

FASTING UNTO DEATH ACCORDING TO THE JAINA TRADITION*

BY

COLETTE CAILLAT

CNRS, ERA 094, University of Paris

Since about 1900 a number of thorough studies have been devoted to the various forms of suicide which are known to have taken place in India.¹ Recent contributions on the subject of

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¹ Cf. among many others, Encyclopaedia of Religions and Ethics 12, 24 ff. 'Suicide (Buddhist)' by La Vallée Poussin, and 12, 33 ff. 'Suicide (Hindu)' by A. B. Keith, ubi alla (also concerning the Jainas). Moreover, Hopkins, 'On the Hindu Custom of Dying to Redress a Grievance', *JAOS* 21, 1901, 146-159; Hillebrandt, 'Der freiwillige Feuertodt in Indien und die Somawelhe', *SBAW* 1917, 19f. To these, it seems advisable to add some thought-provoking studies on the so-called *sati* (though J. Filliozat [cf. n. 3] would separate this custom from the other cases of voluntary death, cf. 'La mort volontaire', p. 38, see however, 'L'abandon de la vie', p. 79): especially Winternitz's chapter on 'Die Witwenverbrennung', in *Die Frau in den Indischen Religionen* (Leipzig 1920), p. 55-85, ubi alla; or Th. Zachariae's illuminating papers 'Zur Indischen Witwenverbrennung', *Zeitschr. des Vereins für Volkskunde in Berlin*, 14, 1904, 198-210; 302-313; 395-407; 15, 1905, 74-90; 'Sieben Mal auf die Welt kommen', *WZKM* 23, 1, 1909, 220-230; Edward Thompson, *Suttee, A Historical and Philosophical Enquiry into the Hindu Rite of Widow-Burning*, (London 1928).—On *sati* according to *śruti*- and *smṛti*-rules, L. Sternbach, 'Indian Tales and the Smṛti-s', The Tale of the Clever Magician (Vikramacarita 30) Vishveshvaranand Indological Journal 10 (1972) [= Vish. Ind. Paper Series 310], p. 47-61; 145-150 (n° 35 of the author's *Juridical Studies in Ancient Indian Law*).

Moreover, the Brahmanical facts have been collected and discussed by Kane,

voluntary death in the Buddhist and Brahmanical traditions have been published by Jacques Gernet² and Jean Filliozat,³ stimulating views being developed by these scholars.⁴

To the body of knowledge concerning suicide in India which has been collected and scrutinized up till now I propose in this paper to add the relevant material that can be drawn from another important Indian tradition, that of the Jainas.⁵ The Jaina position

H(istory of) Dh(armaśāstra), vol. II 2, p. 924-929; III, 939; 949; 958-959; IV, 603-614; (II 2, p. 927-928 on the Jainas). For a recent general survey, see Upendra Thakur, *The History of Suicide in India. An Introduction*. Delhi [1963].

² 'Les suicides par le feu chez les bouddhistes chinois du V^e au X^e siècle', *Mélanges publiés par l'Institut des Hautes Études Chinoises* II (Paris, 1960), p. 527-558.

³ 'La mort volontaire par le feu et la tradition bouddhique indienne', *JA*, 251,1, 1963, p. 21-51; 'L'abandon de la vie par le sage et les suicides du criminel et du héros dans la tradition indienne', *Arts Asiatiques*, 15, 1967, p. 65-88.

⁴ Cf. also Louis Renou's study, 'Le jeûne du créancier dans l'Inde ancienne', *JA*, 234, 1943-45, p. 117-130, on the 'holding', or obstruction of the debtor by the creditor who threatens to starve to death (*dharyā*). L. R. recalls the Celtic counterparts of this custom, evidently an old survival in these marginal Indo-European societies (p. 123-124), cf. Miles Dillon, 'Celt and Hindu', *Vishveshvaranand Indological Journal*, 1, 2, 1963 [203-223], 222. Moreover, H. von Stietencron, 'Suicide as a religious Institution'. *Bhāratiya Vidyā* 27 (1967), p. 7-24.

⁵ For all that concerns Jainism, see W. Schubring, *Die Lehre der Jainas nach den allen Quellen dargestellt*, Berlin Leipzig, 1935 [English translation, Delhi, 1962]; hereafter: *Lehre* (references to paragraphs). Other usual references to: Ludwig Alsdorf, *Les Études jaina. État présent et tâches [so read] futures*, Paris, 1965 (hereafter: *Études*); Colette Caillat, *Les expiations dans le rituel ancien des religieux jaina*, Paris, 1965 (: *Expiations*); id, *Candāvejjhaya*. Introduction, Édition critique, Traduction, Commentaire, Paris, 1971; Jozef Deleu, *Viyāhapannatti (Bhagavati)*. The fifth Anga of the Jaina Canon. Introduction, Critical Analysis, Commentary and Indexes, Brugge, 1970 (: Deleu; or Deleu, *Viy*); Kurt von Kamptz, *Über die vom Sterbefasten handelnden älteren Paipṣa des Jaina-Kanons*, Hamburg, 1929 (: Kamptz); R. Williams, *Jaina Yoga. A Survey of Medieval Śrāvakācāras*, London, etc., 1963.

