūtavijaya.

A terrible long-lasting famine occurred during the combined tenure of Ācārya Saṃbhūtavijaya and Ācārya Bhadrabāhu. Ācārya Saṃbhūtavijaya passed away in V.N. 156, during the period of the dreadful famine. After him, Ācārya Bhadrabāhu took the reins of the congregation into his hands completely. At the command of Ācārya Bhadrabāhu, Ācārya Sthūlabhadra travelled many places propagating the religion.

The first discourse and writing of canonical literature in Pāṭalīputra V.N.160

Prior to Ācārya Saṃbhūtavijaya’s departure to heaven in 156 V.N., due to severe drought, Central India was struck with dreadful famine. In order to save themselves from its severe impact most of the monks, abandoning the famine-affected areas, migrated to far off places. Ācārya Bhadrabāhu along with some monks went to Nepal. Because of the scarcity of food during the famine, fearing any violation in the observance of vows of self-restraint, many spiritually inclined monks took the vow of fast unto death and attained Samādhi and made their life meaningful.

When the famine was over, and the conditions returned to normalcy, all monks who migrated to different places, returned to Pāṭalīputra. Prolonged living without enough food and water due to the terrible long famine and facing many death-like difficulties, the monks were unable to practice recitation of Āgamas regularly. As a result, much of the canonical texts were forgotten. The need for the recitation and rememorisation / writing of sacred texts was felt. For this purpose, the aged and the scholarly monks, the Sthaviras who were well-versed in Ekādaśāṅgī, were to congregate at a common place and recite all the canonical literature and protect the Dwādaśāṅgī from falling into oblivion.

After taking such a decision, the first recitation of Āgamika scriptures took place at Pāṭalīputra in 160 V.N. All the monks present there participated in it. Pontiff Bhadrabāhu was in Nepal at that time, practicing *Mahāprāṇa* meditation. Hence the recitation was carried out under the auspices of Sthūlabhadra, the disciple of the late Ācārya Saṃbhūtavijaya.

The recitation of each of the twelve canons of Dwādaśāṅgī was carried out in series, one by one in a proper manner; and with the extreme and mutual cooperation of the Śramaṇas, the forgotten texts were recollected in their original form. All the monks memorised the forgotten texts by listening to the same being recited over and over again by the monks who had retained and recollected them. Thus, the farsightedness, mutual cooperation and collective exchange of the recalled texts, saved Ekādaśāṅgī from going into oblivion.

A Major Problem

After the completion of the recitation of Ekādaśāṅgī, the monks were confronted with a difficult problem regarding the profession of the canonical knowledge. None of the monks attending the congregation had the knowledge of Dṛṣṭivāda. The congregation was worried that without Dṛṣṭivāda, how can the essence of the preachings of Lord Mahāvīra be adopted. Some of the monks came out with a suggestion that only Ācārya Bhadrabāhu was proficient in the fourteen Pūrvas, and that he was engaged in *Mahāprāṇa* meditation in Nepal. He alone could recite

the entire fourteen Pūrvas to the monks and thus save Dṛṣṭivādaī from going into oblivion.

Finally, the congregation decided to send a large group of monks to Bhadrabāhu in Nepal on behalf of the congregation and request him to teach the fourteen Pūrvas and save the ocean of knowledge. Accordingly, under the leadership and guidance of some Sthaviras, a large group of monks went to Bhadrabāhu in Nepal. After reaching there, bowing in veneration, the leader of the Sthaviras appealed, “Omniscient-like Lord! After the recitation of Ekādaśaṅgī by the congregation of monks in Pāṭalīputra, they sent this message to you that today, in the Śramaṇa congregation, you are the last authority on the fourteen Pūrvas; other than you there is none else to teach the fourteen Pūrvas. So to save the knowledge, please impart the knowledge of the fourteen Pūrvas to the eligible monks”.

Perspective of Āvaśyakacūrṇi and Dharma Sāgara Tapagaccha Paṭṭāvalī

From among the congregation in Pāṭalīputra, a few monks were sent to Nepal to bring Bhadrabāhu. However as he was engaged in the Mahāprāṇa meditation, he declined to obey the congregation. The congregation again despatched the second group of Mokṣa. They asked Bhadrabāhu, “What penalty one has to pay if he disobeys the congregation?” Bhadrabāhu replied, “Excommunication”. But as I already started observing Yoga Spiritual-exertion of Mahāprāṇa Meditation, the congregation should take mercy upon me and send intelligent and able monks here, so that I can teach them seven lessons per day”. Thereupon, the congregation sent Sthūlabhadra etc., 500 other monks to learn the fourteen Pūrvas from Bhadrabāhu. This narration is found in a fore mentioned literature.

The Mentions in Titthogālī

Listening to the message of Śramaṇa congregation from the Śramaṇas who arrived there, Ācārya Bhadrabāhu said, “The lessons of the Pūrvas are very complicated. Sufficient time is required to teach them. Since I am at the fag end of my life, because of which there is lack of time, I regret for my incapability to teach the knowledge of Pūrvas to the

Śramaṇas. I am left with very short time in my life. I am engaged in self-realisation. Under these circumstances, what spiritual purpose does it serve to me if I teach these texts?”

As Ācārya Bhadrabāhu refuted the command of the congregation, the Śramaṇas got upset and said emotionally, “O eminent ācārya! With regrets we are forced to pose the question, what penalty one pays if he disobeys the congregation’s command?”

Ācārya Bhadrabāhu solemnly answered, “According to the rules of Jain Order, the one who gives such a reply should be considered as a heretic in the canonical texts and should be ex - communicated from the congregation”.

The leader of the congregation said, “You are the highest leader of the congregation. Despite the awareness of the twelve rules of “Saṃbhoga Viccheda” (excommunication from the congregation) how are you declining to teach the Pūrvas?”

Ācārya Bhadrabāhu said in a decisive tone, “I am willing to teach the Pūrvas on one condition. When I am practicing Mahāprāṇa meditation, for spiritual- exertion, I will not talk with anyone and nobody should talk to me. After the completion of my meditation, every day, I will teach seven recitals of Pūrvas to the monks: one recital after returning from seeking alms, three recitals in the rest of the day time (kālavēlās) and three recitals after the evening pratikramaṇa. Thus there will not be any hindrance even in my meditation and at the same time, the command of the congregation will also be fulfilled”.

The leaders of the group of monks accepted the condition of Ācārya Bhadrabāhu. Ācārya Bhadrabāhu, keeping his word, started teaching the Pūrvas to the 500 brilliant Śramaṇas including Ārya Sthūlabhadra. Because of the complicated and obscure nature of the subject and because of the slowness in the progress of the recitals, gradually 499 monks feeling tired and frustrated stopped learning & went back to Pāṭalīputra. But Ārya Sthūlabhadra kept at his study of Pūrvas with courage, concentration and dedication. Thus of the remaining period of the twelve years of his Mahāprāṇa meditation, Bhadrabāhu taught the

Pūrvas to Sthūlabhadra continuously for eight years; and Sthūlabhadra became well-versed in eight Pūrvas.

One day Sthūlabhadra asked Ācārya Bhadrabāhu, “Lord! How much more remains for me to learn?”

Ācārya Bhadrabāhu replied, “O humble son! Whatever you have learnt so far is equivalent to one drop of the unfathomable Sindhu Ocean. You are still left with learning the entire Sindhu Ocean, except for this one drop.”

Catching a glimpse of slight disappointment on the face of his disciple, Ācārya Bhadrabāhu said in an encouraging tone, “Do not be disappointed, O amiable One! I will teach the remaining Pūrvas very fast.”

By the time Ācārya Bhadrabāhu finished his Mahāprāṇa Dhyān, he had taught Sthūlabhadra two topics less of the ten Pūrvas and with his congregation from Nepal left for Pāṭalīputra. There he preached dharma to a huge audience in a garden outside the city.

Sthūlabhadra’s ascetic sisters, Yakṣā and the six others also came to the garden to pay homage to Ācārya Bhadrabāhu, Ārya Sthūlabhadra and other monks. After bowing to Ācārya Bhadrabāhu, Female-monk Yakṣā asked, “Lord! Where is our eldest brother, Sthūlabhadra?”

The ācārya answered “Ārya Sthūlabhadra might be studying in the dilapidated temple (caitya) nearby.”

Yakṣā along with her six sisters left towards the said temple. Sthūlabhadra, from a distance, saw them approaching and wanted to show them a miracle from his learning. Instantly, using the power of his knowledge, he turned himself into a huge and beautiful lion. After reaching the decrepit temple, the Female monks saw the ferocious lion sitting there and their eldest brother was not visible anywhere, they fled to their teacher and told him, “O Lord! There is a lion sitting at the temple and Ārya Sthūlabhadra is nowhere to be seen. We are worried if our astute Śramaṇa has been devoured by the lion.”

Using his knowledge the ācārya instantly understood what had happened. Assuring them, the ācārya said, “Children! Return to the temple and now see; you will find your brother sitting there and not the lion. In fact, the lion is none other than your brother”.

The sisters once again went to the temple and were overjoyed to see their brother in place of the lion. They paid humble deferential salutations and inquisitively asked, “Eldest brother! Just a few seconds back there was a lion seated at where you are sitting now. Where has that lion gone?”

The amused Ārya Sthūlabhadra replied with a smile, “There was no lion here. That was just me, testing my knowledge”

The seven lady ascetics were extremely happy knowing that their eldest brother was a treasure house of extraordinary knowledge & miracles.

Later, Female monk Yakṣā related to Ārya Sthūlabhadra, the sad incident of their younger brother-monk Śrīyaka whom she encouraged to initially observe Ekāsana (taking food only once in a day) and then undertake complete fasting, as a result of which he passed away.

After the departure of the female-monks, when it was the time for learning, Ārya Sthūlabhadra went to his teacher. Ācārya Bhadrabāhu told him in clear words, “Son! It is very difficult to acquire knowledge but actually it is much more difficult to digest the acquired knowledge. You failed to digest the secret knowledge. You could not control the temptation of displaying your power. In front of your sisters you exhibited your eminence and the miracle of your knowledge. And hence you are no longer eligible to learn the remaining knowledge. Be happy with whatever you have learnt.”

When Ārya Sthūlabhadra heard the words of his teacher, he felt remorse for the sin he committed. He prostrated on the feet of his Guru and repeatedly implored for his forgiveness and he repeatedly promised that he would never, ever repeat such a mistake. But Ācārya Bhadrabāhu bluntly refused his plea saying that he was unfit to acquire the wisdom of the last four Pūrvas filled with much celestial and miracle-achieving knowledge.

The whole congregation came to know of what transpired. They approached Ācārya Bhadrabāhu, persuaded and prayed that he should forgive the sin of Sthūlabhadra and punish him suitably for his fault and continue teaching the remaining Pūrvas.

The ācārya listened to their entreaties attentively and said, “As a matter of fact, I thought that Ārya Sthūlabhadra was eligible to acquire the knowledge of the Pūrvas. So I already taught him ten Pūrvas with complete details including meaning and interpretation and only two topics remain. There is a strong reason behind my decision not to impart the knowledge of the remaining four Pūrvas to him. When Sthūlabhadra triumphed over the invincible Kāmadeva, his Ācārya Saṃbhūtavijaya honoured him with the title “Duṣkara duṣkara kāraka”. When such a great ascetic like Sthūlabhadra, who has conquered his mind, who is well versed in ten Pūrvas, and is of noble lineage, could not restrain the enticing ostentation of his knowledge, it is incomprehensible how the common men of future will be able to digest the knowledge of celestial and miraculous powers.

In future, as time passes, there will be cantankerous, ill-tempered and arrogant Śramaṇas, who will get upset in a moment, and will disobey and disrespect their teachers and with little spiritual essence. If such monks acquire the great powerful knowledge of these Pūrvas, then, when they become angry even over a trivial issue and using these four types of lore may harm people; declining from their asceticism may even get ready to totally destroy others. As a result of such bad deeds, they will be for infinite time, wandering in the cycle of transmigration. Considering all these facts, it is better not to pass the knowledge of the remaining four Pūrvas to the next generation”.

To this Ārya Sthūlabhadra replied, “Whatever you said is true, however, the people of the next generations will complain that on account of Sthūlabhadra’s misdemeanour, the knowledge of the last four Pūrvas, perished. I shudder with the very thought of such ignominy. Hence, even if you do not elucidate the meaning and special interpretation of the remaining four Pūrvas, I pray, at least, teach these to me in their original text”.

Ācārya Bhadrabāhu was certain that the knowledge of the last four Pūrvas will definitely be lost with his demise. So he imparted the

knowledge of the last four Pūrvas to Ārya Sthūlabhadra only in their original text without elaborating either their meaning or interpretation.

In V.N. 170 (357 BC) after Ācārya Bhadrabāhu's accession to heaven, Ārya Sthūlabhadra became the eighth pontiff.

Both the Śvetāmbara and Digambara traditions agree that Ācārya Bhadrabāhu was the last Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara and Śruta – Kevalī ācārya of Lord Mahāvīra's tradition.

Wandering many places and uplifting the laymen, Ācārya Sthūlabhadra one day arrived at Sravasti. There he made Dhandeva, his childhood friend, an ardent believer and follower of the true religion and showed him the right way to obliterate the cycle of transmigration.

After the completion of 44 years as Pontiff, Ācārya Sthūlabhadra, the third heretic, known as 'Avyaktavādī' originated from amongst the disciples of Āṣādhācārya in 214 V.N. in the city of Śvetāmbika. (Its short description is given at pages 415 to 417 in part II of the non-abridged edition of Jain Dharama Kā Moulīka Itihāsa).

Ārya Sthūlabhadra was a householder for 30 years. Between V.N. 170 & 215, as the Pontiff ācārya of the congregation served the Jain order. Finally, at the age of 99, he acceded to heaven in 215 V.N. in Vaibhāragirī near the city of Rājagṛha after fasting for 15 days.

From the point of view of Indian History, the era of Ārya Sthūlabhadra may be regarded as the political era of dynastic-transition and political upheaval. The Greek invasion against India, the rising of the great political philosopher Cāṇakya, the decline of the Nandas and the rise of Maurya Dynasty were the significant political events of his era.

Sikandara (Alexander the great) invades India

During Sthūlabhadra's pontifical period (from 170-215 VNY), approximately 200 V.Y (327BC) the Greek Emperor Alexander with a huge army invaded the north-western frontier of India. At that time, there were many small kingdoms in the north-western frontier and many republic states of different clans in Punjab. Dhanananda, the ninth Nanda

emperor of Magadha, because of his miserly nature, and because of imposing heavy taxes on people, lost the love and confidence of his subjects. Many small kings who were until then under the control of Magadha and the vassal kings too, revolting against him, declared their independence. Because of their internal rivalries, the kings were trying to expose and humiliate each other.

Due to the lack of a single supreme political power in the country, Alexander was successful in his initial military campaigns. He conquered the Indian regions from Hindukuśa and Kābula mountain pass to the regions east of the Sindhu River, and Kāshmirā and Takṣilā.

Though all the kings and the republic states fought bravely against Alexander but the stubborn resistance put up by King Paurava and a fierce battle that ensued therein will always remain as a remarkable incident in the history of India. The army of King Paurava, putting their lives at stake, fought the army of Alexander valiantly; yet they met with defeat. Though victorious in the battle, Alexander impressed by the chivalry and valour of Paurava, felt that he should make friends with him. Hence he reinstated the kingdom he won to Paurava, and marched ahead continuing his victory campaign.

The army of Alexander wanted to advance further but the combined forces of the republics of Kṣudraka and Mālawa offered a tough fight in the battlefield at the confluence of Indus and Cināba. The Greek army succumbed to a heavy loss. Alexander himself was wounded in the battle with the Mālawas. As he was injured, the rumours of Alexander's death started spreading. As a result many soldiers in the Greek army, as a group, retreated towards Greece. The Greek army lost its morale. Considering his condition and that of his army, Alexander gave up further expeditions and headed back towards his homeland.

As he marched towards Greece leaving behind the conquered territories of India, the Indian provinces, setting themselves free of the yoke of foreign rule, declared themselves as independent. Alexander died in June in 323 BC., while reaching Babylon.

After the death of Alexander, his empire fell apart and anarchy prevailed everywhere. Alexander had no children. Therefore, his commanders-in-

chief distributed the vast empire among themselves. The first partition took place immediately after Alexander's death in 323 BC and the second in 321 at a place known as Striyāśa.

The invasion of Alexander aroused a new awareness among the Indians and laid the thought foundation for the establishment of a major sovereign authority. The campaign of Alexander displayed to the world, the combat skills and the chivalry of the Indians. Not only the men, even the women here, with undaunted courage, confronted the enemy in the battlefield and sacrificed their lives to protect their motherland from the Greek invasion.

During the campaign of Alexander to annex the Indian kingdoms in 327 BC, and after his death in 323 BC, during the invasions of Greek king Selucas on India in 304 BC., and between 327 and 304 BC, King Candragupta Maurya played a significant role to make futile the foreign invasions, and to make India a strong Nation. In this context his life sketch is given here in brief.

Origin of Maurya dynasty

In 215 V.N. (312 BC) with the end of Nanda dynasty, India witnessed the advent of the powerful Maurya Dynasty. This great dynasty eliminated the Greek rule completely from our motherland, without a trace. It not only extended its power over the entire India but also hoisted their banner of victory on territories outside India, thereby, bringing India under one sovereign authority, and ruled for 108 years from 215 to 323 V.N. There was all round development and progress during its regime in India.

Emperor Candragupta Maurya, the founder of this dynasty is associated with the great politician of that time, Cāṅakya. In fact Cāṅakya can be considered as the founder and custodian of this powerful dynasty. The Mauryan dynasty came into existence due to the astuteness of this great Brahmin scholar.

Cāṅakya, founder of Maurya dynasty

A Brahmin named Caṅī lived in Caṅaka village in Golla-Pradeśa. His wife was Caṅakeśwarī. The Brahmin couple followed Jain religion

sincerely. Apart from observing the vows of a layman, they used to serve the monks also.

In course of time, Caṇakeśwarī gave birth to a son. At that time, some Sthavira Śramaṇas were staying in a secluded room in their house. Caṇī showed his new born son to the Sthavirs and told them that the child was born with teeth. The Sthavira Śramaṇa replied, “O righteous disciple! Your son will become a great valiant king.

“I hope that my son, by wielding power as a king, will not entitle himself to purgatory”. Thus thinking, Caṇī took the child home and filed his teeth. When Caṇī informed the saints what he had done, the Sthavira said, “As you have filed the teeth, now the child will not become an emperor, but in course of time he will become equivalent to an emperor (one who makes another person the king and wields the power via him). Caṇī named his son ‘Cāṇakya’.

Starting his schooling at the right age and studying with complete dedication, the intelligent Cāṇakya became a master in many disciplines. Cāṇakya used to feel that contentment is the real wealth and so would observe the vows of Votary with utmost faith and sincerity.

When Cāṇakya attained youth, he was married to a Brahmin girl from a respectable family. After the death of his parents, Cāṇakya took over the responsibilities of his modest household. As he was content with whatever little he had, he never tried to accumulate wealth. Once, Cāṇakya’s wife went to her maternal home to attend the marriage ceremony of her brother. Cāṇakya’s sisters-in-law were all married into very rich families. Hence, they used to wear expensive clothes and bedecked with precious jewels and make-up always surrounded by servants. Cāṇakya’s wife, however, did not possess anything that can be termed as an ornament. All through the day & night she wore an old sari and blouse. Her own sisters and the other women who came to attend the marriage derided her of her poverty and poked fun at her. When Cāṇakya came to know that his wife was humiliated because of their poverty, he firmly decided to earn money. He knew that Nanda, the king of Magadha donates adequate amount of money to Brahmins. So hoping to obtain the money, he reached Pāṭalīputra. There, he sat on the first seat which was slightly elevated than the others and kept his stick and rosary beads, etc.

on the other seat. In fact, the seat on which Cāṇakya seated himself was intended for king Nanda who would always sit on it to donate money. So as per the instructions of Nanda's son, a servant asked Cāṇakya to vacate the seat and sit on another seat. Cāṇakya felt insulted and did not budge. The servant then kicked Cāṇakya and made him vacate the seat.

Insulted by the servant, Cāṇakya flared up in anger. In front of the vast gathering of people present there, he, in a thunderous and deafening voice took an oath—"I will rest only after I completely annihilate this Nanda, his army, sons, friends and his treasure".

After taking this oath, glaring at Nanda with knitted eyebrows and fiery eyes and trembling with fury, Cāṇakya walked out of the palace and left the city. He remembered the prediction of the Sthavira which he heard from his parents, that in future, though not an emperor, he will become equivalent to an emperor, and remaining like a shadow behind the screen, he will wield power like an emperor. "The words of a renunciant Śramaṇa never go false". So thinking, Cāṇakya firmly decided to search for such a person, through whom he can destroy Nanda, his dynasty and his kingdom.

Encounter with Candragupta

Wearing the robes of a religious mendicant, Cāṇakya set out in search of a capable person. Wandering from place to place, one day he reached the village where the people who take care of the peacocks of King Nanda resided. Looking at the sage-like Cāṇakya, their chief said, "O Great Soul! My expectant daughter has a strange longing to drink the moon. How is it possible to fulfill her impossible desire? If, during pregnancy a craving is not fulfilled, not only the child in her womb even my daughter may also die. This is worrying me a lot. It will be of great help, if you fulfill this strange yearning of my daughter".

The erudite Cāṇakya immediately understood that the person, whom he is searching for, is in the womb of the Chief's daughter. So he said to the Chief, "If you promise to hand over the boy to me when he attains youth, I will fulfill your daughter's desire".

The Chief happily accepted the pre-condition. Then under the instructions of Cāṇakya, a hay and grass hut was made ready. A big hole

like portion at the top of the hut was left open. At night, the moon's reflection fell in the hut through that opening. Cāṇakya asked a person to secretly climb on to the hut and to hide himself. Then when he signals him, he has to cover the opening slowly with hay.

After making all these arrangements he called the pregnant woman into the hut and made her sit on a stool. He then gave her a plate filled with water. The full moon reflected in the water. Cāṇakya addressing her, said, "Daughter, drink this moon".

The expecting woman started drinking the water. As she kept drinking the water slowly, the person hiding on the roof of the hut began covering the opening with hay little by little. Thus when she drank all the water, the moon was no longer seen. She felt happy thinking that she drank the moon. As her desire was satiated, the child in the womb started growing and in due course she gave birth to a radiant child. Keeping in mind the incident of her desire, he was named as Candragupta.

Farsighted Cāṇakya wanted to collect gold to maintain an army for the future king. He was wandering from place to place in search of experts in metals. Meanwhile Candragupta grew up into a boy and while playing with his friends used to behave like a king with them.

Wandering from one place to another, Cāṇakya came back to the village of the peacock caretakers. At that time Candragupta was playing with his peers, showing signs of the princely arts. Observing the princely gestures of the boy and listening to the conversation of the children playing with him, Cāṇakya understood that he was the same boy whose mother's wish he had fulfilled when she was pregnant.

Stroking Candragupta on his face and head with love, Cāṇakya introduced himself and said, "Come with me, I will make you a king".

The ambitious child Candragupta at once held the little finger of Cāṇakya and visualising the most magnificent images of his future empire, accompanied Cāṇakya. Apprehensive that any obstacle might impede him from accomplishing his task, Cāṇakya, without even informing Candragupta's parents or guardians, left the village immediately for an uncertain destination.

The task that Cāṇakya decided to accomplish was in fact a herculean and a highly impossible one. If one carefully analyses, it becomes quite clear that Cāṇakya's struggle was in fact, not just to avenge his insult. In truth, there were many latent intentions behind this undertaking in his heart. The then disintegrating tendencies prevalent in the country created great discontentment in his heart. He desired to provide a good rule with strong government to the people who were being crushed under the burden of heavy taxes and were suffering badly under the evil rule of the Nandas. In all probability, the humiliation in the palace of the Nandas could have aggravated the already innate ambition of Cāṇakya and might have severely stimulated his thoughts and gave him the strongest inspiration for a political revolution.

There were two famous universities in India at that time. One was Takṣṣilā and the other Nālandā. Had Candragupta been enrolled in Nālandā University which was under the very nose of Nanda, he would have had the risk of being noticed by Nanda. To avoid such risk, Cāṇakya might have preferred to admit him in Takṣṣilā University, which was away from Pāṭalīputra. This inference seems proper and logical.

In Takṣṣilā University, there was appropriate arrangement for imparting the best military training to the young Princes, which includes both theory and practical training, archery and the training related to elephants, etc. Apart from the training provided by the university, a separate teacher was also available to independently teach and train military arts to the princes.

No sooner had Cāṇakya found the brilliant child Candragupta in the village of the peacock caretakers, than he directly brought him to Takṣṣilā and made necessary arrangements for his education & training in the University.

It has already been mentioned earlier that Alexander, with a huge army, invaded and conquered all kingdoms from Greece upto the North-western frontiers of India and then in 325 BC invaded India. The small kingdoms and small republics that were situated near the North-western front could not confront the huge army of Alexander and were miserably defeated by him one after the other despite their strong resistance. This pitiable situation in India caused anguish in the minds of the young and

old alike and evoked patriotism encouraging them to take a firm resolution to do their share to protect their motherland. The young were ready to sacrifice their lives for the freedom of their Motherland. An ambitious youth like Candragupta, who had by then already received the best military training in Takṣṣilā, could not remain a passive spectator during the country's dire needs. Hence, he in the capacity of a Commander-in-Chief of a troop of soldiers fought bravely against the army of Alexander and offered a strong resistance.

Under the able guidance of the far-sighted Cāṇakya, who was an inimitable diplomat and a great political philosopher of the times, the fearless young Candragupta took up the challenge of liberating his motherland, India from the slavery of Greece; and with undaunted valour, courage and gallantry, he was successful in rooting out the enemy from the borders of the country. When Candragupta revolted against the Greeks, he was neither a ruler of any kingdom nor he had any systematic army. He mobilised the youth who were willing to stake their lives for the sake of the country and emerged victorious in the most difficult task.

After putting an end to the foreign rule, Candragupta as per the instructions of Cāṇakya, his guardian or his destiny-writer, with his tenacious efforts mobilised a powerful army to invade and to establish his authority over Pāṭalīputra. After mobilising a powerful army and finalising all military preparations Cāṇakya ordered Candragupta to embark on a lightning attack on Pāṭalīputra. Obeying his orders, Candragupta at once headed towards Pāṭalīputra with his army. Cāṇakya was also with Candragupta during this military campaign. Both the armies fought bravely but the small army of Candragupta could not withstand the vast and organised army of Magadha. Ultimately both Cāṇakya and Candragupta had to flee from the battlefield to save their lives. Nanda ordered the soldiers of Magadha to chase them both. But the crafty Cāṇakya, taking Candragupta along with him, went on escaping, in a disguise, crossing dense forests, high mountains and fast-flowing rivers.

A lesson to Cāṇakya from a rural woman

With the burning desire to stay alive till he accomplishes his oath and mission of annihilating the Nanda dynasty totally, Cāṇakya took refuge in a secluded hut, for the night, together with Candragupta. The old lady

of the hut served boiling hot native porridge in a plate and placed it in front of her children. One of the children put his hand in the centre of the plate of the hot porridge to eat and started yelling as his hand scalded. The woman in a fretful voice complainingly said “My son! You too, like Cāṇakya seem to be foolish”.

Listening to the elderly woman Cāṇakya was startled. He enquired her, “What foolish act did Cāṇakya do that you are comparing this boy to be foolish like him”.

The old woman replied, “O traveller! Without conquering the frontier territories he straight away attacked Pāṭalīputra, which is in the heart of the kingdom; he faced a terrible defeat, and foolishly risked his life. Similarly this foolish child without first eating the porridge near the ends of the plate directly put his hand in the middle of the plate and scalded his hand”.

Cāṇakya learnt a lesson from the old woman’s taunts. He thanked her in his heart, and immediately worked out his future plans and even before sunrise, left the place for an unknown destination.

Confronting many problems, Cāṇakya successfully crossed the border of Magadha along with Candragupta. After reaching a secure place, once again he started mobilising the army. This time he made an alliance with Pravartaka, the king of Himālaya foothills. Cāṇakya, luring him to his side, promised him half of Magadha Kingdom, and convinced him to invade the kingdom of Nanda. In a short time, Candragupta too mobilised a powerful army. Following the instructions of Cāṇakya, the combined army of Candragupt and Pravartak attacked the frontier regions of Magadha Kingdom, invading, subjugating and establishing their rule on the frontier regions and cities one after the other and ultimately reached Pāṭalīputra. A fierce battle broke out between the two armies. After a long fight the Magadha army fled away from the battle field. With the fall of Magadha, Candragupta captured Dhanananda alive. The entire credit for the success of this military campaign goes to Cāṇakya, because of whose shrewd diplomatic tactics the armies of Candragupta and Pravartaka had emerged victorious, continuously.

End of Nanda dynasty & Establishment of Maurya dynasty

Candragupta presented before Cāṇakya, Dhanananda as a captive. Dhanananda begged for his life and pleaded that he would practice religious life in seclusion. Cāṇakya agreed to his request and said that he could take his two wives, his daughter and enough money along with him and go in a chariot wherever he wants to.

Abiding Cāṇakya's orders Dhanananda prepared to leave the palace along with his two wives, his daughter and sufficient wealth, on a chariot. Just as he bawled at the horses to get going, as if by divine intervention, at that very moment Candragupta reached the palace on a chariot, from the opposite side. Seeing the chariot-mounted, radiant Candragupta, at the very first sight itself, Dhanananda's daughter forgot her status, noble birth, etc. and was completely captivated by the charm of Candragupta. Like a Cakorī (Himalaya partridge) enamoured of the moon, stares at it incessantly, similarly the princess forgetting her senses and unconcerned about the surroundings kept staring at Candragupta. Dhanananda being old and well-experienced in worldly matters immediately realised that his daughter had totally surrendered herself to Candragupta. He stopped the chariot and said, "Dear child! It is believed that self selection of the bridegroom (Svayamvara) is the best means of choosing the groom for a girl born in a Kṣatriya family. As per your wish, happily marry Candragupta. Get down from this chariot, and mount onto the chariot of Candragupta and free me of my responsibility of searching an able groom for you."

Hearing her father's words the princess as if spellbound, got down from the chariot immediately. Just as she kept one foot to get into the chariot of Candragupta, six spokes of the wheels of the chariot broke down making a loud noise.

Seeing this Candragupta said, "Who is this inauspicious girl, climbing into my chariot, with whose mere touch of a foot, the spokes of the wheels of my chariot broke down? Had she seated herself completely in the chariot, not only my chariot, but my very existence may be jeopardised." So saying, he prevented the princess from getting into the chariot.

Cāṇakya interrupting him, said, “No, no Candragupta! Do not do that. You, without any hesitation, allow her to sit in your chariot. The breaking of the six spokes of the wheels is a very good omen for you and for your future generations. It implies that up to six generations your dynasty will rule the country continuously.”

“Just as you wish Lord!” saying this Candragupta bowed down to Cāṇakya’s command and allowed the princess to sit in the chariot.

Soon after, Candragupta and Pravartaka began portioning among themselves, the immense fortune of Dhanananda. Just then, an extremely captivating and extraordinarily beautiful damsel, from the seraglio of Dhanananda was presented in front of them. King Pravartaka was completely besotted by her beauty. Their marriage was arranged on the advice of Cāṇakya. During the wedding ceremony, when the bride’s hand was placed in the hand of the groom their hands were sweating profusely, as they were in front of the sacred fire. As she was a poison-girl (*Viṣa-kanyā*), the mere contact of her fatal poisonous sweat had a quick effect on Pravartaka. Ultimately as a result of the fatal poisonous sweat, king Pravartaka lost his life. In this manner when Pravartaka died without any efforts, Candragupta became the sole and unrivalled lord of the entire wealth and kingdom. Thus in 215 V.N. (312 BC), when Ācārya Sthūlabhadra attained heavenly abode, in the same year, the end of Nand dynasty, the death of Pravartaka, and the coronation of Candragupta Maurya as the unrivalled king of the vast empire of Pāṭālīputra and of Parvatak’s kingdom took place. Candragupta put an end to Nanda rule and established Mauryan dynasty in Pāṭālīputra in 215 V.N. (312 BC)

ĀRYA MAHĀGIRI AND ĀRYA SUHASTĪ

After Sthūlabhadra, the seventh successor and eighth ācārya of Lord Mahāvīra, Ācārya Mahāgiri became the ninth pontiff and Ārya Suhastī became the tenth pontiff.

	9th Mahāgiri pontiff	10th pontiff Suhastī
Birth	V.N. 145	V.N. 191
Initiation	V.N. 175	V.N. 221 (Alt. V.N. 214)
Became ācārya	V.N. 215	V.N. 245
Heavenly abode	V.N. 245	V.N. 291
Household life duration	30 years	30 years (Alt. 23 years)
Ordinary Monk tenure	40 years	24 years (Alt. 31 years)
Tenure as ācārya	30 years	46 years
Total longevity	100 years	100 years
Gotra	Elāpatya	Vaśiṣṭha

Family life

Both Ārya Mahāgiri and Suhastī, from their infancy were left under the supervisory care of Female ascetic Yakṣa. They were brought up and educated under her able auspices.

Initiation as Śramaṇa

Ārya Mahāgiri was initiated in 175 V.N. and Ārya Suhastī was initiated in 221 V.N. As far as Mahāgiri is concerned, there is no controversy regarding his time of initiation. However as per the data given above, the initiation of Suhastī took place in V.N. 221 in such a case the most important objection would be the initiation of Suhastī by Ārya Sthūlabhadra himself. But Ārya Sthūlabhadra went to heaven in 215

V.N. itself. In such a situation, initiation of Suhastī by Ārya Sthūlabhadra in V.N. 221 does not seem to be logical or true. Hence it appears that Ārya Suhastī was initiated at the age of 23 and probably by a slip-up of some scribe, the figure 30 got documented instead of 23. If we accept that Suhastī was initiated at the age of 23, then, that he got initiated by Ācārya Sthūlabhadra (214 - 250 V.N.) himself, seems logical.

Life as Śramaṇa

These two great men spent 14 and 31 years of their life respectively as ordinary Jain saints. During this period they performed severe penance, flawlessly observed self-restraint and served Sthavira Śramaṇas with great reverence. Besides, they, with persistent practice and complete concentration acquired knowledge. Both of them are scholars in the ten Pūrvas except for two topics.

Post of ācārya

In the year 215 V.N. at the time of his departure for heaven, Ācārya Sthūlabhadra appointed both his worthy students - Ārya Mahāgiri and Ārya Suhastī as his successors, the eighth pontiff.

Ārya Suhastī after taking initiation from Ācārya Sthūlabhadra barely completed his study of Ekādaśaṃgī that Ācārya Sthūlabhadra went to heaven. So Ārya Suhastī studied the Pūrvā Śruta s under Ārya Mahāgiri. According to the Pariśiṣṭa Parva Kāra, Ārya Suhastī himself said addressing Ārya Mahāgiri - “*Mamaite guravaḥ Khalu*” - “he is my Guru”. If this fact is taken into consideration, it does not corroborate the statement that in V.N. 215, the novice monk, Ārya Suhastī, was given the post of ācārya along with Ārya Mahāgiri by Ācārya Sthūlabhadra.

A scrutiny of the facts makes it highly probable that while nominating Ārya Mahāgiri as his successor, Ācārya Sthūlabhadra with his special knowledge might have perceived that Ārya Suhastī would be the most eligible and efficient monk for running the congregation in future and so might have instructed Ārya Mahāgiri to appoint him as ācārya at the proper time.

During the tenure of both these ācāryas, Jain Dharma spread throughout India, far and wide. Moreover, Avantī also became a strong centre of Jain tradition during their time.

Remarkable Spiritual-exertion of Ārya Mahāgiri

Ārya Mahāgiri taught his many disciples the Āgamas and made them proficient in Ekādaśāṃgī. Later, he handed over the responsibility of his gaccha also to Ārya Suhastī and staying with the gaccha he started practicing the Śramaṇa principles of Jinakalpa. Even after taking the vow of *Jinakalpa Śramaṇācāra*, he did not leave the order (gaccha). He used to wander with Suhastī and the Śramaṇas. However, he would go alone for begging alms and also meditate in solitude. He took a challenging resolution that he would accept only the dry tasteless or stale food that the householders would discard.

Ācārya Mahāgiri is regarded as the greatest ācārya of his time. Besides being a staunch supporter of pure conduct, he was well-versed in the Pūrvas. He would not accept even the slightest deviation in the strict adherence of the daily activities or self-control.

Thus practicing the strict monkhood as stipulated by Jinakalpa, Ācārya Mahāgiri performed severe penance for many years and set up a yardstick for the high quality life of a Śramaṇa. He was of peerless character and the highest quality monk of his times. Finally, he went to a place called Gajārapada near Elakaccha (Daśārṇapura) and fasting there he undertook Samādhi and attained heaven in 245 V.N.Y after completing 100 years of his life.

Mahāgiri's contemporary royal dynasty

It was already mentioned that the Mauryan dynasty was established during the last days of Ācārya Sthūlabhadra (215 V.N.Y). During the period of Ācārya Mahāgiri, Candragupta Maurya, the first King of this dynasty, under the guidance of his inspirational Prime Minister Cāṇakya, was engaged in wars for many years with the rulers within and outside India. He brought the entire country under one strong administration and established a vast, powerful sovereign empire. He even drove out the

great Greek conqueror Selucus from Kābula and Kandhāra and annexed those regions to his vast Indian kingdom.

According to many ancient scriptures, when Candragupta Maurya ascended the throne of Pāṭalīputra, he was not a follower of Jainism. However, Cāṇakya in different ways proved the greatness of Jain doctrines and of Jain Śramaṇas and convinced him to follow Jainism. As a result, Candragupta became a staunch believer and a devoted votary of the Jain Dharma. He patronised and served the Jain order significantly.

After the coronation of Candragupta as the king of Pāṭalīputra, apprehending that he may be poisoned by any treacherous person, and so to safeguard his precious life, the farsighted Cāṇakya administered very small doses of poison to him, mixed in his food. The dose was steadily increased and the poison soon worked like ambrosia on Candragupta providing nourishment and sustenance to his body. Gradually, the ratio of the poison being fed to Candragupta was increased to such an extent that if somebody else just tastes the food that is served to Candragupta, would die then and there itself.

Birth of Bindusāra

One day while Emperor Candragupta was having his food, his pregnant wife came there. The queen expressed her desire to eat along with him. The more Candragupta resisted her from eating from his plate, the more adamant the queen became and in the end, she suddenly snatched a morsel from his plate and at once kept it in her mouth. The poisonous food worked instantly on the queen and she fell to the ground, unconscious. Immediately, there was hue and cry everywhere in the palace. Prime Minister Cāṇakya quickly rushed to the spot.

“It is impossible to save the life of the queen”, uttering these words, Cāṇakya ordered the surgeons to cut open the abdomen of the queen as fast as they can and to save the life of the unborn child. The surgeons acted accordingly and took the baby out of the womb. There was not much effect of the poison consumed by the mother, on the baby, except the appearance of a blue dot (Bindi) on his forehead. He was named as Bindusāra, because of this poisonous dot on his forehead.

Maurya emperor Candragupta ruled over a vast territory of Maurya Kingdom for a period of 18 years from 215 to 233 V.N. and he died in 233 V.N.

Bindusāra - the Maurya Emperor

After the death of Candragupta, his son Bindusāra succeeded to the throne inheriting a vast kingdom. His name appears different in different texts. In Vayu Pūrāṇa etc, his name is mentioned as Bhadrāsāra and Vārisāra; in the Mahāvamśa and Dīpavamśa scriptures of Buddhism as Bindusāra, and in the Greek memoirs and texts as Amitraceṭasa and Amitraghāta.