The main śvetāmbara works quoted are (abbreviations as in *Lehre*, and Deleu): *Ācār* = *Ācārāṅga-sūtra*. Erster Śrutaskandha. Text . . . Walther Schubring, Leipzig, 1910; *Antagaḍa(dasāo)*, Sutt'āgame ed., Muni Śrī Phūlchandji, Gurgāon Cantt, 1953-54; *Aṇuttarovavāṭiya(dasāo)*, 1b, (references to page and line): English translation, L. D. Barnett, *The Antagaḍa-dasāo and the Aṇuttarovavāṭiya-dasāo*, London, 1907; *Aup* = *Das Aupapātika Sātra* . . . Text . . . Ernst Leumann, Leipzig, 1883; *Āyār(angasutta)*, 1, ed. Schubring (*Ācār*, ref. to page and line); translation Schubring, in *Worte Mahāvīras*, Leipzig, 1926, p. 66-121; Jacobi, *S(acred) B(ooks of the) E(ast)*, 22, 1884, p. 1-213 (*Āyār* 1-2); *Bh(attachaparinnā)*, ed. Āg(amodaya) S(amiti), Bombay, samvat 1983 (= 1927); *Candāv(ejjhaya)*, ed. Caillat (*supra*); *Isibhāstyāṃ*.

on the subject of voluntary death is particularly interesting, as Mahāvīra's community has stressed the salvationist value of asceticism. Moreover, in all matters, Jinism has endeavoured to make a clear-cut and original synthesis out of elements sometimes evidently heterogeneous, some of them being very archaic. To the question 'Is suicide licit?' the other Indian communities have propounded conflicting and, to a certain extent, wavering answers. The Jainas' position, on the contrary, is well delineated. One form of suicide is allowed and only one. It can take place in definite conditions only and must conform to strict rules, which are laid down minutely. The one form which they expressly allow is death through fasting (*anaśana*).

In fact, in classical India, this type of voluntary death seems to have normally been advocated or tolerated among the Hindus and among the Buddhists, at least in the case of the individual who is aware that the end of his life is drawing near.⁶ On the

Aussprüche der Weisen. Aus dem Prākṛit der Jainas übersetzt von Walther Schubring (with revised edition of the text, by Schubring), Hamburg, 1969; *Jñāc(ariya)*, in Hermann Jacobi, *The Kalpasūtra of Bhadrabāhu*, Leipzig, 1879 (ref. to paragraph); *Nāyādhammakahāo*, in *Sutt'āgame* (ref. to page and line); *S(aṃ)thāra*, ed. ĀgS; *Uvav(āīya)*, ed. Leumann (*Aup*; ref. to paragraph); *Uvās(agadasāo)*, ed. transl. A. F. R. Hoernle, *The Uvāsagadasāo or the Religious Profession of an uvāsaga*, Calcutta, 1888-1890: I Text and Commentary; II Translation (ref. to (lesson and) paragraph); *Viy(āhapannatti)*, in *Sutt'āgame*.

For technical terms, I generally quote the Ardha-Māgadhī (= amg.) form in canonical contexts; the Sanskrit (= skr.) form in other developments, specially if it is in common use.

An asterisk after a reference indicates that the text is in verse.

⁶ Cf. Bühler, 'Über die indische Secte der Jaina', *WZKM* 1887, p. 13 and p. 38 n. 11, referring to Āpastamba Dharma Sūtra 2,22, 4, and 23,2. Cf. Alsdorf, *Etudes*, 45-46; J. Filliozat, 'L'abandon de la vie', 68; Kane, *H Dh* II 2, p. 926, all quoting *Raghuvaṃśa*, 8, 94. Also see Kane, *H Dh* II 2, p. 928 (about Purāṇas). Cf. the prescriptions of the *Garuḍa Purāṇa* (ed. Calcutta, Śaka 1812/1890 AD), *uttara-khaṇḍa* 5, 39:

grhṇīyāc ced anaśanaṃ vrataṃ vidhivad āgale
mṛtyau na so, 'pi saṃsāre bhūyaḥ paryāṭati . . . ,

'if, when death is drawing near, one correctly undertakes the vow of fasting, then also, one does not, after death, wander in the saṃsāra'; *Garuḍa-Purāṇa-sāroddhāra* (ed.-transl. Ernest Wood - S. V. Subrahmanyam, Allahabad, 1911), ch. 9, 34-35:

other hand, there is no doubt that ordinary suicide is generally condemned. When teachers do allow voluntary death, they stress that it should be a thoughtful, carefully prepared undertaking.⁷ Before it can be resorted to, all worldly ties are to be severed: the individual will already be out of this world;⁸ and he should be pure in all respects.

As for the conception of voluntary death which prevailed among the Jainas, and for the famous suicides which they extol, I shall

*prāṇa-prayāṇa-samaye kuryād anaśanam . . .
nṛto Viṣṇu-puraṃ yāti, na punar jāyate bhuvā,*

'At the time when the breath is leaving (the body), he should fast . . .'.⁷

As for the Buddhists, Prof. N. Tatia has recently drawn attention to a rule which is laid down in Buddhaghosa's *Samantapāsādikā* (N^o 463-464). This passage is quoted and discussed by N. Tatia in his article 'On saṃlekhanā or Suspension of Allment' (*Shri Mahavir Jaina Vidyalyaya Golden Jubilee Volume*, Bombay, 1968, I, p. 139-142). He paraphrases the text thus: 'The question of the suspension of food and drink by a Buddhist monk is discussed and approved. Should a monk stop taking food and medicine if he is afflicted with long-drawn disease and finds his body incapable of surviving even if carefully tended and nourished, and his attendants tired and exhausted? The answer is in the affirmative. — A monk is also allowed to stop taking food and medicine if he finds his disease acute and is convinced of the impossibility of survival and the attainment of spiritual elevation appears to him as a *fail accompli*. — Even a monk who is not sick is permitted to do so provided he has developed detachment from fear of the world and considers the begging of food as a hindrance and a handicap and desires to apply himself exclusively to meditation . . .'.⁸

⁷ Cf. J. Fillozat, *loc. cit.*, *passim*.

⁸ Physically or/and spiritually; cf. J. Fillozat, *loc. cit.* In this connection, it is noteworthy that those who choose to die declare their intention solemnly: it thus becomes irrevocable, cf. the ritual for those who give up life in a holy place, as summarized by Kane (*H Dh IV 610f.*); or the announcement of those who resort to *prāyopaveśa* (Hopkins, *loc. cit.* 152 foll.); or, again, the preparation of the *śālī*, who must proclaim her intention, who, if allowed to follow her husband, will have to carry out her pledge (Abraham Roger, *La Porte ouverte pour parvenir à la connaissance du Paganisme caché*, ch. XX, p. 129), and who, henceforward, is considered a sacred being (Zachariae, *ZVVB 1905*, 1, p. 86). Further, it has been noted that she throws away the insignia of her household life: 'elle jette dans le feu [. . .] un [. . .] pilon de ris; [. . .] un petit van [. . .] et quelque chose davantage, dont les femmes se servent ordinairement dans leur ménage [. . .]', Abraham Roger, *loc. cit.*, ch. XX p. 131 (cp. *infra* p. 63 and n. 78).

Moreover, those who are preparing for a voluntary death are, apparently, often believed to be gifted with clairvoyance, so the *śālī* (Zachariae, *loc. cit.* 83; 86-88), the philosopher Kalanos, according to Plutarch and Arrian (*ib 87*).

collect the evidence mostly from the oldest Jaina Scriptures.⁹ Epigraphical and historical records can also furnish various data.

There is no doubt that fasting unto death is one of the supreme austerities, skr. *tapas*, amg. *tavo, tava*, recognized by the Jāinas.¹⁰ Tapas, it will be remembered, is twofold, external and internal,¹¹ again, external tapas, which is sixfold, consists mainly of various kinds of fasts.¹² As a matter of fact, as time went on, tapas, in disciplinary contexts, came to mean all the prescribed sorts of fasting.¹³ Now, as any vow can be either transitory (amg. *ittariya*, n. 64) or permanent (amg. *jāvajjivāe*), it is clear that fasting unto death is but one variety of the first category of tapas. Fasting, on the other hand, is connected with all the sorts of austerity,¹⁴ for

⁹ As there are no fundamental discrepancies between the śvetāmbara and the digambara doctrinal tenets, I shall, for convenience sake, confine myself to the śvetāmbara canonical data; I shall not enter into the scholastic debates.

It will appear that, in the books of discipline, there are important differences between the prescriptions contained in the old and the new canonical treatises; on the other hand, that the rules given in digests composed in the 19th cent. conform to the regulations formulated in the latest strata of the Canon.

Moreover, it will be remembered that the rules laid down in the oldest strata of the Jaina Scriptures are meant mainly for the *nir-grantha*, the religious, 'free from (worldly and spiritual) bonds'. When the later Canonical books show interest in the layman, they do no more than adjust the old monastic prescriptions. In the Middle Ages, when the Jaina doctors expressed a keen interest in the lay-follower and traced detailed codes of behaviour for him, the devotee even then was proposed a scale of perfections such that, for a limited or unlimited period, his life, so to speak, coincides with life in religion (cf. R. Williams, *Jaina Yoga*, p. XVI).

¹⁰ According to the Jāinas, *tapas* is a means,—a necessary means—on the Path to Deliverance. Apart from its technical disciplinary meaning (n. 11–13), the word can also, in Jaina literature, have its etymological sense, 'fervour', '(creative) ardour' (compare *infra* p. 51 and n. 29).

¹¹ *s'abbhantara-bāhira*, *Uvav* § 30; etc.; cf. *Lehre* §§ 178–179; Caillat, *Expiations*, p. 109, *ubi alia*.

¹² *chavithe paṇṇalle . . . aṇasaṇe, omoyariyā, bhikkhāyariyā, rasa-pariccāe, kāyā-kilese, paḍisaṇṭṭayā*, ' . . . to suppress meals; to reduce food, equipment, emotions; to beg; to give up dainties; to mortify one's body (through ascetic postures, etc.); to retire into oneself and into solitude', *Uvav* § 30 I–VI.

¹³ Cf. Caillat, *Expiations*, 109.

¹⁴ Therefore with the internal *tapas*, which also is sixfold: *pāyacchittaṇi, viṇae [sic], veyāvaccāṇi, sajjhāo, jhāṇaṇi, viṭosaggo [sic]*: 'to confess, and atone for one's faults; to be well behaved and trained; to serve the Community, etc.; to study; to meditate; to renunciate one's body, etc.' (*Uvav* § 30 I'–VI', etc.). Study is often considered as one of the best forms of *tapas*.

the articles of the Doctrine cannot be isolated from one another: the practice of one form of tapas thus more or less involves the practice of all of them.

It is natural that a creed which believes in the saving power of tapas should endeavour to derive benefit from it, especially at crucial instants, when death is drawing near.¹⁵ The Jainas, therefore, like many other Indians, try to determine the conditions which, for one preparing for 'death in perfect conditions' (*samādhi-maraṇa*), will lead to good rebirth, or, even, to 'perfection' (*siddhi*), i.e. deliverance (*mukti*), sometimes also called *nirvāṇa*. They consider that these conditions can be realized if one knows how to fast correctly unto death.

Fasting unto death is alluded to in many passages of the Jaina Canon which, on the other hand, also gives detailed descriptions and instructions on the subject. Indications are found 1. in chapters relating legends of the saints (which are stereotyped); 2. in some of the either very old, or, on the contrary, quite new treatises dealing with the discipline of the religious. This 'death in perfect dispositions' is the 'wise man's death' (*pañḍita-maraṇa*), it should be accepted and voluntary (*sakāma-maraṇa*). It is summed up in the following cliché: (. . .) *bhattāṇaṃ aṇasaṇṇe chedittā āloiya-paḍikkante samāhi-palle kāla-māse kālaṃ kiccā . . .*, the believer 'by remaining without food has suppressed (sixty/many) meals; he has confessed, repented (and atoned); he has attained perfect dispositions; he has done with his lifetime after one month . . .'.¹⁶ According to most of the texts, this controlled suicide needs a long preparation; and only exceptional individuals will be able to perform such an heroic feat.

¹⁵ The Jainas define death as the blowing up (*samudghāta*) of the atoms of life; it can greatly disturb the mental equilibrium of the panic-stricken individual (n. 71). — As is well-known, it is a common belief in India that the last moments of the creature are of paramount importance. The Jainas share this view.