According to Bṛhatkalpa Bhāṣya, after inheriting the throne, Bindusāra extended the boundaries of the territories acquired from his father. He was a very just, kind, compassionate and benevolent king and a believer of Jain Dharma. When a famine broke out during his regime Bindusāra opened charity houses and common taverns and liberally helped the victims of the famine. A Greek ambassador named Daimaikas a delegate of Antiochus I, the son of Selucus lived in the court of Bindusāra.

The other name of Bindusāra was Amitraghāta (the slayer of enemy) and so the scholars opine that he might have been compelled to spend most of his time in wars wherein he victoriously vanquished his enemies because of which he got the name Amitraghāta. During the end of his regime, a rebellion broke out in Takṣṣilā - the northwestern frontier of his kingdom. He had to send Prince Aśoka with a huge army to suppress it.

Death of Cāṇakya

After the death of Maurya Candragupta who followed him like a shadow, Cāṇakya decided to take initiation of a Śramaṇa and to strive for his self-realisation. However after being repeatedly implored by Bindusāra, he eventually agreed to remain as the Prime Minister for some more time.

Subandhu, a minister, who gravely aspired to become the Prime Minister of the Magadha kingdom, was extremely jealous of Cāṇakya, who wielded authority over the king, the kingdom and the subjects. Whenever

he found a chance he would fill the ears of Bindusāra against Cāṇakya. One day Subandhu narrated to Bindusāra, the incident of the latter's mother's death weaving it in such a beautiful way that it seemed as if Cāṇakya intentionally murdered her. At last, Subandhu succeeded in sowing a seed of aversion and disbelief towards Cāṇakya in the mind of Bindusāra. The foresighted tactician Cāṇakya immediately read the feelings of Bindusāra, developed an aversion towards the world, retired to a secluded place on the outskirts of the city and started observing fasting and engrossed him in meditation. When Bindusāra came to know the truth of his mother's death through his wet-nurse, he felt remorse. He immediately went to Cāṇakya, asked for his forgiveness and urged him to take up his previous position as the Prime Minister. But Cāṇakya had already freed him of the worldly ties and bonds and was involved in the practice of spiritual-exertion. So the disappointed Bindusāra had to return to the palace, empty-handed. This incident, according to Jain literature, is narrated thus: Subandhu, on the pretext of serving Cāṇakya, stayed with him; and one day, he lighted fire to the dry cow-dung heap on which Cāṇakya sat in meditation. However, Cāṇakya did not make any attempts to escape and died in the posture of Samādhi, and died.

The heinous and repugnant misdeed of Subandhu could not be hidden from Bindusāra and the people. Being humiliated, condemned and turned away by the king and the people, Subandhu leading a miserable life and facing lot of troubles, ultimately breathed his last.

Royal dynasty at the time of Ārya Suhastī

After the accession of Ārya Mahāgiri to heaven in 245 V.N., his disciple Ārya Suhastī succeeded him as a ācārya; by then it was probably 12 years of Bindusāra's reign. After ruling the country for 25 years Bindusāra died in 258 V.N.

Maurya Emperor Aśoka

During the tenure of Suhastī as ācārya, after the demise of Bindusāra, his son Aśoka became the ruler of the vasta kingdom of Magadha in V.N. 258. Bindusāra, the father of Aśoka and Candragupta, his grandfather, both were the followers of Jainism. So initially Aśoka was also the follower of Jainism. During the ninth year of his reign (266 V.N.) Aśoka

led a campaign against Kaliṅga. Kṣemarāja the king of Kaliṅga confronted Aśoka in the battlefield with his huge army and put up a stiff resistance. A fierce battle ensued between both the armies. Though the valiant soldiers of Kṣemarāja fought bravely, they were no match to the powerful and innumerable army of Aśoka and after a bloody battle the Magadha army inflicted a cruel defeat on Kaliṅga. In this battle of Kaliṅga, about one and a half lakh soldiers were imprisoned, other than that one lakh soldiers died and a greater number who were wounded in the battle, later died. The brutality of the war weighed heavily on Aśoka's heart. In his 13th rock edict he announced that he himself was responsible for this bloodshed and declared that in the future, he would never attempt to win a country with this type of human - butchery and bloodshed.

When Aśoka was in deep pain with guilt and shame and was feeling remorse, it is possible that he might have confronted a Buddhist ācārya and influenced by him, adopted Buddhism. After becoming a follower of Buddhism, he spent his life in propagating and glorifying Buddhism. He got his son Mahendra and daughter congregation mitrā initiated as bhikṣu and bhikṣuṇi respectively and sent them to the neighbouring country, Lanka to propagate Buddhism. Apart from propagating Buddhism, Aśoka also performed many noble deeds for the welfare of the people, and engraved rock edicts on which religious and cultural commandments were inscribed for the benefit of the people.

Because of his significant contribution for the expansion and propagation of Buddhism, Aśoka's name will be remembered for ever and will be taken with great reverence in the history of Buddhism. After exercising power and authority over Magadha for 24 years, Emperor Aśoka died in V.N. 282. Some historians believe that during the last four years of his life, Aśoka once again reverted to and followed Jainism.

After Aśoka, his grandson Samprati succeeded to the throne.

Sermon by Ārya Suhastī to Samprati

According to Kalpa Cūrṇi, Ārya Suhastī once went to Ujjain² to pay homage to Jīvita Swāmī and walking along with the chariot procession

² According to Nishida Churni, he went to the City of Vidisha.

he arrived at the palace. When king Samprati, who sat near the window of his palace, saw Ārya Suhastī, he at once felt very familiar with him, as if he had seen him somewhere. While pondering about it, Samprati's knowledge of past lives revived. He sent his servants to find out the place of stay of Ācārya Suhastī. When he came to know where Ācārya Suhastī was stationed, he approached him and after listening to his discourses posed a question to him, "Lord! What is the fruit of Dharma?"

The ācārya replied, "O king, following the holy law with equanimity, without implicit understanding, results in acquisition of kingdom, etc."

"Yes Lord! What you are saying is true" saying this he asked one more question, "Lord, do you recognize me?"

Ācārya, using his cognitive consciousness, saw the past life of Samprati and answered, "I do know you; you were my disciple in your just previous birth." Later, king Samprati under took the five lay-vows, gave up killing of animals and engaged himself in the progress and development of Śramaṇa congregation.

Past life of Samprati

Narrating his past life to him as an answer to his question Ācārya Suhastī said, "O king! This is in relation to your just previous birth. Once in my wanderings I reached the city of Kauśāmbī, along with my disciples. That time the city was gripped in severe famine. Hence, the common people could not even afford to see the food (let alone, eating). But the house holders because of deep veneration and devotion would give sufficient water and food to the Śramaṇas as alms. One day, my disciples, while begging alms went into a house. A poor, wretched and hungry beggar also followed them into the house. The host gave large amount of food and water to the monks, but he did not give even a grain to the beggar.

The hungry beggar followed my disciples begging for food. They explained to him that as per the rules prescribed for Śramaṇas they cannot give anything to a householder. The beggar, unable to tolerate the pangs of hunger, following them, came to me. He begged me also for food. With my cognition, I found out that in his next birth, he would

propagate and spread Jainism. I told him that if he takes initiation into Śramaṇa Dharma, we would give him enough food as per his desire. The beggar thought that the difficult path of Śramaṇa Dharma is better than his poor, worthless and miserable life. He at once took initiation from me, after which he became entitled to our food, which he ate up to his heart's content. The novice who had been starving from many days, suffered with severe stomach ache, when he ate the sumptuous meal. Consequently, he died that night. He was born to the blind prince Kuṅāla, the son of Aśoka. O king! You are the same beggar who took initiation from me in your past life. This is the result of your Śramaṇa life that you led for one day because of which you are born as a king. (Ācārya Suhastī became a monk in V.N.S. 214. Samprati became a full-fledged king in V.N.S. 282. There is a gap of 68 years. Therefore, Ācārya Suhastī was present during the just previous birth of Samprati. Ācārya Suhastī attained heavenly abode in V.N. 291).

Propagation and expansion of Jainism by Samprati

In Jain literature, the Maurya emperor Samprati holds the same status as Aśoka holds in Buddhist literature. According to many Jain texts, after listening to the sermons of Ārya Suhastī, King Samprati sent his officers, personnel, soldiers and his offspring - sons and daughters - to different places, within and outside the country in the guise of Jain monks and spread Jainism far and wide and even converted his vassals to Jainism. The personnel of Samprati, in the guise of Mokṣa, even went and wandered in non-Ārya (non-vegetarian) countries, enlightening them with the responsibilities of a Votary and rules of conduct of as Śramaṇa and made those places worthy of visit by the Śramaṇas. Yielding to the request of King Samprati, Ācārya Suhastī sent a few Śramaṇas to non-Ārya lands to spread Jainism. They felt happy seeing the zeal and faith of the people there, towards Jain religion. The monks wandered freely in the non-Ārya lands just as they do in the Ārya lands and extensively propagated Jain religion there. The people in non-Ārya lands too, showed a lot of reverence towards & accepted the Jain religious principles of a Votary. Ācārya Suhastī felt overwhelmingly happy listening to all these reports.

In few Jain texts, it is mentioned that Samprati got many Jina temples erected in both Ārya and non-Ārya lands, thus beautifying the places

with these temples. But there is no mention of these types of temples in the historical texts written before 882 V.N.

Avantī Sukumāla, the unparalleled symbol of strenuous practice of conduct

After Ārya Mahāgiri went to heaven, Ārya Suhasī, wandering through many lands, once again reached Ujjain and camped in a garden in the outskirts of the city. He sent two of his disciple saints to the place of a very wealthy & respected lady called Bhadrā for permission to stay in her place somewhere. Permission having been granted, he along with his disciples, stayed in the out house of that very wealthy & respected lady Bhadrā.

The next day, at dawn, Ācārya Suhasī was chanting the chapter of “Nalinī Gulma” aloud. Avantī Sukumāla, the son of Bhadrā, who was at that time sleeping in a room on the seventh floor of the mansion, with his 32 beautiful wives, heard the melodious recitation of the verse, which echoed in his ears. He listened to it rapt with attention. He at once found the chanting irresistible, and in order to listen to it more clearly and to understand it properly, he came out of the palace as if he were under a spell. He came to Ācārya Suhasī and listened to him attentively. Listening to the recital, an overwhelmed Sukumāla felt as if he had previously experienced the happiness described in the recital. On profound contemplation, he gained the knowledge of his past life. He went to the ācārya, bowed to him with humility and said, “Lord! I am the son of Bhadrā, the mistress of this house. On listening to your recital I regained the knowledge of my past life. Prior to this birth, I was a celestial being in a plane called ‘Nalinī Gulma’. Now once again the strong desire to go back to my Nalinī Gulma has arisen in me. I want to be initiated into the ascetic life by you and return back there. Please ordain me as a Śramaṇa”. Ācārya Suhasī explained him the difficulties of a Śramaṇa life.

Avantī Sukumāla said, “Lord! As per the norms laid down for the monks, I cannot practice penance for a long time. So, in the beginning itself, I will take the initiation into Śramaṇa Dharma undertaking the vow of fasting and endure the worst suffering for a short period”.

Having noticed that he was firm in his decision, Ārya Suhasī asked him to seek the permission of his kinsmen. Later Avantī Sukumāla asked the

permission of his mother and his wives to take initiation; however he did not get it. Hence, he himself plucked his hair with his fingers (keśalumcana) and clad as Monk went to serve Ārya Suhastī. Looking at Sukumāla who was detached even with his own body and completely averse to the world, and who initiated himself into asceticism, Ārya Suhastī initiated him into Śramaṇa as per the rules prescribed in the scriptures. Avantī Sukumāla then appealed Ārya Suhastī to grant him permission to perform penance by observing fast unto death.

Taking permission from Ārya Suhastī he went to the desolate burial ground outside the city, and stood there in a meditative posture (kāyotsarga). The very elegant and delicate Sukumāla, for the first time in his life, walked such a long distance, barefoot. So his feet pierced by thorns and sharp stones, were bleeding profusely. Enduring the pain bravely and suppressing hunger and thirst, he was engrossed in self-realization. The scorching sun burnt the ground like fire, but Avantī Sukumāla did not pay any attention to it and continued his meditation peacefully. The day progressed and soon the sun set; slowly darkness engulfed. The night appeared horrible and terrifying like a fatal night. But the delicate novice, Avantī Sukumāla who was averse from life stood still deep in his meditation in the burial ground. Sniffing the blood-stained foot prints, a female Jackal with her cubs came near Avantī Sukumāla. Sniffing the smell of blood trickling from the legs of the monk, it started licking his legs. Engrossed in spiritual meditation, the monk stood still. As there was no protest from him, the Jackal became fearless. It pierced its teeth into the flesh of his leg. Hot blood gushed out of it. The Jackal with her cubs began devouring his leg. Steadily the monk's meditation was reaching greater & greater heights. Without trying to obstruct the jackal, the monk thought, "This jackal, by devouring my flesh, is burning out my karma, and opening the doors of my Nalinī Gulma Vimāna". The jackal and the cubs started eating the second leg of the monk. The monk fell on to the ground. However, the monk's concentration of meditation was only getting deeper. After eating his thighs and shoulders, they tore open his stomach. The monk also moved to higher level in his self-realisation. Eventually he went into Samādhi, died with equanimity and achieving his aim, was born as a celestial being in the plane of Nalinī Gulma.

Next day when his mother Bhadrā, came to know about the incident from Suhastī, she with her 31 daughters-in-law, excluding one who was pregnant, took initiation into the Śramaṇa dharma.

Disciples of Mahāgiri

According to Kalpasūtra, the disciples of Ārya Mahāgiri sequentially are as follows:

1. Sthavira Uttara (Bahula)
2. Sthavira Balissaha
3. Sthavira Dhanāḍhya (Dhanagupta)
4. Sthavira Śrī Āḍhya
5. Sthavira Kauḍinya
6. Sthavira Nāga
7. Sthavira Nāgamitra
8. Rohagupta of Kouśika Gotra

A Gaṇa known as Uttar Balissaha, originated from the names Sthavira Uttara and Sthavira Balissaha, which had the following 4 branches:

1 Kauśāmbikā 2 Śuktivatikā 3 Koḍambāṇī and 4 Candanāgarī

Line of Ārya Suhastī's Disciples

The disciple family of Ācārya Suhastī was very large. Out of them, there are twelve important disciples, whose names are as follows:

1. Sthavira Ārya Rohaṇa
2. Ācārya Yaśobhadra
3. Meghagaṇī
4. Ācārya Kāmardhigaṇī
5. Ācārya Susthita Sūri
6. Ācārya Supratibhaddha Sūri
7. Ācārya Rakṣita
8. Ācārya Rohagupta
9. Ācārya Ṛṣigupta
10. Ācārya Śrīgupta (of Hārila Gotra)
11. Ācārya Brhamgaṇī
12. Ācārya Somagaṇī

Samucchedavādī, the Fourth heretic Aśwamitra (V.N. 220)

During the fifth year of the pontification of Ārya Mahāgiri, i.e. in V.N. 220, the fourth schism took place as transitory-ness (*Kṣaṇikavādī*.) Under Aśwamitra, the disciple of Kodinna, who was in turn the disciple of Mahāgiri?

According to him, the hellish beings which are existent at the present time undergo destruction at a later time. In such a situation the hellish mode prevalent previously, obliterates and modifies into a distinct one at some other time.

During that period, the head of the Tollage department of the city Rājagṛha was a follower of Śramaṇa Dharma. He brought Aśwamitra onto the right path. Aśwamitra realising that his beliefs are false went back to his teacher and asked him forgiveness. He underwent vow of repentance for holding a false view of reality and once again joined the congregation as a Śramaṇa.

Dwikriyavadi Fifth Heretic - Gaṃga (228 V.N.)

The fifth schism was started by an ascetic named Gaṃga, in V.N.228. He was also known as Gaṃgadeva and was a disciple of Dhanāḍhya (Dhana Gupta), who was the disciple of Ācārya Mahāgiri. He opined that two types of activities and two manifestations can occur simultaneously. He held that Mahāvīra's saying 'only one feeling and one conscious activity at one point of time' is untrue.

Ārya Dhana Gupta tried his best to mitigate the doubt that cropped up in his mind citing many examples. Even after listening to the logical, intrinsic, analytical and easy to grasp explanation of his teacher, the ascetic Gaṃga did not forsake his importunity. So he was exterminated from the congregation.

After being expelled from the congregation, Gaṃga started a new doctrine called 'Dwikriyas'. It was short-lived and he, by this time realised his blunder. He went to his teacher, pleaded forgiveness,

underwent vow of repentance and once again observed the holy path following the principles of temperance.

Administration of congregation after Pontiff Suhastī

Ācārya Suhastī did a remarkable service to the congregation during his pontificate, and his tenure is an embodiment of all-round development both in the congregation and in the religion. Nearly for 300 years right from Ārya Sudharmā to Ārya Mahāgiri and Ārya Sushati, the Jain Order was administered & safeguarded efficiently by all the ācāryas only.

Apart from ācāryas, there was the mention of other ranks in the scriptures such as Upādhyāya, Gaṇi, Gaṇavachedaka, Sthavira, preacher (Pravartaka) etc. However, except for ācārya, Gaṇadhara and Sthavira there is no mention of any other rank or their activities, right from the Tīrthaṅkara era till pontiff Ācārya Mahāgiri.

The sub-divisions like lineage, Gaṇa and branches started originating, since the period of Ācārya Yaśobhadra. But due to the influence of brilliant ācāryas like Bhadrabāhu and Sthūlabhadra, differences of opinion could not arise in the Śramaṇa congregation. Ārya Mahāgiri and Ārya Suhastī also did not allow any divisions, and competently maintained the unity of Jain order.

The three ranks of group-ācārya, discourse-ācārya and epochal-ācārya were created and their duties and powers were clearly demarcated so as to prevent any minor difference in the traditions, from transforming into a gigantic form and to protect the pure doctrines of Śrūta dharma and the principles of conduct from being destroyed either totally or partially in future. As a result, the following three traditions came into existence:

1. **Gaṇadhara lineage:** The leader of the Gaṇa should take care of the Gaṇa and act as a teacher and ensure that the Guru-disciple tradition was followed strictly. This tradition and rank has been continuing till date. The current Gaṇapatis are regarded as the vestige of it.
2. **Descriptive scholar lineage:** the monks who were proficient in all the pious traditions of canonical literature and knowledge and could recite and explain the meaning efficiently was considered

as the ācāryas of decriptive scholar lineage. Their boundary is not restricted to their own Gaṇa; instead it stretches over the entire congregation.

3. **Epochal lineage:** In this tradition, one, who with his exceptional talent and skill could influence not only within Jainism but even outside its purview, was made as the epochal-ācārya. There was no prescribed eligible criterion that the discourse-ācārya or epochal-ācārya should belong to a particular Gaṇa or tradition; he could be appointed from any Gaṇa or tradition. After an epochal-ācārya, his successor could be appointed from a different Gaṇa or tradition from that of the pontiff who held the office till then.

After Lord Mahāvīra, for nearly 250 to 275 years, the congregation was efficiently run by a single Gan-ācārya, who successfully and proficiently accomplished the two tasks, i.e., administration of the congregation and the recital and explanation of the canons. During his pontification, Ārya Suhastī gave up the long established convention of Monocracy and opted for two Pontiffs – Gan-ācārya to run the congregation and dicourse-ācārya to recite and explain the meanings of the Āgamas. In course of time, the rank of epochal-ācārya was created. The necessity behind creating the three ranks in place of one is attributed to the following reasons: Farsighted ācāryas could foresee the differences that will erupt in the future, in Gaṇas, traditions and in beliefs. So in order to sustain unity in diversity, they might have preferred this type of arrangement in the congregation.

After Ārya Mahāgiri, so as to sustain the unanimity of scriptural traditions both in aphorisms and in structure; Keeping in mind the well being of the Jain traditions, Ārya Suhastī appointed Ārya Balissaha, as discourse-ācārya, as he was equally respected by both the Gaṇas. Thus facilitating the smooth administration of the congregation and retaining the age-old tradition, he paved the way for a new convention.

As there were two independent ranks i.e. group-ācārya and discourse-ācārya and as they were always associated closely with other Śramaṇas, the unity of the congregation was held high and intact at all times.

As far as the rank of epochal-ācārya is concerned, during the period of Suhastī, under the patronage of the Mauryan king Samprati and also due

to his faithful and devoted services, Jaina Dharma spread far and wide; besides there was tremendous development & growth in Śramaṇa congregation also. The Śramaṇas went to distant lands both within and outside the country and spread Jainism. As a result, the versatility of Suhastī was recognised and praised by one and all and he became renowned as epochal-ācārya of his times. And from then onwards the third convention of epochal-ācārya came into prominence. Both the posts i.e. discourse-ācārya and epochal-ācārya were not restricted to any particular Gaṇa as only the efficiency and worthiness of the Śramaṇa was taken into consideration. Hence both these ranks have been respected by the monks of all traditions and Gaṇas, till date.

The main responsibility of the epochal-ācārya was to bring all the Gaṇas under one roof, encouraging them to adhere to its principles; and in the time of crisis, apart from administration of the congregation, their chief duty was to propagate and pay tribute to Jainism using all their abilities and skills. Their decisions were cited as authentic even in non-Jain commonkities also.

According to “Duṣamākāla Śramaṇa congregation Stotra”, in the Jain order, till the end of Duṣamākāla period, Sudharmā and 2004 other ācāryas were considered as epochal.

The immediate advantage of the creation of new ranks like discourse-ācārya and epochal-ācārya was that, in spite of the sub-division of Gaṇa, lineage, branch, etc., the unity of the congregation remained intact and thereby preventing the disintegration of the congregation.

Before presenting the historical events during the respective periods of the ācāryas of the aforesaid three traditions up to Devardhi Kṣamā śramaṇa, the names of ācāryas of these three traditions are given below:

Initially, the lineage of Ārya Mahāgiri which was well-known as discourse lineage tradition is being given below:

The ācārya traditions of Ārya Mahāgiri
Discourse lineage tradition:

1	Ārya Sudharmā	2	Ārya Jambū	3	Ārya Prabhava
4	Ārya Sayyambhava	5	Ārya Yaśobhadra	6	Ārya Saṃbhūtavijaya
7	Ārya Bhadrabāhu	8	Ārya Sthūlabhadra	9	Ārya Mahāgiri
10	Ārya Suhastī	11	Ārya Balissaha	12	Ārya Swāti
13	Ārya Śyāma	14	Ārya Sāṃdilya	15	Ārya Samudra
16	Ārya Gaṃgu	17	Ārya Dharma	18	Ārya Bhadrugupta
19	Ārya Vajra	20	Ārya Rakṣita	21	Ārya Ānandila
22	Ārya Nāgahasti	23	Ārya Revatinakṣatra	24	Brahmdwīpaka Siṃha
25	Ārya Skāṃdila	26	Ārya Himavanta	27	Ārya Nāgārjuna
28	Ārya Govinda	29	Ārya Bhūtaḍḍina	30	Ārya Lauhitya
31	Ārya Dūṣyagaṇi	32	Ārya Devārdhigaṇi		

Names of epochal- ācārya

Contemporary of discourse lineage

1	Ārya Sudharmā Swāmī	2	Ārya Jambū Swāmī	3	Ārya Prabhava Swāmī
4	Ārya Sayyambhava Swāmī	5	Ārya Yaśobhadra Swāmī	6	Ārya Saṃbhūtavijaya
7	Ārya Bhadrabāhu	8	Ārya Sthūlabhadra	9	Ārya Mahāgiri
10	Ārya Suhasthi	11	Ārya Guṇasundara	12	Ārya Syāmācārya (Kālakācārya I)
13	Ārya Skāṃdilācārya	14	Ārya Revatimitra	15	Ārya Dharma
16	Ārya Bhadrugupta	17	Ārya Śrīgupta	18	Ārya Vajraswāmī
19	Ārya Rakṣita	20	Ārya Durbalikapuṣya Mitra	21	Ārya Vajrasena

22	Ārya Nāgahasti	23	Ārya Revatimitra	24	Ārya Siṃha
25	Ārya Nāgārjuna	26	Ārya Bhūtaḍḍina	27	Ārya Kālakācārya (IV)

**Kalpasūtra –Sthavirāvalī (group ācārya tradition)
(ĀRYA SUHASTĪ ĀCĀRYA TRADITION)**

1	Ārya Sudharmā	2	Ārya Jambū	3	Ārya Prabhava
4	Ārya Sāyambhava	5	Ārya Yaśobhadra	6	Sambhūtavijaya- Bhadrabāhu
7	Ārya Sthūlabhadra	8	Ārya Suhasthi	9	Ārya Susthith- Supratibuddha
10	Ārya Indradinna	11	Ārya Dinna	12	Ārya Siṃhagiri
13	Ārya Vajra	14	Ārya Ratha	15	Ārya Puṣyagiri
16	Ārya Phalgumitra	17	Ārya Dhanagiri	18	Ārya Śivabhūti
19	Ārya Bhadra	20	Ārya Nakṣatra	21	Ārya Dakṣa
22	Ārya Nāga	23	Ārya Jehila	24	Ārya Viṣṇu
25	Ārya Kālaka	26	Ārya Saṃpalitabhadra	27	Ārya Vridha
28	Ārya congregation palita	29	Ārya Hasti	30	Ārya Dharma
31	Ārya Siṃha	32	Ārya Dharma	33	Ārya Sāṃdilya

As the lineage of Mahāgiri is important, information about the lineage of Ārya Mahāgiri is discussed first and then the ācāryas of remaining traditions are narrated in the text, based on the information provided in the Sthavirāvalī of Nandi Sūtra.

**Ārya Balissaha and Group-ācārya & discourse-ācārya of Mahāgiri
Tradition
(Estimated V.N.S. 245 to 329)**

In 245 V.N. after Ārya Mahāgiri acceded to heaven, out of hindsight prominent Sthaviras, Ārya Balissaha was appointed as the group-ācārya. His Gaṇa was called as ‘Uttara Balissaha’.

No personal information, like the birth, initiation, parents, etc., of Balissaha is available. He was a Brahmin of Kauśika lineage. Initiated into monastic life by Ārya Mahāgiri, he obtained the knowledge of the ten Pūrvas. Like his Guru, he too very strictly followed the holy path, because of which, after Ārya Mahāgiri, he was considered as the Chief group-ācārya of this tradition.

With a view to maintain the unity of the congregation, Ārya Suhasī created the ranks of discourse-ācārya and epochal-ācārya, apart from group-ācārya. Accordingly, to maintain coordination and affability between the two ranks, he appointed Balissaha, the great scholar of canons, as the discourse-ācārya of the entire congregation.

Ārya Balissaha imparting canonical knowledge to the monks of the congregation carried out commendable service to the Jain order. In the recital of Śramaṇa congregation, which was organised during his tenure, he recited and explained the meaning of the eleven Aṅgas and the ten Pūrvas and contributed his full share in compiling them in a systematic order.

During the period of recital, he also compiled a Jain canon text called Aṅga Vidyā from ‘Vidyānuvāda Pūrva’. From Uttara Balissaha, his disciples branched out into four divisions known as Kosambiyā, Sotittiyā, Kodambāñī and Candanāgiri.

Thus, Ārya Balissaha held the rank of group-ācārya of Mahāgiri tradition in addition to being the discourse-ācārya of the entire congregation for a long time. His tenure is estimated from 245 to 329 V.N.

11th Epochal-ācārya Guṇasundara (291 TO 335 V.N.)

According to the tradition of epochal-ācārya, Ārya Balissaha declared Ārya Guṇasundara (also known as Guṇākara, Meghagaṇī, and Ghanasundara) as epochal-ācārya.

Birth	V.N. 235
Initiation	V.N. 259
Became epochal-ācārya	V.N. 291
Heavenly abode	V.N. 335
Household life duration	24 years
Ordinary Monk tenure	32 years
Tenure as epochal-ācārya	44 years
Total longevity	100 years

11. Susthita - Supratibuddha group-ācārya (291 TO 339 V.N.)

Birth	V.N. 243
Initiation	V.N. 274
Became group-ācārya	V.N. 291
Heavenly abode	V.N. 339
Household life duration	31 years
Ordinary Monk tenure	17 years
Tenure as group-ācārya	48 years
Total longevity	96 years

After Ārya Suhasī, in his lineage, Ārya Susthita and Ārya Supratibuddha were appointed as group-ācāryas.

Ārya Susthita and Ārya Supratibuddha were brothers. They were born in Kākandī city in the ruling family and they belonged to Vyāghrāpatya Gotra. Both the ācāryas chanted Sūri Mantra 10 million times. Hence their gaccha became famous as Kauṭika-gaccha. Prior to this, right from Ārya Sudharmā to Ārya Suhasī, the Dharma congregation of Lord Mahāvīra was known as Nirgrāṃtha or detached gaccha.

The King of Kaliṅga, Mahāmeghavāhana Khāavela assembled together the entire four-fold congregation for reciting the canons at Kumāragiri hills. The two brothers also participated in it. They had 5 disciples.

1 Ārya Indradinna - group-ācārya 2 Ārya Priyagramtha - Occulist 3 Ārya Vidyādhara Gopāla 4 Ārya Ṛṣidatta and 5 Ārya Arhadatta.

Except his name, no other information is available about Ārya Supratibaddha.

Royal Dynasty during the period of Ārya Balissaha

After the departure of Ārya Mahāgiri to heaven, Ārya Balissaha became the group-ācārya of Mahāgiri's Gaṇa in V.N. 245. After that he became the discourse-ācārya of the congregation. However, information is not available as to how many years he held the rank of ācārya. Based on the information available in different texts, only a rough presumption can be derived.

According to Himavaṃta Sthavirāvalī, Ārya Balissaha attended the council of the four-fold congregation organised by Mahāmeghavāhan Bhikkurāya, the King of Kaliṅga, at Kumāragiri, so as to revive and re-establish the knowledge of the Pūrvas and the Ekādaśāṃgī. It is a historical fact that after killing Bṛhadratha, the last king of Magadha in V.N. 323, his Commander-in-Chief, and Puṣyamitrā Śṛṅṅ ascended the throne. Upon the request of the Jain populace of Magadha, to protect them against the atrocities of Puṣyamitrā, Bhikkurāya attacked Magadha and defeated Puṣyamitrā twice.

Later, in order to uphold the canonical scriptures, Bhikkurāya organised a large assembly of Śramaṇas, Śramaṇīs, Votaries and Female-votaries at Kumāragiri, to compose, compile and restore the Aṃga Śāstra and the knowledge of Pūrvas.

The aforesaid council by Bhikkurāya Khāavela is believed to have been organised after 323 V.N., between 325 and 329. It is so because, after the nirvāṇa of Mahāvīra, the Kingdom of Magadha was ruled by the Mauryan Dyansty for 108 years. Thus, Puṣyamitrā ascended the throne of Magadha in 323 V.N.

After giving an adequate lesson to Puṣyamitrā, the then formidable foe of Jains, Khāravela, sometime between V.N. 325 and 329, might have summoned the council of the four-fold congregation including Śramaṇa congregation at Kumāragiri hills to properly organise the lessons in the Dwādaśāṃgī.

In the light of above mentioned facts, it can be assumed that the following major dynasties reigned during the tenure of Ārya Balissaha as discourse-ācārya:

- Bindusāra, the Mauryan emperor ruled over the kingdom from V.N. 233 to 258; out of the 25 years of his total reign, the last 13 years were from 245 to 258 V.N.
- The reign of Mauryan emperor, Aśoka the great, from V.N. 258 to 283.
- Mauryan emperor, Samprati's reign from V.N.Y 283 to 293, of which 2 years were with Pāṭalīputra as his capital and 9 years with Ujjaini as his capital.
- According to Jain scriptures King Puṣyaratha and Vṛhadratha and according to Hindu scriptures Śāliśūka, Devaśarmā, Śatadhanuṣa and Vṛhadratha supposedly ruled the kingdom from V.N. 293 to 323. After the Mauryan emperor Samprati, they wielded power over Ujjaini too.
- Bhikkurāya or Mahāmeghavāhana and Khāravela are estimated to have ruled Kāliṅga from V.N. 316 to 329.
- Out of the 30 years of the reign of Puṣyamitrā Śṛṅga from V.N.322 to 352, 7 years are from 322 to 329 V.N. His capital was Pāṭalīputra and he reigned over Ujjaini also.

Thus, if the tenure of Ārya Balissaha as a discourse-ācārya is taken to be between V.N. 245 and 329, i.e., a total of 84 years, then it can also be said that during that time Bindusāra ruled for 13 years and the remaining 7 Maurya kings ruled for 71 years.

The King of Kāliṅga - Mahāmeghavāhana Khārvela (316 TO 329 V.N.)

In the history of Kāliṅga, the name of Emperor Bhikkurāya Khārvela as such occupies an incomparable place; besides his name is written in golden letters in the history of Jainism and will remain so for time

immemorial. The kings who invade the other lands to expand their territories cannot be counted. But the one who takes the risk of war to protect his co-religionist subjects, from the atrocities of a powerful king, is a true king and such examples are seldom found in history.

King Khārvela not only enhanced the glory of Kaliṅga by his most valuable contributions for the progress of Jain religion and culture but also protected the Jain monks and followers from the brutality of the Magadha King Puṣyamitrā Śrṅga alias Brahaspati by invading and defeating & punishing him twice.

On the basis of inscriptions, some historians opine that the Kaliṅga King Khārvela belonged to the Chedi dynasty while others believe him to be of the Caitra dynasty.

In Himavaṃta Sthavirāvalī it is mentioned that Khāravela was of Ceṭaka dynasty and the story goes along these lines: Ceṭaka, the King of Vaiśālī was defeated by Kūṇika in a war; after the death of his father Ceṭaka, his son Śobhanarāya went to Sulocana, his father-in-law, the king of Kaliṅga. King Sulocana had no heir; hence he declared his son-in-law as his heir-apparent. Consequently, after the death of Sulochan, Śobhanarāya ascended the throne. Khāravela is of the tenth generation of Śobhanarāya, the son of King Ceṭaka.

The fourfold congregation, organized by Khāravela to reconstitute the canonical texts was attended by Ārya Balissaha and 200 other Śramaṇas equaling to Jinakalpi monks (whose conduct is modelled upon that of Mahāvīra), Ārya Susthita and 300 Sthavira Kalpi monks, female-monk Āryā Poyaṇī and 300 others, Bikṣurāja, Sīvaṃda, Cūrṇaka, Selaka and 500 Votaries, and Purṇamitrā (the queen of Khāravela) and 500 Female-votaries. Yielding to the request of Khāravela, those monks inscribed the doctrines of Mahāvīra in a unanimously acclaimed form, on cortices of Birch and Palmyra leaves; thus he safeguarded the Dwādaśāṅgī, preached by Sudharmā.

In V.N. 323 Puṣyamitrā Śrṅga became the king of Magadha by killing Vṛhadratha, the last emperor of the Maurya dynasty. Usurping the kingdom he started tormenting the Buddhist and Jain monks. As soon as he became aware of these facts, King Khāravela attacked Puṣyamitrā in

V.N. 324, i.e., during the 8th year of his reign for the first time; and in V.N. 328 during the 12th year of his reign for the second time. This proves that Khāravēla ascended the throne of Kalīṃga in 316 V.N.

On the basis of the events that occurred, it is evident that Khāravēla was born in V.N. 292, became Prince in 307, crowned as king in 316 and died in V.N.Y 329. Khāravēla belonged to the Candra dynasty of Haihaya Kāatriya Ceṭaka.

Elephanta cave inscriptions of Khāravēla were written 50 years after the death of Khāravēla in 379 V.N. (B.C. 148).

Puṣyamitrā Śṛṅga

During the reign of Puṣyamitrā Śṛṅga, Ārya Balissaha was the ācārya of the Jain order. After killing Brihadratha, the last Maurya king in V.N. 323, Puṣyamitrā Śṛṅga ascended the throne of Pāṭalīputra. He was also known as Vṛhaspatimitra. His reign is marked for the decline of Jainism and Buddhism and the rise of the Vedic rituals.

After seizing the throne of Pāṭalīputra in V.N. 323, he inflicted atrocities on the Buddhists and Jains. As soon as he came to know of this, King Khāravēla attacked Puṣyamitrā Śṛṅga for the first time in V.N. 324 and again in V.N. 328 and defeated him.

After the death of Ārya Balissaha and the Kalīṃga King Khāravēla, epochal-ācārya Ārya Guṇasundara and group-ācārya Ārya Susthita-Supratibudha, etc encountered many problems during the regime of Puṣyamitrā Śṛṅga, as he was a strong opponent of Jainism.

Ārya Swāti, the 12th Discourse-ācārya (His estimated tenure – V.N. 329 – 335)

Ārya Swāti headed the congregation after the demise of Ācārya Balissaha. He was born in a Brahmin family of Hārīta lineage. After listening to Ācārya Balissaha's preaching filled with renouncement, he became avert towards the world, and when still an adolescent took initiation into the Śramaṇa congregation. Serving his teacher with

dedication, he gradually learnt Ekādaśāṅgī and the ten Pūrvas thoroughly, with concentration and perseverance.

The historians are of the opinion that Ārya Swāti is different from Umā Swāti, the Vācaka (one who recites and explains the canonical literature and referred as descriptive scholar). It is probable that due to the similarity in their names, the authors of Paṭṭāvalī might have been confused. Ārya Swāti died in V.N. 335. During his tenure as ācārya, Guṇasundara was the epochal-ācārya and Ārya Susthita-Supratibuddha was the group-ācārya.

**Śyāmācārya, the 13th Discourse-ācārya and 12th Epochal-ācārya
(First Kālakācārya)
(V.N. 335 TO 376)**

Birth	V.N. 280
Initiation	V.N. 300
Became discourse-ācārya / epochal-ācārya	V.N. 335
Heavenly abode	V.N. 376
Household life duration	20 years
Ordinary Monk tenure	35 years
Tenure as ācārya	41 years
Total longevity	96 years

According to the Nandi Sūtra Sthavirāvalī, after discourse-ācārya Swāti, his disciple Ārya Śyāmācārya was considered as 13th discourse-ācārya. In the Prabhāvaka Caritra and Kālakācārya Prabhaṃdha, Ārya Śyāmācārya is referred to as the 12th epochal-ācārya after Ācārya Guṇākara.

Śyāmācārya was an eminent scholar of his times in Dravyānu yoga (exposition of metaphysics). He was the first Kālakācārya and regarded as the interpreter of ‘Nigoda’ (The dormant state of human soul).

This very Śyāmācārya was also the author of Pannavaṇā Sūtra. Even today, this Sūtra is classified into 36 parts. From the point of view of the explanation of Jīva, Ajīva and other substance types given in this Sūtra, it can be regarded as the unparalleled storehouse of metaphysical knowledge. A study of this Sūtra is considered to be beneficial for the understanding of the intricate knowledge of Jain philosophy.

Ārya Śyāma was also known as Kālakācārya (first). All together, there were four different Kālakācāryas during different periods of time.

The political and religious scenario during Ārya Śyāma's leadership

During the tenure of Ārya Śyāma, who was the 13th discourse-ācārya and also the 12th epochal-ācārya, the reigning King Puṣyamitrā patronised Vedic religion. As a result, the Vedic rituals like Yajñas and sacrifices, gained more popularity. Puṣyamitrā performed the Aśwamedha sacrifice, probably sometime during V.N. 330 and 340. According to Greek historians, the year of the Aśwamedha sacrifice was performed around V.N. 347 (170 B.C).