¹⁶ *Uvav* § 100; cf. 88; 116; 119; etc. Minor variants of this cliché are met with. It is found frequently, see *Uvav*, *Uvās*, *Viy* . . . Hoernle shows that *kāla-māse kālaṃ kiccā* does not specify the exact duration of the process, but is just a general formula, *Uvas* II p. 61, n. 161.

Let us first consider the legends. The legends of the saints who thus put an end to their own lives form the subject of three books, in the first section of the Śvetāmbara Canon. Two of them, the *Antagaḍadasāo* and the *Aṇuttarovavāiyadasāo*, retrace the careers of monks, the third one, the *Uvāsagadasāo*, the careers of a series of lay-followers.¹⁷ The general scheme is more or less identical in all cases. It reproduces or remoulds the legend of the religious Khandaga,¹⁸ an episode inserted in the *Viyāhapannatti*. The principal events of his life can be summarized thus.¹⁹

Khandaga Kaccāyana was an accomplished brāhmaṇa. But he becomes aware of the lacunae of the brahmanic tradition. He is converted by Mahāvīra's preaching, takes the five 'great vows',²⁰ and thus becomes a niggantha. It is worthy of note that one of the sermons which Mahāvīra preaches bears, precisely, upon death. Mahāvīra says, 'There are two kinds of death: the fool's death (*bāla-maraṇa*), and the wise man's death (*pañḍīya-maraṇa*)'.²¹ Transmigration will not cease for him who dies the fool's death—of which twelve types are reckoned with: that of the man who kills himself in consequence of moral weakness; or of physical weakness; or who dies without confession; or with some craving or other; or throwing himself from the top of a mountain; or of a tree; or drowning himself; or burning himself; or drinking poison; or using a weapon; or hanging himself; or

¹⁷ This heroic death is also extolled elsewhere, for instance *Isibhāsiyāṇi*, n° 45 (51); 6 ('motto'). *Uttar* 35, 20f. and 36, 249 (on which see SBE 45, p. 229 n. 4; also L. Alsdorf, 'The Āryā Stanzas of the Uttarajjhāyā . . .', *Abh. der Geistes- und Sozialwiss. Kl.*, 1966, 2, Ak. der Wiss. und der Lit. Mainz, p. 163 = 11 of the off-print); *Uvav* (cf. n. 16); etc.

¹⁸ Cp., more briefly, Ambaḍa's career and achievements, *Uvav* §§ 89–116; his seven hundred disciples' death, *ib.* 82–88.

¹⁹ *Viy* (Suttāgame ed.), p. 417–426. This episode is summarized by A. Weber, *Über ein Fragment der Bhagavati* II (Berlin 1867), p. 196–198; cf. text, German translation and commentary, *ib.* 242–306, 'Die Legende von Khandaga'. — On this chapter, Deleu, *Viyāhapannatti*, p. 89–90.

For an English translation of this stereotyped development, see Barnett, *Antagaḍa-dasāo*, p. 54–61 (generally quoted *infra*).

²⁰ The *maha-vvayas*, *Lehre* 171 (not to hurt a living creature; not to lie; not to steal; not to sin against chastity; not to be attached to any possession).

²¹ *Viy* 421, 6–7: *mae duihe maraṇe paṇṇalle, taṇ-jahā, bāla-maraṇe ya paṇḍīya-maraṇe ya . . .* (Cf. Deleu, II 1^{6a} 2).

abundant, zealous, earnest, happy, blissful, lucky, auspicious, splendid, lofty, magnificent, excelling, exalted, stately mortification, [Khandaga] became withered, wizened, fleshless; he became a mere frame of bone and skin; he grew so that his bones rattled, emaciated, overspread with veins. It was by force of spirit alone that he walked and he halted. He was faint after speaking, and in speaking, and before speaking. As forsooth a cart full of sticks, or of leafage, or of oil-seed and jars and leafage, or of castor-oil sticks, or of coals, that has been put out in the heat and dried up, goes with a creaking and halts with a creaking, so [Khandaga] went with a creaking and halted with a creaking, being piled high with mortification and piled low with flesh and blood, and like an [oblation-devouring] fire confined within a heap of ashes he shone mightily with glow [*tapas*], with lustre [*tejas*], and with splendour of glowing lustre [*tapas + tejas*].²⁹

Then, during his religious vigil, in the middle of the night, Khandaga sums up the situation: he considers all the signs of his physical weakness, but, at the same time, he knows he has two advantages. First, he is still possessed of 'energy, work, power, vigour, manly force, prowess'; secondly, he has the benefit of Lord Mahāvīra's spiritual guidance.³⁰ Therefore, he decides to take advantage of these favourable circumstances: 'On the mor-

viva bhāsa-rāsi-paḍicchanne taveṇaṇi teṇaṇi lava-leya-sirīe aḍva 2 uvasobhemāṇe 2 ciffhai.

²⁹ The last metaphor is met with elsewhere, for instance:

nivvāṇaṇi paramaṇi jāi ghaya-sittō vva pāvae,

'he goes to the supreme n., like (fire) sprinkled with ghee', *Mahāpaccakkhāṇa*, 23;

jillā maṇaṇi kasāe yā jo samuṇaṇi kurule lavaṇi saṇḍippate sa suddh'appā aggi vā havisḍhule,

'he who, having subdued pride and passions, correctly practises *tapas*, pure-souled, he shines like a fire upon which a libation has been poured', *Isibhāsīyāḷiṇe*, 29 (17).

Thus is suggested a sort of homology between the man engaged in *tapas* and the (brahmanic!) sacrificial fire.

³⁰ . . . *me uḥhāṇe, kamme, bale, vīrie, purisakkāra-parakkame; taṇi jāva tā me althi u. k. b. v. p., jāva ya me dhamm'āyariē dhammōvadesae samaṇe Bhagavaṇi Mahāvīre . . . tāva tā me seyaṇi . . .*, *Viy* 424, 14-17.

row, when the night shall have lightened into dawn and the sun shall arise in golden lustre', Khandaga will approach Mahāvira and will pay due homage to him. Mahāvira already knows of the resolution of his disciple: he grants him necessary permission. Khandaga takes leave of the Master. He solemnly takes the five monastic vows (thus he renews his ordination, so to speak), he asks for forgiveness from all those whom he may have wronged or injured.³¹

Then, surrounded by accomplished theras, he ascends Mount Vipula (near Rajgir), and looks for a dry slab of stone-like earth, which he inspects.³² The text continues: he 'spread a bed of darbha-grass, sat thereupon in a squatting posture with his face to the east, raised to his head the ten fingers of his hands clasped before his forehead with joined palms', and recited the appropriate formulas: the homage³³ to the five categories of the Saints, the Perfect Ones, the Masters, Teachers and Religious; followed by homage to Mahāvira.³⁴

He repeats the five Great Vows, and solemnly renounces the four kinds of food (thus including liquids); he renounces his body, and, observing the uninterrupted fast called *saṃlehaṇā*, he sits motionless, 'waiting without eagerness for death by wasting away in starvation'.³⁵

³¹ *sayam eva panca mahavayāṭi aruhei 2llā samaṇe ya samaṇto ya khāmet . . .*, *ib.*, 425, 4-5.

³² *khāmet 2llā tahārūvehtī therehtī kaḍāhīṭī saddhtī Vipulaṭī pavvayaṭī saṇiyāṭī 2 durūhel . . . puḍhavi-sillā-vaffayaṭī paḍilehel . . .*, *ib.*, 5-6. — Concerning *puḍhavi-sillā-vaffa(ya)* or *paḍḍa(ya)*, *prthivi-sillā-paḍḍaka*, 'a stone platform of earth', 'a masonry platform', Hoernle, *Uvās* II, 107 n. 251, *ad Uvās* 6 § 164.

³³ *dabbha-saṇṭhārayaṭī saṇṭhorai 2llā puralḥābhīmuhe saṇṭpaliyanka-nisāne karayala-pariggahiyāṭī dasa-nahaṭī sirasāvallaṭī malḥae anjalīṭī kaḍḍu, evaṭī vadāsi 'namo 'lḥu . . .*, *ib.*, 7 foll. — *Dabbha-*: cp. the ritual in Hopkins, *loc. cit.*, p. 152; but *Āyār* 1, 'taṇa', grass, or straw (*Infra*, n. 65a).

³⁴ 'vandāmi ṇaṇī Bhagavantaṇī . . .', *Viy* 425, 10.

³⁵ Barnett's trsl.

*puvviṭī pi . . . iyāṇṭī pi ya ṇaṇī samaṇassa Bh. M. antle savvaṇī pāṇātvāyaṇī paccakkhāmi jāvaṇṇivāe jāva micchādamaṇasasallaṇī paccakkhāmi, evaṇī savvaṇī asaṇaṇī pāṇaṇī khā. sā. cauṇvithaṇī pi āhāraṇī paccakkhāmi jāvaṇṇivāe, jaṇī pi ya imaṇī sariraṇī . . . eyaṇī pi ṇaṇī . . . voṣṭrāmi tti kaḍḍu saṇṭlehaṇā-jhūsaṇā-jhūste bhalla-pāṇa-paḍiyākkhīe pāvogae kālaṇī aṇavakankhamāṇe viharati, 'Previously (. . . I have for all my life renounced all harm to living beings . . .), now also in front of the Samaṇa . . . I renounce . . .', *ib.*, 11-18.*

The text sums up Khandaga's religious life: after having studied the sacred texts, fulfilled the life of a perfect and heroic niggantha for twelve years, he 'wasted himself away in starvation, withheld from himself sixty meals', 'confessed, repented (and made appropriate atonement), he correctly attained the perfect religious dispositions, and he progressively ended his life'.³⁶

His companions, knowing that he has passed away, observe the rites of renunciation which should favour Khandaga's nivvāṇa. They collect his religious insignia, descend Mount Vipula, inform Mahāvīra, and give him the robe and bowl of their dead companion. Questioned, Mahāvīra answers that Khandaga will be reborn as a god in one of the highest heavens; and that, after an ultimate rebirth, in the Mahāvīdeha Continent, he will reach Deliverance.³⁷

This passage of the *Viy(āhapanatti)* is perfectly clear: *saṃlehaṇā* cannot be resorted to except after a long, progressive training, a life in which every progress has been tested.³⁸ In Khandaga's spiritual career, three stages are registered: 1. the perfect observance of all vows; 2. the observance of more and more difficult austerities; 3. then,—and only because circumstances were favour-

With *sartraṇ vostrāmi*, cp. *Bhagavā . . . āyu-saṃkhāraṇ ossaji*, *DighaNikāya* (PTS) II 106, 22 (on which J. Filliozat, 'La mort volontaire', 31-32).

On *saṃlehaṇā*, 'kāyasya tapasā kṛt-karaṇam' and *Jhūsaṇā*, 'castigation', Leumann, *Aup*, Gloss., s.v. s. and *Jhūs*, *Jhūsiya*.

³⁶ Barnett's trsl. (with changes).

Sāmāiya-m-āiyāṇ ikkārasa Angāṇ ahijjillā, bahu-paḍipunnāṇ duvāṭasa-vāsāṇ sāmanna-pariyāgaṇ pāṇillā, māsiyāe saṃlehaṇāe allāṇaṇ Jhūsillā saḍḍhiṇ bhallaṇ aṇasaṇāe chedillā āloiya-paḍikkante samāhi-palle āṇupuvvīe kāla-gae, *ib*, 19-21. — On *sāmāiya*, etc. and *Angas*, *Lehre* 37; 151 and 40; Caillat, *Candāv*, p. 106-107.