With the performance of the Aśwamedha Sacrifice by Puṣyamitrā, a kind of wave spread throughout the Country about performance of sacrifices. Many small and big sacrifices have been performed in different parts of the Country. Hence, many inscriptions are available which mention the several yagnas performed during the reign of the Śṛṅga Kings.

The Śṛṅga dynasty was founded in V.N. 323, when Ārya Balissaha was a discourse-ācārya. After the death of Puṣyamitrā Śṛṅga in V.N. 353, his son Agnimitra ascended the throne of Magadha. Not much information is available in Jain literature, about the other kings and their reigning period of this dynasty. The following information is available about the king of the Śṛṅga dynasty and their reign in the epic literature:

1. Puṣyamitra	36 years
2. Agnimitra	08 years
3. Vasujyeṣṭha	07 years
4. Vasumitra	10 years
5. Bhada	02 years
6. Pulindaka	03 years
7. Ghoṣa	03 years
8. Vajramitra	01 year
9. Bhāgavata	32 years
10. Devabhūti	10 years

A careful observation of the regimes reveals the fact that other than Bhāgavata, the ninth ruler of this dynasty, the other rulers' reign was

neither stable nor peaceful. The regime of the fifth to the eighth monarchs is more or less insignificant.

The rulers of this dynasty were not at all tolerant towards other religions and religious intolerance reached its zenith. The massacre of Buddhist monks by Puṣyamitrā is a proof of this.

Ārya Indradinna - Group-ācārya

In the lineage of Ārya Suhastī, after the departure to heaven of Ārya Susthita-Supratibuddha, in V.N. 339, Indradinna of Kauśika Gotra was appointed the group-ācārya of the congregation. Apart from this, no other information is available about him. During his tenure, his co-disciple Ārya Priyagraṁtha was described as an influential occult ācārya. After Ārya Indradinna, Ārya Dinna became group- ācārya. He was Gautama Gotra Brahmin.

14th Discourse-ācārya and 13th epochal-ācārya Ārya Sandilya (Skandila) (V.N.S. 376 to 414)

Birth	V.N. 306
Initiation	V.N. 328
Became ācārya	V.N. 376
Heavenly abode	V.N. 414
Household life duration	22 years
Ordinary Monk tenure	48 years
Tenure as ācārya	38 years
Total longevity	108 years

Subsequent to Śyāmācārya, Ārya Śāṁdilya of Kauśika Gotra became the 14th discourse-ācārya. He is also known as Skaṁdilācārya. Ācārya Devardhigaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa, in reverence, saluted Śāṁdillaṁ, saying “*vaṁde kosiyaḡotaṁ sāṁdillaṁ ajjajīyadharaṁ*”. It is apparent from the word “*ajjajīyadharaṁ*”, in the verse that Ācārya Śāṁdilya was a staunch believer and follower of ‘*Jīta- Vyavahāra*’, i.e., code of conduct based on conformity to the Jain tenets and also other four Vyavahāras i.e. Āgama, Sūtra, Ājñā and Dharma. In Tapāgaccha Paṭṭāvalī, he is described as the author of a holy text ‘*Jīta maryādyā*’. It is believed that Ācārya Vṛddhacārī was his disciple. The sub-division ‘Śāṁdilya Gaccha’

originated from Ācārya Śāṃḍilya, which in course of time merged with 'Candra Gaccha'.

From V.N. 376 to 414, Ācārya Śāṃḍilya held the rank of both a discourse-ācārya and an epochal-ācārya simultaneously. Accordingly, he was the 14th ācārya in descriptive-scholar lineage and the 13th ācārya in the epochal lineage.

Ārya Dinna Group-ācārya

In the line of Ārya Suhastī, Ārya Dinna succeeded Ārya Indradinna to the rank of group-ācārya. He was a Brahmin of Gautama Gotra.

Ārya Samudra, the 15th Discourse-ācārya (414 To 454 V.N.)

In V.N.414, Ārya Samudra held the rank of a discourse-ācārya after Ārya Śāṃḍilya. Ācārya Devavācaka has started that he had immaculate knowledge of cosmology and geography. Being a very good orator, his sermons used to be very impressive. He wandered in distant lands too.

Ārya Samudra was a good scholar in metaphysical knowledge and he was a specialist in geography. Even in adverse situations, he would maintain his equanimity without getting agitated or worried. A versatile monk like Ārya Maṃgu was his disciple. Serving the Jain order for forty years as ācārya, he finally attained heaven in 454V.N.

During the last years of his life, Ārya Samudra suffered from severe weakness in his thighs, because of which he was unable to walk. At the end of his tenure, the very impressive Ārya Kālakācārya (second), became the ācārya of the congregation.

Kālakācārya (SECOND)

Nearly a century after the first Kālakācārya, in the 5th century V.N., the second Kālakācārya presided over the congregation. His introduction is as follows: -

Vairasiṃha, the King of Dhārāvāsa and his Queen Surasundarī had a son by name Kālaka and a daughter named Sarasvatī. The brother and sister were so fond of each other that they spent most of their time together. Once a Jain monk was giving discourses in a garden at the outskirts of the city. Kālaka and Sarasvatī listened to the sermon; feeling averse towards the world, they took the permission of their parents and got initiated into ascetic life.

Within a very short time, Ārya Kālaka learnt all the scriptures from his teacher and took over the charge of the congregation as ācārya in 453V.N. Kālakācārya was a renowned scholar-ācārya with occult powers, of his times. But it is said that the disciples who take initiation from him, would not remain with him for long. He thought that it was due to his miscalculation of the auspicious time. So in order to learn perfect calculations of auspicious times, he approached Ājīvakaś ascetics and learnt occult science

Thus Ācārya Kālaka, apart from being proficient in the Jain Āgamas, also became a distinguished scholar in astrology and occult knowledge. Once, Ācārya Kālaka came to Ujjaini along with his disciples. Many female ascetics came to the garden outside the city where he stayed, to seek his blessings; among them was female monk Sarasvatī. King Gardabhilla, who saw her on the way, was completely taken over by her exquisite beauty. He ordered his soldiers to abduct her and brought her to his palace.

Being aware of the sinful incident, Ācārya Kālaka and the congregation in Ujjaini tried to persuade Gardabhilla. But blinded by lust, he refused to let go off female monk Sarasvatī. Enraged thereby, Ācārya Kālaka swore an oath that he would dethrone King Gardabhilla.

Apprehending that Gardabhilla might become cautious about the impending danger, the foresighted Ācārya Kālaka prattling incoherently

and pretending to be a mad person, started roaming on the streets and crossed of Ujjaini. When Ācārya Kālaka was confident that Gardabhilla was convinced about his madness, he left Ujjaini.

Brothers Balamitra and Bhānumitra were his contemporary kings ruling over Bharoṃca. They were the nephews of Sarasvatī and Ārya Kālaka. In order to free his sister from the clutches of Gardabhilla and to dethrone him, Ārya Kālaka received help from his nephews Balamitra & Bhānumitra and the Śaka kings as well. They, with their combined armies attacked Ujjaini, defeated and overthrew Gardabhilla and freed female monk Sarasvatī.

The Śaka king, who provided shelter to Ārya Kālaka, was anointed as the king of Ujjaini. From then the reputation of the Śaka dynasty spread far and wide. Thus in V.N. 466, the Śaka dynasty established its authority over Ujjaini, though for a very short time.

Ārya Kālaka underwent the vows of self-reproach and sanctified him for the high-violence sin that he had committed, to safeguard the congregation. He once again initiated his sister Sarasvatī and brought her onto the holy path of self-restraint.

Observing penance, temperance and spiritual-exertion, Ārya Kālaka involved in the progress and spiritual development of himself and of the congregation. He propagated and expanded Jain religion and uplifted many souls.

Because of internal Strīfe and rivalry, gradually the Śaka kingdom became so weak that within four years, it fell prey in the hands of Vikramāditya who with a huge army invaded in V.N. 470, subjugated and conquered the throne. As soon as he ascended the throne of Ujjaini in V.N. 470, he initiated the calendar year with his name.

Annual Saṃvatsarī celebration on Caturthī instead of Paṃcamī

Ārya Kālaka made it customary to start observing Paryūṣaṇa Parva (festival celebrated annually for self-purification) on Caturthī i.e. 4th day of the fortnight instead of Paṃcamī i.e. fifth day of the fortnight. The details pertaining to this change, as described in Nīśītha cūrṇi are as follows:

Wandering through many places, he reached Bharoṃca and camped there for the monsoon. At that time Balamitra was the king and his younger brother Bhānumitra was the crown prince.

Balamitra and Bhānumitra had a sister named Bhānuśrī. Her son Balabhānu was very simple and humble by nature; he had great faith and devotion towards ascetics. He happened to listen to the sermon of Kālakācārya and got enlightened. Averted from worldly life, took initiation from him. This enraged Balamitra and Bhanumitra, who compelled Kālakācārya to leave Bharoṃca during monsoon itself. Because of the unfavourable reaction from the king, Kālakācārya left Bharoṃca for Pratiṣṭhānpura with his entourage. He sent a message to the Śramaṇa congregation in Pratiṣṭhānpura that he would reach the place before the festival of Paryūṣaṇa and that only after his arrival the related festive – programme must be finalised.

Sātavāhana, the king of Pratiṣṭhānpura was a follower of Jain Dharma and a great devotee of Śramaṇa monks. In order to welcome the ācārya, he took with him the local congregation, the ruling clan, kinsmen, attendants, servants and citizens; Kālakācārya thus entered the city amidst exhilaration and welcoming cheers of veneration.

After entering the city, in front of the congregation, Kālakācārya announced the collective celebration of Paryūṣaṇa festival on Bhādrapada Śukla Paṃcamī. The commonky accepted the proposition. But at the same moment King Sātavāhana said, “Lord! Following the customs and conventions of the society, I have to participate in the Indra Mahotsava on the day of Paṃcamī (5th) and so I will be deprived of offering salutations to the monks, listening to the discourses and the very occasion itself. Hence it will be optimum to celebrate the festival on Ṣaṣṭi (6th)”.

The ācārya said, “However, the date of the festival cannot be postponed”.

The King enquired, “In such a situation, of what harm would it be if we advance the date to Caturthī (4th)?”

Giving his consent, Kālakācārya said, “Yes, it can be done that way”.

Thus Kālakācārya as he was an impressive propagator, taking into consideration the ongoing times, and as the situation demanded, started the annual celebration of Paryūṣaṇa on Bhādrapada Śukla Caturthī (4th).

Kālakācārya (Second) in Swarṇabhūmi

During the last phase of his life Ācārya Kālaka (Second) with his large family of disciples was wandering in Ujjaini. In spite of his old age, he was always engaged in imparting the knowledge of canonical scriptures to his disciples. During those days, Ārya Sāgara, the exponent of Sūtras and the disciple of Ārya Kālaka, was wandering in Swarṇabhūmi.

Ācārya Kālaka was grieved noticing the disinterest and lack of concentration towards the study of scriptures among his students. He thought, “These disciples of mine are not putting their heart and soul in listening to and studying the expositions. Then what is the use of staying with them? I should stay at such a place where there is inclination towards & practice of expositions. It is possible that following my departure to another place, my disciples, may feel ashamed of themselves and regain interest towards learning the expositions”.

So thinking, Ārya Kālaka said to Śayyātara, “I am proceeding towards Swarṇabhūmi. Do not readily disclose this information to my disciples. If they persistently insist, only then inform them that I have gone to Ārya Sāgara in Swarṇabhūmi.”

Thus apprising Śayyātara, Ācārya Kālaka set out for Swarṇabhūmi at night much before his disciples awoke from their sleep and reaching Swarṇabhūmi, he entered the group (gaccha) of Ārya Sāgara. Ārya Sāgara thinking that “he is only a peasant”, did not show any regard, etc to Kālakācārya.

Analysing the scriptures during the time of their study, Ācārya Sāgara asked the newly-arrived elderly monk, (Kālakācārya), “Peasant! Do you understand these?”

The ācārya replied, “Yes!”

Sāgara with an egoistic tone said, “In that case, listen to these,” so saying, he started explaining the expositions. Elsewhere in Ujjaini, when

the disciples noticed that their teacher was nowhere to be seen, they searched for him and not finding him, finally asked Śayyātara. Śayyātara said, “When your teacher did not even inform you, then why would he inform me?” When the disciples, worried by the sudden disappearance of their teacher, kept on asking Śayyātara, then he said, “The ācārya was highly distressed seeing your disinterest and tardiness in learning the canons. So he went to Ārya Sāgara in Swarṇabhūmi”. He reprimanded them in harsh words for their lack of interest in learning.

That very instant the conscious-Stricken disciples set out for Swarṇabhūmi. On the way when the passers-by would query them, as to the name of the revered ācārya who is going, they would reply ‘Ācārya Kālaka’. Thus the intimation spread like wild fire all over Swarṇabhūmi. The people there told Ārya Sāgar, “Ārya Kālaka who is well-versed in all the scriptures and who has a large family of disciples is arriving here”. Ācārya Sāgara became very delightful and he said to his disciples, “My revered Grand Guru (Guru’s Guru) is coming. I will ask some questions that are worth knowing”.

Ārya Sāgar along with his disciples went to receive Kālākācārya, his – Grand Guru the great ācārya of that era. The visitor disciples asked Ārya Sāgara, “Did our ācārya come here?” They replied “No, however an old saint has been here”.

Reaching the lodging, when the host of monks from Ujjaini, swayed by emotion, fell on the feet of the ācārya with great reverence, then Ārya Sāgar realised that the old Saint himself was his Grand Guru, Ācārya Kālaka. Crushed with shame, he felt as if he was swallowed by the earth. He uttered with remorse, “Alas! I prattled a lot and even made the Kṣamāśramaṇa (one who endures suffering with equanimity) offer salutations to me”. Later to sanctify again his violation of the codes of conduct, he in the midday observed the vow of Mithyā Duṣkṛta (guilty of doing a wrong act). He then prostrated on the feet of ācārya and humbly asked, “O Kṣamāśramaṇa! How do I explain the expositions?”

Ācārya Kālaka replied, “Good, but do not ever try to be proud or arrogant”. Then Ārya Kālaka took a fistful of sand from a mound and placed in a small heap. He again lifted that fistful of sand and kept it nearby, repeating the exercise three times. Then he explained to the

congregation that just as the mound of soil reduced in size after taking away some amount from it and placing it in some other place, similarly, the meaning of the scriptures is carried forward from the Tīrthaṃkaras to Gaṇadharas, and from the Gaṇadharas to our preceding Ācāryas Upādhyāyas, so on and so forth like hereditary wealth. Thus in the course of its journey from one place to another, it is difficult to comprehend how this wealth becomes less and less, getting lost in some practices. . Hence, it is not right to have pride or arrogance regarding knowledge”. Thus Ācārya Kālaka enlightened Ārya Sāgara, his disciple’s disciple.

According to one belief, Śāṃdilya Gaccha sect emerged from the lineage of Kālakācārya.

Ācārya Vṛddhavādī and Siddhasena

Among the ācāryas who belonged to the first century of Vikram era, Ācārya Vṛddhavādī occupies a significant place. He was the teacher of Siddhasena, and an intellectual and a strong-willed monk. He was born in a village called Kauśāla in Gaudadeśa. His parents named him Mukunda. Inspired after listening to the discourse of Ācārya Skāṃdila Sūri of Vidyādhara lineage, a feeling of total detachment and renunciation roused in the mind of Mukunda and he took initiation as a Śramaṇa monk. Though initiated at an elderly age, he had a passion for learning and would spend day and night in quenching his thirst of knowledge. As he learnt by reading the verses aloud, other disciples who felt disturbed objected to his waking up so early in the morning to recite the lessons. In spite of his co-disciples repeatedly objecting, he continued his practice incessantly as he could not control his ardour for knowledge.

One day a co-disciple asked him, “By reading the verse in a loud tone, do you want the pestle to bloom?”

The sarcasm pricked Mukunda’s heart like a needle. He, with the grace of his Guru, who imparted him with a Sarasvatī Mantra, recited continuously for 21 days alongside following the vow of Acamlā (eating dry and tasteless food once a day). His endeavour culminated successfully with the appearance of the Goddess of Knowledge, who pleased by his devotion granted him the boon, “May you be blessed with the knowledge of all disciplines!”

Thus gifted with divine power, the monk Mukunda who now turned into a great poet approached his teacher’s feet and addressing the congregation, said in a high tone, “All those who poked fun at me saying whether at this old age, would I make the pestle blossom, may behold that I am indeed going to make the pestle bloom”.

Uttering these words ascetic Mukunda stood on the ground and using his divine power sprinkled unblemished water on the pestle and made it blossom right in front of the monks. Thus he proved that nothing is unachievable by a person with a strong determination.

Because of his unparalleled brilliance and knowledge, no opponent could face the elderly monk Mukund in debates and discussions. Hence he

became famous all over with the name Vṛddhavādī (Vṛddha =elder and vādī= debator).

Finding him fit in all respects, Ārya Skandila nominated him as ācārya. Once during his wanderings, Vṛddhavādī was going towards Bhṛḡupura. At that time a scholar called Sidhasena, considering himself to be the most prudent and the most intelligent, scorned at other scholars as if they were a blade of grass. Travelling from place to place in order to debate in scriptural discourses, he came to the path that led to Bhṛḡupura. There he listened to the tales of glory of Vṛddhavādī and followed him. Vṛddhavādī was on his wanderings at that time. Sidhasen followed him and met him on the way. The moment he met Vṛddhavādī Sidhasena declared, “I wish to debate with you on scriptures”.

Ācārya Vṛddhavādī replied, “That is fine, nevertheless, there are no scholars here for mediation. Without spectators who will give the verdict of who won or who lost the debate?”

Unable to restrain his intense desire to debate, Sidhasena showed the cowherds nearby and said, “Let these cowherds be our audience”.

Vṛddhavādī happily agreed to this proposition. The debate commenced with the adjudicating audience of cowherds. Sidhasen took the initiative and began the debate. Addressing the cowherds, he put forth his contention for a considerably long time in Sanskrita using beautiful words and phrases. Unfortunately the cowherds could not understand even a single word of Sidhasena. When Sidhasena after his line of argument, retired, the Avasarajña (one who can assess a situation and behave accordingly) Vṛddhavādī with resolve, stated his assertion in a musical pattern, the gist of which was – the one who does not ever harm any being, does not steal anything, does not seduce the spouse of another, and who according to his status and availability of resources gives alms to the needy, he slowly but surely will attain heavenly abode.

Listening to his explanation the cowherds were pleased and said, “O how melodiously and delightfully ‘Bābājī Mahārāja’ had shown the righteous path! But as far the revered Sidhasena is concerned we did not even understand what he said. He with his loud voice created throbbing pain in our ears.”

Listening to the verdict of the cowherds, Sidhasena accepted his defeat and said, “Lord! Please initiate me and make me your disciple as the audience has declared you a winner.

Ācārya Vṛddhavādī said, “Sidhasena, let us go to Bhṛgupura and have a debate in the royal court. What significance does a debate held in front of laymen like cowherds have?”

But Sidhasena was firm on his stand and said, “Sir! You are Kārajña (one who knows the three dimensions of time). So please initiate me in your congregation”. Seeing his firm resolve, Vṛddhavādī initiated him into the ascetic life and gave him the name Kumudacandra. Later when he held office of ācārya, he became famous with the name of Ācārya Sidhasena Diwākara. After nominating his most eligible disciple, Sidhasena to the rank of ācārya, Vṛddhavādī continued his wanderings elsewhere and Sidhasena moved towards Avantī.

The congregation in Avantī received him warmly amidst applauds and cheered him as ‘Son of Omniscient’ and other laudatory titles. Coincidentally, King Vikramāditya was coming from the opposite side, seated on an elephant. When he heard the people saying ‘Son of Omniscient’, in order to test him, offered salutations internally in his mind. Sidhasena lifted his hand and gestured to the king that he had accepted his salutation. The king asked in astonishment, “Are your blessings so insignificant that you are bestowing them on to a person who did not even pay his respects to you?” The ācārya replied, “O King! Though you did not physically salute me you did it in your heart”.

The pleased King Vikramāditya dismounted from the elephant and bowed to him in front of all the people gathered there and presented him with ten million golden coins. Ācārya Sidhasena who was under strict vow of non-possession of any kind said to the king, “O King! Leave alone accepting, we Jain monks do not even touch gold and women”.

As the king also felt that he cannot take the money back, once bequeathed to the monk, he spent the money for the welfare of the people.

There are famous anecdotes about Ācārya Sidhasena Diwākara’s erudition and his miracles. One of them says that Sidhasena secured a magic leaf from Mānsthambha (pillar of pride) in Citrakūṭa that had two charms. With the first charm Hemasiddhividyā, one can procure as much gold as one desires, and with the second charm, sarpavidyā, innumerable soldiers can be generated like mustard seeds. With these two mantras in hand, Sidhasena went to Devapāla the King of Kūrmārpura and with the help of his magic charms made him victorious in the battle against Vijayvarmā. Out of gratitude King Devapāla became a great devotee of Ācārya Sidhasena and as a royal tribute bestowed upon him the title ‘Diwakāra’, would visit him everyday and offer him salutations. Impressed by the devotion and sincerity of the king, even Ācārya Sidhasena used to go to the king, sitting in a palanquin.

Human mentality is such that it gets carried away by emotions and Ācārya Sidhasena was no exception to this. Carried away by the devotion of the king and devotees of high rank, he became languid towards his ascetic life and conduct. He spent most of his time in eating, drinking, relaxing and sleeping. He could not even encourage his disciples to practice the doctrines. The author of Prabaṃdha Kośā describes the situation in these words, “If the teacher continues sleeping inconsiderate of the path he is treading on, the disciples would surely follow suit. They too mimicking their teacher were leading a carefree and comfortable life – eating, drinking and sleeping. Thus, competing with each other in sleeping, the ascetics pushed salvation behind”.

When Vṛddhavādī came to know about the fame and also the deterioration of Sidhasena, he was pained and to literally and figuratively rouse him from his deep slumber, handed over the responsibility of the Gaccha to the worthy monks and alone headed towards Kurmārpura. There he joined as one of the palanquin-bearers and carried Sidhasen in the palanquin, along with others.

Seeing the faltering walk of the old palanquin-bearer, Sidhasena asked him, “Are you feeling sore in your shoulders being bogged down by the intense weight?” Vṛddhavādī replied, “This afflicted pain (of the shoulder) is not more than his inflicted pain (of disgrace)”.

Hearing the familiar voice, Sidhasena was alarmed and started contemplating, “Who could this monk be alluding my fault? Is he by any

chance my Guru Vṛddhavādī?” No sooner did such contemplation cross his mind, than Sidhasen got down from the palanquin, and recognising Vṛddhavādī, felt abashed and pleaded for forgiveness.

During the conversation to make sure that Sidhasena stays more deep-rooted in his practice of spiritual purification, Vṛddhavādī uttered the following stanza and asked him the meaning:

Aṇaḥfullipa fulla ma toḍai, māṃ rovā moḍahiṃ ||
Maṇakusumehiṃ achchi niraṃjaṇu, hiṃdahi kāmī vaṇeṇavaṇu ||
14 || (from Prabandha Kośā)

Even after reflecting for a long time Sidhasena could not get the real meaning of it. Then Vṛddhavādī explained the meaning to him

“*Aṇaḥfullipa fulla ma toḍai*” which means, Siddhasena! The tree of yoga had borne the flowers of name, fame and power. Do not pluck the flowers in their immature stage without allowing them to grow into the fruit of absolute knowledge.

“*Māṃ rovā moḍahiṃ*” – meaning, do not needlessly stamp and crush the saplings of great vows.

“*Maṇakusumehiṃ achchi niraṃjaṇu*” – which means, worship Jinendra Deva with the flowers of virtuousness that bud in the heart; or worship the transcendental Lord with the blossoms of the heart and soul.

“*hiṃdahi kāmī vaṇeṇavaṇu*” – which implies that just like a person who roams aimlessly from one forest to another, why are you engrossed in prodigal and improvident acts like entertaining the king and so on? What a wonderful education!

After listening to Vṛddhavādī, Siddhasena sanctified himself following the vow of Ālocanā (confessions and self-criticism) at the holy feet of the Guru. He firmly stabilised himself in the practice of self-restraint and taking the permission from the king, set off on his religious travels along with Vṛddhavādī.

In reference to the language used in Jain scriptures, the Brahmin scholars used to say that the Jain ācāryas were unaware of Sanskrita language

else, they would not have written their scriptures in a simple language like Prākṛta. Besides, even their Mahāmantra is also chanted in Prākṛta, the language of the common folk. By virtue of his noble birth and having studied in Sanskrita all his childhood, Siddhasen felt hurt when he heard such comments. “*Namo arhat siddhācāryopādhyāya sarvasādhubhyaḥ*” – thus he recited the Nāmaskāra mantra in Sanskrita. Then he came back to the lodgings, to his Guru and recited the same before him, and expressed his desire to compile the scriptures of Jainism in Sanskrita.

The congregation reprimanded him saying, “Siddhasena, you acquired sin by uttering such words. Lord Tīrthaṅkara and Gaṇadhara were not unaware of Sanskrita. If we translate the scriptures into Sanskrita, it is equal to humiliating those great souls. You did a grave mistake by translating the primordial immortal Nāmaskar mantra into Sanskrita. In order to purify yourself of that sin, you have to undergo ‘*daśave pārāmcika*’ – Punishment of contrition.

In front of the congregation and his Guru, Sidhasen accepted the vow of contrition of concealing his appearance of a monk by forgoing his mouthcover cloth and whiskbroom for twelve years and serve the Jain order. He immediately commenced his services to the congregation, secretly. Giving discourses about the Jain doctrines to many kings, in the eighth year of his vow of contrition, he reached Ujjaini. It is said that he, when in the guise of a monk (avadhuta), went into the temple of Mahākāleśwara, slept stretching his feet towards the Śiva Liṅga. In the morning when the priests of the temple noticed his legs towards the Śiva Liṅga, they asked him to move from there and even admonished him, but to no avail. Finally they complained the matter to the king who became furious and sent his soldiers to flog the monk and make sure he leaves the temple. The soldiers at first tried to convince him to leave the place; then they coerced him and finally they were forced to flog him. But to everyone’s surprise, not even a single scourge fell on him. Seeing this, everyone was dumb-founded. They passed on the message to the king. The astounded king Vikramāditya at once went to the temple and said to the yogi, “O Great Soul! It is not befitting you to lie down stretching your feet towards the Śiva Liṅga. You should in fact bow to Lord Śiva, revered by one and all”.

The yogi replied, “O King! This divine Śiva Liṅga of yours cannot endure the intense power of my salutations”. After repeated entreaties by

the King, Siddhasena started praying to the true form of the Lord by chanting some verses (Ślokas). As he recited only a few Ślokas, the idol of Pārśvanātha appeared emitting dazzling light.

Thus witnessing the many miracles of the will power of Siddhasena, King Vikramāditya became his devotee. In like manner, in seven years, Siddhasena converted 18 kings into Jain Dharma by enlightening them with his sermons. It is said that though there were still five years left in his contrition, the congregation pleased with his work as an exalter of Jainism granted him amnesty and pardoned the remaining period of punishment. It is believed that King Vikramāditya performed many righteous deeds under the influence of Siddhasena. Inspired by Ācārya Siddhasena, King Vikramāditya became the follower of Jainism and worked towards the benefit of the people.

Ācārya Siddhasena was a distinguished scholar, a great exalter of Jainism, eloquent orator, proficient administrator and an eminent litterateur. The evidence of his versatility is available in the form of his extensive literary works. He was the author of important books like Nyāyavatāra, Sanmati Tarka, 32 Dwātriṃśikāḥ, Nayāvatāra, Kalayāṇa Mandira Stotra, and the commentary on the exposition of Gandhahastī on Ācārāṅga, etc.

From the accounts of Prabhāvaka Caritra, Prabhandha Kośā, etc., it is evident that he belonged to the 1st century of Vikram era. His father's name was Devarṣi and Mother was Devaśrī. They were Brahmins of Kātyāyana lineage. It is said that prior to his initiation, to flaunt his erudition, he used to wear an iron band around his waist, and hold a pick axe in one hand and ladder in the other while walking on the streets. An objective analysis of all the incidents reveals the fact that the authors sometimes weaved exaggerations of the truth for amusing the readers. The appearance of the idol may also be one such exaggeration.

Ārya Khaputa

The era of Ārya Khaputa may be described as the era of extra ordinary super sensual powers. Some special events of his life are described below: Once he went to Bhṛgukacchapura. There his nephew Bhuvana, impressed by his sermons, became his disciple monk. Believing him to be intelligent, Ārya Khaputa taught Bhuvana a few such powers. Incidentally, in Bhṛgupura the Buddhist monks became arrogant due to the patronage of and reverence shown by the King Balamitra. They would throw small bundles of grass into the dwellings of Jain monks, suggesting that the Jain monks as equal to animals. By chance, novice monk, Bhuvana happened to see this. Out of fury, he went to the royal court accompanied by some laymen. There he said in a loud voice, “O King! Your Guru is abusing the Jain Śramaṇas. We want to debate with him. Summon him once and ask him to participate in a discussion with us and let the people grasp the reality”.

So the king summoned the Buddhist monks and arranged a debate with monk Bhuvana. The Buddhist monks faced defeat as they were unable to challenge Bhuvana’s incontrovertible arguments. With the victory of Monk Bhuvana, waves of happiness spread all over the Jain congregation, but, the Buddhist monks were grieved because of their humiliation. They invited their Ācārya Vuḍḍhikara from Guḍaśastrapura and requested him to debate with Monk Bhuvana. Monk Bhuvana defeated him as well, with his logic and transcendental powers. Miserable because of the humiliation, Vuḍḍhikara died after some time and was reborn as a Yakṣa in Guḍaśastrapura. Carrying forward the animosity that he bred in his previous birth, he started harassing the Jain monks in numerous ways. The congregation informed Ārya Khaputa about the situation and requested him to head to Guḍaśastrapura.

Ārya Khaputa asked Bhuvana monk to stay behind with the other monks of the Gaccha in Bhṛgupura, while he went to Guḍaśastrapura alone. While leaving, Ārya Khaputa gave a casket to Monk Bhuvana and commanded him to guard it carefully and not to open it at any time. Reaching Guḍaśastrapura, Ārya Khaputa with his power, made the Yakṣa his devotee and impressed the king and all his subjects.

When Ārya Khaputa was still in Guḍaśastrapura, two monks from Bhṛgupura arrived there and informed him, “After you left from the place, Bhuvana monk opened the secret casket that you gave him to safeguard; he took one leaflet from it and by just reading the verse in that, acquired ‘*ākaraṣiṇī vidyā*’ (a magical power by which one can attract anything towards him). With that power in hand, each day he is attracting the best of foods and savouring them. When the Sthaviras objected to this, he angrily left the place and joined the Buddhists. As a result of the magic power, empty vessels fly in the air and return filled with delicious sweetmeats. Seeing such things, all the Votaries are getting attracted to him. Therefore you should come and provide solace to the congregation”.

Listening to the monks, Ārya Khaputa considered the matter for a while and from Guḍaśastrapura set out for Bhṛgupura. After reaching there, instead of going directly to the congregation, Ārya Khaputa stayed at a place in secret and started breaking with stones in the midway itself the food-filled vessels into pieces, which were being attracted by Monk Bhuvana. The sweetmeats from the broken vessels started falling on the heads of the people. When his efforts met with failure, it did not take long for Monk Bhuvana to understand that Ārya Khaputa had returned. In awe, he fled from Bhṛgupura. Ārya Khaputa followed by the monks went to the Buddhist monastery and impressed upon them with his knowledge and later embarked on continuing his wanderings.

In an age which was dominated by the exhibition of magical powers, Ārya Khaputa, using his unique magical powers, did a lot of service to the Jain order. According to Tapagaccha Paṭṭāvalī his period was fixed as V.N. 453 and according to Prabhāvaka Caritra it was V.N. 484. If we consider these texts as complementary to each other then a conclusion can be derived that his tenure as ācārya began in V.N. 453 and ended in V.N. 484, both the authors appear true and provide determinative data about the tenure of Ācārya Khaputa.

14th Epochal-ācārya - Ārya Revatimitra

Ārya Revatimitra was next in line to Ārya Skamḍilācārya as epochal-ācārya. No data is available about his caste, birth, native place, etc. The

information about him, available in the nine stanzas of Yugapradhāna Yantra and Vicāra Śreṇi written by Meru Tuṃgācārya is given below:

Birth	V.N. 352
Initiation	V.N. 366
Became ācārya	V.N. 414
Heavenly abode	V.N. 450
Household life duration	14 years
Ordinary Monk tenure	48 years
Tenure as ācārya	36 years 5 months 5 days
Total longevity	98 years

Group-ācārya: It seems that during the tenure of Ārya Samudra, the group-ācārya of the lineage of Ārya Suhasī was Ārya Dinna only.

The Royal dynasties during the time of Ārya Samudra

During the tenure of Ārya Samudra as discourse-ācārya, the Śṛṅga dynasty in Pāṭalīputra, the Nabhovāhana and later Gardhibhila dynasty in Ujjain and King Śisuka, the founder of Sātavāhana dynasty in Pratiṣṭhānapura, were in power.

During this period Yajñas, sacrifices, Vedic rituals and culture gained good momentum in India.

36th Discourse-ācārya Ārya Maṅgu

Ācārya Samudra, introduced in the earlier chapters, was a man free from passions and completely detached. Whatever he received in alms, be it tasty or insipid, he would mix everything and unaffected by its taste, have it in an unperturbed manner. He would always deliberate that the soul may be bound in the cycle of karma because of the enticement of the senses and attachment towards the body.

It is because of this triumph over taste and his detachment towards gains, that he was eulogised by Ācārya Devārdhi as “*Akkhubbhiya Samuddhagambhīraṃ*”. Ārya Maṅgu was the disciple of this very Ārya Samudra. After the heavenly abode of Ācārya Samudra, his disciple, Ārya Maṅgu was designated as the discourse-ācārya in V.N. 454. He was wise, insightful and a strong propagator of the true philosophy (Samyaga darśana). To all the devoted disciples, he would explain the Sūtras with dexterity; and through his discourses on righteousness, awakening thousands of devotees he performed outstanding services to the Jain order.

According to the Niśītha Bhāṣya and Cūrṇi, Ārya Maṅgu was a scholar of all the scriptures and had a large number of disciples; he would always continue his wanderings, without getting attached to and staying at one place for long. Once, while wandering as usual, Ācārya Maṅgu arrived at Mathura and with his mellifluous and appealing preaching filled with detachment, he started enlightening the citizens there. Influenced by his

knowledge and preaching filled with detachment, the faithful devotees venerated him with clothes etc. Everyday they would offer him delicious foods like milk, curd, ghee, jaggery etc. Soon ācārya developed delusion and immersed in comforts and pleasures, settled in Mathura itself. The other monks proceeded further leaving him behind.

Unhealthy tendencies are ever ready like a temptress looking for a susceptible moment. At the slightest vulnerability in one's self-restraint, it sneaks in and exerts its power, immediately.

As he settled at one place, all his penance, self-restraint and spiritual endeavours had come to a standstill. The treasure of his character diminished and his attachment towards riches, taste, pleasure and honour increased. With the devotees offering appetising food and providing loving services, he deserted the extensive wandering and started living there like a lazy person. In the end, he died without even repenting about his culpable conduct and without abandoning his careless attitude. Since he violated the principles of ascetic life, he was born in a demigod (Yakṣa) family. With his cognition, when he became aware of his previous birth, he started repenting, "Alas! In spite of possessing a great treasure like Jain religion, which is attained by virtues of previous birth, and which is capable of destroying miseries forever, because of my foolishness, I wasted my life. It is fittingly said, 'Even an expert in the fourteen Pūrvas, can, by negligence of his principles be born into '*Anantkaya*' (a body containing countless living beings). So saying, he used to repent sincerely for the mistakes of his past life.

Once he saw the disciples of his previous birth. Taking out his long tongue and in a strange appearance he stood in their way in order to teach them. Looking at the Yakṣa, a righteous disciple said, "O Divine one!, Whether you are a deity, a demigod or someone else, please reveal yourself and speak; if not, we are not at all able to understand any of your intention".

The Yakṣa sadly said, "O monks! I am your very same teacher, Ārya Maṅgu".

The monks also felt sorry and replied, "Lord! How did you get into this unfortunate situation?"

The Yakṣa told, “If one gets carried away by the delusive pleasures, slackens his character, then he would end up like me. What is so shocking if an unprincipled person like me who honours wealth, taste and pleasure ends up here? If you want to save yourselves from such misfortune and move ahead towards salvation, then abandoning careless attitude, being devoid of passions, and maintaining temperance, always keep wandering as a monk without getting attached to any place or thing.”

The monks said, “O Divine one! You have rightly enlightened us!” Having said this, they took to penance and also started observing self-restraint and continued their travel as monks without getting attached to any one place.

In the Sthavirāvalī of NandiSūtra, Ācārya Devavācaka honouring Ārya Maṅgu using adjectives like - “Bhaṇagaṃ” to describe one who recites the Kālīka Sūtras, etc., “Karaṅgaṃ” to denote one who performs deeds as prescribed by the Sūtras and “Jharaṅgaṃ” to represent one who follows Dharma - described him as a Transcendental ācārya of the ocean of scriptures. The term he used “*Pabhāvagaṃ nāṇadaṃsaṇagaṇāṇaṃ*” - indicates that Ārya Maṅgu is a strong propagator of the right knowledge and philosophy. Ācārya Devavācaka further wrote, “Salutations to Ārya Maṅgu, the divine ācārya of the ocean of scriptures, and the one who is calm and composed!”

According to the commentary ‘Jayadhavalā’ of “Kasāya-Pāhuḍa”, the authentic scripture of the Digambara tradition, Ārya Maṅkṣu and Ārya Nāgahasti were considered to be the teachers of Ācārya Yativṛṣabha, the commentator of Kasāya-Pāhuḍa. In the words of the commentator of Jayadhavalā, Ācārya Yativṛṣabha received the divine ray of knowledge from his teachers, Ācārya Maṅkṣu and Ācārya Nāgahasti.

After Ārya Maṅgu of Vācaka tradition, Ārya Dharma, Ārya Bhadrāgupta, Ārya Vajra and Ārya Rakṣita - these four epochal-ācāryas were described as discourse- ācārya also.

Out of these four epochal-ācāryas, Ārya Vajra was undoubtedly from the line of Ācārya Suhastī, however, no clear evidence is available on

whether the other three ācāryas were of the lineage of Ārya Mahāgiri or Suhastī.

From the citations of various old scriptures and from the chronology of “epochal-ācārya”, it is implicitly evident that all these four ācāryas were the most influential persons of the era and were highly proficient in the canons. Owing to their extreme versatility, they were considered as epochal-ācāryas and discourse - ācārya too.

From the above, it is evident that the three ācāryas - Ārya Maṅgu, Ārya Nandi and Ārya Nāgahasti had long span of lives and during their tenure as discourse- ācārya, the aforesaid four epochal-ācāryas, even though they did not belong to the Vācaka lineage were still considered as Scholar-preceptor, because of their own brilliance and in-depth knowledge of the canonical scriptures.

Considering all the above facts, these four ācāryas are being mentioned in epochal-ācārya lineage and not in discourse-ācārya lineage.

15th epochal-ācārya ‘Ārya Dharma’

After Ārya Revatimitra, Ārya Dharma became epochal-ācārya in V.N. 450. He took initiation at the age of 18. He followed the Śramaṇa Dharma for 40 years and later became an epochal-ācārya. Being in the position of an epochal-ācārya for 44 years he did remarkable services to the Jain Order. Living a complete life of 102 years, 5 months and 5 days, he left for his heavenly abode in V.N. 494.

Group-ācārya (gaṇa- ācārya) Ārya Siṃhagiri

In Ārya Suhastī’s lineage, after Ārya Dinna, Ārya Siṃhagiri became the group-ācārya. The only information available about him is that he was an exceptionally brilliant & impressive ācārya also having knowledge of past-lives. According to Khuśāla Paṭṭāvalī he left for heavenly abode in V.N. 547-548. Ārya Vajra was born in V.N. 496 and much before that Ārya Samita had taken initiation from Ārya Siṃhagiri, from which it can be inferred that Ārya Siṃhagiri should have been a ācārya during V.N. 490. Out of his vast family of disciples, only the names of his four main

disciples, Ārya Samita, Ārya Dhanagiri, Ārya Vajra and Ārya Arahdata are available. They are being introduced hereunder.

Ārya Samita

Ārya Samita was born in a village named Tumbavana, of the most prosperous Avantī Pradeśa. His father's name was Dhanapāla, a renowned merchant. Belonging to Vaiśya community and Gautama Gotra, he figured as one of the prominent millionaires of that time. Other than Ārya Samita, Dhanapāla had a daughter also, by name Sunandā.

Merchant Dhanapāla made appropriate arrangements for the education of his promising son. Right from his childhood Ārya Samita lived like a detached person. He never had the slightest interest in worldly pleasures.

As soon as Samita entered adolescence, he renounced all the wealth, grandeur and all exuberant means of enjoyment and took initiation from Ācārya Simhagiri.

Samita had a close friend, Dhanagiri, the son of another wealthy merchant Dhana, of the same Tumbavana village. After his son Samita took to renunciation, Dhanapāla proposed to his friend Dhanagiri to marry his daughter Sunandā. Even though Dhanagiri was reluctant to mundane pleasures, under the continuous pressure and persuasion of his friend's father, he finally married Sunandā. Ārya Samita's sister, Sunandā later gave birth to the glorious and powerful Ācārya Vajra.

After initiation, Ārya Samita, serving his Guru, systematically studied the scriptures with great concentration. He also became an expert in the science of spell and incantation. During those days, close to Acalapura, which was surrounded by the rivers Kṛṣṇā and Veṅā, there was a convent (*āśrama*) with 500 non-Jain ascetics living in it. The name of their chief was Devaśarma. As the convent was surrounded by two rivers, it was popular by the name of Brhmadwīpaka. On the eve of festivals like Saṃkrānti, etc., in order to propagate his faith, Devaśarma along with all his disciples, used to smear a special type of lotion to their feet and walk on the waters of the Kṛṣṇā River and reach Acalapura. The innocent and sentimental laymen, fascinated by such miraculous and marvelous scene,

would pay their respects to those ascetics by offering them various foods and services. The devotees of those ascetics, with great pride, would praise their teacher in front of the Votaries (Jain laymen) and ask them, “Do any of your teachers have such miraculous power?” Seeing the Votaries fall silent to their question, they would become all the more enthusiastic and boast further, “There is no such magical power or greatness either in your religion or in your Gurus that equals the austerities practised or the miracles performed by our Guru. In fact, our Guru is God incarnate. With face bowed, bow in front of him with devotion.”

The sarcastic words of the devotees of the ascetics hurt the feelings of the Votaries. At that time, Ārya Samita Sūri, the disciple of Ārya Siṃhagiri and the maternal uncle of Ārya Vajra arrived at Acalapura. The group of Votaries venerated Ārya Samita and later narrated the incidence about the ascetics walking on the river waters as if they were walking on the ground. Ārya Samita was silent for a few moments. The Votaries pleaded again, “Lord! The influence of Jain religion on the common man is deteriorating. We request you to please come out with an idea by which the Jain Dharma can impress the people more.”

Ārya Samita Sūri replied with a smile, “It is not because of the austerities that those ascetics are walking on the water, but because of the effect of the lotion that they are applying to their feet. They are unnecessarily fooling the innocent people”

The votaries were determined to prove that the supernatural illusion created by those ascetics is not exceptional and so they invited all the saints including their chief for a feast. The next day when all the ascetics arrived for the feast, the votaries started washing the feet of the saints with warm water. The Chief of the ascetics tried to prevent the votaries from washing their feet, but they did not listen to him. “We would acquire great sin, if we offer food without washing the lotus feet of great people like you” - thus saying, the votaries in a seemingly devout manner scrubbed and washed the feet of all the ascetics.

After the feast, the ascetics set out towards their convent. On the pretext of seeing them off with honour, the votaries had already mobilised

thousands of men and women. A large crowd accompanied the ascetics with great applause.

Reaching the bank of the river Veṇā, all the ascetics including their chief were hesitant. They had a grave problem facing them. On one hand, there was fear of drowning and on the other there was fear of losing their hard-earned fame. The chief of the ascetics, thinking that the lotion must definitely have some effect left, stepped into the water of the river Veṇā. The waters of Veṇā were flowing rapidly and as such the lotion of his feet was already thoroughly washed with the warm water. Hence, the chief of the ascetics started drowning due to the depth and turbulent flow of Veṇā.

Just then Ārya Sumita Sūri came to the bank of Veṇā and seeing the chief drowning in it said, “O Veṇā! I want a path to go to the other bank”. To the astonishment of the crowd, the water in the river shrunk at once and both banks of the river appeared close to each other. In one leap Ārya Samita reached the other bank of Veṇā. All the men and women present there including the ascetics, were very impressed by the unparalleled inner - power of Ārya Samita Sūri. Explaining everyone the real form of Dharma, he motivated the people to do good deeds to uplift one self and others’. Listening to the sermons which touched the depth of the heart, the Chief of the ascetics along with his 499 disciples took ‘Nirgrantha śramaṇa’ initiation (one who has no room for wrath, pride, wickedness, greed, sexual thoughts). As these 500 Śramaṇas were earlier staying in Brhmadwīpaka convent, after initiation into the Śramaṇa Dharma, they became famous as the “Brhmadwīpaka gaccha”.

Ārya Samita was the greatest proponent of Jainism of his times. He not only Strived for the accomplishment of the tremendous vitality of his soul, but also showed the path of spiritual-exertion to the seekers of salvation and thus offered unparalleled service to the Jain Order.

Ārya Dhanagiri

Ārya Dhanagiri, the second prominent disciple of Ārya Simhagiri, left his bountiful riches and his chaste, loyal, pregnant wife in his prime youth and set such an ardent example of detachment and renunciation

that it is impossible to find elsewhere. He will be discussed in detail alongside Ārya Vajra.

Ārya Arahadatta

No relevant data is available about Ārya Arahadatta.

Important dynasties during the tenure of Ārya Maṅgu

During the tenure of Ārya Maṅgu as discourse-ācārya (i.e. V.N. 470 or 57 BC or 135 years before Śaka era) the throne of the Republic of Avantī was adorned by the most chivalrous and benevolent king Vikramāditya. The very same day when Vikramāditya ascended the throne of Ujjaini, a new calendar came into existence in his name in the Kingdom of Avantī; and about 17 or 13 years later, it was followed by the entire country, which was also referred to as Kṛta Year, Mālawa Year and Vikram Year one after another.

As per a few Jain scriptures, a brief note on the life of Vikramāditya is as follows:

A king named Gardabhilla was ruling the city of Avantī of Mālawa Pradeśa righteously. He had two sons, Bhṛtrahari by his first wife Dhīmatī, and then Vikram by his second wife Śrīmatī.

Both the princes gradually reached adolescence. Gardabhilla married his eldest son Bhartṛhari to Princess Aṅgasenā, the daughter of Rājā Bhīma. After that Gardabhilla conquered several countries and established his sovereignty over them.

In course of time Rājā Gardabhilla died due to acute abdominal pain and the ministers crowned Bhartṛhari as their king.

One day, insulted by his elder brother Bhartṛhari, the offended Vikramāditya left Avantī kingdom, all alone, taking his sword.

Thus the elder brother Bhartṛhari was ruling the Avantī kingdom while his younger brother Vikramāditya was wandering from place to place.

After giving the aforesaid information about Vikramāditya's parents and brother, etc, Subhāṣīlagaṇī quoted the most popular verse, “*yāṃ cintayāmi satataṃ mayi sā viraktā*” and narrated the episode of the fruit of immortality (amaraphala), in which a Brahmin acquires an amaraphala and offers it to the king Bhartṛhari, who in turn gives to his queen; the queen gives it to the hunch-back charioteer, the charioteer to the courtesan and from courtesan it once again reaches king Bhartṛhari. It was also mentioned that when Bhartṛhari came to know the reality, he became a monk and retired to the forest and thus Vikramāditya became the king of Ujjaini.

Himavanta chronology of elders (Sthavirāvalī) and Vikramāditya

It was mentioned in “Himavanta Sthavirāvalī” that Vikramāditya belongs to the Maurya Dynasty. According to this Sthavirāvalī, at that time, in Avantī, King Samprati died heirless, and so Aśoka's grandsons and Tiṣyagupta's sons Princes Balamitra & Bhānumitra ascended the throne of Avantī. (These two brothers are not to be mistaken for Balamitra and Bhānumitra, the kings of Bhṛgukaccha and the nephews of Ārya Kālaka). Their regime was between 353 and 413 V.N., whereas that of the Balamita-Bhānumitra of Bhaḍaṃca was after 454 V.N.)

Both the brothers were staunch devotees of Jain Dharma. After their demise, Balamitra's son Nabhovāhana became the king of Avantī. Nabhovāhana was also the follower of Jain Dharma. After his death, his son Gardabhilla became the king.

Gardabhilla forcibly abducted Sarasvatī, the lady ascetic and the sister of Kālakācārya and imprisoned her in his palace. Despite all means of persuasion Gardabhilla did not set her free. Eventually, as Kālakācārya was left with no alternative, made the combined forces of his brothers-in-law, Balamitra and Bhanūmitra, the ruler of (ruled the kingdom one at a time, in turns) Bhṛgukaccha and the Śāka kings of Sinṃdhu region attack against Ujjaini. In the ensuing forceful battle Gardabhilla was killed. Ārya Kālaka once again initiated his sister Sarasvatī into the holy path of ascetism, he himself underwent suitable contrition and engrossed in the practice of self-restraint.

After the death of Gardabhilla, Ujjaini was captured by the Śakas. At that time, his younger son Vikramāditya neither had an organised army nor

even a small state. In order to regain his hereditary authority over the kingdom, there was no other alternative than to instigate the people against Śakas, the foreign rulers and to seek assistance from any other mighty king. Under these circumstances, either through matrimonial alliance or by some other means, he established friendly relations with the valiant, warrior group of Mālawas; with their support he defeated the Śakas and established his right over his paternal kingdom, Avantī. In order to express his boundless gratitude towards Mālawas, he renamed the Avantī Pradeśa as Mālawa; and to immortalise his friendship with the Mālawas, he floated a new calendar, Krita or Mālawa, initially in Mālawa region and later on throughout India, which is popular by the name Vikram year.

Almost in all the Jain scriptures, it is mentioned that Vikramāditya was a follower of Jain Dharma.

17th Discourse-ācārya Ārya Nandila (Ānandila)

Ārya Nandila became the Discourse-ācārya after Ārya Maṅgu, in the lineage of Vācakas. According to Prabhāvaka Caritra, he was known to be the spiritual Guru of Vairoṭyā Devī. Ācārya Nandila helped Vairoṭyā Devī gain peace in her distressed life through his discourses. After she became the queen of Dharaṇendra, she continued her devotion and respect towards Ācārya Nandila. From time to time, she used to help the ardent devotees of Lord Parśvanātha by helping them to solve their problems.

In praise of Vairoṭyā Devī, Ācārya Nandila wrote an inscription with a mantra “*Namiuṇa jiṇaṃ pāsam*” which made her name immemorial.

16th Epochal-ācārya Ārya Bhadrugupta

Ārya Bhadrugupta presided over the congregation as the epochal-ācārya after the heavenly abode of Ārya Dharma in V.N. 494. Ārya Bhadrugupta was proficient in the ten Pūrvas, the canonical scriptures, and was an outstanding scholar. He was fortunate enough to be the teacher of the great epochal-ācārya Vajra Swāmī. Vajra Swāmī had attained the knowledge of the ten Pūrvas from him.

Birth	V.N. 428
Initiation	V.N. 449
Became ācārya	V.N. 494
Heavenly abode	V.N. 533
Household life duration	21 years
Ordinary Monk tenure	45 years
Tenure as ācārya	39 years
Total longevity	105 years 4 months 4 days

His last spiritual-exertion (*Niryāmaṇā*) was guided by Ārya Rakṣita Sūri.

Chief preceptor of a group (group-ācārya)

In V.N. 547 – 48, Ārya Siṃhagiri, the group-ācārya of Ārya Suhasī tradition, left for the heavenly abode when Ārya Nandila was the discourse-ācārya.

18th Scholar-preceptor (Discourse-ācārya) Nāgahasti

Nāgahasti became the Discourse-ācārya after Ācārya Ārya Nandila. Ācārya Devārdhigaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa in his Nandisūtra Sthavirāvalī described him as the foremost erudite of Karma philosophy and an able ācārya who provided appropriate and satisfactory answers to the queries of the inquisitive. As he was gifted with ‘*Pūrvajñāna*’, he was considered an expert in expositions of meataphysics and karma. Out of his disciples, Ārya Pādalipta was a very dynamic ācārya, whose introduction is briefly given here.

Ārya Pādalipta

Like Ārya Khaputa, Ārya Pādalipta is also considered a very influential ācārya. There was an intelligent and generous merchant named Fūlla in Kośalā, during the regime of King Vijayavarmā. His wife was Pratimānā. Though she was extremely beautiful, modest and virtuous, she was not blessed with a son. On the advice of someone, she worshipped goddess Vairoṭyā Devī and begot a son. He was named as Nagendra.

Believing the child to be the blessing of the Guru, Pratimānā brought him up with great love and care for eight years and then surrendered him at

her Guru's feet. The teacher initiated him and arranged for his education under the guidance of an ascetic named Maṇḍana. As he was extremely intelligent, Nagendra excelled in learning all the subjects in a very short time. Pleased with his service, his Guru taught him Pādalepa Vidyā (knowledge of the ointment for feet to achieve miraculous powers). Hence he became popular as Pādalipta.

This is an incident that happened during the reign of the king Muruṇḍa of Pāṭalīputra. He was suffering from unbearable headache for six months. Incidentally, after taking over the responsibility of the congregation as ācārya, Pādalipta visited Pāṭalīputra. By that time the king in spite of being treated by several methods (tantra, mantra and medicines, etc) did not find any relief. The king sent his minister to Ācārya Pādalipta and appealed to provide him with a remedy for his chronic headache. Therefore, ācāryaśrī went to the palace and with the power of his mantra, completely cured the king of his headache.

Getting relieved of his headache, the delighted king, put ācāryaśrī through few tests and after that became his ardent devotee.

There are many astounding incidents in Jain literature describing the outstanding abilities of Ācārya Pādalipta. Some of the books mention that he would apply a lotion made of various medicines to his feet and travel in space.

It seems that he travelled far and wide. King Kṛṣṇa of Mānyakheṭa, King Bhīma of Oṃkārapura and many other kings and emperors were his followers. He demonstrated his outstanding skills in Pāṭalīputra, Bhṛgukacchapura and in other places and eliminated opposition created by people of other faiths against Jains and many people became followers of Jainism.

During the tenure of Ārya Nagahasti as the discourse-ācārya, there were three epochal-ācāryas - Ārya Śrīgupta, Vajra and Rakṣita, who are discussed hereunder.

17th Epochal-ācārya Ārya Śrīgupta (533 To 548 V.N.)

After Ārya Bhadrāgupta left for his heavenly abode, Ārya Śrīgupta led the Congregation as epochal-ācārya. The only available information about him is:

Birth	V.N. 448
Initiation	V.N. 483
Became ācārya	V.N. 533
Heavenly abode	V.N. 548
Household life duration	35 years
Ordinary Monk tenure	50 years
Tenure as ācārya	15 years
Total longevity	100 years 7 months 7 days

The sixth non-believer Ārya Rohagupta was his disciple-monk.

The Sixth Heretic- Ārya Rohgupta

In V.N. 544 Rohagupta propounded the doctrine of *Trirāsika* (three types of existents rather than two as living and non living beings described in Jainism). As he propounded differently than Lord Mahāvīra, so, he is considered a heretic. How this belief came into existence is described in the following way:

Once, a ācārya called Śrīgupta camped along with his disciples at the Bhūtaguhā garden on the outskirts of Aṃtaramjikā city. Balaśrī was the ruler of Aṃtaramjikā. Rohagupta, one of the very intelligent disciples of Ācārya Śrīgupta, came to Aṃtaramjikā from another village to be with his Guru. On the way he saw an ascetic holding a twig of a rose apple (Jambū) tree in his hand; he had an iron band around his waist, lest his stomach may burst open by the spate of his knowledge. As he wore an iron band around his waist, he became famous as Poṭṭasāla. The twig of rose apple tree in his hand probably implied that no one could defeat him in religious debate in the entire Jambūdāvīpa. So he proclaiming at the beat of a drum, travelled from place to place, challenging the scholars to debate with him.

Rohagupta listened to the proclamation. He could not tolerate the vanity of the ascetic; so he went up to the herald and stopping him, declared, “I will participate in the debate on canonic knowledge with the ascetic”. Later he went to his teacher, after offering humble salutations he confessed to him, “O Lord! I accepted the challenge of Poṭṭasāla ascetic to debate with him”.

Ācārya Śrīgupt said, “You haven’t done a prudent thing accepting his challenge. The ascetic possesses supernatural powers. Even if he is vanquished in the debate, he will try his best to defeat you with those powers”.

Rohagupta humbly asked, “As I have already accepted the challenge, hence, please divulge some strategy to be triumphant.”

Then Ācārya Śrīgupta imparted the Siddhamātra Vidyās and even gave his whiskbroom to him and said, “Despite these *Vidyās* if you face any problem, at once just whirl this whiskbroom. Then none can beat you”.

Rohagupta thus equipped with the new powers and the whiskbroom, went to the Royal Court and said, “O Ascetic! Please begin your argument.”

The ascetic thought, “These Śramaṇas are very tactful. Therefore I will commence with their doctrines as the base of my argument”. So thinking he said, “The world is classified into two groups - Jīvas and Ajīvas” (Living beings & Non-living beings).

Rohagupta contradicting the statement said, “No, there are three groups, Jīva, Ajīva and No-jīva. Jīva means that which has life, Ajīva means lifeless objects like pot, cloth, etc., and No-jīva means that which possesses both the attributes of Jīva and Ajīva, like the severed tail of a lizard.

Three types of substances are visible in the world. Even the stick has three parts, the beginning, the end and the middle. There are three universes namely upper, middle and lower. Hence it is improper to say that there are only two groups in the world.”

The ascetic got enraged with the logic of Rohagupta and tried to subdue him by his supernatural powers. One after the other he used Vṛścikī (scorpion), Sarpikī (snake), Mūṣikī (mouse), Kākī (crow) and Mṛgī (deer) powers against Rohagupta. Rohagupta made them ineffective by using Mayūrī (peacock), Nakulī (mongoose), Mārjārī (cat), Ulūkī (owl) and Vyāghrī (tiger) powers respectively.

Defeated even with the use of his supernatural powers, the ascetic unable to tolerate his trouncing became aggressive and finally used the power of “*Surakṣita Gardabhī*” against Rohagupta, who did not have any power to counter it. So he took out the whiskbroom given by his Guru and with that made the Gardabhī Vidyā ineffective and defeated him. The king announced Rohagupta as the victor. After defeating the ascetic, Rohagupta went back to his Guru and narrated the entire incident.

When the topic of three groups was told, Ācārya Śrīgupta said, “Son! Achieving victory by falsifying the scriptures is not advisable. As soon as the argument was over you should have informed the king that as per our doctrines there are only two groups - Jīva and Ajīva, and not three; and that you just wanted to rout the ascetic’s intellect, because of which you put forth and proved your statement to be true with logical explanation and nothing else. In reality there are only two groups in the world. It is not too late. Go to the king at once and following the vow of truthfulness, confess the reality honestly.”

Rohagupta did not heed the advice of his Guru. He kept silent and did not budge from his place. When time and again the teacher advised him to go to the Royal court, Rohagupta started arguing with him, and tried to prove his argument.

The teacher unable to accept the falsehood of his disciple right away went to the king’s court and said, “O King! Whatever my disciple Rohagupta proved about three groups in your court is nothing but against the principles. As a matter of fact, there are only two groups. Kindly arrange for a discourse between my disciple and me, so as to establish the truth.”

The king granted permission and the debate between the teacher and the disciple started and continued for six months, because of which the activities of the State got disturbed. So the king requested ācāryaśrī to

conclude the argument soon. The next day, in order to end the debate which has been in progress for the last six months, Ācārya Śrīgupta asked the king in front of his courtiers, “O King! Each and every object of the world is available in the market. So please arrange to fetch Jīva, Ajīva and No-jīva objects from there.”

Immediately the king’s attendants went to the market and brought Jīva and Ajīva objects and informed that they could not get any No-jīva substance. The king gave his verdict, “There are only two types of entities namely Jīva and Ajīva in the world. There is no other group like “No-jīva”. And hence I declare ācāryaśrī as the vanquisher of this discourse and Rohagupta as the vanquished.” But Rohagupta did not let go of his obstinacy. Finally Ācārya Śrīgupta expelled him from the congregation. The King expelled Rohagupta from his Kingdom.

18th Epochal-ācārya Ārya Vajra Swāmī

Ācārya Vajra Swāmī occupies a very important place among the influential ācāryas of Jain order. The most unique and amazing fact of his life is that as soon as he was born, he had the memory of his previous births. From the very first day of his life, he was completely detached from the world and all through his life; he worked for spiritual development of his own self as well as others.

Śreṣṭhi Dhana, the grandfather of Ārya Vajra Swāmī was the resident of Tumbavana in Avantī. He was counted amongst the wealthiest, distinguished and eminent people of Avantī. Because of his virtues like generosity, magnanimity & kindness, his name and fame spread across the land of āryas.

In those days a merchant named Dhanapāla lived in Tumbavana, who owned immense wealth and property. He had a son called Samita and a daughter called Sunandā who was the most beautiful and most virtuous girl. His son Samita, enlightened by the sermon of Ārya Siṃhagiri, at a very young age itself relinquished all the wealth that he inherited and with great detachment took initiation into ascetic life from Ārya Siṃhagiri.

When Sunandā reached the marriageable age, Dhanapāla was concerned about finding a worthy and well-matched groom for her. Finally he felt that Dhanagiri, son of Dhana, who was equal to him in caste, wealth and character, was an appropriate match for his daughter and so put forth the marriage proposal.

Though averse to the worldly passions, Dhanagiri had to succumb to the loving entreaties of Dhanapāla. Eventually the marriage of Sunandā and Dhanagiri took place with great pomp and show, in a joyous environment. The newly married couple led their marital life in a more or less self-restraint manner. After a few days a great and fortunate soul entered the womb of Sunandā.

With the auspicious dream indicating the pregnancy, the couple was confident that they would beget a very blessed son. As the pregnancy of Sunandā progressed, so did her happiness progress.

Confirming the truth of the axiom “*Jñāte Tattvekaḥ Samsārah*” the knower of the ultimate truth, the disdained Dhanagiri had no attraction left towards familial pleasures. He used to feel that the family and wealth are fetters that dampen the spiritual progress. Thinking that it was an appropriate moment for the path of self realization, he decided to take advantage of the happy mood of his wife.

One day Dhanagiri said to Sunandā, “O beloved! You know very well that I want to move ahead on the path of self-purification. Fortunately, soon you are going to have a son who will not only be of support to you, but will also be the reason for your living. I want to renounce the world and involve myself completely in the practice of spiritual progress. Virtuous women like you, are always prepared to make the utmost sacrifice, to make the path of their beloved ones easy and free of obstacles. So please extend your help to me in my path of self-realisation and permit me to renounce. This is my heart-felt desire”.

The heart-melting articulation of her husband’s inner feelings, at once awakened the latent Indian femininity in Sunandā. She replied in a calm and peaceful but firm tone, “O Love of my life! You carry on your noble wish joyously. I will lead my life with dignity and honour with the support of the child given by you”.

Taking the permission of Sunandā, Dhanagiri at once left the house. As luck would have it, Ārya Siṃhagiri was camping at Tumbavana that time. Dhanagiri approached Ārya Siṃhagiri and took initiation. He started studying the canonical scriptures and was simultaneously practicing severe penance and self-restraint. His detachment towards worldly affairs was so deep that he never, not even for a fraction of a second, recalled his wife.

After the completion of the pregnancy, in V.N. 496, Sunandā gave birth to a very radiant son. Whoever heard the news of the birth of the child, expressed their happiness. The women of the household and the friends of Sunandā celebrated the occasion with a lot of merriment and joy. At that joyful moment someone from among the guests commented, “Had the child’s father not renounced, this festivity would have been celebrated with more cheerfulness.”

The moment the words fell onto his ears, the child because of the sacraments of his previous birth became aware of his former births. The newly born child contemplated in his heart, “Ah! My father is an epitome of virtuous deeds and hence he became an ascetic. I too, should take initiation and the vow of self-restraint as fast as possible which is the only way to safely cross the ocean of mundane existence. For achieving this end, I have to make sure that my mother does not develop possessiveness or attachment towards me and soon grieved by my behaviour, would willingly forsake me”. He thought that incessant crying would yield fast results towards this direction, and so he started crying. His mother, her friends, relatives, skilled women, every one tried in many ways to console him and to stop him from crying, but in vain. He cried incessantly and Sunandā was perturbed and felt helpless. She could not be at peace either in the morning or at night. She used to heave heavy sighs and say, “Son, you are so cute and attractive. Just a glance at you overwhelms my heart with love towards you, but your ceaseless crying gives me lot of pain and misery. It pierces and penetrates into my heart like a spear.” Thus somehow she managed six months, which seemed like six long years. Incidentally, Ārya Siṃhagiri once again came to Tumbavana.

At the time for seeking alms, Ārya Dhanagiri taking the permission of his teacher was ready to leave for the same. Listening to the chirping of the birds then, Ārya Siṃhagiri, who was a scholar in the science of Omens, foresaw everything and counselled him, “Son! Today whatever you receive in the alms, irrespective of whether it is endowed with life or not or is a combination of both, accept it without any second thoughts.”

“Your wish is my command, Lord,” thus saying Ārya Dhanagiri together with Ārya Samita went for seeking alms. While wandering, first he approached Sunandā’s house. When the friends of Sunandā saw Ārya Dhanagiri and Ārya Samita approach Sunandā’s house for alms, they immediately went to Sunandā and said, “Sunandā! Hand over your son to Dhanagiri.”

Sunandā was grieved by the continuous crying of her son. She, heeding the advice of her friends, lifted her son with both the hands, came to Dhanagiri, saluted him and said, “I am completely exhausted because of

your son's ceaseless crying. Kindly take him away with you. If he feels happy staying with you, I too shall find my happiness in it."

Ārya Dhanagiri said in clear words, "Female-votary! I am ready to take him. But one cannot rely on the words of women. To prevent any Strife in the future, you, in front of many witnesses swear that you will never utter a word about your son in future."

Sunandā in a deep sorrowful tone said, "This Ārya Samita (her own brother) is my witness; further, all these friends of mine are also witnesses. In front of them I pledge that after this moment, I will never talk about my son."

Sunandā then placed her son in the receptacle of Ārya Dhanagiri. That very instant the child feeling very happy, at once stopped crying. Monk Dhanagiri, tied strong knots around the cloth-bag and holding it tightly with his right hand, left Sunandā's place and headed towards his teacher. By the time he reached his teacher, due to the weight of the child, his shoulder pained as if it was breaking. Somehow managing the weight of the child, he came to his teacher. Seeing Dhanagiri, from a distance, leaning more towards one side, Ārya Siṃhagiri approached Dhanagiri, took the bag from him and exclaimed in astonishment, "O Monk! What did you bring today which is as heavy as a mountain (Vajra)? Behold, it is slipping out of my hands too". He then placed the receptacle on his seat and opened the knot. Inside he saw the child in the receptacle, who was as pleasant as the moon, radiating bright light. Ārya Siṃhagiri named him as Vajra and said, "He will become a promoter of the Jain religion. He must be taken care of properly."

Ācārya Siṃhagiri entrusted the responsibility of the child to Śayyātārī, the lady caretaker of the lodging house for lady ascetics, and set out on his wandering.

Śayyātārī Female-votary before taking care of her own children would feed, bathe, and massage baby Vajra. He would remain in the lodging from morning till night, after which Śayyātārī would take him to her house. When the child wanted to urinate or defecate, he would either with a gesture on his face or by crying, hints Śayyātārī and never troubled her on this account.

When Sunandā came to know about the angels in the behaviour of the child and that he became chubby under the loving care of Female-votary Śayyātārī, unable to resist the desire to have a look of him, went to the lodging, one day. When she saw that her child was handsome and healthy and in a good mood, her motherly love and instinct gushed like the tide of an ocean. She begged Śayyātārī to return back her son, but Śayyātārī did not agree. Out of affection, she would visit regularly and breast feed her son. Thus, Vajra became three years old. Because of the knowledge of his former births, he used to take only unblemished food and was fond of listening to the scriptures from the Female monks.

In course of time, Ārya Siṃhagiri wandering many places came to Tumbavana along with his disciples. Sunandā went to Dhanagiri and pleaded him to return her son.

Ārya Dhanagiri explaining to her the conduct of ascetics, said, “O Female-votary! We, the monks follow the principles of monkhood and so cannot return the alms we once receive. Like clothes, receptacle etc; similarly we cannot return even child Vajra whom we received once. You too are well acquainted with the principles of Dharma. When you accepted and gave your word once, it is now not appropriate to violate it. With Ārya Samita and your friends as witnesses, you gave the child Vajra to me and said, ‘I am giving the boy to you. And henceforth I will never talk anything about him’. So you should stick to your promise.”

Ārya Dhanagiri’s efforts to convince Sunandā and to make her adhere to her word fell on deaf ears. Even the members of the congregation also tried to dissuade her. But the adamant Sunandā went to the king and lodged a complaint pleading justice. The judicial officers, after thorough enquiry, gathered the relevant information from both the sides, and placed before the king the complicated case to resolve. Listening to the entire matter of giving up the boy and demanding him back again, the king and judges were in a fix, as one side, the mother was anxious to get her son back and on the other, Sunandā herself willingly gave her son to the monk, who is the father of the son and was once her husband. Since he was given to the monk he belongs to the congregation. The congregation, as such, is the paramount power; even the Tīrthaṅkaras respect and obey the congregation. After much deliberation, the king

declared that the child be handed over to the one to whom it goes freely and willingly.

The first opportunity was given to the mother. To attract the child towards her instantly, she brought many beautiful and eye-catching toys, delicacies that are loved by children; showing them all, she approached the child with great love. Addressing him sweetly, calling him, clapping her hands gently, she stretched out her hands for the child to come. She tried in many ways, but to no avail. Like an enlightened yogi he was not at all lured by those temptations. He did not budge even a little from his place.

Afterwards, the king gave the chance to the father, Dhanagiri. Ārya Dhanagiri showed his whiskbroom to Vajra and said, “Son, if you are willing to become a monk and a knower of Truth, and then take this whiskbroom to dust out the karma”.

Ārya Dhanagiri did not even complete his sentence that Vajra at once jumped out from his place and sat on his lap. He then took whiskbroom from his hand and waved it like a whisk. The entire court fell silent for a moment. Then the Royal Court was filled with the echoes of the victory of Dharma.

‘Boy Vajra will stay with the congregation’, passing this ruling, the king showed his reverence to the congregation and to the monks. Everyone returned to their respective houses.

Sunandā contemplated, “My brother Ārya Samita got initiated, my husband also got initiated, and my son is almost initiated. In such a situation, I too should renounce the world and take initiation.” After considerable deliberations, she firmly resolved to lead an ascetic life. She approached the Female monks who ordained her into the Jain order. Vajra was three years old then.

As soon as Vajra became eight years old, Ārya Siṃhagiri took him out from the care of the Female monks, initiated him into the Śramaṇa order and kept Vajra with him. By then Vajra almost knew by heart all the 11 Aṃgas, as he had been listening to them constantly from the Female monks.

Wandering in many places with his disciples, in course of time, once, Ārya Siṃhagiri came near a mountain. With the intention of testing monk Vajra, Ṛṃbhaka Devas, his friends of former life, by their celestial power (assuming transformations of their bodies), created thick black clouds and reverberating with thunders. Seeing that it was about to rain, Ārya Siṃhagiri entered a cave of the mountain with his disciples. As they were entering into the cave there started torrential downpour with terrifying thunders and dazzling lightning. Within no time, the entire place was flooded with water. It looked as if the rain would not stop. So the monks decided to fast and were happily engrossed in meditation. By dusk it stopped raining. So, Ārya Siṃhagiri and his disciples spent the night in the cave itself.

The next day in the afternoon Ārya Vajra monk, taking the permission of his Guru proceeded towards the hamlet to seek alms. After walking some distance, Monk Vajra saw a small beautiful colony and he entered a house to ask for alms. There a few decent men of gentle disposition paid homage to Monk Vajra and offered him a sweet dish made out of pumpkin. Though Vajra was a young lad, he had a very good knowledge of discrimination. He at once evaluated the alms on the basis of its material content (dravya), season (kāla), kṣetra (place) and analysis (bhāva) in the following ways: Matter – pumpkin sweetmeat, Place - Mālawa Pradeśa, season – summer, and analysis – the sacred donors who are wearing fresh garlands around their necks and, whose feet are not even touching the ground while walking; so they are definitely not human beings and therefore must be of celestial origin. Hence, under no circumstances the alms given by celestial beings is acceptable by monks.

Thus, after evaluating the food, he was sure that it was impure. So, declining the food, with a smile he said, “O Celestial beings! As this sweet dish is being offered by gods, it is not fit for monks.”

The Ṛṃbhaka Devas was astonished and pleased as well, seeing the sharp intellect of Vajra. They revealed themselves in their true forms and offered salutations with devotion to monk Vajra. Praising him highly for his strict observance of pure ascetic principles they went back to their abode.

In course of time, the Jṛambhaka Devas resolved to test Vajra Monk once again. On a summer afternoon, under the scorching heat of the sun, Vajra monk was on begging round (seeking food). Jṛambhaka Devas considering that it was the right time to test him, with the celestial power, disguised themselves as perfect householders, and created a house with their magical power. Then they called Vajra monk from within the house and urged him to accept their alms. Vajra monk entered the house to take alms. The disguised Jṛambhaka Devas offered him a plate filled with sweetmeats (phynia). Looking at the phynia in summer, a dish which is normally prepared in winter, Vajra monk minutely scrutinised the offered food, the donor, etc and refused the food saying that it belongs to gods. Appeased with his pious conduct and strong adherence to the principles and his analysis of the food that is being offered to him, they granted him the spell to fly through the air (Ākāśagamana Vidyā). In the chapter of Mahaparījñā in Āvaśyaka Niryukti, it is mentioned that Vajra Monk was blessed with the Ākāśagamana Vidyā.

From his childhood, Ārya Vajra had passion for knowledge and was service-oriented. Within a short period of time, he won the hearts of his Guru and fellow-monk with his rare combination of attributes like tranquility, power of endurance, tenacity, humility and his power of remembering what he once heard. He learnt canonical scriptures from his revered teacher, thoroughly understood their meaning and assimilated the essence in his heart.

Charisma and humility of Ārya Vajra

The very next day after the aforesaid incident, Ārya Siṃhagiri went towards forest to attend the nature's call, and the rest of the monks also went out to seek alms and on their respective duties. When Monk Vajra discovered that he was all alone, the childish nimbleness manifested in him. He arranged the clothes of all the monks in a circle and sitting in the middle, started reciting and explaining the meaning of the canons and the Pūrvas. Slowly he got engrossed in it, and with fluency, continued his recital and explanation one after the other in an august tone. Mean while Ārya Siṃhagiri returned to the dwelling. Recognising the voice of Ārya Vajra, he hid himself behind the door and listened to him. Listening to his explanations so explicit and breath-taking from a boy of a playful age, Ārya Siṃhagiri was overwhelmed by ecstasy. He felt such elation that he instantly expressed to himself his feelings and emotions in the

following manner, “How fortunate and blessed is the Jain Order! How fortunate is this Gacaha to have such an enlightened child monk!”

Ārya Siṃhagiri in a loud voice uttered ‘Nissihī-Nissihī’ to make known his arrival so that the child monk does not feel shy or embarrassed.

As soon as he listened to the voice of his teacher, the child monk had mixed feelings of shyness and fright. He quickly rearranged the clothes of ascetics and approached his teacher with head bowing down. He, with all humility bowed at his feet and wiped them with a cloth. Seeing the smiling countenance and the nectar of love showering from the eyes of his teacher, the child monk realised that his secretive act could not escape from the sight of his teacher.

At night, Ārya Siṃhagiri, pondering over the amazing talent of his disciple-child monk Vajra, thought that though tender at age, he is mature in knowledge; it is a disregard from my side to make him serve the monks just because they had taken initiation earlier than him. I should prevent this in future. After reflecting for a long, he came out with a solution.

Next day, early in the morning, he assembled his disciples at one place and said, “Today I am leaving this place. All the student-Śramaṇas will remain here”

The Śramaṇas who were studying the canonical scriptures enquired with humility and inquisitiveness, “Lord, who will teach us scriptures and explain them?”

Ārya Siṃhagiri peacefully, solemnly and decisively gave a short reply, “The young monk Vajra”

Had there been a vicious environment in those days, as it is today, then the disciples would have definitely protested against the teacher, raising unruly slogans, defying him for taking such a decision. But those humble disciples accepted his words like God’s command.

Without any deliberation, the Śramaṇas readily agreed saying “As you wish Lord.” Later Ārya Siṃhagiri with some Sthavira monks left for

another place. When it was time for recital, the Śramaṇas arranged a higher seat for Monk Vajra, and making him seated with due respect, they too sat on their seats.

Vajra Monk started imparting the knowledge, in an elaborate and in an easy-to-understand method, commented every Sūtra and every stanza expounding the deep and inner meaning of the canons in such a way that it got imprinted in the brain of each and every monk. Thus every day the recital and explanation continued. While receiving the scriptural knowledge from Vajra Monk, every monk felt as if he were drinking nectar.

After few days Ārya Siṃhagiri returned back. Everyone bowed and prostrated at his feet with devotion. The teacher asked, ‘Śramaṇas! Tell me how the study of the canons is progressing?’

All the monks in a single happy tone replied, “Revered Sir! By the grace of our teacher, our studies are progressing in a smooth and lively manner. While listening to and learning the canons we are experiencing immense joy. Lord! Let Ārya Vajra alone be our discourse-ācārya forever.”

Ārya Siṃhagiri too felt immeasurably happy and said, “I understood this with my direct experience. I intentionally left this place to let you know of the virtues and abilities of this child monk.”

Ārya Vajra performed different types of penance and simultaneously taught his co-disciples while receiving knowledge from his teacher.

Within no time Ārya Vajra learnt from his teacher the entire canonical knowledge that the teacher had. Ārya Siṃhagiri decided to send Ārya Vajra to an able scholar saint who could teach him the remaining knowledge of scriptures. In his wanderings, one day he arrived at a city called Dashapur. From there he sent Ārya Vajra to study under Ārya Bhadrāgupta who resided in Avantī (Ujjain) and who was a Daśa Pūrvadhara (knower of ten pūrvas). Ārya Vajra, obeying the orders of his Guru, walked fast on foot to reach Avantī. As evening had already set in, he stayed at the outskirts of the city for the night.