³⁷ *Accue kappe devattāe uvavanne . . . Mahāvīdehe vāse sījhihiti bujjhihiti mucchihiti parinivvāhiti savva-dukkhāṇaṇ antaṇ karehiti*, *ib*, 426, 5-10.

³⁸ Cp. J. Filliozat, 'La mort volontaire', specially p. 31; 45f. The author shows how the Buddhist *arhat* is systematically trained by Buddhist discipline, so that, in the end, he is psychically detached and corporeally insensible. His soul is absolutely free. He sees his individuality as an object from which he is totally dissociated. If, then, he puts an end to his life, his act is absolutely passionless. He just gets rid of his mortal coil, which has become altogether vain and useless. His death can, to a certain extent, be compared with that of the Buddha himself who, according to the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*, let drift away the constituents of life, the vital principles (*supra* n. 35; also n. 6, on Buddhaghosa's position). In brahmanism, cf. J. Filliozat, 'L'abandon de la vie', particularly p. 68.

able, the final ordination, the ultimate irrevocable departure from the world. After this long course of correct training, the soul knows how to conduct and control its present earthly journey unto the end. In the above case, assistance is moreover given by a group of accomplished theras.³⁹

It is not surprising that degrees are observed in Khandaga's spiritual career: Mahāvīra himself had awakened but gradually.⁴⁰ This is also the case in most legends of religious suicides which form the *Antagaḍadasāo* and the *Aṅuttarovavāiyadasāo*: these legends, obviously, are just slight variants of the suicide of Khandaga: the careers are identical, they are described with the help of the same stock phrases, show the same landmarks, and culminate in the final *pāvagamaṇa* fast, on the summits of Satrunjaya, or of Girnar, or of Parasnath. This being the general pattern, it happens that some details are amplified. For instance, when the portrait of 'Fortunate' Dhanna is traced, each element of his body, emaciated by the mortifications, is compared to dry and withered fragments.⁴¹

One curious hybrid variant may be mentioned here. It is related to Nemi's and Kaṇha's (Kṛṣṇa's) legendary cycle. It tells the story of Kaṇha's younger brother, Prince Gayasukumāla of

³⁹ *tahāruvehiṇṇ therehiṇṇ kaḍḍhiṇṇ saddhiṇṇ . . . Vīy 424, 21-22; etc.* Is this detail comparatively late (cp. the *dabbha* grass, *supra* n. 33)? It contrasts with the solitude requested in *Āyār 1 (infra 57)*. In *Nāyādhammakahāo 1, § 36* (ed. Sutt'āgame 976, 5), it is explicitly stated that theras 'unflinchingly serve' the fasting Meha: *tāe ṇaṇṇe te therā bhagavanto Mehassa aṇaḡārassa aḡilāe veyāvaḡṭṭiyaṇṇe karenti*.

⁴⁰ He first follows the ordinary religious course for two years and two months; then, for twelve years, he leads his ascetic life, progressing until he attains *kevala*. After forty-two years of monkhood, he is perfected, accomplished, and his life is extinguished. As tradition will have it, he dies in the Plains, at Pāvā (Pāpā), in King Hatthipāla's secretariate (cf. the summary of his ascetic career, *Lehre* § 18, following *Āyār 1, ch. 9* and *Jīṇac(ariya)* §§ 110 foll.). — According to the same tradition, reported in *Jīṇac*, the two Prophets who had preceded Mahāvīra died: Ariṭṭhanemi, the twenty-second, 'in the company of 536 monks', on one of the summits of Girnar's mountain; and the twenty-third, Pāsa, 'in the company of 83 persons on the highest peak of Mount Sametsikhar, *Jīṇac* §§ 168; 182.

⁴¹ *Aṅuttarovavāiyadasāo*, ch. 3, 1. Cf. text and translation in Barnett, *loc. cit.*, 128-134; 112-120.

The Meha(kumāra) episode, *Nāyādhammakahāo* book 1, §§ 35 foll., also inserts various amplifications (cf. *supra* n. 39).

Bāravaī (Dvāravati).⁴² He is married to lovely Somā, the daughter of the brahmins Somila and Somasirī. But, having heard Ariṣṭha-nemi's preaching, he is converted, and renounces worldly life. In fact, he is already possessed of the highest spiritual knowledge and vigour. Therefore, he is immediately allowed to meditate in a lonely, terrifying cemetery. Somila, meanwhile, had gone 'eastward from the city of Bāravaī for fuel, and gathered faggots, darbha-grass, kuśa-spikes, and leafy twigs'.⁴³ He returns, and passing by the solitary graveyard, he sees Gayasukumāla, and 'he recalled his spite and fell into a rage . . . He took some moist clay . . . stuck it like an earthen bowl on Gayasukumāla's head, from a pyre took in a pot flaming coals of khadira-wood, like blooming kiṃśuka flowers, and cast them upon . . . Gayasukumāla's head. Then in fear . . . , he departed speedily . . .'.⁴³ Gayasukumāla, who is deep in meditation, bears this 'fiery, abounding, violent, furious, vehement, grievous, bitter, and intolerable pain . . . in a blessed spirit, with fine resolution . . . and in him arose boundless, supreme, . . . absolute knowledge and vision; and thereupon he became . . . free from all sorrows'.⁴⁴ The gods celebrate this great spiritual victory.

Is this tragic chapter a comparatively recent development? Some details, particularly the suddenness of Gayasukumāla's spiritual attainments, are obviously late.⁴⁵

⁴² *Antagaḍa* 1163-1172. English trsl., Barnett, *loc. cit.*, 63-77.

⁴³ Barnett's translation, *loc. cit.* p. 74 (Barnett writes: Gaya-sukumāle, nom.; but see E. Leumann, *JRAS*, 1907, 1079-1080), with minor changes.