In the morning, after the completion of his routine activities, he started for Daśa Pūrvadhara Ārya Bhadrugupta. Mean while Ārya Bhadrugupta said to his disciples, “Sons! Last night I dreamt that a lion cub drunk and licked the sweet pudding (kheer) off my bowl. My dream indicates that someone who is extremely intelligent is coming to obtain knowledge of the ten pūrvas from me.”

Ārya Bhadrugupta just completed his sentence, when Monk Vajra stood in front of him, offering him humble reverential salutations, and telling him the purpose of his coming, prayed him to teach him the scriptures. With the gestures and attributes of his body, considering Vajra as able and worthy of learning the scriptures, Ārya Bhadrugupta started imparting him with the knowledge of the Pūrvas. When Ārya Vajra fully completed his study of the Pūrvas with their meanings, Ārya Bhadrugupta gave him permission to go back to Ārya Siṃhagiri and Vajra Monk went back to his teacher. Pleased, Ārya Siṃhagiri came to Daśapura and appointed Vajra Monk as a ‘Vācaka’.

Seeing his beloved disciple Vajra monk attaining the status of DaśaPūrvadhara Ārya Siṃhagiri’s happiness knew no bounds. As he realised that he would be leaving the physical body in a very short time, in V.N. 548, he appointed his disciple Daśapūrvadhara Ārya Vajra as his successor ācārya, to head the congregation after him. As Ārya Vajra became ācārya, everyone organised a grand festival to celebrate the occasion. Ācārya Vajra was wandering along with 500 monks at that time.

Ārya Vajra Swāmī served his Guru with devotion during the last days of his life. After the accession of his Guru to heaven, Ācārya Vajra Swāmī proficiently ran the organisation and served Jain order. Wandering through different places preaching the Jain Dharma, he, once arrived at Pāṭāliputra and camped in a garden outside the city. Thousands of people - men, women, children and old - thronged the garden to sanctify their souls by listening to his transcendental preaching and by catching a glimpse of him.

Captivated and enlightened by his extremely appealing and amazing discourses, a great number of men and women vowed to follow the path of righteousness, and observed the rules and vows of Jainism.

Rukmiṇī, the daughter of a distinguished wealthy merchant called Dhana of Pāṭalīputra heard much in praise of Ārya Vajra from the female monks who stayed in their wagon shed. As soon as she saw the blissful face of Ārya Vajra glowing extraordinarily due to the Strict observance of celibacy and listened to his soft and sweet words as if dipped in nectar, while delivering the sermons, Rukmiṇī got attracted towards him. She took a pledge, “If Ārya Vajra marries me I will stay bound to the world, or else I will renounce the comforts, luxuries and the world. She sent the message to her father through a friend, that she chose Ārya Vajra as her husband, and hence if she fails to marry him she would jump into the pyre and sacrifice her life.

The father was very well acquainted with her terrible oaths and stubbornness. So he felt worried and anxious when he came to know about her resolution. After reflecting for a long time, he with innumerable precious stones, and accompanied by her charming daughter went to the garden where Ārya Vajra stayed with his disciples. The merchant Dhana after paying homage requested Ārya Vajra, “O Best of ācāryas! My daughter, the most beautiful, embellished with all virtues is drawn to you by your virtues and versatility and wants to be your wife. I have a wealth of thousand million silver coins. I want to hand over my daughter together with the entire money to you. You can enjoy comforts and luxuries of life with that money, besides using it to help others. Kindly marry my daughter.”

Ācārya Vajra with his habitual composure said in a peaceful tone, “Sir! You are very gentle and soft-natured. As such you already are bound by the worldly ties and now want to bind others too. You are unaware of the spiritual bliss and joy one gets by following the path of temperance. No doubt it is a path full of thorns, yet the unique happiness a true wanderer enjoys through self-restraint and knowledge is unparallel when compared to the momentary material happiness, which is insignificant, contemptible and a mirage. The ineffable spiritual bliss one attains through temperance is infinite times more precious than the most precious treasury of gems. You want to compare the incomparable happiness of self-restraint which is equal to a wish-fulfilling tree (kalpavṛkṣa) with the detestable sensual pleasures which are worthless, equivalent to a blade of grass. O Gentleman! I am a monk who does not possess anything or attached to anything. I do not have any desire

towards worldly riches or sensual pleasures. If your daughter really loves me, then let her follow and observe my path - the path of self-restraint which bestows the highest happiness.

When Rukmiṇī listened to the words of sacrifice and detachment of Ārya Vajra, which were sanctified by penance and are logical, the black shroud of ignorance was pulled off and her inner eyes opened. She immediately took the vow of temperance and observing it, Ārya Rukmiṇī started her spiritual wanderings along with other female monks.

Even though the pleased Ṟambhaka Devas, the friends of Ārya Vajra in his previous birth, gifted him with the 'power to walk in the air', yet with his unfathomable scriptural knowledge, from the chapter 'Mahaparijñā' from Ācārāṅga Sūtra, Ārya Vajra found out power to walk in the air and during the dreadful time of famine, as the time and situation demanded, inspired by kindness to the people he used that power and saved many lives.

Thus the versatile genius Ācārya Vajra Swāmī, during his tenure as ācārya, wandered from east to north of India. That time as there were no signs of rain, a severe famine broke out in the entire north. Due to the scarcity of food resources, the people gripped under pangs of hunger and misery raised hue and cry. Animals, birds, children, aged people, everyone started falling victim to starvation deaths as the land completely dried up without any grass, flowers, fruits and crops. The congregation undergoing the miserable plight of natural calamity came running to Ācārya Vajra seeking protection.

Though it was against principles and code of monkhood, in response to the piteous request of the congregation, with a view to save the lives of many and from the perspective of welfare of both the society as a whole and the religion, Ārya Vajra using his extraordinary power to fly carried the congregation to Maheśwarīpurī. There the king, being a follower of Buddha Dharma, was anti-Jains. But under the influence of the great Ācārya Vajra, he too became a Jain Votary which propagated the religion immensely.

India alone was not victimised by a chain of famines, but even other countries faced the same situation from time immemorial, which, shook

the humanity very badly from time to time. The culture, the spirituality and religious knowledge that was earned by the untiring efforts of the elevated men for centuries together, and the very concept of humanity was considerably lost as a result of the evil effects of the famine. Even in these calamitous circumstances, the lights of virtues like temperance and spiritual knowledge were kept burning due to the insurmountable willpower of great ācāryas like Vajra Swāmī. By the grace, mercy and efforts of such great religious leaders, our religion, spiritual knowledge and culture survived and the humanity is kept alive till date, despite the severe blows received from time to time by dreadful famines, political turmoil's and religious upheavals,.

The innate desire of Ācārya Vajra Swāmī was to see that the ocean of knowledge of scriptures should continue to flow perennially and uninterruptedly. But as there was none able and worthy to receive the knowledge of Pūrvas, he in the autumn of his life felt worried, that the knowledge of Daśapūrvas would be lost with him. The spiritual yearning of great souls would not be left unheard. Proving the truth of this axiom, a young monk named Ārya Rakṣita, obeying the command of Ārya Tosaliputra came to Ācārya Vajra Swāmī. He obtained the knowledge of nine Pūrvas and could learn only half of the Ten Pūrva. This is explained in detail in the chapter on Ārya Rakṣita.

Propagating and spreading the preaching of Lord Mahāvīra's Jain order, Vajra Swāmī reached the southern part of India. He ordered a disciple to bring dry ginger to get relief from his cough. After taking some, as a remedy, he kept the remaining portion of the dry ginger on the upper part of the ear and completely forgot about it. Afternoon, during the time of transcription, as he removed the cloth covering his mouth, the dry ginger also fell on to the ground. He pondered over the incident, "I am on the verge of my life and I became careless. And so, I forgot about this dry ginger which I kept on my ear. How will temperance sustain when carelessness has stepped in? It is better for me to take Samādhi." Immediately he foresaw with his power of cognition that a 12 year long famine would upsurge in the near future, which would be more dreadful than the previous one. Hoping that disastrous famine would not engulf all the monks without any survivors, and so in order to save the family of monks, he ordered his disciple Vajrasena to leave for Kuṃkuṇa (Kokaṇa) with few monks and to wander there until the situation comes

to normalcy. He also said, “When you come across preparations to mix poison in cooked rice, purchased for one lakh coins, then, at once, realise that, that would be last day of the famine and that from the next day onwards, normal conditions will prevail”. Ārya Vajrasena obeyed the orders of his teacher, went to Kuṃkuṇa with a few of his co-disciples and wandered in that land which had plenty of riches and grains.

In the land in which Ācārya Vajra Swāmī was wandering, the dreadful impact of the drought increased slowly turning the situation from bad to worse. As the monks could not get any alms for days together and they feeling miserable because of the pangs of hunger, Vajra Swāmī provided them with food everyday using his magical power and said, “This food is the boon of the supernatural power and thus we have to get along for 12 long years. If you feel that the attribute of temperance is on the increasing pace, you survive on this food, or else you have to observe fast unto death (saṃthārā). The discretion is left to you; you can opt for either of the ways”

All the 500 monks unanimously and decisively declared their wish to observe fast unto death. So Vajra Swāmī along with his disciples set out towards the Māṃgi Mountain located in southern India. He tried to dissuade a novice monk from observing the fast but he did not listen. On the way to the Māṃgi Mountain, Vajra Swāmī sent him to a village on pretext of carrying out some errand and he continued his journey with other monks. After arriving on the top of the mountain, they paid their humble respects to the goddess of that mountain and stood upright in mediation observing fast without taking either food or water.

Mean while the young monk came back from the village to the place where they have camped. There as he could not see his teacher or other disciples, he realised that his Guru intentionally did not take him along to observe the vow of fast. He reflected thus, “The revered teacher thought that I am unfit to observe the vow of fasting, and hence he left me behind. Am I really weak and spineless? In order to safeguard the temperance, when my revered teacher and all the other disciples can observe fasting why should I lag behind? Hence, I should also follow his footsteps.”

Thus resolving firmly, the young monk proceeded up to the mountain. At the foothill, standing on a boulder burning hot, due to the blazing sun, he

took the ‘vow of *pādopagamana anaśana vrata*’ (abandonment of body willfully). Forbearing the scorching heat of the sun and fire-like burning heat of the boulder, he continued his penance and fasting, with total detachment. He had not only overcome the physical suffering but also conquered and controlled the mind and heart. Within a span of 48 minutes, he left the perishable body and left for the heavenly abode. The Devas praised his tenacity, courage and energy.

The monks were engrossed in penance observing fasting on the Māṅgi Mountain. One aged monk from among them heard the uproar of the celestial angels down hill and enquired Vajra Swāmī about the reason. Ācārya Vajra Swāmī narrated the entire incident of observance of ‘*pādopagamana anaśana vrata*’ by the novice monk on a burning boulder, and his demise and explaining about the commotion he said that the pleased celestial angels were celebrating the great occasion.

Getting inspired by the strong resolution and will power of the monk who sacrificed his life with detachment at a very young age, all the monks with extraordinary perseverance and concentration were engrossed in self-realisation. A peripatetic celestial angel created lot of trouble for the monks involved in penance, but failed to produce the least effect on them. Vajra Swāmī with his disciples shifted to a nearby mountain. After they paid their humble respects to the goddess of that mountain they sat on their respective seats and started meditating, and attained heaven.

After the demise of all his disciples through observance of fasting, Ārya Vajra Swāmī too, in detached concentrated meditation, left his body. Thus the Pride of Jain order, Ārya Vajra Swāmī left for heavenly abode in V.N. 584. With his demise, the knowledge of tenth Pūrva and the fourth endurance (*ardhanārāca saṃhanana*) got lost.

How profound was the knowledge of Ārya Vajra? Presently, we do not have any yard stick to measure it.

If ‘imagination’ which can fly to its utmost, tries to probe the fathomless knowledge of Vajra Swāmī, who immediately after his birth had gained the memory of his previous births, because of which, even as an infant, instead of his mother’s milk, he drank the ambrosia of the Jain scriptures

from the Female monks and memorised the eleven Aṅgas and who, when still a lad, broke the fetters of the worldly ties and obligations and remained at the feet of proficient teachers worshipping and acquiring knowledge, then that ‘imagination’ would fall downward disappointed, as his knowledge is beyond its reach.

In spite of our past being engulfed in centuries of darkness, if the devotees are still able to see light, it is just because of the light kindled by the sacrifice, detachment and knowledge sanctified by serve penances of great souls like Ārya Vajra Swāmī .

Ācārya Vajra Swāmī for 80 years strictly observed the virtues of pure asceticism and propagated the religion. He was a born yogi. He had excellent oratory skill and so his preaching was attractive, appealing and impressive. After his departure to heaven, the vajjī Gaṇa / group ‘Vajjī śākha’ was founded in V.N. 584, to make his memory everlasting in the minds of the people.

Opinion of Digambaras about knowers of ten prior canons (DaśaPūrvadhara)

The span of time from nirvāṇa of Lord Mahāvīra to 62 years is considered as Kevalī era by some of the acclaimed scriptures of Digambara sect, whereas some extend it up to 64 years.

After the stipulated omniscient - Indrabhūti, Sudharmā and Jambū Swāmī, even the Digambara sect named five Śrutakevalīs, who were scholars in Dwādaśaṃgī and the fourteen Pūrvas. However there are minor differences in the names and their tenure between both the schools. As far as the fifth Śrutakevalī, Ācārya Bhadrabāhu is considered both of the schools have a unanimous opinion.

Śvetāmbara school of thought mentioned the names of Ārya Prabhava, Ārya Śayyambhava, Ārya Yaśobhadra, Ārya Saṃbhūtavijaya and Ārya Bhadrabāhu as Śrutakevalīs and expressed their total tenure as 106 years, whereas Digambara school of thought gives out the names of Viṣṇu, Nandimitra, Aparājita, Govardhana and Bhadrabāhu as Śrutakevalīs and their total tenure as 100 years.

The introduction of the ten Pūrvadharas as per Śvetāmbara sect is already given. Kevalī era extends to 64 years, Śrutakevalī era 106 years and DaśaPūrvadhara era for 414 years; altogether the aggregate years are 584. Thus according to the Śvetāmbara School, the knowledge of the ten Pūrvas lasted up to 584 years.

But according to Digambara sect, Kevalī era stretched for 62 years, Śrutakevalī era for 100 years and DaśaPūrvadhara era for 183 years. Thus according to them, the knowledge of the ten Pūrvas lasted up to V.N. 345 only. The list of the ten Pūrvadharas, according to Digambara School is as follows:

1 Viśākhācārya 2 Proṣṭhila 3 Kṣatriya 4 Jaya 5 Nāgasena 6 Siddhārtha 7
Dhṛtiṣeṇa 8 Vijaya 9 Buddhila 10 Gaṃgadeva 11 Dharmasena

Ācārya Guṇabhadra describes these eleven ācāryas as scholars and also as DaśaPūrvadharas and an expert of the twelve Aṃgas.

Contemporary political scenario of Ācārya Nagahasti & Ācārya Vajra

It is already mentioned that king Vikramāditya ruled the country from V.N. 470 to 530. Under his reign, India became powerful, prosperous and attained progress politically, financially, socially, intellectually & militarily. He had a huge and powerful standing army. Even in the regime of his son Vikramasena, who inherited the throne after him, the country remained powerful and prosperous. But during the last phase of his reign, once again Śakas revolted and attacked some regions. Ultimately, they established their authority over some regions in the northwest frontier. After the death of Vikramasena, the pressure of attacks from the Śakas went on increasing.

**Era of partial knower of prior canons (sāmānya pūrvadhara)
(V.N. 584 - 1000)**

Ācāryas of the era of partial knowers of prior canons

19. Ācārya Rakṣita

Tenure V.N. 584 TO 597

20. Ācārya Durbalikā Puṣyamitra

Tenure V.N. 597 TO 617

21. Ācārya Vajrasena

Tenure V.N. 617 TO 620

22. Ācārya Nāgahasti (Nāgendra)

Tenure V.N. 620 TO 689

23. Ācārya Revatīmitra

Tenure V.N. 689 TO 748

24. Ācārya Siṃha

Tenure V.N. 748 TO 826

25. Ācārya Nāgārjuna

Tenure V.N. 826 TO 904

26. Ācārya Bhūtdinna

Tenure V.N. 904 TO 983

27. Ācārya Kālakācārya (IV)

Tenure V.N. 983 TO 994

28. Ācārya Satyamitra

Tenure V.N. 994 TO 1001

Era of partial knower of prior canons (V.N. 584 TO V.N. 1000)

We have already introduced the ācāryas of Daśapūrvadhara Era ranging between V.N. 170 to 584. The span between V.N. 584 to 1000 is the ordinary Pūrvadhara Era. In this duration, Ārya Rakṣita was well conversant in the nine and half Pūrvas, with all their clarifications and explanations. No written evidences are available as to which ācārya after Ārya Rakṣita was conversant with how many Pūrvas. Under these circumstances, it can certainly be said that up to V.N. 1000, thorough knowledge of one Pūrva and partial knowledge of the remaining Pūrvas prevailed.

19th Epochal-Ācārya Ārya Rakṣita

After Vajra Swāmī, Ārya Rakṣita was considered the prominent epochal-ācārya. His introduction is as given below:

Birth	V.N. 522	Household life duration	22 years
Initiation	V.N. 544	Tenure as an ordinary Monk	40 years
Became ācārya	V.N. 584	Tenure as an ācārya	13 years
Heavenly abode	V.N. 597	Total longevity	75 years

Ācārya Toṣaliputra and Ācārya Vajra Swāmī were acknowledged to be his initiation and academic Gurus respectively.

From the information available from the old scriptures like Āvaśyaka Cūrṇi, etc., there was a Brahmin priest by name Somadeva in Daśapura city (Mandasora) of Mālawa Pradeśa. His wife Rūdrasomā was a follower of Jain Dharma. Somadeva's eldest son was Rakṣita and the younger one was Phalgu Rakṣita. After providing primary education in Daśapura, Somadeva sent Rakṣita to Pātaliputra to pursue higher studies. There, within a short time, he became an expert in 14 disciplines of Vedas and Vedāṅgas etc. After completing of his education, he returned to Daśapura. The king and the citizens received him with pomp and festivity. But his mother did not express any signs of happiness and was indifferent. On asking the reason, she told, "Son! You have studied violence-enhancing books, which would only increase the continuous

cycle of existence between death and rebirth. In such a situation, how can I be cheerful? Had you studied Dṛṣṭivāda which aims at the elevation of one and that of others, I would have rejoiced”

When the son asked her mother about the twelfth canon / limb ‘Dṛṣṭivāda’ and who has the knowledge of it, she replied that Ācārya Toṣaliputra, who stays in Iksuvatika, has its knowledge.

Rakṣita assured his mother of learning Dṛṣṭivāda and taking her permission, the next day he set off to Ikṣuvāṭikā.

When Rakṣita came out of the city, an old man, a childhood friend of Somadeva met him on the way and gave him nine full and one half sugarcanes. This symbolized that Rakṣita would be bestowed with the knowledge of nine and half Pūrvas.

On reaching Ikṣuvāṭikā, following a layman there, Rakṣita entered the religious place and bowed with due respect to Ācārya Toṣaliputra.

Thereupon, when ācārya asked the purpose of his visit, Rakṣita humbly requested, “Lord! I came to your service with an intention to study Dṛṣṭivāda”

When ācārya mentioned that the knowledge of Dṛṣṭivāda would be imparted only after taking initiation, he cheerfully showed his preparedness to be initiated immediately in monkhood. After initiation as a monk, Rakṣita stayed there in the service of his Guru Toṣaliputra and by studying with utmost dedication, within a short time mastered the eleven Aṅgas like Ācārāṅga, etc. Ācārya Toṣaliputra imparted Rakṣita with whatever knowledge he had in Dṛṣṭivāda, which the latter imbibed completely

Later, Ācārya Toṣaliputra directed Ārya Rakṣita to the Daśapūrvadhara Ācārya Vajra Swāmī for further studies of the Pūrvas. While going to Ārya Vajra, Rakṣita reached Ujjaini. There Sthavira Bhadrugupta, who envisaged that his life reached the end, asked Rakṣita to be his assistant and stay with him till the completion of his fast unto death. Ārya Rakṣita considered himself to be very fortunate to have such a golden opportunity of offering services to a great saint, and the superior and

elder monk during his last days. He stayed in Ujjaini with Sthavira Bhadrugupta and offered his services with great devotion.

After Sthavira Bhadrugupta left for heavenly abode while in meditation, Ārya Rakṣita left Ujjain to be present in the services of Ārya Vajra. On reaching there, Ārya Rakṣita offered his humble salutations to Ārya Vajra. When the latter asked him, Ārya Rakṣita informed that he came from Ārya Toṣaliputra.

After that, Ācārya Vajra started teaching the Pūrvas to Ārya Rakṣita. The extremely brilliant Ārya Rakṣita pursued the studies with great devotion and zeal and within a short period, he completed the instruction on nine Pūrvas and started studying the tenth Pūrva.

The parents of Ārya Rakṣita were worried and not able to take up his absence any more. They sent their younger son Phalgu Rakṣita to bring Ārya Rakṣita back.

Falgu Rakṣita approached Ārya Rakṣita and said, “Our mother remembers you day and night. If you visit Daśapura once, our parents and all our kinsmen would take renunciation.”

Ārya Rakṣita was totally intoxicated in spiritual knowledge. He understood, “All the relationships in the world are transient. Body, wealth, kinsmen etc., none of them are mine. I am pure consciousness, separate from this body. Knowledge is my nature and discernment is my only friend.”

He replied to Falgu Rakṣita, “O Dear One! If our parents and kinsmen are prepared to take renunciation on my visit, then why don’t you take initiation first?”

Phalgu Rakṣita took initiation immediately and strictly followed the ascetic discipline. He always used to remind Ārya Rakṣita that he should visit Daśapur.

One day Ārya Rakṣita asked Ācārya Vajra, “Lord! How much of the tenth Pūrva is yet to be mastered?”

Ācārya Vajra said, “Son! As of now, whatever you have learnt is equivalent to a drop. An ocean remains.”

Ārya Rakṣita thought that it is beyond his capability to attain such a vast knowledge and asked the permission of Ārya Vajra to leave for Daśapura. However, renewing his confidence, Ārya Vajra said, “Son! Do not be disheartened. Keep up with your studies.”

“Lord! I shall honour your command” replied Ārya Rakṣita, and continued studying the tenth Pūrva. However, as he was no longer confident that he could master the balance ocean like knowledge, he frequently persuaded Ācārya Vajra for his permission to go to Daśapura. With his cognitive consciousness, the ācārya could see, “After going to Daśapura, Ārya Rakṣita will not return again. There is no person qualified enough to assimilate the entire knowledge of the Pūrvas, and I am not left with enough life. Consequently, the tenth Pūrva would, once and for all vanish from India, with the end of my life.”

Thus looking at the unavoidable future, Ācārya Vajra finally granted permission to Ārya Rakṣita to go to Daśapura.

Hence, Ārya Rakṣita could acquire complete knowledge of nine Pūrvas and partial knowledge of the tenth Pūrva. As soon as he received the permission from Ācārya Vajra, he along with his younger brother Falgu Rakṣita, set off to Daśapura. After reaching Daśapura, Ārya Rakṣita preached and enlightened his parents and kinsmen. As a result, all of them took initiation in Śramaṇa Dharma. Rakṣita’s father, the newly initiated monk Somadeva (who was bodily weak) because of his immense affection towards his son, wandered along with him, but did not put on the prescribed robes meant for the possession-less Mokṣa. Initially he was allowed to carry an umbrella, and wear sandals, the sacred thread etc., but gradually he was brought into the complete path of a monk.

Ārya Rakṣita took all the newly initiated monks to his Guru, Ārya Toṣaliputra. Ācārya Toṣaliputra felt very happy to see his disciple, having attained the knowledge of nine and a half Pūrvas and considering him eligible in all respects, declared him as his successive ācārya. Ārya Rakṣita travelled far and wide, and enlightened laymen & women.

In the ‘Āvaśyaka Niryukti’, it is stated that Ārya Rakṣita systematized and classified the scriptures. It is also mentioned that Ārya Rakṣita was praised by Sīmandhara Swāmī as an expounder on *Nigodha* (lowest form

of life) just like Ārya Śyāma (first Kālakācārya). Hearing this Śakrendra came to test his knowledge and listening to his detailed explanation on Nigodha, he too was thoroughly impressed.

Classification of Expositions (anuyogas)

The name of Ārya Rakṣita remains immortal in Jain History as the one who classified the expositions. The event which led to the classification of expositions is as follows:

All types of monks - scholars, mediators, hermits, debaters - were present in Ārya Rakṣita's Holy Order. Of the disciples of Ārya Rakṣita, there were three Puṣyamitra, who were outstanding, qualified and brilliant. They were addressed as Durbalikā Puṣyamitra, Ghṛta Puṣyamitra and Vastra Puṣyamitra respectively. The second and third Ārya Puṣyamitras had achieved some magical powers.

Durbalikā Puṣyamitra was extremely fond of the study of the scriptures. Hence he would always engage himself in reading the scriptures day and night. Due to the incessant study, he became very weak. He acquired knowledge of all the nine Pūrvas.

In the group of Ārya Rakṣita, the following six disciples were considered the most brilliant and accomplished monks: Durbalikā Puṣyamitra, Ghṛta Puṣyamitra, Vastra Puṣyamitra, Vindhya, Phalgu Rakṣita and Goṣṭhāmāhila. Other Monks were also influenced by them. Out of these, Vindhya Monk was extremely intelligent and fully capable of retaining the meaning of the canons. While studying along with his fellow monks, he was not contented with the lessons of the canons imparted by ācāryaśrī. One day, Vindhya monk, while serving ācāryaśrī, requested, "Lord! I am unable to get adequate lessons on the canonical texts; hence, I feel my studies are incomplete. So kindly arrange for a separate scholar-preceptor for me."

Ācārya Rakṣita accepted the request of Vindhya monk and entrusted Durbalikā Puṣyamitra to teach and explain the canons and their meanings to Vindhya Monk. After teaching Vindhya monk for a few days, Durbalikā Puṣyamitra met Ācārya Rakṣita and requested, "Honorable Teacher! As I am engaged in reciting and explaining the canons to

Vindhya monk, now I am unable to revise the already learnt Sūtras in to; hence many of the canons are dwindling from my memory. Earlier, I was unable to revise the canons because of the frequent visits of family members. Thus I am losing my knowledge of the ninth Pūrva.”

Listening to his intelligent disciple Durbalikā Puṣyamitra’s complaint about his weak retention memory, Ācārya Rakṣita contemplated, “When the most intelligent monk finds it difficult to recollect the studied lesson unless it is revised, then what would be the condition of others?”

With his cognition, Ācārya Rakṣita inferred that the ensuing generation of monks (disciples) could have less developed faculties of intelligence, grasping, and retention. Consequently, with a view to facilitate their learning and retention, he made brief explanations for each aphorism.

However, he wanted to make sure that the below-average and above-average disciples failing to understand the basic concept of standpoints / viewpoints ‘Naya’ do not aspire for the one-sided philosophical approach of knowledge or actions, reality or behavior thinking it as solely beneficial and also do not assume false notions about the intrinsic matters. With this intention, he did not divide the standpoints Nayas.

Ārya Ratha group-ācārya

Ārya Vajrasena, Ārya Padama and Ārya Ratha were the three prominent disciples of Ārya Vajra. In course of time, Ārya Vajrasena was appointed as the epochal-ācārya after Ārya Rakṣita and Ārya Durbalikā Puṣyamitra. The Padama branch originated from Ārya Padama, while Jayantī branch originated from Ārya Ratha and Vajra sect from Ārya Vajra of Gautama Gotra.

The seventh heretic Goṣṭhāmāhila

The seventh and last heresy was led by Goṣṭhāmāhila in V.N. 584. Goṣṭhāmāhila formulated and enforced his own principles “*Abaddhika Darśana*” contrary to the principles of Lord Mahāvīra, hence he was known as a heretic. Goṣṭhāmāhila and the Abaddhika Darśana enunciated by him have been described hereunder.

While wandering several places during the last year of his life, one day Ārya Rakṣita along with his group of disciples went to a place called Ikṣudhara on the outskirts of Daśapura city.

In those days, the philosophical concept of Akriyāvāda (non-action) was gaining popularity in Mathura. They challenged the followers of all religions for a debate. No scholar dared to debate with these Akriyāvādīs. In order to protect the long-standing reputation of Jain Religion, the congregation assembled and discussed the matter seriously. Unable to find a competent scholar, capable enough of debating with Akriyāvādīs, the congregation sent a message to Daśapura (Mamdsora) requesting Ārya Rakṣita to visit Mathurā and defeat them in a debate. Ārya Rakṣita had become very old and was aware that he was in the last stage of his life. Under these circumstances, he felt that it was not wise for him to go and therefore deputed his able and well-qualified disciple Goṣṭhāmāhila to Mathura.

Obeying his Guru's order, Goṣṭhāmāhila reached Mathura and debated with the Akriyāvādīs. Goṣṭhāmāhila's powerful arguments and irrefutable logic shook the very ground beneath the feet of the Akriyāvādīs. The arbitrators and the members unanimously declared the Akriyāvādīs as vanquished and Goṣṭhāmāhila as the vanquisher. The honor of Jain Order was glorified and waves of happiness spread all over the congregation. The victorious Goṣṭhāmāhila came back to the services of his Guru at Daśapura. A prestigious delegation of the Mathura congregation also accompanied him. They requested Ārya Rakṣita to permit Goṣṭhāmāhila to perform his Rainy season halt in the city of Mathura. The approach and the persuading humble request by the congregation was accepted by Ārya Rakṣita and Goṣṭhāmāhila once again set off to Mathura.

During the rainy season halt period, when Ārya Rakṣita was in Daśapura and his disciple Goṣṭhāmāhila in Mathura, the physical condition of Ārya Rakṣita deteriorated day by day and knowing that he would not live much longer, he discussed the issue of the successor with the congregation. From the batch of Ārya Rakṣita, Ghṛta Puṣyamitra, Vastra Puṣyamitra, Durbalikā Puṣyamitra, Vindhya, Phalgu Rakṣita and Goṣṭhāmāhila were the six brilliant disciples. Some of the monks in the congregation favored Ārya Phalgu Rakṣita to be appointed as the

successor to the post of ācārya, while some were in favors of Goṣṭhāmāhila. But Ārya Rakṣita considered that only Durbalikā Puṣyamitra was qualified to be his successor-ācārya.

Seeing the differences in opinion within the disciple group regarding the appointment of his successor, Ārya Rakṣita acted with great insight. He assembled all of them and said, “Imagine that some monks have placed three pots in front of you. One of the pots is filled with black gram, and the remaining two with oil and ghee respectively. If these three pots were inverted over three other pots one by one in front you and all the members of the congregation, then what would be the amount of black gram, oil and ghee left out in the three empty pots?”

Listening to the question posed by Ārya Rakṣita, his disciples and chief monks replied, “Lord! The one which had black gram would be completely empty; the pot with oil would have traces of oil left whereas the one with ghee would still have substantial amount left in it, as it sticks the insides.”

Addressing all the disciples and members of the congregation, Ārya Rakṣita told in a decisive tone, “Just like the pot with black gram, I have emptied my entire knowledge into Durbalikā Puṣyamitra. Even after completely inverting, small quantity of oil and substantial quantity of ghee still remains in the other two pots; similarly, in spite of my impartation, the rest of the disciples could not grasp the complete knowledge.”

This brief but sententious and tactful decision of Ārya Rakṣita instantly solved the problem of succession. The disciple group along with the entire congregation unanimously accepted Durbalikā Puṣyamitra as the successor of Ārya Rakṣita. Ārya Rakṣita gave instructions to the newly elected Ācārya Durbalikā Puṣyamitra and the congregation, on how to organize the congregation. Later deeply engrossed in spiritual meditation, Ārya Rakṣita left for heavenly abode.

Hearing the news that Ārya Rakṣita had left this world; Goṣṭhāmāhila came to the Monk congregation after completion of his Rainy season halt and was deeply hurt when he came to know that Ārya Durbalikā Puṣyamitra was appointed as the Group-ācārya. Śramaṇa congregation

and Votary congregation tried hard to clarify, but Goṣṭhāmāhila not heeding anyone, stayed in a separate monastery aloof from other monks and studied the scriptures alone at the time of Sūtra - Paurūṣī. Even during Artha-Paurūṣī when group-ācārya Ārya Durbalikā Puṣyamitra was reciting the Āgamas to the group of monks, Goṣṭhāmāhila would not be present there. He inwardly developed hatred towards the group-ācārya. Only after the group-ācārya completed the recital and Vindhya monk started the sermons of the meaning of Sūtras, would Goṣṭhāmāhila be present and listen to the eighth Pūrva.

Because of his hatred [coupled with disgust] towards group-ācārya and the development of grey aura (kāpota-leśyā) of delusion, he was unable to grasp the actual spirit of the eighth Pūrva and used to interpret them in a negative way.

During the recital of the eighth Karmapravāda (Law of Karma) Pūrva, while describing the nature of karmic bondage, Ārya Vindhya said, “there are three types of states of karmika bondage / association in which the soul (ātman) is bound with karmas, namely, Karma-Baddha (loose), Baddha-Sprṣṭa (loose and firm) and Nikācita (non-annihilator). The mere association of the karmic particles with the sentient molecules is known as Baddha e.g. the bondage of karmika influx of a passion-less soul would get separated in course of time without any stability, just like a handful of powder sprinkled on a dry wall. In the second type, Baddha-Sprṣṭa Karma, the karmika particles bind and stay with sentient molecules for some time and separate later, similar to powder thrown on a wet or oily wall. In the third type, i.e. Nikācita Karma, the same Baddha-Sprṣṭa Karma stays tightly attached to the soul surpassing incessant mental effort and the soul is relieved from such karmas only after bearing the consequences.

The example of a needle is cited to understand the matters easily relating to the bonds of Baddha, Baddha-Sprṣṭa and Nikācita states of Karma. The soul bound by Baddha Karma is compared to a needle wrapped by the thread. The needle can be separated from the thread with very little effort. Similarly it is easy to separate the soul clung to Baddha Karma. Baddha-Sprṣṭa Karma is compared to a needle bound to a sheet of iron. A special effort is required to separate the needle from the metal; similarly special effort is required to separate the Baddha-Sprṣṭa Karma

from the soul molecules. The third Nikācita Karma is compared with the cluster of needles that are heated and hammered together. Once again, to recover the needles, the lump should be melted and casted into the moulds of needles. Similarly, Nikācita Karma can be shed off only by bearing the consequences.

After listening to the explanation of Karmika bondage given by Vindhya monk, Goṣṭhāmāhila said, “O Sage! If you interpret Karma in such a way then it implies that Karma is bound to the soul molecules in an inseparable manner. As such, the soul can never be freed from the clutches of Karma. The relation between the soul and the Karma is so peripheral like that of a man and his garment. The garment just touches the body of a person who wears it but does not bind him. Similarly, Karma and the soul are unlike milk and water, which is inseparable after mixing; the Karma just touches the soul and no more than that.”

Listening to Goṣṭhāmāhila’s illogical argument, Ācārya Vindhya said, “This is the way our Guru taught us.” Goṣṭhāmāhila replied, “What more can one expect from a Guru, who himself was ignorant about it.”

This created a doubt in the mind of plain-hearted Vindhya monk. He narrated the entire incident to his ācārya and asked to clarify the matter explaining the meaning of this Sūtra.

Durbalikā Puṣyamitra said, “O Noble Monk! Whatever you said is correct. However the interpretation of Goṣṭhāmāhila is very inappropriate. He argues that if one accepts the relation of the soul with Baddha, Baddha-Spr̥ṣṭa and Nikācita karmas, it does imply that the living being and the soul are inseparable. This, in itself is a contradictory statement. The end or separation of āyū Karma (the Karma that determines the lifespan of a living being in a destiny) is evident in the form of death. The separation of Karma is done by special effort. Even the inseparable bond of an iron ball with the fire can also be separated by effort. On heating, the heat spreads into every cell of the iron ball, and when quenched, it becomes cool, free of fire or heat. In the same manner, karmika cells combined with soul space points (Pradeśa) can be separated by ‘Right Knowledge’ and practice of “Right Conduct” together. Thus the soul freed from karma obtains its elevated state,

wherein, it realizes ‘the truth, the conscious and the beauty as the essence of divinity’ (Satyaṃ, Śivaṃ, Sundaraṃ).

Vindhya monk tried to explain to Goṣṭhāmāhila the meaning that was interpreted by Lord Mahāvīra. However, Goṣṭhāmāhila stuck to his one-sided view. The saint Vindhya kept the matter before the group-ācārya. Ācārya Durbalikā Puṣyamitra too, citing scriptural evidences and using logic tried to make him understand, but in vain. Then Durbalikā Puṣyamitra with the help of Sthaviras of other gacchas and guardian deities tried his best to make Goṣṭhāmāhila understand the relation between karma and soul; but Goṣṭhāmāhila was not at all convinced and did not let go of his stubbornness. Goṣṭhāmāhila persisted in his argument, going against the principles of the scriptures. Eventually the congregation declared him a heretic and expelled him from the congregation.

What is the period of the seventh heretic? This question remained unanswered for centuries together and is like a puzzle to the scholars. According to the verse of Viśeṣāvaśyaka Bhāṣya –

*Pañcasayā culasiya, tayiya sidhdhim gayassa vīrassa
Abaddhiyaṇa ditti, Daśapura nayare samutapaṇṇa.*

It is clear that Abaddhika view point originated in Daśapura in 584 V.N. But as per other historical texts the time of Durbalikā Puṣyamitra does not match with that of Ārya Rakṣita. However, this event took place after the Samādhi of Ārya Rakṣita; and all the historians unanimously accept that Ārya Rakṣita attained heaven in 597 V.N.

Ārya Durbalikā Puṣyamitra 20th Epochal-ācārya

In V.N.597 after the departure of Ārya Rakṣita to heaven, Ārya Durbalikā Puṣyamitra succeeded him as epochal-ācārya. He was born in V.N.550 in a wealthy Buddhist family. When he was 17, in V.N.567 he received “Nirgraṃtha” Śramaṇa initiation from Ārya Rakṣita. After initiation, he was continually engaged in two tasks, namely, serving his Guru with all humility and studying, recollecting and reflecting the scriptures. Thus he mastered the 11 Aṃgas and 9½ Pūrvas along with their meanings & interpretations.

“When the pot filled with mustard seeds is turned over, and not even a single seed remains in it, similarly I taught my entire knowledge to Durbalikā Puṣyamitra” these words emotionally uttered by Ārya Rakṣita in the presence of the entire congregation during his last moments, establishes the fact that he learnt the complete knowledge of 9½ Pūrvas from Pūrvadhara Ārya Rakṣita.

Ārya Durbalikā Puṣyamitra, though full of tremendous will power, lacked physical stamina and strength. Day and night he was so engrossed in studying, recollecting and reflecting, that, because of the excessive exertion even the best of foods also failed to provide essential stamina and energy to his body, and he always felt weak. Due to this weakness, he was nicknamed as ‘Durbalikā,’ in the congregation.

From the point of view of both the Indian history and Jain history, the tenure of Ācārya Durbalikā Puṣyamitra was very significant. The following important events occurred during his tenure as ācārya:

1. In V.N. 605 during his tenure commencement of Śaka era / calendar (briefly described below)
2. In V.N. 609 Jain congregation is divided into two major-sects viz., Śvetāmbaras and Digambaras

It is already mentioned that Ārya Durbalikā Puṣyamitra confessed to Ācārya Rakṣita that in the absence of repetition, he was unable to remember the knowledge, due to lack of retention power. Ārya Rakṣita analyzing the facts thought that the students of the ensuing generation, under the influence of changing times, would lack memory and retention ability. In order to facilitate their studies, he classified the expositions (Anuyogas) into separate small divisions. Durbalikā Puṣyamitra was the cause behind this very significant event in Jain history.