⁴⁴ *veyaṇā pāubbhāyā ujjalā*, 'there arose a fiery . . .', *Antagaḍa* 1169, 28. Cf. Barnett, *loc. cit.*, p. 75, n. 1, referring, for the commentary's gloss, and discussion on the meaning of *ujjala* (skr. *ujjala-*), to Hoernle, *ad Uvas* § 111 (II, p. 79, n. 209). — In the present context, probably in both literal and figurative senses.

This trial appears to be both a test of the progress already accomplished, and a means to further accomplishment (cf. *Uvās*). Its importance is obvious in the text (perhaps somewhat blurred in Barnett's translation): *tae ṇaṇi tassa Gayasukumālassa aṇagārassa taṇi ujjalaṇi jāva ahityāsemāṇassa subheṇaṇaṇi pariṇāmeṇaṇi passatthi'ajjhavasāṇeṇaṇi, tayāvaraṇi'jjāṇaṇi kammāṇaṇi khaṇaṇi kamma-ṇaya-vikīraṇa-karaṇaṇi apuvvakaṇaṇaṇi aṇupparivāṇassa aṇante aṇuttare jāva kevala-vaṇa-nāṇa-dāṇsaṇe samuppaṇṇe; tao pacchā siddhe jāva ppahīṇe*, 'as he bore this fiery . . . pain with an auspiciously developing spirit, with blessed application,—then, because the hindering kammās were annihilated, as he had entered the apuvvakaṇa stage which scatters the murk of kamma—in him arose . . .', 1170, 1-4.

⁴⁵ Compare the developments in Chinese Buddhism, Gernet, *loc. cit.*—For Hinduism, see H. von Stietencron, *loc. cit.* p. 16-17.

Lay devotees who fasted unto death form the subject of the *Uvāsagadasāo*. *Mutatis mutandis*, the narrative is very similar to the above relations.

The hero, generally a rich merchant, is converted by Mahāvīra's or some other saint's sermons. He takes the layman's five Minor Vows⁴⁶ and consolidates them by a series of lesser observances.⁴⁷ He follows them as best he can during a first period, which, generally, lasts for about fourteen years.

In the course of the fifteenth year, he sees how difficult it is to observe the Law strictly while living in the turmoil of the world. Therefore, he hands his business over to his eldest son, announces that he should not be consulted further about it, and forbids any food to be prepared for him. He retires to his vigil house (*posahasālā*), where he will be able to be absorbed in meditation. There, he stretches out on a bed of darbha-grass,⁴⁸ and lives in conformity with the Jaina teachings. His austerities are such that he becomes 'withered, wizened, fleshless . . .',⁴⁹ the above cliché being used in this circumstance also.

At this point, in the first story concerning the lay-follower, the devotee sees a supernatural vision: it proves the spiritual progress of this man,⁵⁰ who, in fact, has ascended the whole scale of perfection, as far as a layman can.⁵¹

Then, and then only, he undertakes the *saṃlehaṇā* fast, thanks to which he will be reborn in one of the highest heavens, and, ultimately, in the Mahāvīdeha continent, where he will awaken and obtain Deliverance.⁵²

Here again, three main stages are distinguished. It happens that the first of these, in some stories, is troubled by various trials: the devotee is victorious, thanks either to his own spiritual

⁴⁶ *aṇuvvaya*, *Lehre* 170. They are similar to the *mahāvayas*, but milder.

⁴⁷ *pañcāṇuvvāṭṭiyaṇi salla-sikkhāvāṭṭiyaṇi duvātasa-viṭṭiyaṇi sāvayadhammaṇi paḍi-vajjal . . .*, *Uvās* 1, § 58 (cf. *Lehre*, *ib*).

⁴⁸ *ib*, 1, § 69, etc.—Cf. n. 33.

⁴⁹ *ib*, § 72, etc.

⁵⁰ *ib*, § 74.

⁵¹ *uvāsaga-paḍimāo uvasaṇapaḍimāṇaṇi viharai . . .*, *Uvās*, 1, §§ 70–71 (cf. Hoernle, *Uvās* II, p. 45, n. 127; and, on *paḍimās*, *Lehre* 156; Williams, *Jaina Yoga*, p. 172–181).

⁵² *Uvās* 1, §§ 89–90, etc.

power, or to some external assistance, when, after an initial defeat, some other Jaina believer, a member of his family, helps him to recover and to win the supreme fight.⁵³

Let us now consider the books of discipline. The rules concerning religious suicide are detailed in a series of late pamphlets (*infra* p. 60), and in the first section of the first book of the Śvetāmbara Canon, the *Āyār(anga)*, one of the 'seniors' of the canonical treatises.⁵⁴

In this book, the narration of Mahāvīra's ascetic life is preceded by the chapter called *vimoho*, 'deliverance'.⁵⁵ This chapter gives a conspectus of the different types of fast unto death, and, also, states what training they suppose, how and when they should be observed if they are to lead to the highest goal.

Three types are here mentioned, and described in a poem⁵⁶ which develops this concise prose sentence: *kāyaṃ ca joḡaṃ ca iriyaṃ ca paccakkhājjā*, the niggantha 'shall renounce 1. his body, 2. activity (of body, voice and mind, as far as they are conducive to bondage of karman), 3. motion' (*Āyār* 1, 38, 21). In the first case, the bhikkhu simply abstains from food (*bhatta-paccakkhāṇa*); in the second case, he abstains from food and limits his movements (*ingīṇi-maraṇa*); in the third case, he abstains from food, and, as far as possible, he altogether abstains from moving (*pāvogamaṇa*).⁵⁷ Obviously, in the last mentioned case, the dying man receives no help from anyone.⁵⁸ In all three cases, he has previously gone through a course of progressively more severe mortifications; and he has proved his spiritual mastery.

Āyār describes his long training thus: first, 'for one who applies himself to tapas, it is preferable to repair, alone, to the forest':

⁵³ *ib.*, §§ 138-142; 151-153; 161-162.

⁵⁴ Alsdorf, *Etudes*, p. 28, quoting Schubring.