In 597 V.N. Durbalikā Puṣyamitra became epochal-ācārya after leading an ascetic life of an ordinary monk for 30 years. He attained heavenly abode in 617 V.N., after serving the Jain Order and propagating Jainism for 20 years as epochal-ācārya. His age is calculated as 67 years, 7 months and 7 days. Nevertheless, in the table of ‘Duṣṣamakāla Śramaṇa samgha Stotra’ another point of view is mentioned, according to which,

his tenure as epochal-ācārya was 13 years and span of life was 60 years, 7 months and 7 days.

Śālivāhana: start of Śaka calendar

Sātakarṇī, the son of Gautami of Sātavāhana dynasty and the king of Pratiṣṭhāna kingdom killed ‘Nahapāna’ the powerful ruler of Śaka dynasty. Besides, he totally destroyed the great Satrapies of the Śakas in the Southern region, Saurashtra and Gujarat. Hence, he took the title of “Śakāri Vikramāditya”. He also brought the Śaka era into existence in 605 V.N., (135V.S, 78AD).

The word ‘Śaka’ in Śālivāhana calendar creates a misconception whether any foreign ruler named King śāka had commenced the calendar. As a matter of fact, the word ‘śāka’ here means ‘śakti’ or power’. The literal meaning of ‘Śālivāhana śāka Samvata’ is the śakti calendar that is brought out by Śālivāhana’. Further, in all the authentic dictionaries the meaning of ‘śāka’ is given as power, ability and energy, and ‘varṣa’ as year, particularly Śālivāhana year.

Sectarian differences in Jain order

Right from Ārya Sudharmā to Ārya Vajra Swāmī, the Jain Order had run without any sectarian differences. Though Gaṇas (groups) and Śākhās (branches) started emerging from the tenure of Yaśobhadra, and differences between Gaṇas became customary from the period of Ārya Suhastī, yet there did not appear any basic sectarian differences. The entire Jain congregation was known as 'Nirgrantha' by one and all without any divisions like Śvetāmbara, Digambara etc. Those who kept the essential clothes and those who did not, - both had the object of emancipation and without any conflict between themselves progressed forward on the spiritual path.

On one side there were ācāryas like Mahāgiri who preferred seclusion to practice Jinakalpa, and on the other, ācāryas like Suhastī wandered through villages, cities, preaching the sermons to normal people, propagating and expanding the Jain Order, thus constantly remained in association with devotees. Yet there was goodwill between them. Till then both the sects - with and without clothes - were equally respected, revered and were thought as eligible for liberation. The 'cloth' (either wearing or not wearing it) was not considered as the criterion for either practicing asceticism or attaining final salvation (muktipatha). Wearing clothes was not considered as hindrance to the path of salvation, similarly being naked was also not considered as the eligible criterion for attaining salvation. Śvetāmbaras never stated that without the tools of Dharma (like cloth, etc) one cannot attain liberation, and on the other side, Digambaras never claimed that the monk who wears clothes is, in real sense, not a monk at all. To put in a nutshell, till then 'with clothes' or 'without clothes' was not a yardstick to measure either the significance or the insignificance of a monk. The correct yardstick of monkhood was to have the right knowledge, right faith and the right conduct.

But in V.N. 609, this situation came to an end and a clear sectarian difference originated in the Jain society by the name of Śvetāmbara & Digambara. Jinabhadragaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa has said, 609 years after V.N. Boṭhika sect (Digambara sect) originated in Rathavīrapura.

The circumstances that led to the sectarian difference were described in Viśeṣāvaśyaka Bhāṣya and Āvaśyaka Cūrṇi etc. The gist is as follows:

Once Ācārya Kṛṣṇa came to a garden called Dīpa in Rathavīrapura. Śivabhūti, a royal priest used to live in the same city. As he was patronized by the king and was in his good books, he led a luxurious life enjoying all the sensual pleasures. He would return to his house only past midnight, roaming all over the city till then.

One day Śivabhūti's wife confessed her grief to her mother-in-law, "Your son never returns home in time, he always comes only after midnight. It is very painful to remain hungry till then and to stay awake for such a long time". The mother-in-law consoled her. The next day she asked her daughter-in-law to sleep and waited for her son to return. After midnight when Śivabhūti came home and knocked the door, his aged mother replied angrily, "Go to that place, where the doors are open at this late hour. Nobody is dying for you, over here."

Thus chided by his mother, Śivabhūti arrogantly returned back immediately. While roaming in the city, he saw that the Jain monastery (place of stay of the Jain monk) was open. He went inside and the next day, took initiation from Ācārya Kṛṣṇa and started wandering with him.

After sometime Ācārya Kṛṣṇa once again came to Rathavīrapura with his disciples. The King, because of his previous association, gave a precious blanket studded with gems, to Śivabhūti.

When the ācārya came to know about this he said, "The monk should not keep such precious blankets / clothes".

In spite of his Guru's objections Śivabhūti, out of attachment did not abandon the blanket, instead carefully packed it into a bundle.

One day, seizing an opportunity, the ācārya cut the blanket into several pieces and distributed among the monks. Śivabhūti felt distressed. After this incident he bred sinful feelings towards the ācārya.

Ācārya Kṛṣṇa, on one occasion was explaining about the conduct of monks who follow Jinakalpa. He said, 'Jinakalpi monks are of two types - Panipatra, one who takes food placing it on the palm and Patradhari, one who uses some utensils for eating. They are subdivided into one who

wears clothes and the one who doesn't. Jinakalpa is should keep at least two requisites with them - Whisk broom and cloth covering the mouth'.

Listening to this description of Jinakalpa, Śivabhūti asked, "If this is the case, why then in the name of audhika (daily used tools) and aupagrahika (borrowed and returned after use) so many requisites are being kept now?"

Ācārya replied, "After the nirvāṇa of Jambū Swāmī, because of the structural weakness, the Jinakalpa tradition is considered as lost".

Śivabhūti, already pained due to the loss of his blanket declared, "Master! As long as I am alive, I shall not allow the Jinakalpa to disintegrate. The one who aspires for the other world should always keep himself away from those objects which create delusion and passion."

The teacher said, "Son! Requisites like clothes, etc. need not increase attachment. Just like our body, the clothes also help us to follow the Holy Path; the way a monk bears his body without any attachment towards it to practice the Holy Path, similarly the basic needs like clothes, etc. is not inappropriate, but should be worn with the same feeling that they are helpful in our spiritual practice. The monk should use them with detachment, with a feeling that it is only a requisite which helps in spiritual practice.

Thus citing examples and evidences, the ācārya explained the true meaning and tried to bring him around, but the adamant Śivabhūti gave up clothes and practiced total nudity. He started living separately in a garden outside the city. Śivabhūti had a sister named Uttarā. She also took initiation and initially followed him. But later she gave up nudity and put on clothes.

According to Śvetāmbara School, it was under Śivabhūti, who is also known as Sahasramalla, that the Digambara sect came into existence. He had two disciples - Kauṇḍinya and Koṭṭavīra. Thus the Boṭṭika (Digambara) sect was led by Śivabhūti.

In most of the literature of Śvetāmbaras almost similar description is available. Just as Śvetāmbaras declare that the Digambara sect came into

existence in V.N. 609, in the same way, the Digambara sect asserts that the Sevada congregation or Śvetapaṭṭa (white clothes) congregation (Śvetāmbara congregation) came into existence in V.N. 606.

Devasena Sūri, the author of Bhāvasaṃgraha wrote - “136 years after the death of Vikramāditya, the Śvetāmbara congregation originated in Vallabhī Nagara in Saurashtra”.

In this connection, Devasena Sūri giving special information says that, “In the 2nd century, after Vikramāditya’s death, Bhadrabāhu, a great occult ācārya, warned his Śramaṇa congregation that a famine would break up in the near future that would last for 12 years; and so he asked them to go away to different places with their community. So while all the Gaṇadhara as per his advice migrated to the South along with their disciples, ācārya called Śānti with his great number of disciples went to Vallabhī Nagara in Saurashtra, where he had to confront the most dreadful famine. There the calamitous situation reached such pinnacle that the poor hungry people used to tear open the stomach of those who had just eaten something and eat that food, thus quench their pangs of hunger. As there was no way out from such terrifying situation, Ācārya Śānti and his monks started using the requisites like stick, blanket, bowl, etc and wore clothes. They started eating along with the householders in their homes, sitting beside them.

When the famine was over and normal conditions prevailed, Ācārya Śānti addressing all the monks of the congregation, said, “Now, as the conditions restored back to normalcy, let us get rid of the low conduct that we adopted, undergo repentance to wash off the effects of the wrong deeds and follow our original, pure, virtuous code of Śramaṇa Dharma”.

The disciples reacted to this and said, “How can we observe those Stringent and arduous rules now? Whatever methods we have adopted and have been observing are easy to follow; it is comfortable; so it is impossible for us to abandon them at this juncture.”

When Ācārya Śānti tried to persuade them repeatedly and ultimately expressed his anger, his chief disciple struck him with a stick on his head with all his strength. Ācārya Śānti died at once and was born as a Vyantara (low-class angel).

Ācārya Devasena, the author of “Bhāvasaṃgraha” is of the opinion that the Śvetāmbara congregation was brought into existence by Jinacandra, the disciple of Śānti Ācārya.

Even in ‘Bhadrabāhu Caritra’ of Ratnanandi and ‘Vṛhat Kathā Kośā’ of Hariṣeṇa, similar description is narrated with a little variation about the birth of the Śvetāmbara sect. They held that the disciple of Sthūlācārya and Sthūlabhadra led to the birth of the Śvetāmbara sect.

According to Vrihat Kathā Kośā, during the time of the famine, as per the orders of Bhadrabāhu - the Śrutakevalī, Viśakhācārya along with some monks went to ‘Punnaṭa’ located in the South, while Rāmilla, Sthūlācārya and Sthūlabhadra with their entourage went towards Indus (Sindhu Pradeśa). Rāmilla, et al., had to undergo the worst hardships during the famine. As requested by the devoted Votaries, to escape from the menace of the beggars, they used to seek alms at night and eat the same the next day. Upon the request of Votaries, they started placing a cloth on their left shoulder. After the famine, both the Śramaṇa congregations met in Madhya Pradeśa. By that time, Rāmilla, Sthūlabhadra and Sthūlācārya, out of fear of transmigration, gave up clothes & following the spirit of ‘Nirgraṃtha’. But a few Mokṣa who did not have the courage to withstand the difficulties imagined Jinakalpa and Sthavirakalpa and created a new Sthavirakalpa, which was different from the Nirgraṃtha tradition. However which disciple, of which ācārya was the reason for the new Śvetāmbara sect, is not mentioned therein.

According to Ratnanandi, the author of ‘Bhadrabāhu Caritra’, the Śvetāmbara sect came into being out of a division called ‘Ardhaphālaka’. According to him:

Lokapāla, the king of Vallabhīpura upon the request of his queen Candralekhā invited her Guru Jinacandra from Ujjaini to Vallabhī. Seeing only one cloth, on the body of Jinacandra, the king in a dilemma, went back to his palace without paying obeisance to him. The queen, perceiving the feelings of her husband, sent clothes to Jinacandra, praying him to wear them. The king then paid homage, when he came to know that the monks wore clothes. Thus the ‘Ardhaphālaka’ sect since then they started wearing white clothes, gained popularity, as

Śvetāmbara sect and it came into being 136 years after the death of King Vikram.

Different – different versions about the origin of Śvetāmbara sect are found in the three scriptures of Digambara sect like, Bhāvasaṃgraha, Vrihat Kathā Kośā and Bhadrabāhu Caritra written by Ratnanandi.

In all Śvetāmbara works like ‘Viśeṣāvaśyaka Bhāṣya, Āvaśyaka Cūrṇi, Sthānāṅga’ etc., the main event for the birth of the vatic sect (Digambara sect) appears totally the same, without any prejudiced and diversified opinions. Whereas in the texts of Digambara sect, varied versions are found, which are more or less biased in their narration.

In conclusion, it can be said that on the basis of the information available from the texts of both the sects, the sectarian division of Digambara & Śvetāmbara took place in 606 or 609 V.N.

Division of congregations in Digambara tradition

Four branches sprouted in Śvetāmbara sect, namely, Candra, Nāgendra, Nivṛtti and Vidhyādhara, and many sub-branches (*Kulas*). Similarly many divisions sprang up in the Digambara sect also like, Kāṣṭhā congregation, Mūla congregation, Mathura congregation and Gopya congregation, besides Nandiḡaṇa, Balātakāra Gaṇa and different other branches as mentioned in different texts. They are discussed in brief.

The scholars of the Digambara sect held that the Jain Order functioned unbroken right from the nirvāṇa of Mahāvīra up to Ācārya Arhadbali. But in 593 V.N., on the occasion of the five-yearly periodical session of confessions, when all the ascetics assembled in a congregation in Mahimā Nagara, Ācārya Arhadbali noticed that the various ācāryas were displaying favoritism towards their respective disciples. So he divided the main congregation into many branches. Later, these branches began working independently and established their separate identity. Some of the names of the congregations, divided by Arhadbali ācārya are as follows:

1.	Nandi congregation	6.	Bhadra congregation
2.	Vīra congregation	7.	Guṇadhara congregation
3.	Aparājita congregation	8.	Gupta congregation
4.	Paṃcastūpa congregation	9.	Siṃha congregation
5.	Sena congregation	10.	Caṃdra congregation, etc.

In some of the well-accepted works of the Digambara sect, it is mentioned that some of the congregations, that were from time to time divided and subdivided, adopted less stringent principles. So they were looked upon as pseudo-Jain congregations. Ācārya Devasena mentioned five such types of congregations: 1. Drāvīda congregation, 2. Yāpanīya congregation, 3. Kāṣṭhā congregation, 4. Māthura congregation and 5. Bhillaka congregation.

According to Ācārya Nandi in his book “Nīti Sāra”, the 5 pseudo-Jain congregations are 1 Gopucchaka, 2 Śvetāmbara, 3 Drāvīda, 4 Yāpanīya and 5 Niṣpicchaka congregations.

According to Jainendra Siddhanta Koṣā the names of the congregations are:

1.	Anantakīrti congregation	2.	Aparājita congregation	3.	Kāṣṭhā congregation
4.	Guṇadhara congregation	5.	Gupta congregation	6.	Gopucchaka congregation
7.	Gopya congregation	8.	Caṃdra congregation	9.	Drāvīda congregation
10.	Nandi congregation	11.	Nanditara congregation	12.	Niṣhiyācchika Congregation
13.	Paṃcastūpa congregation	14.	Punnāṭa congregation	15.	Bāgada congregation
16.	Bhadra congregation	17.	Bhillaka congregation	18.	Maghnanandi congregation
19.	Māthura congregation	20.	Yāpanīya congregation	21.	Lādabāgada congregation
22.	Vīra congregation	23.	Siṃha congregation	24.	Sena congregation

Yāpanīya Congregation

In the present day, only these two sects - Śvetāmbara and Digambara - are mainly known. However, in ancient times, 'Yāpanīya congregation' existed as a third sect of Jainism. From the 2nd century to the 14th -15th century of Vikram era, this was also considered as a major sect of Jainism. It was also known by two other names - Āpulīya congregation and Gopya congregation.

Some of the Śvetāmbara ācāryas attribute the origin of Yāpanīya congregation from the Digambara tradition, whereas Ācārya Ratnanandi the author of 'Bhadrabāhu Caritra' held the view that it originated from Śvetāmbara sect.

Ācārya Maladhāri Rājaśekhara, of the Śvetāmbara sect in his text 'Ṣad Darśana -Samuccaya' expressed the opinion that the Gopya congregation, i.e. Yāpanīya congregation was a subdivision of the Digambara Tradition.

In his Bhadrabāhu Caritra, Ācārya Ratnanandi states that Śvetāmbara sect came into existence in Vikram 137 Era (V.N.606) in Vallabhī Nagara in Saurashtra and in course of time, the Yāpanīya congregation emerged out of the Śvetāmbara sect in Karahātākṣa Nagara.

Digambara Ācārya Devasena, the author of 'Darśana-cāra' a small book, opines that 'Śrī Kalaśa', ācārya of Śvetāmbara sect, started Yāpanīya congregation in Vikram 205 years.

Though, today, there is no trace left of Yāpanīya congregation, or of its followers, in India, yet on the basis of the available information, it can be stated firmly that Yāpanīya congregation existed in India for about 1200 to 1300 years as a prominent religious sect.

With the examples cited in 'AmoghaVṛtti' written by Ācārya Śākaṭāyana, who is also known as Pālyakīrti, of Yāpanīya congregation, it becomes apparent that Yāpanīya congregation considered the canonical scriptures of Śvetāmbara sect, such as the Āvaśyaka, Cheda Sūtras, Niryukti, Daśavaikālika etc., as authentic texts of their religious sect.

Śrī Gunaratna, in his commentary on Ṣad Darśana wrote that the ascetics of Yāpanīya congregation practice nudity, carry a soft broom made of shed peacock feathers with them, partake food placing it on the palm of their hands, worship naked idols and bless by uttering ‘Dharma Lābha’ (May you be blessed with Dharma) when the Votaries bow to them.

The Yāpanīya congregation gained popularity in Karnataka and its nearby places. It was a highly effective congregation of its times. It enjoyed royal patronage up to Vikram 15th century.

21st Epochal-ācārya Ārya Vajrasena

Birth	V.N. 492	Household life duration	9 years
Initiation	V.N. 501	Tenure as an ordinary Monk	63 years
Became group-ācārya	V.N. 584	Tenure as group-ācārya	33 years
Became epochal-ācārya	V.N. 617	Tenure as epochal-ācārya	3 years
Heavenly abode	V.N. 620	Total longevity	128 years

Vajrasena took initiation from Ārya Siṃhagiri prior to Ārya Vajra, who was initiated in 504 V.N. As Ārya Vajra was gifted with implicit intelligence and knowledge, Ārya Siṃhagiri entrusted Ārya Vajra with the responsibilities of ācārya during his life time, and just before his final salvation, he officially appointed Ārya Vajra as the leader of the congregation.

Probably Vajrasena might not have accepted the post of ācārya because he regarded highly the immense knowledge of Ārya Vajra. That Ārya Vajra and Ārya Vajarsena had teacher-disciple relationship between them, is proved from the fact that before leaving with an entourage of 500 monks to observe fast unto death at the onset of the great famine, Ārya Vajra reinforced Vajrasena that the drought will end when in the house of the merchant Jinadatta in the city of Sopāraka, poison is mixed in the high-price cooked food.

Thus though Ārya Vajra was subordinate to Vajrasena in terms of initiation, from knowledge point of view, Ārya Vajra was not only senior and proficient but also a scholar in the ten Pūrvas and hence was considered as most fit for the rank of ācārya. In 584 V.N., Ārya Vajrasena was declared as group-ācārya and Ārya Rakṣita who was also a scholar in (2 topics less) ten Pūrvas succeeded Ārya Vajra as discourse-ācārya and epochal-ācārya.

Ārya Vajrasena was highly efficient and proficient in running the administration of the congregation; but unlike Ārya Vajra, et al, he lacked the knowledge of the Pūrvas. Hence after Ārya Rakṣita, Ārya Durbalikā Puṣyamitra, the scholar of Pūrvas was preferred as epochal-ācārya to Ārya Vajrasena who was performing the duties of group-ācārya in a proficient manner. At the end of the drought, i.e., during the last phase of the 12th year, Ārya Vajrasena wandering through many lands reached the town of Sopāraka, where the distinguished merchant Jinadatta, his wife Īśwarī and their four sons took initiation into Śramaṇa from Ārya Vajrasena.

Their four sons started four Gacchas (sub-division of congregation or Gaṇa). Nagendra Gachha- also known as Nayilī originated from Nagendra, Candra Kula from Candra Bhumi, Vidyadhara Kula from Vidyādhara Monk and Nivṛtti Kula from Nivṛtti Monk. Thus, these four main Kulas originated.

The Śvetāmbara sect is of the opinion that the Digambara sect was originated by Ārya Śivabhūti, the disciple of Ācārya Kṛṣṇa in V.N. 609, during the lifetime of Vajrasena itself.

In V.N. 617, after Durbalikā Puṣyamitra left for heavenly abode, Ārya Vajrasena was nominated as his successor to the rank of epochal-ācārya. After efficiently serving the congregation for three years as epochal-ācārya, he attained heavenly abode in V.N. 620, after completing a long span of life of 128 years.

Ārya Candra ‘group-ācārya’

After Ārya Vajra has attained heaven, once, Ārya Vajrasena during his wanderings reached Sopāraka. A wealthy merchant of Salahada lineage

named Jinadatta lived in that city with his wife Īsvarī and four sons. The worst outcome of the drought had reached its peak. Total scarcity of food and goods was prevalent everywhere. Even the fabulous riches of Jinadatta could not buy enough food to mitigate their pangs of hunger. The very thought of starvation death of his family sent chills down his spine. After duly discussing with his wife, he decided that it is better to die together by consuming poison mixed in food, rather than dying by degrees, undergoing the severe pains of starvation. However it was very difficult even to secure enough grains for one time meal. Expending one lakh rupees, he somehow managed to procure some food enough for a meal. Incidentally, wandering for seeking alms, Ārya Vajrasena reached the house of merchant Jinadatta.

When Jinadatta's wife was about to mix the poison in the food, at that very moment Ārya Vajrasena arrived at Jinadatta's house seeking alms. Ārya Vajrasena discerned that she was about to mix poison in the food worth one lakh rupees. He at once recollected the prediction Ārya Vajra. In a calm and composed manner, he said to Īsvarī, '*Subhikṣam bhāvi, saviṣam pākam mā kurū vadṛthā*' - which means "O Pious Lady! Now the end of drought has drawn closer. Do not mix poison in the food. By tomorrow, there will be grains aplenty".

'The words of those great souls who are always engaged in service and in doing good to others will never go wrong', with this strong belief in heart, she at once gave up the thought (of mixing poison) and gave the food to Ārya Vajrasena with great delight.

As foretold by Ārya Vajrasena, the very next day, ships full of grains arrived at Sopāraka Nagara and with it brought a ray of hope in the lives of people who were frustrated due to hardships of the famine. Everybody received enough food as per their needs. Seeing this, the merchant's wife, Īsvarī was very happy. She said to her husband, "Hadn't Ārya Vajrasena convinced us with his encouraging words, our family would have been totally wiped out by this time. He gifted us a new life. Therefore why don't we take shelter in Jain Dharma and make our lives worthy?"

Everyone liked her suggestion. The couple along with their 4 sons Candra, Nāgendra, Nivṛṭti & Vidyādhara, renouncing all their wealthiest

got initiated into Nirgrantha Śramaṇa Dharma. The four sons serving the Guru with all humility learnt all the canons and Pūrvas and all the four became eligible to hold the rank of ācārya.

Ārya Vajrasena made them ācāryas of different Śramaṇa groups. Ārya Candra was the founder of Candra Kula, Ārya Nāgendra of Nāili Kula (Nāgendra Kula), Ārya Nivṛtti of Nivṛtti Kula, and Ārya Vidhyādhara of Vidhyādhara Kula. Thus four Kulas came into existence. Candra Kula later became famous as Candra Gaccha. It is estimated that Ācārya Candra was born in V.N. 576, initiated in 593, became group-ācārya in V.N. 620 and attained heavenly abode in V.N. 643.

The then political situation

During the end of first phase of the 6th century V.N. (first phase of the first century AD) Parthian, after asserting their authority over most of the places in Iran, attacked India. They waged war against Śakas, defeated them and established their authority over the North Western frontiers and Punjab. As a result, the Śakas' power was restricted to the South Western Saurashtra and some other small neighboring lands. After establishing their rule over Punjab, the Parthian started expanding their rule. A Parthian ruler named Gonda Farness proclaimed Takṣaśilā, Mathura, Ujjaini, etc and appointed as their Governors (Satraps). After some time these satraps declared their independence and thus the might and power of the Parthian, decentralised and gradually disintegrated.

It is most likely that the Parthian and the Śaka rulers adopted the Indian religion and extended their patronage, thus helping the Indian culture to flourish. They strictly observed the Indian administrative system while governing the conquered areas, and served the people by implementing many welfare activities.

Whenever the foreign invaders attacked India, the chieftains, kings and the people faced those foreign powers with undaunted courage and gave a stubborn resistance. The well-organised vast army of the foreign invaders could easily usurp and establish their authority over many territories in India, as India lacked a strong and centralised military force. Yet, the Indian kings constantly revolted against them creating a threat to their existence. There was continuous resistance offered by the Indian

public and the rulers to the foreign invaders. Even the foreign invaders would also fight among themselves. As a result, ultimately, those foreign powers diminished, declined and disappeared. Initially Maurya Candra Gupta and subsequently the Śakas put an end to the Greek rule; the Śakas in V.N. 470 were defeated by Vikramāditya, and Gautamiputra Śakaṭārani (Śālivāhana) crushed the Śaka power in V.N. 605. In the same manner, the foreign rule of Parthians was put to an end by Kuṣāṇas, who were also foreign rulers and who belonged to the Yū-Cī tribe.

Prior to the tenure of Revati nakṣatra, as the discourse-ācārya, Kujula Kaidphises-I, a Kuṣāṇa warrior, defeating the Parthian annexed and established his power over Gandhāra (Afghanistan) and some areas of Punjab. His son, Vem Kaidphises started moving further, and during the tenure of Durbalikā Puṣyamitra as epochal-ācārya, he occupied and established his authority over complete Punjab and Duābā and extended his kingdom up to Varanasi in the East.

Being constantly exposed to the foreign assaults, our country became weak and vulnerable in many aspects. Harassed by the atrocities of the foreign invaders, the people became cynical and developed intolerance towards other common kites which resulted in social, religious and racial animosity. One race condemned the other, one religious follower blamed the other and one class held the other class responsible for the calamitous and miserable conditions that prevailed in the country as a result of the atrocities committed by the foreign invaders. It is impossible to assess the amount of damage done to our society by the people who bred such dangerous false notions in their hearts, because it was inconceivably greater than the greatest damage caused by these foreign - invaders. History bears testimony that the most selfish, from time to time instigated people to such polluted thinking. As a result, the people belonging to different classes, castes and religions who for thousands of years lived together in peace, now Strived hard to annihilate each other. Apart from various other reasons, this religious hatred was the main reason for the total extinction of Buddhism from our country. The crusades, led by King Puṣyamitra Śuṅga against Buddhists and Buddhism, are evidences which confirm this fact.

Due to the calamitous conditions that escalated in India as a result of the success of the foreign invaders, the followers of Jainism also had to

undergo a difficult period. On the one hand emperors like Samprati of the Maurya dynasty patronised, propagated and expanded Jain Dharma in India and neighboring countries to an inconceivable extent, on the other hand after the invasions of India by foreign powers during the early first century A.D, the number of Jain followers gradually dwindled because of the atrocities inflicted upon them.

19th Discourse-preceptor Revatinakṣatra

After Ārya Naghasti, Ārya Revtinakṣatra became the discourse-ācārya. Discourse-ācārya Revatinakṣatra and Epochal-ācārya Revatīmitra are two different people who belonged to different periods of time. Ārya Revatīmitra belongs to a much later period than Ārya Revatīnakṣatra. It is believed that both Ārya Vajrasena and discourse-ācārya Ārya Revatīnakṣatra were of somewhat same period, so it is possible that Ārya Revatīnakṣatra might have attained heaven sometime between V.N.640 and 650, whereas epochal-ācārya Ārya Revatīmitra went to heaven in V.N. 748, approximately 100 years after the demise of Ārya Revatīnakṣatra. Ārya Revatīnakṣatra was a very eminent scholar in teaching scriptures (Āgamas).

20th Discourse- ācārya Brahmadvīpaka Siṃha

After Ārya Revatīnakṣatra, Ārya Brahmadvīpaka Siṃha became the 20th discourse-ācārya. As the names of the 24th epochal-ācārya Ārya Siṃha and Ārya Brahmadvīpaka Siṃha appear very close in sequence in Jain history, most of the authors confuse discourse- Brahmadvīpaka Siṃha with epochal-ācārya Ārya Siṃha, and consider them to be the same. With the prefix Brahmadvīpaka it is estimated that he was different from and earlier than epochal-ācārya Siṃha.

2nd epochal-ācārya Nāgendra

After Ārya Vajrasena, the name of Ārya Nāgendra appears next in the lineage of epochal-ācārya. Ārya Nāgendra was the eldest of the four sons of Jinadatta of Sopārakpura, who were initiated into Jainism. According to Duṣṣamākāla Śramaṇa Saṃgha Stotra (Prayer Verse) he took initiation in V.N. 592 – 593. As Ārya Nāgendra was a scholar in approximately the ten Pūrvas (less few topics), he was nominated to the rank of epochal-

ācārya after Ārya Vajrasena. He served the Jain Order for 69 long years and departed for heavenly abode in V.N. 689.

Birth	V.N. 573	Household life duration	20 years
Initiation	V.N. 593	Tenure as an ordinary Monk	27 years
Became ācārya	V.N. 620	Tenure as ācārya	69 years
Heavenly abode	V.N. 689	Total longevity	116 years

Ācārya Sāmantabhadra – group-ācārya

After Ārya Candra Sūri departed to the heavenly abode in V.N. 643, Ācārya Sāmantabhadra became the 16th group-ācārya. Though he was a scholar in the knowledge of Pūrvas, he was the worshipper of unblemished character. Wandering with detachment to observe the path of self-restraint with utmost purity, he used to camp only in the forests, gardens, abode of Yakṣas, desolate temples etc. He was called as Vanavāsī’ (forest dweller) due to his immense detachment towards worldly matters and his love to stay in forests and his disciple monks were known as belonging to ‘Vanavāsī Gaccha’. It is stated that ‘Vanavāsī Gaccha’ was the fourth name of ‘Nirgrāṃtha Gaccha’ of Saudharmakāla. The utterance of the word ‘Vanavāsī’ brings to mind the word ‘Vastivāsī’ (or monastery living) because of its similarity.

From Lord Mahāvīra to Ārya Sudharmā, even though the monks camped mostly in forests, yet the then Śramaṇas were called as Nirgrāṃtha Śramaṇas and not Vanavāsī Śramaṇas, because at that time there was no other alternative as ‘Vastivāsī Śramaṇas’.

As, the order of ascetics went through the names of Nirgrāṃtha Gaccha, Kautika Gaccha and Candra Gaccha and their contact with people went on increasing, it is natural that the monks might have started primarily living in localities (as opposed to forests and gardens). Probably after Ārya Rakṣita, laxity in the path of strict conduct of the ascetics became quite rampant. So, Sāmantabhadra, in order to preserve the rules of temperance and the severe austerities in their original form, preferred Vanavāsa (dwelling in forest) as a measure to arrest the laxity in the code of conduct. This Strict preference of Vanavāsa to prevent laxity, might

have gained momentum for a short time. But it did not yield the expected permanent results.

Ācārya Vṛaddha Deva group-ācārya

Ācārya Sāmantbhadrā was succeeded by Ācārya Vṛaddha Deva, who was declared as the 17th group-ācārya of the congregation. As he obtained the rank at a very late age, everyone called him Vṛaddha Deva Sūri. He was considered as the ardent supporter of strict code of conduct.

Ācārya Pradhyotana group-ācārya

Ācārya Vṛaddha Deva was followed by Ācārya Pradhyotana Sūri. He attained heaven in V.N. 698.

Ācārya Māna Deva group-ācārya

Group-ācārya Māna Deva became the successor of the congregation after Ācārya Pradhyotana Sūri. He was very renowned for his practice of detachment and penance. There is seldom a person in the Jain community, who is not acquainted with the glory of Ācārya Māna Deva.

His father Dhaneśwara was a distinguished merchant of Nādaula Nagar and his mother was Dhāriṇī Devī. As he was their only son, the parents named him as Māna Deva. Once, Ācārya Pradhyotana, giving sermons and wandering through the places, reached Nādaula. Fortunately Māna Deva got the opportunity to listen to his preaching of detachment towards worldly life. Māna Deva felt very happy and was attracted towards the ascetic life. He expressed his desire to renounce the world to ācārya. Māna Deva managed to get the permission of his parents, with great difficulty. He took initiation into Śramaṇa Dharma at an auspicious moment and with humility and sincerity started acquiring knowledge, besides practicing severe austerities and penance with utmost concentration. Within a short period of time, he learnt and mastered the eleven Aṅga Sūtras, Mula, Cheda and Upāṅga Sūtras i.e., all Jain scriptures.

The Guru, believing Māna Deva to be worthy, wanted to appoint him as the ācārya of the congregation. All the same, he worried whether Māna

Deva would continue to stay true to the principles of Strict code of conduct as he was blessed with the grace of both the goddesses of Lakṣmi and Sarasvatī (i.e., he came from a rich family and now became a scholar).

Perceiving his Guru's apprehension, Māna Deva became very conscious about his conduct and behaviour. To please his reverend teacher, he totally abandoned sinful (*vigai*) and denatured (*vikṛati*) food such as milk, curds, sugar, oil, honey, butter etc. and even stopped taking alms from devotees. Because of his extreme vigilance in his practice for self-realisation, he could attain some supernatural powers.

Political situation during the time of Ārya Nāgendra

When Ārya Revatīnakṣatra was the discourse-ācārya, Vem Kadphises, the son of Kujula Kadphises of the Kuṣāṇa Dynasty inherited his father's kingdom from Iran to river Indus, and expanded his territories by conquering the entire Punjab, Duābā and extended up to Varanasi in the East. After his demise, his son Kaniṣka ascended the throne in the early 7th century of V.N. i.e., after the Śaka colander came into existence. He built a new city called Puruṣpura -Peshawar and made it his capital.

King Kaniṣka converted to Buddhism and started his victory campaigns. He totally obliterated the rule of Parthians from India. After conquering Kashmir, he also occupied some territories of China, Turkistan, Kashgar, Yarkhand, Khotan, etc and thus established his supremacy over a vast territory. His kingdom extended from Iran to Varanasi, China-Turkistan to Kashmir and up to the Vindhya mountains in South. He built a city in Kashmir and named it Kaniṣpura (present Kanispor) after himself. He adapted himself into the Indian culture with such finesse that he seemed an Indian native. Though he was of an alien culture, he followed the path paved by Emperor Aśoka and helped in the propagation and expansion of Buddhism. He convoked a Buddhist council (a religious meeting of Buddhist monks, scholars, followers and devotees of Buddhism) at Kuṇḍalavana in Kashmir. After a lot of deliberations, resolutions were taken about how to reform and propagate Buddhism and other related issues. The historians opine that the division into two (Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna) of Buddhism came into existence after this congregation organised by Kaniṣka. 'Hīnayāna' followers are those few devotees who

follow the simple and deferential principles of life preached by Buddha without any vanity, show, extravagance or ostentation. Alternatively, a large number of devotees revere Buddha as an incarnation of God and worship his idol. These are the Mahāyāna followers. Kaniṣka patronised Mahāyāna. During his regime, the idols of Buddha were worshipped with great extravagance, and the art of sculpture progressed by leaps and bounds. Though he was an ardent follower of Buddhism, Kaniṣka showed religious tolerance and was benevolent towards other religions.

In his regime, Sanskrita literature received great impetus. His court-poet Aśwaghōṣa wrote *Buddhācārita*, *Saundarānandaṃ* and *Vajrasūcī*, which were regarded as the best contributions to the Sanskrita literature.

For the smooth and efficient administration of his far-flung empire, he divided his kingdom into provinces called Satrapies, headed by provincial governors, the Satraps. The Satrapies of Mathura, Varanasi, Gujarat, Kathiawad and Mālwa and their Satraps - Kharapallāna and Vanasphara - were specially mentioned by the historians.

Even during the calamitous period of both national and international campaigns led by Kaniṣka - the powerful king of Kuṣāṇa dynasty, some of the Indian kings maintained their independence with valour and courage. The shining example was the Sātavāhana dynasty in southern India, whose reign stretched unbroken over a long period, right from the time of Vikramāditya to V.N. 993; substantial evidences are available both in Jain literature and other historical texts in support of this point. That some of the kings of the Sātavāhana dynasty were the followers of Jainism, is found mentioned at many places in Jain literature.

During the reign of Kaniṣka, the Buddhists and the King amalgamated to such an extent that, the exaltation of either of them was perceived and rejoiced by the other as if it were his own. Because of this close association there was total all-round help from the Buddhist congregation for the progress of the Kuṣāṇa Empire and Kaniṣka's influence continuously increased in Buddhist congregations. This mutual close cooperation was a boon in the exaltation of Buddhism, albeit, it also proved to be an inexorable bane. The Indians who wanted to free themselves from the yoke of the foreign rule and who bred contempt towards the Kuṣāṇas, obviously felt increasing hatred towards the

Buddhist monks, congregations and the followers of Buddhism as they extended their full support and help to Kaniṣka to stabilise & strengthen his kingdom. The freedom-desirous Indians looked upon the Buddhists as the loving foster sons of the invaders, as those fallen into the abyss of unfaithfulness from the altar of patriotism, and also as totally devoid of spiritual independence. Thus this hostile impression in the minds of the Indians against Buddhists ultimately resulted in not only the decline but also the complete annihilation of Buddhism from India.

The rising of Nāga Bhāraśiva dynasty

The foreign power reinforced its might and authority over India with the full support and cooperation of the Buddhists. Their intolerable oppressions resulted in the advent of the Nāga Bhāraśiva dynasty.

An ascetic called Lakulīśa, through his spiritual campaign, breathed a new life into the souls of Indians, who were impatient to free themselves from the slavery of these intruders, wherein, he portrayed Lord Śiva as the destroyer of evil and encouraged the worship of this form. The Bhāraśiva Nāga considered the ascetic Lakulīśa as the incarnation of Lord Śiva himself, and executed and implemented his each and every command verbatim. Soon after the death of Kaniṣka, they rose to a status of a royal dynasty. Eventually, they totally destroyed the Kuṣāṇa dynasty and established their suzerainty over the vast territories of India.

As per the historical evidences it is estimated that Kaniṣka ascended the throne of Ganadhāra in V.N. 605 (78 AD) and died in V.N. 633 (106 AD). Consequently, it can be assumed that the

Bhāraśiva Nāgas rose to power only after V.N.Y 633.

Originally Bhāraśiva Nāgas were the inhabitants of Padmāvati, Kāntipurī and Vidiśā. There is mention of them as Vṛṣa (the bull Nandi, vehicle of Lord Śiva) in Brahmāṇḍa Pūrāṇa and Vāyu Pūrāṇa. According to these epics, they annexed and established their authority over a vast expanse which includes Bhadra (East Punjab), Rajputana (present Rajasthan), Madhya Pradeśa, Uttar Pradeśa, Mālwa, Bundelkhand and Bihar, etc. Historical evidences are available that the five Nāga dynasties of Śesa,

Bhogina, Ramcandra, Dharmavarmana and Baṃgara ruled over Vidhisa during the reign of Sungas.

Apart from these, the fact that, after the Śuṃga dynasty, the eight Nāga kings—Bhūtanandī, Śīsunandī, Yaśanandī, Puruṣadāta, Usabhadāta, Kāmadāta, Bhavadāta, and Śivanandī ruled over the Vidisa kingdom is substantiated by inscriptions and coins of those times. During the last phase of the first century A.D., the Nāgas had to abandon their original inhabitation like Vidhisa, Padmāvati and Kāntipurī and collectively migrated to Central India at the time of expansion of Kuṣāṇa Kingdom by Kaniṣka. They started living in the vicinity of Vindhya Mountains like exiles. The Kuṣāṇa kings established their power over Vidiśā, Padmāvati and Kāntipurī. Due to the increasing power and dominion of the Kuṣāṇas, the Nāgas were forced to desert their land; however they kept their eyes open for an opportunity to re-establish their authority over their hereditary kingdom. Hence they waited for opportune time & started mobilising resources. During the period of their exile, they made strong alliances with the rulers of Nagapura, Purika, Rivam, etc.

After the death of Kaniṣka, the Nāgas firmly resolved to free their mother land from the clutches of slavery of the Kuṣāṇas. In order to achieve their objective, they were totally engrossed in mobilising the essentials, necessary for a strong military campaign.

Ārya Revatīmitra, the 23rd epochal-ācārya (V.N. 689 – 748)

Ārya Revatīmitra adorned the rank of epochal-ācārya after Ārya Nāgendra. Whatever little data is available about him is provided along with the information on Ārya Revatīnakṣatra, the discourse-ācārya.

Bhāraśiva and the Kuṣāṇa king Huviṣka

After the death of the valiant king Kaniṣka, his son Huviṣka inherited the throne and his vast kingdom in V.N. 633 (106 A.D). During the regime of Huviṣka, Bhāraśiva Nāga again rose to a strong and powerful dynasty. Besides strengthening their power in the neighboring lands of Vindhya, they started attacking the Kingdom of Kuṣāṇa. It was not an easy task for a newly emerged power like Bhāraśiva Nāga to fight the Kuṣāṇas, whose

kingdom extended from Uttar Pradeśa to Turkistan. So they evolved a strategy and led a campaign from Madhya Pradeśa to Bundelkhand, subjugating and annexing the border areas of the Kuṣāṇa Kingdom on the way. Bhāraśivas waged wars with great four and formulated skillful military strategies. Thus the death-knell of the Kuṣāṇa Kingdom started in the very regime of Huviṣka.

Vāśiṣka, the Kuṣāṇa king

After the death of Huviṣka in V.N.Y 665, his son Vāśiṣka inherited an empire which was weak and declining. Vāśiṣka built a city in Kashmir in the memory of his late father and named it as Huviṣkapur. His reign extended from V.N. 665 to 679, i.e. A.D. 138 to 152.

An assault by Bhāraśivas on Kuṣāṇas

During the regime of Vāśiṣka, the Bhāraśiva Nāga, under the able leadership of Nava Nāga, attacked the Kuṣāṇa kingdom with a huge army and fought with great valour to regain their lost territories. Putting an end to the reign of the Kuṣāṇa dynasty in many places of Uttar Pradeśa, ultimately in V.N. 674, i.e., 147 A.D., Nava Nāga reclaimed control over Kāntipurī, their lost homeland and re-established his authority over it.

After re-establishing his authority over Kantipuri, Nava Nāga, the first Bhāraśiva king of the Nāga Dynasty in order to annihilate the power of Kuṣāṇas, gave protection to the tribal confederations like Madrakas, Yaudheyas, Mālwas, etc., who aspired for a Republican status. With the military aid of ā, these confederations gained momentum and revolted against the Kuṣāṇas. The Kuṣāṇas could not withstand the lightening attacks of Nava Nāga, Madraka, Mālawa, Yaudheya, et al, and the Kuṣāṇa kingdom started shrinking gradually.

Kuṣāṇa king Vāsudeva

After the demise of Vāśiṣka in V.N. 669, his son Vāsudeva ascended the throne. Navnāga, the king of Kāntipurī spent the rest of his life waging wars against Vāsudeva. After the death of Nava Nāga in V.N. 697, (A.D. 170), his son Virasena ascended the throne and immediately started

besieging the Kuṣāṇas, inflicting massive defeats upon them. The Republican states like Yaudheya, Madraka, Arjunāyana, Śivi, Mālawa and others made valuable contribution towards the military expeditions initiated by Bhāraśivas, to overthrow the power of the Kuṣāṇas. Ultimately by the 2nd century A.D., Virasena successfully rooted out the dominance of the Kuṣāṇas and eliminated their reign once and for all from our motherland.

Bhāraśivas to commemorate their victory performed Aśwamedha sacrifices on the banks of River Gaṃga in Kāśi and immortalised the memory of these sacrifices by building a 'Daśaśwamedha Ghāta' in that place.

Though Bhāraśivas rooted out the reign of the Kuṣāṇas, yet, even after the demise of Kuṣāṇa King Vāsudeva, a few names of the kings of Kuṣāṇa dynasty appear in Indian history. But their kingdom was restricted to Kabul Pass and the border areas. When the Gupta dynasty was in the zenith of its glory and grandeur, even the remnants of the Kuṣāṇa dynasty were nipped out from Kabul and the border areas. In the Allahabad inscription of Samudragupta, it was mentioned that the kings of Ganadhāra and Kashmir of the Kuṣāṇa dynasty, paid a large tribute to Samudragupta accepting his suzerainty. Even the coins that were found, issued in the name of Kidara of the Kuṣāṇa dynasty, substantiate the fact that the Kuṣāṇa rule continued in Ganadhāra and Kashmir up to the 5th century AD.

The lineage of Bhāraśiva dynasty

After suppressing the rule of the Kuṣāṇas, Virasena the king of Bhāraśiva Nāga dynasty, divided his kingdom among his three sons and gave Kāntipurī to Hayanāga, Padmāvati to Bhimanāga and Mathura to his third son whose name is unknown.

After the death of Hayanāga, the throne of Kāntipurī was ascended by Trayanāga, Brhīnanāga, Carajanāga, and Bhavanāga in succession. During his last days, Bhavanāga gave the kingdom of Purikā to Rūdrasena, his daughter's son, the grand son of emperor Parvarsena of Vākāṭaka. Thus a fragment of the Bhāraśiva kingdom became a part of the Vākāṭaka kingdom.

The rulers of Padmāvati, after Bhīmanāga were as follows: Skanda Nāga, Bṛhaspati Nāga, Vyāghra Naga, Deva Nāga, and Gaṇapati Nāga. The Bhāraśivas established cordial relations with the Guptas and the Vākāṭakas through matrimonial alliances, because of which India enjoyed independence for a long time, without any threat of foreign invasion, thanks to these three dynasties.

The Bhāraśiva dynasty branched out into 3 units. Main branches of Kāntipurī

1.	Navanāga	5.	Brhinnāga
2.	ViraSena	6.	Carajanāga
3.	Hayanāga	7.	Bhavanaga
4.	Trayanāga	8.	Rudrasena , the king of Vākāṭaka dynasty (Bhavanāga's daughter's son, whom Bhavanāga made the king of Purikā)

Branches of Padmāvati

1.	Bhīmanāga	4.	Vyāghranāga
2.	Skaṇḍhanāga	5.	Devanāga
3.	Bṛhaspatināga	7.	Ganpatināga (His coins were found in large numbers)

After Gaṇapati Nāga probably Nāgasena succeeded to the branch of Padmāvati. According to the Allahabad inscription, written by poet Hariṣeṇa, Nāgasena was defeated and overthrown by Samudragupta, in his first expedition itself. The great poet laureate Bāṇa, in his 'Harṣacaritra' mentioned that Nāgasena was the king of Padmāvati, and described his foolishness.

The names of the kings of Mathura branch are not available.

The rise of Vākāṭaka dynasty

Prior to the advent of the Gupta power, the Vākāṭakas ruled over a vast territory in India. The Republican States like Arjunāyana, Mādraka, Youdheya, Mālawa, etc, the kings of Punjab, Rajaputana, Mālawa,

Gujarat, etc, were the vassal kings of Vākāṭakas and paid tribute to them. In the epics they were also named as the Viṃdhyakas. Plenty of coins, rock inscriptions and copper plate inscriptions of Vākāṭaka dynasty are available. Even the Ajantā cave paintings and records (transcriptions) throw light on the history of the Vākāṭakas.

Historians believe that Vindhya Śakti, a Nāga king was the founder of the Vākāṭaka dynasty. According to the Pūrāṇas, the dynasty rose into power under the leadership of Vindhya Śakti of Kolikila Vṛṣom (Bhāraśiva) dynasty.

“Tatah kolikilebhyasca, vindhyaśakti-bhaviṣyati” this quote reveals that Vindhya Śakti was closely associated with Bhāraśiva Nāga. Bhāraśivas were of the Nāga dynasty and Vindhya Śakti also belonged to a branch of the same dynasty. It is possible that one of the divisions of the Nag dynasty might have lived in a village, place or land with the name ‘Vākāṭaka’. Hence in order to depict their separate identity from the other rulers of Nag dynasty, Vindhya Śakti and his successors called their branch as ‘Vākāṭaka’.

Some historians interpret the aforesaid saying and state that Vindhya Śakti, in reality occupied the highest rank in the army of Bhāraśivas. He gradually established his authority over the areas near the Vindhyas and expanded his kingdom. Since a new Śakti (power) emerged from the Vindhyas, he became famous as Vindhya Śakti. Thus either way, it is proved beyond doubt that Vākāṭaka dynasty came into existence out of the Bharasiv dynasty only.

The reign of the kings of Vākāṭaka dynasty was as follows:

NAME OF THE KING	TENURE OF RULE (Christian Year)	TENURE OF RULE (V.N.)
VindhyaŚakti-I	248 - 284	775 - 781
PravaraSena-I (Gautamṭputra)	384 - 344	811 - 871
RudraSena I (Daughter’s son of Bhāraśivarāja Bhavanāga)	344 - 348	871 - 875
Pr̥thviṣeṇa-I	348 - 375	875 - 902

RudraSenāII (Son-in-law of Candragupta-II)	375 - 395	902 - 922
Prabhāvati Gupta, guardian of DiwākaraSenā	395 - 405	922 - 932
Prabhāvati Gupta, gaurdian of DamodaraSenā	405 - 415	932 - 942
PravaraSenā II	415 - 435	942 - 962
NarendraSenā	435 - 470	962 - 997
Pr̥thviṣeṇa II	470 - 485	997 - 1012
Devasena	485 - 490	1012 - 1017
Hariṣeṇa	490 - 520	1017 - 1047

Vatsagulma branch of Vākāṭaka dynasty

1.	VindhyaŚakti	4.	Vindhyasena (VindhyaŚakti II)	7.	Devasena
2.	Pravarasena I	5.	Pravarasena II	8.	Hariṣeṇa
3.	Sarvasena	6.	(Anonymous)		

Ārya Siṃha, 24th epochal-ācārya

After the accession to heaven of Ācārya Revatīnakṣatra, Ārya Brhmadwīpaka Siṃha became the discourse-ācārya of the congregation. He was initiated into the Śramaṇa Dharma in Acalapura. Ācārya Devārdhi in the Sthavirāvalī of NandiSūtra in the verse ‘*bambhag divagasihe*’ described him as Siṃha of Brhmadwīpa, proficient in the commentary of KalikaSūtra and the best reciter of canons.

Probably Brhmadwīpaka Siṃha’s tenure as discourse-ācārya fell in the last phase of the 8th century AD. The time span of epochal-ācārya Siṃha is as follows: Birth in V.N. 710, initiation after 18 years, i.e., in V.N. 728, 20 years as an ordinary monk, 78 years as epochal-ācārya, total longevity of 116 years, attained heaven in V.N. 820. Whether Vācaka Ārya Brhmadwīpaka Siṃha and epochal- Ārya Siṃha were one and the same or two different personalities is a matter of research.

Ācārya Mānatuṃga

After Ārya Māna Deva, Ārya Mānatuṃga was considered as a very influential ācārya. He was the son of a merchant Dhana Deva, a Brahmin Ksatriya and an inhabitant of Varanasi. Once, some Dīgambara Jain monks camped in Varanasi. Listening to their sermons, Mānatuṃga got averted from the luxuries of worldly life and took initiation from Cārukīrti. Later on, he took initiation into Śvetāmbara sect from Ācārya Ajita Siṃha.

Once, King Harṣa impressed by the power of knowledge of the scholars Mayūra and Bāṇa, invited Ācārya Mānatuṃga to his court with due respect.

Ācārya Mānatuṃga reached the royal palace. The king offered humble salutations and said, “O Reverend Soul! How great are these Brahmins! One Brahmin cured his leprosy by worshipping the Sun god, whereas the other (Bāṇa) regained his severed arms and legs by worshipping goddess Caṇḍikā. If you too have any such magical powers, please demonstrate them to me.”

Ācārya Mānatuṃga replied, “O King! We are not householders who entertain the kings to earn cash and kind for the sake of children and wives. We work only for the ethical and spiritual upliftment of the public.

The annoyed King ordered, “Chain him and throw him into a dungeon”.

The soldiers chained him with 44 iron chains, threw him into a dark dungeon and locked him. Ācārya Mānatuṃga did not show even the slightest agitation; instead he impromptu started praying the primordial Lord Vṛṣabha Deva. The said prayer became the famous Bhaktāmara Stotra. No sooner did he complete the 44th sloka of the stotra, the locks and the doors opened automatically and his 44 chains broke open and he appeared in the royal court.

Impressed and delighted by his practice of detachment and penance, and the brilliance of his miraculous power, King Harṣa became an ardent devotee of Ācārya Mānatuṃga. The ‘Bhaktāmara Stotra’ composed by

Ārya Mānatuṃga is recited even today in each and every house of Jain community with extreme faith and devotion.

The Bhaktāmara Stotra has totally 48 Stanzas. At some places it is mentioned that on the recitation of the 46th stanza all bondages broke. At different times the staunch devotees have constructed yantra & mantra on each stanza of this stotra. Many miracles are famous from the use of Bhaktāmara Stotra.

The Bhayahara Stotra is also considered to be composed by Ācārya Mānatuṃga. After serving the Jain Order for a very long time, appointing Gunkar his able and worthy disciple as ācārya of the congregation, observing the vow of Saṃlekhanā, Ācārya Mānatuṃga attained heaven in V.N. 758.

Rising of Gupta dynasty during the tenure of epochal-ācārya Ārya Siṃha

The war of independence initiated by the Bhāraśivas was continued by the Vākāṭakas with improved strategies and was finally concluded victoriously by the Guptas, who wielded power on Afghanistan, Kashmir, Nepal, Assam, Bengal and the coastal lands of South-Western area; thus brought every nook and corner of India under one roof, providing political unity and gave a strong and centralised administration to our country.

The founder of Gupta dynasty was Śrīgupta. According to the accounts and memoirs of the Chinese traveller Hsien Tsang, who visited India in 672 AD, Śrīgupt came to power in 190 AD and his empire extended from Nālandā to the present Mushirabad.

The famous historian Radha Kumud Mukherjī states that the reigning period of Śrīgupta was from 240 to 280 AD, and not 190 AD. After the death of Śrīgupta, his son Ghaṭotkaca succeeded the Magadha throne in V.N. 807 and his son Vikramāditya became the ruler somewhere before V.N. 846, after the demise of his father.

Ārya Skandila 21st discourse-ācārya

In the lineage of scholars (Vācakas), Ārya Skandila is regarded as very influential and a versatile genius. His commendable service to the Jain Order of protecting the knowledge of the canons, amidst extremely difficult times will be written in golden letters in the history of Jainism.

Skandila was born to a Brahmin couple, Meghratha and Rupasenā. When she was expecting Skandila, Rupasenā saw the moon in her dream. So he was named 'Somaratha' after the moon. His parents were followers of Jainism from the beginning. On one occasion during his spiritual wanderings, Ācārya Brhmadwīpaka Siṃha arrived at Mathura. Listening to his religious discourse, Somaratha took initiation and relinquishing his family name, he was given the name 'Skandila'. Serving his Guru, he learnt and attained the knowledge of the 11 Aṃgas and Pūrvas. Recognising him to be fit, his Guru proclaimed him as his successor. Accordingly, when Ārya Siṃha attained heavenly abode, he was appointed as the scholar-preceptor of the congregation. Some authors confused Śāṃdilya with Skandila and considered both to be one and the same; nevertheless, Ācārya Skandila and ten Pūrvadhara Ācārya Śāṃdilya are two different personalities.

The tenure of Skandila as ācārya was approximately from V.N. 823 to 840. That period was very critical. On one side there was a severe discord in Sourashtra between the Jains and Buddhists, and on the other, in Central India a dreadful war was in progress between the Guptas and Huṇas. Making the situation worse, a dreadful 12 year long famine broke out during that time. In such a disastrous situation the number of Jain monks in general and the scholars of scriptures in particular, gradually decreased and became very insignificant. As a result, the Jain literature, scriptures, canons, etc were on the verge of extinction. When after the famine, the conditions restored to normalcy, Ārya Skandila convened a council in Mathura between V.N. 830 and 840, inviting all the monks, Śramaṇas of the North, et al. for recital of canons.

Under the guidance of Ācārya Skandila, the canons were recited and the expositions were collected and arranged, which are being used even today by the congregations. As this event of recital took place in Mathura, it is known as 'Māthuri Vācanā' and as Ācārya Skandila

explained the meaning in the form of Anuyogas, it is called as ‘Anuyog of Skandilācārya’.

Synchronous with the council at Mathura, which was organised under the leadership of Skandilācārya, for the recension of the canons and Scriptures, almost at the same time Ācārya Nāgārajuna convened a council of monks of the South at Vallabi and tried to collect and compile the Āgamas.

As the two councils for the recension of the Jain Scriptures and canons, were convened at two different places, the two ācāryas could not meet each other even after completing the task successfully. Both of them attained heavenly abode. Hence, though there is uniformity in the doctrines rearranged by them, nevertheless whatever slight differences in the verses appeared, continues to remain so even today, as the succeeding ācāryas fearing sin, did not alter it. Consequently, the commentators when referring to those texts, state ‘*Nāgārajunīyah punah evaṃ Kathāyanti*’ (the school of thought of Nāgārjuna says like this). These types of quotes indicate the differences that exist in the recensions (Vācanās).

By protecting the waning canonical knowledge, Ācārya Skandila is and will be remembered forever with lot of reverence, for the cherished and commendable efforts he extended not only to the Jain Order, but also to the monks, devotees, and the other spiritual aspirants.

He observed Samādhi and attained heavenly abode in Mathura approximately in V.N. 840.

Himvanta Kṣamāśramaṇa – 22nd discourse-ācārya

Ārya Himvan (Himvant) became the 22nd discourse-ācārya, after Ārya Skandila attained heavenly abode. He was considered as the disciple of Ācārya Skandila. He was well-conversant in many Pūrvas and an efficient commentator. He made remarkable service to the Jain Order by propagating and expanding Jainism, facing and resolving bravely the problems encountered during propagation. He was made discourse-ācārya in the middle of the 9th century V.N.

**23rd discourse-ācārya &
25th epochal-ācārya of his time Nāgārjuna**

Ārya Nāgārjuna succeeded Ārya Himvanta Kṣamāśramaṇa. He was a Kṣatriya by birth. His father was Saṃgrama Siṃha of ṬhaṃkaNagara. His mother's name was Suvratā. As soon as the soul of Nāgārjuna entered her womb, she saw a thousand headed cobra in her dream. So the child was named Nāgārjuna. He was impressed by the magical powers of Ācārya Pādalipta Sūri. Nāgārjuna was a famous chemist of his times. He knew thoroughly the medicinal value and properties of different herbs and vegetation.

The analysis of time and sequence of events brings to light that after epochal-ācārya Ārya Siṃha attained heaven in V.N. 826, considering the explicit intellect and age, Ārya Skandila was conferred with the rank of discourse-ācārya and simultaneously the young monk Ārya Nāgārjuna was appointed as epochal-ācārya. Then, in V.N. 840, when Ācārya Skandila attained the heavenly abode, eldest monk Ārya Himvanta was appointed as discourse-ācārya and after his demise, in the absence of any other discourse-ācārya, the then epochal-ācārya Ārya Nāgārjuna was handed over the responsibilities of discourse-ācārya too.

It is already mentioned under the topic on Ārya Skandila that when Ārya Skandila had convened a council for the recension of the Āgamas, Ārya Nāgārjuna too at the same time, convened a council in the southern region in Vallabhī Nagara. This bears the testimony for the fact that Ārya Nāgārjuna was given the responsibilities of Vācaka of the congregation. Sequential order of important events of his life is as follows:

Birth	V.N. 793	Household life duration	14 years
Initiation	V.N. 807	Tenure as an ordinary Monk	19 years
Became ācārya	V.N. 826	Tenure as ācārya	78 years
Heavenly abode	V.N. 904	Total longevity	111 years

During the period of epochal-ācārya Ārya Nāgārjuna King Ghaṭotkaca of Gupta dynasty ruled upto V.N. 846. After his death, his son Candragupta-I expanded the Kingdom.

Caityavāsi (Temple dwellers)

From the times of Ārya Sudharmā to the period before Ārya Sāmanta Bhadra Sūri, Jain monks used to live mostly in forests and gardens. In ‘Nirayavalik Sūtra’ it is mentioned that Sudharmā Swāmī took resolution, in the garden called Guṇaśīla and wandered. Under some exceptional circumstances, certain monks at times might have stayed in lodgings (vasativāsa); but till that time, mostly they stayed in the forests during their wanderings. In spite of this, these monks were recognized as of ‘Nirgramtha tradition’ and not as ‘Vanavāsi tradition’. Next comes the time period of Sāmanta Bhadra Sūri, who with his entourage of monks was being called as Vanavāsi Gaccha’. In order to prevent the increasing influence of staying, rather camping at the lodgings as make-shift houses, he started propagating ‘staying in forests’. This was an encouraging effort to prevent the monks from being weakened in the observance of the holy path and austerities. But this type of strict arrangement on the part of the monks could not sustain for long due to the changing times, lack of self-confidence and determination of the monks.

This can also be stated beyond doubt that the convention of camping in forests and gardens renewed by Sāmanta Bhadra could not continue for long. Gradually going through alterations and modifications, ultimately it took the form of Caityavāsa, a dwelling in monasteries or temples by V.N. 808.

The more the Śramaṇas were lured by the royal patronage and honour, the more they deviated from the path of temperance. Indifference and disinterest for studying the scriptures increased in degrees and following the basic principles of conduct of Dharma remained only in words. Thus infatuated with the comforts and luxuries of life, they preferred shifting from Vanavāsa (living in forests) to Vasativāsa (living in monasteries / lodgings). Since then Caityavāsa metamorphosed into Mathavāsa-Upāśrayas (living in monastery lodgings) of the Yati-society.

When Ācārya Sāmanta Bhadra of Candra lineage started the concept of living in forests, a momentum started even in the Śramaṇas of other Kulas like Nāgendra, Candra, Nivritti and Vidhyādhara who followed his example and were called as ‘Vanavāsi Gacchas’. But owing to the difficult times, they encountered many problems while living in forests.

To cite a few, continuous internal wars among the kings, repeated long-term droughts, scarcity of food and water, long breaks in study and learning of the scriptures, waning of scriptural knowledge, decrease in energy levels, dislike of people and disorderliness in congregation, etc. are some of the reasons. After a profound analysis of the pros and cons scholars of the Āgamas decided that the wandering monks should camp in the lodgings near the temples instead of staying in the settlements of laymen. This started in V.N. 882 itself. Even though they stayed in temples or lodgings instead of living in forests, they did not reside there permanently. They continued their constant wanderings and so they were called wanderers (Vihārakas).

But in course of time, this practice also degenerated and the monks started living permanently in the monasteries. By the end of the Vikram 8th century (V.N. 12th century), staying in monasteries (Caityavāsa) had become more or less like a dwelling in a residence (Grahavāsa).

The Jain monks were always of the opinion that it is essential to keep away from the association of householders as much as possible, so that they do not develop any attachment. If one stays for a long time at one place, it is likely to develop attachment. Thus deviation from detachment may occur. Keeping this in mind, they had their stay at a distance from the residences of the householders and such stay was never permanent. Even after the nirvāṇa of Lord Mahāvīra, they continued this propriety of living away from householders with detachment. As it goes, ‘*gāme-gāme, ege rāyaṃ, Nagre-Nagre pānca rāyaṃ*’, they lived true to this statement, wandering with detachment from place to place.

But as soon as they started living in monasteries, near the residences of lay devotees, this is for sure that, the devotees did definitely extend their maximum services to the monks mornings and evenings, without fail. With lot of sentiments and feelings, they would come and go, paying their respects to the monks; on their part, the monks too would get carried away by emotions upon receiving so much devotion and reverence. Thus the monks started preferring permanent dwellings out of attachment. When the monks started living permanently at one place, a lot of undesirable issues crept into their ascetic practice and in their lives as well. This is the negative contribution of Temple dweller.

Ācārya Hari Bhadra gave a poignant description of the degenerated and distorted proprieties of monastic life in his text, ‘Saṃbhodhaprakaraṇa’ from which one understands the evil effects of monastic life. Ācārya Hari Bhadra expressed his feelings in the following manner:

“Those monks never pull (keśa-locana) their hair, they hesitated to practice endurances (pariśaha), they remove dirt from their bodies, they wander wearing wooden sandals and slippers and they without any reason wear a cloth around their waists”. He called the monks who do not pluck their hair as a coward. He writes further: “These monks live in temples and monasteries; they worship, enjoy & consume the materials obtained in the name of the Lord. These monks order for the construction of temples and places, wear varied-coloured and aromatic clothes, like a herd without a cowherd, they sing in front of women without any restraint, they eat the edibles brought by the female ascetics, they keep different types of implements, they enjoy the living substances (sacita) like water, flowers, and fruits, eat two to three times a day and even enjoy betel and cloves.”

“They calculate and find out auspicious moments, explain the omens and even give sacrificial ashes (vibhūti), receive sweetmeats and delicacies prepared for feasts, they flatter others just to receive food from them, and do not explain the real holy path even if asked.”

“They take bath, apply oil, and beautify themselves with make-up, use perfumes and scented oils and in spite of themselves being deprived, would involve in criticising others.

In spite of witnessing the distorted and corrupted form of these monks, the devotees thinking them to be Tīrthaṃkaras, pay their respects to them. Ācārya Hari Bhadra describes these devotees using very harsh language:

“Some unintelligent people say that these are clad as Tīrthaṃkaras. So we have to prostrate ourselves on their feet. Oh! Shame on them! With whom shall I share my grievances?”

In the introduction to his ‘congregation Paṭṭika’, author Jinavallabha, narrating the history of monastic life, writes – “approximately from V.N.

850, some monks gave up the aggressive wandering and started living in shrines. Gradually their number increased and in course of time they became very powerful”. “They started propagating that it is now appropriate for the monks to live in monasteries. They should also keep money to buy books, etc”.

It is said that in VS 802 (V.N. 1252), in Anahilpura, the Guru Śīlaguṇa Sūri compelled Vanarāja Cāvadā, the king of Pāṭṭana, to issue an order, prohibiting the entry of any monks (including Vanavāsi monks) other than Temple dweller monks into the city. In order to nullify this inappropriate command, Jineśwara and Buddhi Sāgara, the two scholarly monks of right-path (vidhi-mārgi) in V.S. 1074 (V.N. 1544,) challenged for debate on the scriptures with those Caityavāsi monks in the court of King Durlabhdeva and defeated them. It was only then that the monks of ‘right-path’ were allowed to enter the city of Pāṭṭana.

The study of the ancient books brings out the fact that even in the existence of few monks who strictly adhered to the holy-path, the Temple Dweller wielded power for long. However the monks, who were ardent devotees and followers of Jain Order, vehemently opposed the deterioration in the austerities and stood firm on the holy-path based on the doctrinal principles of Mahāvīra.

After Jinavallabha, Ācārya Jinadatta and Jinapati and in Saurashtra monks Candra and Sundar etc., the scholar monks of the right-path, through their writings and sermons competed with the Temple dweller and eventually outwitted them. After V.N. 15th century, these Temple dwellers converted and were found in the form of Yatisamāja.

Just like in Śvetāmbara tradition, its influence is also seen in the Digambara tradition. The seats (positions) of Bhaṭṭarakas can be said to be representative of that Caityavāsa and māvāsa.

From ‘Liṅga Pāhuḍa’ by Ācārya Kundakunda, the fact came into light that even such type of Jain monks existed in those times, who arranged matrimonial alliances and were engaged in activities of violence like cultivation and commerce. Śivakoṭi the Temple dweller monk who supported living in monasteries wrote in his ‘Ratnamāla’ that in

Kaliyuga, the best of the monks should not reside in the forests. It is appropriate for them to live in Jain shrines and particularly in villages.

It is believed that the Digambara monks had given up living in forests in V.N. 472 and might have started living in Nasiā (shrine); soon this also got distorted and after VS 1219, they started living in monasteries and such monks were called with respect as Bhaṭṭarakas (administrator Monks). By V.N. 1285, the Caityavāsa totally stopped the monks ceased to live in temples and began living in Upāśrayas (monasteries where Jain monks can stay temporarily).

Royal dynasties during Ārya Skandila and Ārya Nāgārjuna time

Candragupta-I

When Ārya Nāgārjuna was the epochal-ācārya, the reigning period of King Ghaṭotkaccha of Gupta dynasty lasted till V.N. 846. After his death, his son Candragupta-I ascended the throne and expanded the kingdom.

Historians assume that the reign of Candragupta-I extended from A.D. 319 to 335 (V.N. 846 to 862). The famous historian of the west, Mr Fleet proved that in A.D. 319 - 320, Candragupta-I assumed the title King of kings or emperor 'Mahārājādhirāja' and initiated the gupta calendar. In order to honor himself with the title of 'Mahārājādhirāja', first as a king, he should have already invaded and conquered the neighboring states of Magadha, which might have easily consumed a span of 4 to 5 years. Immediately after ascending the throne, a king defeating and conquering such vast area within two months and assuming the title 'Mahārājādhirāja' is beyond comprehension. In such a situation, after analyzing the facts, it appears that Candragupta-I might have ascended the throne a few years before 319-320 A.D., and this does sound reasonable and appropriate. So his coronation ceremony might have taken place between 310 and 315 A.D. and he might have extended his father's kingdom when still a crown prince.

Historians consider Śrīgupta as the founder of the Gupta dynasty and Candragupta-I was the founder of the Gupta Empire. According to the

Allahabad pillar inscription, Candragupta-I considered his youngest son Samudra Gupta to be most fitting and proclaimed him as his successor in the royal court saying, “Now, you rule this kingdom.” Samudra Gupta had to face the war of succession after the death of his father.

Contemporary Kings of Ārya Nāgārjuna period

The noblest Mahārājādhirāja Candra Gupta-I declared his youngest son Samudra Gupta as his heir-apparent because he was the ablest and fittest among his sons. After his death, Samudra Gupta came out victorious in the war of succession and ascended the throne in V.N. 862 i.e., 335 A.D.

In the Allahabad inscription, the court poet Hariṣeṇa described about the three military expeditions accomplished by Samudra Gupta.

In his above three military expeditions, Samudra Gupta subjugated and annexed all the big and small kingdoms, except the western region ruled by Śakas, and established a vast powerful Gupta Empire. It is estimated that Samudra Gupta reigned from 862 to 902 V.N.

Ārya Govinda-The 24th discourse-ācārya

Ārya Govinda was an imminent scholar in expositions (Anuyogas) and a famous scholar. In the ‘Vicāra śreṇī’ of Ācārya Meru Tuṃga, Ārya Govinda’s name appears between Ācārya Nāgārjuna and Ācārya Bhūtaḍḍina. The author of Nīśītha Cūrṇi mentioned about ‘Govinda Nirukti’, so Ārya Govinda might have also been a commentator (writer of treatises on canons).

According to Monk Punya Vijaya, monk Govinda, the author of Nirukti was none other than the ācārya who was described as the scholar of expositions (Anuyogadhara) in NandīSūtra, and as 28th epochal in Yugapradhāna Paṭṭāvalī and as the fourth Yugapradhāna after Ārya Skandila, the leader of ‘Māthurī recession or Vācanā.’ Ārya Govinda was a renowned discourse-ācārya of his times.

Bhūtaḍḍina 25th discourse-ācārya & 26th epochal-ācārya

Ārya Bhūtaḍḍina followed Ārya Nāgārjuna to the rank of discourse-ācārya. According to Nandī Sthavirāvalli, Ārya Bhūtaḍḍina was the

disciple of Ārya Nāgārjuna but the Duṣamākāla Śramaṇa congregation Stotra describes him as epochal-ācārya. Ācārya Devavācaka in his Sthavirāvalī describes him in the following words:

“He was considered as the most prominent among the then existing Indian monks because of his remarkable knowledge in the Aṃgas like Ācārāṃga etc., and in the other scriptures. He was very skilled in the administration of the congregation. He appointed many able monks to carry out the study of scriptures (Swādhyāya) and service of the saints (Vaiyāvṛtya), etc.” According to ‘Yugapradhāna Yantra’ his particulars are as follows:

Birth	V.N. 864	Household life duration	18 years
Initiation	V.N. 882	Tenure as an ordinary Monk	22 years
Became ācārya	V.N. 904	Tenure as Epochal-ācārya	79 years
Heavenly abode	V.N. 983	Total longevity	119 years

King Candragupta-II
A Contemporary of Ārya Nāgārjuna & Bhūtadīna
902 - 941 V.N. (375 – 414 A.D.)

After the death of Samudra Gupta in 902 V.N., his son Candra Gupta-II inherited a vast empire. Samudra Gupta’s father Candra Gupta-I chose his youngest son from among his children, and announced him as his successor; similarly Samudra Gupta also chose Candra Gupta-II from among his children to be the best heir in all aspects and made him the crown prince.

Some scholars opine that in the transition period between Samudra Gupta and Candra Gupta-II, an inefficient king like Rāma Gupta ruled over the kingdom for 2-3 years. However, historical evidences prove the fact that Samudra Gupta himself made Candra Gupta-II as the heir-apparent of his vast empire.

Candra Gupta-II was a great warrior and a valiant king. He defeated the Satrapies of Śaka kings like Mālawa, Saurashtra and Gujarat and killed the great Śaka Satrap, Satya Simh-III. Thus, he liberated India from the long rule of the Śakas approximately in 925 V.N. (400 A.D). As he ended the

rule of the Śakas, the people conferred upon him the title, ‘Śakāri Vikramāditya’. He was a very just, scholarly king of unblemished character. He brought the entire India under a single rule. Seven inscriptions of Candra Gupta Vikramāditya are available to date.

Political Scenario during Ārya Bhūtdinna

After the demise of Candra Gupta-II, his eldest son Kumāra Gupta-I inherited the vast kingdom. His mother was Dhruva Devī. It is estimated that he reigned from 414 - 455A.D. (941 - 982 V.N.).

Except for the last five years, no significant political event occurred in his long reign of 41 years. Around V.N. 977, a tribe known as Puṣyamitra, whose small kingdom was located near Narmada River in the Southern region, mobilised a vast powerful army with a firm resolution to depose Kumāra Gupta-I of Magadha and attacked him. A fierce battle broke out between the two armies. Probably, the attack was aimed at either routing out the Gupta Empire or with an ambition to seize and become the emperor of a vast empire. As he was backed by a huge army, Puṣyamitra continuously won the battles one after the other. The army of Kumāra Gupta-I lost its morale. At the crucial and decisive moments of victory and defeat, Prince Skanda Gupta, the elder son of Kumāra Gupta-I took over the charge with great fervor and gallantry. He, boosting the morale of his army, gave a stubborn resistance to the enemy. He mobilised additional troops, counter-attacked and crushed the opponent’s army. Thus Skanda Gupta gave his full support to his father, at the exact moment, safeguarded and protected the kingdom from falling victim into the hands of a formidable foe.

Because of these internal wars between Kumāra Gupta-I and Puṣyamitras, India became vulnerable. Had this battle not taken place, the Hūṇas would not have summed up the courage to invade India.

Ārya Lohithya, 26th discourse-ācārya

After Ārya Bhūtdinna, Ārya Lohitya became the discourse-ācārya of the congregation. In the words of Devārdhigaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa, Ārya Lohitya was an able interpreter of the Sūtras and a skilled exponent of

the substance, with the detailed description of its perishable and imperishable properties.

Even in the Digambara tradition a monk with a name Lohācārya or Lohārya, who was a scholar in eight Aṃgas, was considered as one of the prominent ācāryas.

Ārya Dūṣyagaṇi 27th discourse-ācārya

Ārya Dūṣyagaṇi succeeded to the rank of discourse-ācārya after Ārya Lohitya. Ācārya Devārdhigaṇi Kṣamāśramaṇa praised him as the best discourse-ācārya of his times. Śramaṇas of hundreds of other Gacchas who had yearning for knowledge used to come to learn the scriptures from him. He interpreted and commented the scriptures with such efficacy and fluency that he never felt fatigue either mentally or physically.

The author of Sthavirāvalī, Devārdhigaṇi Kṣamāśramaṇa offered salutation to Ārya Lohitya in the following manner, “I humbly prostrate on the feet of Ārya Dūṣyagaṇi which are adorned with auspicious marks and have delicate soles”. This praise makes it very clear that Devārdhigaṇi Kṣamāśramaṇa was the disciple of Ācārya Dūṣyagaṇi and hence he was well aware of the auspicious marks and delicate soles of his Guru’s feet. His tenure falls in the middle of the 10th century V.N.

Devārdhigaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa

28th discourse (*vācanā*)-ācārya & group (*gaṇa*) ācārya

Among the Ācāryas of Lord Mahāvīra's Jain order, discourse-ācārya Devārdhigaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa occupies an exceptionally important place. The foresighted Ācārya Devārdhigaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa convened a council in Vallabhī Nagara in V.N. 980, inviting all the Śramaṇas from all over. Through the recession of Āgamas by the Śramaṇas, he rearranged the forgotten verses of the eleven Aṅgas, editing and compiling them in a systematic order. Besides, with the aim that the sacred texts should ever remain intact, without any loss, for the benefit of the future generations, he gave all the sacred texts a book form by making the Śramaṇas write all the Sūtras. The four-fold congregation of Lord Mahāvīra, which will survive up to the end of the fifth epoch (Araka), is greatly indebted to Devārdhigaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa for his excellent foresighted & unparallel service.

Devārdhigaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa, by birth was a Kṣatriya of Kāśyapa family lineage. He was known as Devārdhigaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa and Deva Vācaka too. He was enduring, resolute, noble and an ardent follower of austerities. He had the knowledge of one pūrva and was an efficient discourse-ācārya.

He was born at Vairāvala Pāṇa in Saurashtra. The then ruler of Saurashtra was Aridamana. Devārdhī was born to virtuous parents namely, Kalāvātī and Kāmarddhi of Kṣatriya of Kāśyapa family lineage, an ordinary officer in Aridamana's court. In his previous birth, Devārdhī was a Hariṇagameṣī celestial deity. When he descended into the womb of Kalāvātī, she saw a wealthy and prosperous deity in her dream. So when he was born, they named him as Devārdhī. At the proper age, his parents sent him to an able teacher to attain knowledge. At a young age, he was married to two girls. Young Devārdhī because of bad company of his childhood developed deep interest in hunting. He used to go to the forest with his friends frequently for hunting.

A lot of efforts were made by the successor Hariṇagameṣī deity to bring Devārdhī on to the virtuous path. Ultimately, he arose from his long slumber and took initiation into Śramaṇa Dharma from Ācārya Lohitya.

Serving his Guru with utmost sincerity and constantly studying, he acquired the knowledge of the eleven Aṅgas and one Pūrva.

At first, he was appointed as group-ācārya and after Ārya Dūṣyagaṇī attained heavenly abode, he was nominated as discourse-ācārya. Some authors opine that he was the disciple and successor of discourse-ācārya dūṣyagaṇī; whereas others hold that he was the disciple and successor of Ārya Lohitya.

After a time lapse of 150 years of the two recessions-the Mathura and the Vallabhī recital organized under the auspices of Ācārya Skandīla and Nāgārjuna respectively, Devārdhī noted that his disciples were not able to retain the knowledge in their memory. The lack of memory of scriptures resulted in lethargy and hesitation in repeated revision of the scriptural texts. Devārdhī realised that it is impossible to safeguard the sacred texts without recording them in a written form. By making them to write down the text, two goals will be met at the same time-apart from reading and learning, it develops the concentration and averts the risk of extinction of the scriptures and the knowledge passes on to the succeeding generations. Therefore, he gave the scriptures a textual form.

Thus, to save the congregation from the extinction of knowledge & from laziness, the monks decided to give it a written form. According to Jain tradition, it is believed that during the tenure of Ārya Rakṣita and Ārya Skandīla, some portions of the scriptures were written and made into a text. However, the re-manifestation of the holy canons in a systematic order and in a fully written form was ascribed to Devārdhigaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa in Vallabhī.

With the permission of Jain congregation, Devārdhigaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa convened a meeting of a grand and of all the monks and ascetics in V.N. 980 in Vallabhī. He listened to the recitals of the Āgamas, whether complete or incomplete, whatever one could recollect, and recompiled all the available matter in a systematic order and eventually gave them a text form. The differences in the recitals were replaced by Nāgārjunīyā verses, and finally the holy scriptures were given the text form. It is believed that because of his penance, self-discipline, austerities, and the services done to the sacred knowledge of the scriptures, deities &

celestial beings like Cakreśwarī Devī, Gomukha & Kapardi yakṣa were always present in his service.

By analysing the writings of different authors and historians, it can be concluded that Devavācaka and Devārdhī were not two different ācāryas but were two different names of the same ācārya.

There was no unanimity about the lineage of Gurus of Devārdhigaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa. Some agree with the Kalpasūtra Sthavirāvalī and ascertained that Devārdhī belonged to Suhastī branch and was the disciple of Ārya Śāṃdilya. Whereas, according to the Nandi Sūtra Sthavirāvalī, the Cūrṇi written by JinaDāsa, Vṛttis of Hari Bhadra, Commentary of Malayagiri and Vicāraśreṇi of Merutumī, Devārdhī is considered as the disciple of Duṣyagaṇī. Still some others claim that Devarddhi was the disciple of Ārya Lohārya. However, from an objective perspective of historical facts and evidences it is appropriate to accept that Devārdhigaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa was a disciple of Duṣyagaṇī. Besides, the prefix ‘gaṇi’ in both the names like Duṣyagaṇī and Devārdhigaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa also indicates that both of them are teacher and disciple.

According to the commentator Ācārya Malayagiri, there will not be any controversy if Duṣyagaṇī is considered as the Guru who initiated Devārdhigaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa into monkhood, and Devārdhī was appointed as discourse-ācārya of Mahāgiri branch.

Attainment of heaven abode by Devārdhigaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa & the loss of knowledge of Pūrvas

According to the traditional point of view, Devārdhigaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa was considered as the last Pūrvadhara.

As mentioned in Bhagavatī Sūtra, 1000 years after the nirvāṇa of Lord Mahāvīra, the knowledge of Pūrvas will be lost. In such situation, it becomes apparent that Devārdhigaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa was the last Pūrvadhara and he went to heaven in 1000 V.N. Despite the above mentioned fact, some of the authors of Paṭṭāvalī claimed that epochal-ācārya Satyamitra’, was the last Pūrvadhara, who attained salvation in

V.N. 1000, whereas, Devārddhi attained his Samādhi 10 years prior to it, in 990 V.N.

In one of the stanzas of Tithogālīpāinnā, an ascetic called Ārya Satyamitra was described as the last Daśa Pūrvadhara. It appears that the expressions narrated in Tithogālīpāinnā for the last Daśapūrvadhara, Ārya Satyamitra were linked with 28th epochal- ācārya Satyamitra, due to the similarity in names and out of confusion, the authors of Paṭṭāvalī considered him as the last Pūrvadhara. Had Ārya Satyamitra who served as the 28th epochal- ācārya from V.N. 994 to 1001 been the last Pūrvadhara, then, the author of Tithogālīpāinnā would not have mentioned the last descriptive-ācārya Devārddhigaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa as the last Pūrvadhara instead of Ārya Satyamitra.

Profound analysis of all these facts proves that by giving the Holy Scriptures a textual form, Devārddhi not only helped his contemporaries, but also helped millions of monks (male and female), votaries and devotees of past and future, i.e., right from 980 V.N. to the end of the 5th Araka i.e. 20020 years. After completing his extremely beneficial task, Devārddhi attained heavenly abode in 1000 V.N.

**Political conditions during
Devārddhigaṇī Kṣamāśramaṇa's time
Skand Gupta Vikramāditya of Gupta Dynasty (V.N. 982-994)**

After the death of Kumāra Gupta in 982 V.N., his elder son Skamḍa Gupta inherited his vast kingdom. He reigned from 982 to 994 V.N. (455 – 467 A.D). He was a brave warrior and a valiant emperor. He was involved in wars throughout his life. Skamḍa Gupta, during the reign of his father, fought bravely against the huge army of Puṣyamitra, and protected the Gupta Empire, by inflicting a crushing defeat on them. As soon as he took the reins of Gupt Empire, to protect the motherland, Skamḍa Gupta waged war against the barbarous Hūṇa invaders who came from Central Asia.

Apart from a very huge army, the Hūṇas had skilled cavalry too. At the cost of their lives, with full force, they tried to move forward. Skamḍa Gupta, directing and guiding the Indian army, massacred the tyrannical Hūṇas and did not allow them to progress. Incurring great loss, both in

men and money, the Hūṇa prince fled from the battlefield with his army. Skand Gupta, with his amazing valiance and chivalry defeated the indomitable Huns and protected India from a great disaster.

Despite the near-total loss, the Hūṇas repeatedly attacked India just to take revenge of their ignominious defeat. However, every time, Skamḍa Gupta suppressed them with an iron hand. After defeating the Hūṇas, Skamḍa Gupta appointed loyal and able governors in all the crucial places of his empire, so as to crush the enemy, the moment he rises in revolt.

Skaḿda Gupta carried out many activities for the public welfare. Spending a large amount of money, he renovated the Sudarsana Lake that was dug during the time of Maurya Candra Gupta around 227 V.N. Though Skaḿda Gupta was a Vaiṣṇavas, yet he showed good will towards other religions. The Buddhists, Jains, Śaivas enjoyed full freedom to propagate and expand their religions during his regime.

During his 12 years reign from V.N. 982 to 994, Skanda Gupta involved in many wars, defeated his enemies and took the title of ‘Vikramāditya.’ The reigning period from Samudra Gupta to Skanda Gupta, V.N. 862 - 994 was the golden age of the Gupta dynasty. After the death of Skanda Gupta, Gupta dynasty started to decline. As Skanda Gupta died heirless, his brother Puru Gupta succeeded to the throne.

In all probability, Puru Gupta’s reign lasted only a year and a half. After his death in 896 V.N., his son Narasiṃha Gupta ascended to the throne of Ayodhyā. He died in 1000 V.N. and was succeeded by KumāraGupta-II.

The list of Gupta rulers and their tenure is given below in chronological order:

Name of the king	Hypothetical tenure of rule (V.N.)	Name of the king	Hypothetical tenure of rule (V.N.)
1. Śrīgupta	767 - 807	6. Kumāragupta (I)	941 - 982

2. Ghatotkaca	807 - 846	7. Skandagupta Vikramāditya	982 - 994
3. Caṃdragupta (I)	846 - 862	8. Purugupta	994 - 996
4. Samudragupta	862 - 902	9. Narasiṃhagupta	996 - 1000
5. Caṃdragupta (II) Vikramāditya	902 - 941		

Views of Digambara sect regarding ordinary Pūrvadhara Era

Though just like the dicots of a single green gram, or two sides of the same coin, Śvetāmbara & Digambara both sects belong to Lord Mahāvīra, yet there is a lot of difference in their traditions or opinions. With the times, the difference regarding the names of the Pūrvadharas, their numbers, and how long the knowledge of the Pūrvas existed, etc., kept increasing, between both the sects. The same is explained by the following chart:-

Subject	As per Śvetāmbara Sect	As per Digambara Sect
The existence of knowers of 14 Pūrvas	V.N. 64 to 170, totaling 106 years	V.N. 62 to 162, total 100 years
Number of knowers of 14 pūrvas	5. Except the last Caturdaśa Pūrvadhara Bhadrabāhu, the names of the remaining 4 Pūrvadharas are different in both the sects	
Tenure of ten pūrvā knowers	V.N. 170 to 584, about 414 years	V.N. 162 to 345, i.e. 183 years
Number of ten pūrvas knowers	11 as per both the sects, but there are differences in the names.	
Knowers of partial pūrvas	V.N. 584 to 1000, i.e. 416 years. 10 ācāryas possessed knowledge of the Pūrvas, out of whom Ārya Rakṣita is a	After the demise of the last Pūrvadhara Dharmasena, in V.N. 345, the knowledge of Pūrvas was lost and only a fraction of it exists now.

	scholar of 9 ½ Pūrvas. Devārdhigaṇī the last knower of one pūrva. The knowledge of Pūrvas lost after V.N. 1000	
	There is a difference of 655 years on the existence of knowledge of Pūrvas in the opinion of both the sects, which is a matter of contemplation	
Loss of knowledge of eleven aṅgas	Because of the influence of time, the knowledge of Āgamas (Aṅgas and Upāṅgas etc.) steadily started becoming weaker & weaker. Even then, up to the end of the Duṣamā kāla i.e. till the end of the forenoon of the 15 th day of 8 th month of V.N. 21003, though some part but in its pure form, the Āgmika knowledge will remain.	Lost in V.N. 683. After that only one part was left over. No written evidence is available about the loss of the remaining knowledge like Aṅgabāhya etc.
The number of Āgamas	There are 45 Āgamas in idol-worshipper sect, 32 in Sthānakavāsī and Terāpamthī	ṢAṬKHAṆḌĀGAMA and KaṣāyaPāhuḍa, etc are regarded as the best form of Āgamika scriptures.

Meticulous and unbiased comparative study of the scriptures of both these schools brings the fact to light that except in 84 small & big issues like ‘Strī Mukti’ (salvation of women), and ‘Kevalī Bhukti’ (taking food morsels of the omniscient), the rest of the expositions of the doctrines, explanation of metaphysics, etc are more or less the same.

Determination of Time of Ācāryas of Digambara Sect

In the perspective of the historical facts, after the nirvāṇa of Lord Mahāvīra, right from Gautama to Arhadbali, the names and tenure of Digambara ācāryas given below are indubitable:

Name	Tradition of scriptures	Duration
Indrabhūti Gautama	Kevalī	12 years
Sudharmā (Lauhārya)	Kevalī	12 years
Jambū	Kevalī	38 (40) years
Later, omniscient knowledge disintegrated		62 (64)
Viṣṇu (Nandī)	Śrutakevalī	Total duration of 100 years
Nandimitra	Śrutakevalī	
Aparājita	Śrutakevalī	
Govardhana	Śrutakevalī	
Bhadrabāhu	Śrutakevalī	
Later, the knowledge of last four pūrvas disintegrated		
Viśākha	Ekādaśāṅga and Daśa Pūrvadhara	Total duration of 183 years
Proṣṭhila	Ekādaśāṅga and Daśa Pūrvadhara	
Kṣatriya	Ekādaśāṅga and Daśa Pūrvadhara	
Jaya	Ekādaśāṅga and Daśa Pūrvadhara	
Nāga	Ekādaśāṅga and Daśa Pūrvadhara	
Siddhārtha	Ekādaśāṅga and Daśa Pūrvadhara	
Dhṛtiṣeṇa	Ekādaśāṅga and Daśa Pūrvadhara	
Vijaya	Ekādaśāṅga and Daśa Pūrvadhara	
Buddhila	Ekādaśāṅga and Daśa Pūrvadhara	
Gaṅgadeva	Ekādaśāṅga and Daśa Pūrvadhara	
Dharmasena (V.N.)	Ekādaśāṅga and Daśa	

345)	Pūrvadhara	
Later, the knowledge of Pūrvas was lost		
Nakṣatra	Ekādaśāṅgadharma (Scholar in 11 Aṅgas)	Total duration of 220 years
Yasapāla	Ekādaśāṅgadharma	
Pāṇdu	Ekādaśāṅgadharma	
Dhruvasena	Ekādaśāṅgadharma	
Kaṃsācārya (V.N. 565)	Ekādaśāṅgadharma	
Later, only Ācārāṅga was left		
Subhadrā	Ācārāṅgadharma (Scholar in Ācārāṅga)	Total duration of 118 years
Yaśobhadra	Ācārāṅgadharma	
Yaśobāhu	Ācārāṅgadharma	
Lohārya (V.N. 565)	Ācārāṅgadharma	
Later, Ekādaśāṅgī was lost		
Vinayāṃdhara	Scholar in one part of Aṅga-Pūva	Approximately 20-20 years
Guptaṛṣi	Scholar in one part of Aṅga-Pūva	
Guptaśruti	Scholar in one part of Aṅga-Pūva	
Śiva gupta	Scholar in one part of Aṅga-Pūva	
Arhadbali	Scholar in one part of Aṅga-Pūva	
Yoga 100 years		
Purna Yoga : 62 + 100 + 183 + 220 + 118 + 100 = 783 years		
After Arhadbali, the succession and duration of ācāryas		
Name of the ācārya		Duration

Māghanandī (Ācārya of Nandī congregation)	21 years
Dharasena	19 years
Puṣpadaṃta (Author of ŚAṬKHAṆḌĀGAMA)	30 years
Bhūtabali (the Author of ŚAṬKHAṆḌĀGAMA)	10 years
	Total: 90 years
Grand Total	873 years

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Tradition of Female monks (female ascetics) from omniscient era To Pūrvadhara era

From times immemorial, the unique feature of Jainism is that, it gave women, the full right to progress on the path of Spiritual-exertion. Similarly, just like men, even women of any class, caste or creed, in accordance with her stamina and desire could take initiation for either as female-votary or female-monk. Jain religion never showed discrimination like, ‘*Strī śūdrau Nādhīyetāma*’ (women and untouchables are not eligible). From the very beginning, the Tīrthaṃkaras, while establishing the Jain Order, considering that women too, just like men are eligible & capable for Spiritual-exertion, created a four-fold order including them also.

The women using the invaluable right conferred by all Tīrthaṃkaras, like men, with great courage, practiced the Holy Path. They uplifted themselves in the spiritual path and helped others progress in the Holy Path as well. Apart from this, they significantly contributed for the propagation, expansion and elevation of the Jain religion.

By the comparative analysis of the number of men & women ascetics, men & women lay devotees of all the 24 Tīrthaṃkaras, it appears that women were always ahead of men in the path of spiritual practices.

Nevertheless, the Digambara sect, (except the Yāpanīya congregation) held that women were not eligible for liberation. In the Śvetāmbara Canon ‘Jambū dwīpa Prajñapti’ (the sixth text of Upāṅga), it is described that the 4000 Female monks of Lord Vṛṣabha Deva attained salvation. Similarly in the Kalpasūtra it is mentioned that the 3000 Female monks of Ariṣṭanemi, 2000 Female monks of Pārśvanātha and 1400 Female monks of Mahāvīra, attained total liberation. The number of lady ascetics who attained liberation in the period of the aforementioned four Tīrthaṃkaras is double than that of the male monks.

While propounding the Holy Path & founding the Dharma-tīrtha, Lord Mahāvīra initiated Candana Bālā and other women into the Śramaṇī Dharma. He also initiated other women who were desirous of salvation, into the female-votary Dharma (lay women observing minor vows).

Thus, he proclaimed that women also are equally entitled to the practice of Spiritual-exertion and can help themselves and others for spiritual elevation.

If the very influential ācāryas like Ārya Mahāgiri, Ārya Suhastī, Ārya Vajra, Yākini Mahattarā Sūnu, Ārya Haribhadra, etc., were able to do significant services to the Jain Order, and for the welfare and progress of their people, and could succeed in their missions, it is because of the immense contribution of female-ascetics.

Introduction about important Śramaṇīs like Candana Bālā, Mṛgāvati, et al, who lived before Mahāvīra's nirvāṇa, is given in brief in the first part of this volume; and introduction about the important Śramaṇīs from after nirvāṇa to 1000 years V.N., whatever available information about them is presented in the current text.

Candana Bālā

Āryikā Candana Bālā was the first woman ascetic disciple of Lord Mahāvīra. She was the head and administrator of a vast community of Śramaṇīs. Candana Bala was the daughter of Dadhivāhana, the King of Campā Nagari and Queen Dhāriṇī Devī. Lord Mahāvīra during his 'Chadmasta' time (imperfect stage or prior to 12th stage of spiritual purification, when absolute knowledge was not yet attained), performed a very long penance with a very severe pre condition for breaking the fast (*abhigraha*) and broke the fast, accepting food from the hands of Candana Bālā. Hence, it is not an exaggeration to say that of all female monks of the current descending half cycle of time; Candana Bālā is the most fortunate one (meritorious). She had to undergo terrible adversities even in her childhood, as dreadful political calamity took place in Campā Nagari. The life of Candana Bālā was described briefly in the first volume of this series. The young celibate and great lady ascetic Candana Bālā gave initiation to thousands of women like princesses, daughters of merchants, queens, wives of attendants and the salvation-desirous women from all walks of life, into Śramaṇī Dharma and led them through the path of deliverance. Lord Mahāvīra himself appointed her as the head of the Śramaṇī community and in that capacity she managed very efficiently a very large Female monk-congregation of 36,000 female-ascetics. The propagator Candana Bālā never allowed even

slightest Devī action or negligible errors in the observance of conduct and austerities. She felt that these small mistakes may serve as the root cause for future grave mistakes or calamities. So, to maintain discipline and for the good and benefit of the Śramaṇī community, she never hesitated to fondly warn the Śramaṇīs even if they were quite older to her. She did not even think twice to reprimand the highly elevated female-votary Mṛgāvātī, when she remained in the holy assembly of the Lord beyond the stipulated time. On her part, even Mṛgāvātī too underwent contrition with simple and pure heart and immediately attained omniscience. Serving the Jain Order for a long time, and helping herself and others progress in the spiritual path, the propagator Candana Bālā attained omniscience after she had destroyed the four obscuring Karmas and later by destroying the remaining four non-obscuring Karmas, she attained absolute, blissful, eternal liberation. Out of the 36,000 Female monks of Lord Mahāvīra, 1400 including Candana Bālā attained liberation.

Mother of Jambū Kumāra - Dhāriṇī & Others

When Jambū, the son of a wealthy merchant got disdained of the worldly pleasures after hearing the preaching of Ārya Sudharmā and took initiation in V.N. 1, simultaneously 17 women of noble birth also took initiation into Śramaṇī Dharma from Āryikā Suvratā. Their names are as follows:

Mother of Jambū Kumāra	Mothers-in-law of Jambū Kumāra	Wives of Jambū Kumāra
1. Āryikā Dhāriṇī	2.Padmavatī	10.Samudraśrī
	3.Kalamālā	11.Padmaśrī
	4.Vijayaśrī	12.Padmasenā
	5.Jayaśrī	13.Kankasenā
	6.Kamalāvātī	14.Nabasenā
	7.Suseṇā	15.Kankaśrī
	8.Vīramatī	16.Kankavatī
	9.AjayaSenā	17.Jayaśrī

These 17 women impressed by the logical, beneficial, appealing and detachment-oriented discussions with the great ascetic Jambū Kumāra,

took initiation into Śramaṇī Dharma from Āryikā Suvratā and observed with the best feelings, pure penance and temperance all through their lives. The wives of Jambū Kumāra relinquished all the sensual pleasures, comforts and luxuries and immense wealth, in their prime youth, when one loves to enjoy them. The way they nurtured their unswerving love till their last breath for Jambū Kumāra, whom they had once chosen as their husband in their hearts is by itself the greatest, unparalleled, incomparable, unique and amazing phenomenon that served and will continue to serve as a perennial source of inspiration to the women desirous of liberation.

Female monk Dhāriṇī
(Approximately 24–60 V.N.)

Dhāriṇī was the wife of Rāṣṭravardhana, the younger son of Avantī King Pālaka (grand daughter-in-law of Canda Pradyota). The life of female-monk Dhāriṇī is considered in Jain history as the symbol of an ideal woman. Before taking initiation into Śramaṇī Dharma, she had to sacrifice great riches and even sever the loving bond towards her children to protect her chastity. After taking initiation, she prevented the probable merciless killing of people in the two kingdoms and gave an inspiring message of Non-violence & non-war to the world.

Female monk Vijayāvati & Vigatabhayā
(Approximately 44 V.N.)

There is a mention of Female monk Vijayāvati and her disciple Vigatabhayā in Āvaśyaka Cūrṇi. A short time before Avantīsenā invaded Kauśāmbī, Female monk Vigatabhayā observed Saṃlekhanā in Kauśāmbī. On the occasion of her Saṃlekhanā, the community of Votaries and Female-votaries organized a spiritual festival and showed their respect towards this noble Mahasatī.

An anonymous Female monk & Muruṇḍa Princess
(3rd to 6th Century V.N.)

It was mentioned that Cilāta Rājā, who was considered as a foreigner in those days, took initiation from Lord Mahāvīra; similarly it is also

mentioned that after nirvāṇa, in the 5th or 6th century a foreign lady took initiation into Śramaṇī Dharma.

According to Viśeṣāvaśyaka Bhāṣya and Niśītha Cūrṇī, the widow sister of Muraṇḍa, the Śaka ruler, expressed her desire to renounce. Before giving permission to his sister, Muraṇḍa wanted to find out which religion is the best one, so that she could in a true sense uplift her soul. He carved out an idea for testing the same. He ordered his elephant's coach to ride on his largest elephant and wait at the cross road near the palace, and goad it on to any female monk of any religion coming that way, while simultaneously warning her in harsh words to Strip off all her clothes at once and stand naked, else the elephant will crush her to death.

The king stood near the window of her palace, watching whether the elephant coach was strictly following his orders or not. The female monks passing by that way, seeing the heavy-bodied elephant rushing towards them at lightening speed, were removing their clothes as warned by the coach. Seeing this, Muraṇḍa felt depressed that there was not even a single commendable female monk from whom his sister could take initiation.

Just as this thought was going through his mind, at that very moment he once again heard the coach's warning. Through the window he saw that the elephant was goaded towards a very lean-bodied Śvetāmbara (white-clothed) female monk. The female monk, without any fear continued her walk towards her destination in a peaceful and composed manner. When the elephant was just a little away from her, she threw her muṃhapattī (a small piece of cloth worn over the mouth by the Śvetāmbara Jains) at the elephant. The elephant stopped at once and held the muṃhapattī with its trunk, looked all around, threw it aside and renewed its menace towards the female monk. The coach shouted again; but this time the female monk threw her flywhisk (Rajoharaṇa) towards the elephant. Once again the elephant stopped, and holding the flywhisk with its trunk, spun it in the air and threw it aside. In this manner when the elephant again came near her, the female monk threw her bowl and other monkhood implements one by one on the elephant and curbed the speed of the elephant. Looking at this miracle, the astounded crowd was completely taken away by her courage and confidence. Finally the female monk was left only with the clothes on her body and nothing else.

The enraged crowd shouted at the coach, “Enough of your wicked act! Now stop it”. The coach looked at Muruṇḍa and receiving a signal from him, brought the elephant under control.

After this incident, Muruṇḍa told his sister, “Sister! You can take initiation under this extremely brave and efficient female monk. It has been proved beyond doubt that her religion is the best propounded by the omniscient”. Taking the permission of her brother, she took initiation from the female monk. Both of them were venerated by thousands of people with the great applause. The teacher and her disciple thus created an eternal source of reverence in the hearts of the people. Despite the fact that their names are unknown to the world, yet they inspire a life of temperance and courage.

Highly influential female monk Yakṣā and others

(2nd and 3rd century V.N.)

It is already mentioned that during the ācārya tenure of Saṃbhūtavijaya, the seven daughters of Śakadāla, the Prime Minister of Dhanānanda took initiation. The memory power of these seven sisters was very acute and sharp. Yakṣā could immediately repeat without missing a single word, even the toughest and longest prose or poetry, just by listening to it once. Similarly, the other six sisters by listening 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 times respectively, could replicate and repeat prose or poetry of any length with great accuracy. These seven sisters, with the miracle of their incredible memory power, crushed the arrogance of a scholar named Vararuci, in the court of the last Nanda.

Ārya Mahāgiri and Ārya Suhasī stayed with the great scholar Āryikā Yakṣā from childhood and obtained thorough knowledge in the eleven Aṅgas.

Some time after the initiation of Sthūlabhadra, Yakṣā and their six sisters, their younger brother Śrīyaka also took initiation into the Śramaṇa Dharma. Yakṣā suffered from excessive guilt and was distraught for encouraging her younger brother to observe Ekāsana (one meal per day) and later complete fasting, which resulted in the death of the delicately-disposed Śrīyaka.

Yakṣa, blaming herself for the death of Śrīyaka, started severe penance. Many of the preceding ācāryas stated that worried about the severe penance of Yakṣā, the congregation invoked ‘Śāsana Devī’ (Guardian Goddess). With the help of the goddess, Female monk Yakṣā arrived at Śrī Simandhara Swāmi in Mahāvideha Kṣetra. Proclaiming her as innocent, the Swāmi granted her the knowledge of four chapters as a Cūlikā (gift).

Thus the seven sisters - Yakṣā, et al, took initiation during the time of Saṃbhūtavijaya and established a remarkable place for themselves in the history of Jainism.

Āryā Poiṇī

(Approximately 300-330 V.N.)

The information about the great female monk Poiṇī, the Head of the Order of the Female monks and a scholar, and about 300 other detached Female monks of the time of descriptive-ācārya Ārya Balissaha, is available in the Sthavirāvalī written by Himavanta. During early 4th century V.N., Mahāmeghavāhan Khāravala, the emperor of Kalīṃga, convened a council on Kumāra hills. Descriptive-ācārya Balissaha and group-ācārya Ārya Susthita with their respective entourage of 500 Śramaṇas and ascetics, and 300 detached Śramaṇīs, under the leadership of Āryikā Poiṇī, etc., attended the council.

One can assess the depth of knowledge and authority on Āgama scriptures, the excellent wisdom and unparalleled intellect of Female monk Poiṇī, by the fact that her contribution was requested and received by the council, for the pious and remarkable task of systematically compiling and protecting the Āgama literature.

She was respected and honored by monks and nuns, votaries and female-votaries of the congregation for her profound canonical knowledge. She enjoyed a prominent place in the congregation.

Female monk Sarasvatī.
(Approximately 5th Century)

Approximately in the first half of the 5th century (in the times of Ārya Guṇākara), along with Kālakācārya-II his sister Sarasvatī also took initiation. Complete information about Sarasvatī is given in the section on Kālakācārya II. Female monk Sarasvatī bravely faced the difficulties which came on her way. Though imprisoned by Gardhabhilla in his palace, and later coerced, threatened, harassed and lured by him, she did not budge from the Holy Path. After being freed from the shackles of Gardhabhilla, Āryā Sarasvatī with full purity of heart and soul performed severe austerities, penance and practiced self-restraint throughout her life, and finally attained heaven.

Female monk Sunandā
(In the beginning of 6th Century V.N.)

After Sarasvatī, who lived during the 2nd and 3rd phase of the 5th century after V.N., Āryā Sunandā, the mother of Ārya Vajra took initiation into Śramaṇa Dharma in V.N.Y 504, from a Sthavira female monk who was the disciple of Ārya Siṃhagiri. Her name will always be written in golden letters in Jain history, as she was the wife of a great renouncing and recluse Dhanagiri, and also the mother of a famous epochal-ācārya Ārya Vajra. She gave permission to her eager husband to renounce even though she was pregnant and in the prime of her youth thus setting an example of an ideal Indian wife seldom seen anywhere. Elaborate information about Āryikā Sunandā is given in the chapter on Ārya Siṃhagiri.

Young Celibate – Female monk Rukmiṇī

Female monk Rukmiṇī's name also occupies a high place among the highly elevated votive nuns. Rukmiṇī's sacrifice itself is unique. Just a minute ago she was in the intoxication of love and the very next moment renouncing everything, she became an ascetic. This is the uniqueness of female monk Rukmiṇī, the only daughter of a millionaire father, a merchant. This has already been described in the chapter on Ārya Vajra.

Female monk Rudrasomā

If a family is bestowed even with one member, who is completely bent towards spiritualism with all his soul, utmost devotion and faith, that person uplifts the entire family in the true sense. The life of Rudrasomā is a living example of this fact.

Rudrasomā was the wife of Somadeva, a scholar in Vedas. Somadeva was a royal priest to the king of Daśapura. He was immensely honoured and loved by the royal family, courtiers, society and people. Rudrasomā was a staunch devotee of Jain religion.

Rudrasomā gave birth to a very fortunate child in V.N. 522, named Rakṣita, who became an influential propagator epochal-ācārya of the Jain congregation. The second son of Rudrasomā was Phalgu Rakṣita. After finishing his primary education, Somadeva sent his son Rakṣita to Pāṭalīputra for further studies. Studying there for many years, the very intelligent and perspicacious Rakṣita learnt all the Vedas including the six Aṅgas. After being well-versed in all the disciplines, when Rakṣita returned to Daśapura in V.N. 544, the king and the people honoured him by giving a grand welcome and celebrating his entry into the city. However, Rudrasomā did not show any enthusiasm at all. When Rakṣita asked about her indifference, she answered in a composed manner, “Son! Is there any mother in this world who does not feel happy at the success of her son? Everyone is happy with your success. Your education is helpful in providing familial comforts and happiness. It is also helpful in securing the necessities of your kith and kin in order to take good care of them. It is limited to that extent only. But it is not at all helpful for uplifting one’s own soul or that of others or for spiritual enhancement. Son! To tell you the truth, I would have experienced real happiness had you returned after studying the Dṛṣṭivāda, which is full of spiritual knowledge”.

The innate desire of his mother expressed with benevolent feelings got completely imprinted in his heart. He questioned his mother, “Where can I learn Dṛṣṭivāda?” Rudrasomā told him about Ārya Toṣaliputra who camped in Ikṣuvāṭikā, outside the town. At dawn, Rakṣita paying respects to his mother went to Ārya Toṣaliputra with great zeal to learn Dṛṣṭivāda.

After listening to Rakṣita's request, Ārya Toṣaliputra informed him that Dṛṣṭivāda could be taught only to a monk who took initiation as a detached Śramaṇa. The moment he listened to this, Rakṣita without any hesitation, accepted initiation into Śramaṇa Dharma.

After learning the eleven Aṅgas from Ārya Tosaliputr, Rakṣita approached Ārya Vajra and studied the nine and half Pūrvas and their meaning. His parents sent their younger son, Phalgu Rakṣita to bring Rakṣita back home. Rakṣita initiated his brother to the Śramaṇa Dharma. Acquiring the knowledge of the nine and half Pūrvas, Rakṣita came back to his Guru Ācārya Toṣaliputra. As he was the most worthy monk, his Guru conferred him the rank of ācārya and later observing Saṃlekhanā, Ācārya Toṣaliputra attained heavenly abode.

After his Guru attained heaven, Ārya Rakṣita who had by then become an ācārya, as per his mother's word, which she sent through her second son Phalgu Rakṣita, yielded finally and went to Daśapura, for the benefit of the devotees and would be ascetics.

Rudrasomā herself & inspired by Rudrasomā the royal priest Somadeva, and many members of their family who were desirous of salvation, took initiation as monk from Ārya Rakṣita.

Āryā Rudrasomā carrying out severe penance, practised pure self-restraint. The two sides of Āryā Rudrasomā, one as a householder and the other as a nun, are a great source of inspiration to mankind. Except for the elevation of one's own self and that of others, Āryā Rudrasomā did not give any importance to the typical beliefs, like the family progeny should prosper and that the family lineage and its name should continue forever. She thought that continuation of one's own lineage is not a criterion to assess the success of a person. To her, self-realisation and helping others to realise their own self in the spiritual path were the requisites to evaluate the success of a person. She never bothered or worried if her lineage would continue or not; instead she imparted her sons with righteous traits and habits and encouraged them to tread on the path of spiritual practice and also to lead others. But for the encouragement of Rudrasomā, Ārya Rakṣita would not have become epochal-ācārya. The credit for the spiritual success of Ārya Rakṣita goes

completely to his mother. In Jain history, along with the name of Ārya Rakṣita as a compiler of the Anuyogas, the name of the priest Somadeva and more specially the name of Rudrasomāa will remain forever.

Female monk Īśwarī
(Last Decade of 6th Century V.N.)

Right from the descent into the mother's womb till death, man is constantly surrounded by problems, either big or small. When the moments of grief and misery pass by, man forgets about the grief-Stricken days and runs in search of the mirage of happiness. Once more he is encircled by sorrow and grief and once more he forgets them. Out of lakhs of people, seldom there is a person who learns from sorrows and difficulties and engages himself in the quest of eternal happiness.

The name of female monk Īśwarī appears first in the list of such rare personalities. The horrible famine resulted in the immense scarcity of food. Unable to bear the of pangs of hunger, Jinadatta, a wealthy merchant of Sopāraka Nagara, his wife Īśwarī and their four sons decided to die by consuming poison mixed food. Even after spending one lakh coins, Jinadatta with great difficulty could procure only two handfuls of grain for their last meal. Īśwarī prepared the food and was about to open the packet of lethal poison to mix in it. At that very moment, Vajrasena, the then epochal-ācārya, appeared at the door. Considering that at the vicious moment of nearing-death, the manifestation of a monk at their door-step was an auspicious omen, Īśwarī with overwhelming joy, offered salutations to the monk.

Seeing the lethal poison which was still in the hands of Īśwarī, Ārya Vajrasena asked the reason. When he came to know the actual situation, he recalled the words predicted by his Guru. On the basis of the prediction of his teacher, Ārya Vajrasena said, "O Noble Lady! There is no need to mix poison in the food. Plenty of food will be available starting tomorrow".

Having immense faith in the words of the monk, Īśwarī kept the packet of poison aside. Giving in to the repeated entreaties of Īśwarī, Ārya Vajrasena partook two morsels of the unblemished food.

The same night some ships loaded with grains arrived at the seaport of Sopārakpura. In the morning plenty of food grains were distributed among all the people. Everyone heaved a sigh of relief with the crisis of the famine being resolved.

Even Jinadatta received food grains. Analysing the fatal situation, Īśwarī addressing her husband and four sons said, “Had the monk Ārya Vajrasena arrived a little late, we would have met with untimely death and would have ruined ourselves. In the transitional period of life and death, the monk manifested like a deity of liberation and salvaged us from being swallowed by the deity of death. Hence I feel that it is most befitting for us to take initiation from Ācārya Vajrasena and to destroy our Karma in the fire of penance and self-restraint and try to liberate ourselves from this terrible wildfire of misery”.

Praising the apt suggestion of Īśwarī, Jinadatta and others determined to renounce.

Jinadatta, Īśwarī and their sons - Nāgendra, Candra, Nivṛtti and Vidyādhara, renouncing their immense wealth and all worldly pleasures and luxuries, accepted initiation into aṃgar / monk Dharma with Sarvavirati (absolute restraint) from Ārya Vajrasena. Īśwarī learnt a lesson from that calamitous situation and her appropriate analysis converted the bane into a boon for herself and her family members too.

As a matter of fact, the life of Īśwarī is a source of great inspiration for all the devotees. It always motivates mankind towards a proper and virtuous direction, “O man, reform yourself; from this very moment, Strive hard towards the direction from where you will never again find any sorrow or grief.”

Epilogue

The Jain history from 1 to 1000 V.N. has been dealt with, in this book; wherein sincere effort has been made to present the lives of ācāryas, important monks and nuns, significant historical events, royal dynasties and the changes that occurred in them, etc. with substantial evidences. The history of post 1000 V.N. is given in the next volume.

Legendary personality ācārya Hastīmaljī

A great Indian thinker of the era, Śrī Hastīmalajī Mahārāja has remained as a bright star in the family of Nirgrath (passionless) Mokṣa. He was born in the city of Pipad, in Jodhpur district in Rajasthan on 13th January 1911, i.e., VS 1967 Paush Shukla Chaturdasi. Two months before his birth, his father Śrī Kevala Chandjī of Oswal lineage, died due to plague. This was a big jolt like a thunderbolt in a cloudless sky, to his virtuous mother Rupkanvar (Rupadevī). Due to this incident she got aversion towards the world. She brought up her son with a feeling of detachment and taught him the values of righteousness. Within a few years, Hasti's paternal grandparents also passed away.

The aforesaid incidents strengthened the feelings of aversion in Hasti, who was already a born ascetic.

At a tender age of 10 years and 18 days, ascetic Hastīmala accepted monastic life from Ācārya Śrī Shobhachandrajī on Magh Shukla Dvitiya VS 1977 (10th February 1921). Along with him, his mother Rupadevī, and two more people who were aspirants of liberation, took refuge in Jainism. Immediately after joining the Order, Hastīmala started studying the Jain scriptures, oriental languages, philosophy and literature. At the tender age of 15 ½ years, the child monk Hastīmala, who was bestowed with distinct abilities and talent was chosen as the leader of the Jain Order.

In a short span of time, he acquired unparalleled knowledge, combined with meditation. In VS 1987 Vaishakh Shukla (Akshaya Tritiya) at a mere age of 19 years, he was appointed as the seventh Head of Sthanakvasi tradition of Ratna congregation in Jodhpur. He was the only person in Jain history who was made a ācārya at an age of less than 20 years, probably after the omniscient Ācārya Hemachandra of Kalaiyuga.

Ācārya Hastīmala was a persona full of spiritual energy and a multi-faceted genius. With appropriate practice (Samayik), he spread the message of equanimity. He also inspired lakhs of people for the study of the scriptures and spread a new enlightenment of amity and knowledge in the society. With indefatigable zeal he strived hard to eliminate profligacy and to root out the evil deeds among mankind, and to

encourage women education. Thus he established his name as a social reformer.

An ocean of compassion, Ācārya Hastī, protected & saved all living beings, even poisonous snakes. He not only personally implemented non-violence, forgiveness, equanimity but also demonstrated that the values of life like non-violence, etc preached by Lord Mahāvīra are fully capable of solving the existing problems in society.

Ācārya Hastī, who was an expertise in ancient language and script, was a legend during his life time itself. With untiring hard work and plenty of substantial evidences, he wrote a book named ‘Jain Dharma ka Moulik Itihaas’ (Original History of Jain Religion), which consists of 3500 pages and is divided into four volumes. This book is an everlasting blessing to Jain religion in particular, and to the Indian society in general. In addition, he even edited and translated the Jain scriptures both in prose and poetry. He wrote poems inspired by the profound feelings of religion, culture and spirituality. He was a skilled and influential religious expounder. His inspirational religious discourses were compiled and published into a book of seven parts, by name ‘Gajendra Vyakhyanmala’.

Ācārya Hastī travelled many states like Rajasthan, Delhi, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, etc and observed altogether 70 Rainy season halt (four month during monsoon) and initiated 85 aspirants of liberation into ascetic life. On 21st April 1991, i.e. VS 2049 Vaisakh (Prathama) Shukla Ashtami, he left his mortal body at 8:21 PM, after observing a fast unto death for 13 days and attained accession to heavenly abode. Just like his birth and life even his final journey too became a legend. His biography was published under the title ‘Namo Purisavaragandhahathinam’ which approximately consists 900 pages. Now his able disciple, Ācārya Śrī Hirāchandrajī adorns the rank of the eighth successor of Ratna congregation.