⁵⁵ Ed. Schubring, 32, 25-40, 8*. Translation *id.*, *Worte Mahāvīras*, p. 104-115.

⁵⁶ *Āyār* 1, 38, 23* - 40, 8*: āryās. The three types of death, 39, 5* - 40, 8*.

⁵⁷ Cf. *supra* n. 24.

⁵⁸ The *Antagaḍa* and *Aṇuttarovavāīya* legends give a milder picture: the saint, while observing *pāvogamaṇa*, is surrounded by well trained theras. Cf. *infra*, the *Paiṇṇayas'* regulation (see n. 39). On the fear of solitude, Callat, *Expiations*, 55; 117.

tavassiṇo hu taṃ seyaṃ jaṃ s'ege viham āie, (36, 10*). His baggage, his clothing, and his food are systematically reduced (36, 14–21; 37, 3 foll.). He practises the Law as best he can. His proficiency becomes such that he is fully conscious of the essential distinction between his soul (*jīva*, which, alone, is 'life', according to the Jaina doctrine), and his empirical appearance, which is different from his real self.⁵⁹ Therefore, he rightly grows tired of his body, which cannot any more be of any help to him, but has become a vain hindrance.⁶⁰ Consequently, he reduces his food more and more; and, at the same time, what is left of his passions,⁶¹ until, it is said, he is as thin as a plank,⁶² he is no more than a shadow.

At this stage, he goes to the nearest inhabited place, where he will beg for grass (*taṇa*, skr. *ṭṛṇa*).⁶³ Then, he will look for a suitable halting place, and will carefully remove all dust, so as not to hurt any living creature: he spreads the straw; and, having selected the favourable time, he applies himself to *limited* fasts.⁶⁴

In the third stage, when his self-mastery is such that he is able to bear all sorts of persecutions, for instance, the biting of cold, of insects, the pricking of grass, etc., *and* the shame of being

⁵⁹ (*tassa bhikkhussa*) . . . *evaṃ bhavaī: 'ego aham aṃsi; na me atthi koi, na yāham avi kassaī', evaṃ sa egāṇiyam eva appāṇaṇi samabhijānejjā*, 'It occurs to this monk: 'I am one and alone; no one belongs to me, nor do I belong to any one': he should thus recognize his oneness . . .', *Āyār* 1, 37, 7–9; compare (n. 72) *Candāvejjhaya* 160–161 (and, on these ślokas, Caillat, p. 149). Cf. a similar disconnection aimed at in the Buddhist training, n. 38.

⁶⁰ *'se gillāmi ca khalu ahaṃ imammi samae imaṇi sariragaṇaṃ aṇupuvveṇaṇi parivahittāe'*, 'I am tired, in the present circumstances, of continuing to haul this miserable body of mine', *Āyār* 1, 37, 14–15 (whereas, previously, the body had played a role in the struggle towards Deliverance, cf. *mokkhasāhaṇa-heussa sāhudehassa*, *Dasav* 5, 1, 92 c-d).

⁶¹ *se aṇupuvveṇaṇi āhāraṇi saṇvaḷḷejjā* . . . *'kasāe paṇaṇe kiccā'*, *ib* 16–17.,

⁶² *phalagāvayaḷḷhī*, *ib*, 37, 18* (on the second term of the compound, *Ācār*, Gloss., s.v. *ph.*).

⁶³ *aṇupavisittā gāmaṇi vā* . . . , *taṇāṇi jāejjā*, *ib.*, 20–22.

⁶⁴ *taṇāṇi jāittā se itam āyāe egantam avakkamejjā* . . . *paḍilehiya 2 pamajjiya 2 taṇāṇi saṇtharejjā, taṇāṇi saṇtharellā ettha vi samae ittiriyaṇi kujjā*, 'having begged for grass, he shall take it and go to a secluded place . . .; after inspection and cleaning, he shall spread the grass; and, in due time, he shall devote himself to transitory (fasts)', *ib*, 22–26.

On *ittariya, itti-*, **itvaraka*, *Ācār*, Gloss., s.v.; *Worte*, p. 112 and n. 3 ('Fastenübungen').

totally naked⁶⁵—if it is certain that he can follow the rules perfectly, that he is tired of and detached from his physical individuality,^{65a} he undertakes one or the other of the three kinds of *unlimited* fasts.

The gāthās which describe them are elliptic, and difficult.⁶⁶ The main points are the following.

In the first kind of death,

[I] gā. 7. 'Whether in a village or in a forest, the muni shall examine the ground, and, knowing it to be free from living beings, he shall spread the straw.

8. Without food, he shall lie down on it, and bear the pains which attack him . . . He shall not, before the (right) time, go (among men) . . .

10. Animals attack his body: he shall not stir from his place.

[II] 12. This other Law has been taught by Nāyaputta: (the muni) shall give up all motion, . . .

15. (Exceptionnally,) he may move to and fro, contract and stretch his limbs to keep his body bound (with his soul); or he remains unconscious. . . .

16. . . . If tired from his ascetic posture, he may sit down . . .

⁶⁵ *ib.*, 38, 13–19.

^{65a} *ib.*, 38, 20 (cf. 37, 14–26, *supra*): 'se gilāmi ca khalu ahaṃ . . .' *taṇāṭiṃ saṃthareṭṭā ettha vi samae kāyaṃ ca jogaṃ ca iriyaṃ ca paccakkhāejjā.*

⁶⁶ Cf. Jacobi, translation, *SBE* 22, p. 74–78. It must be revised, following Schubring, *Worte Mahāvīras*, 113–115.

⁶⁷ 7. *gāme vā adu vā raṇṇe thaṇḍilaṃ paḍḍhehīyā appa-pāṇaṃ tu vinnāya taṇāṭiṃ saṃthare muṇi.*

8. *aṇāhāro tuyaḷḷejjā, puḷḷho taṭṭh' ahiyāsaē, nāivetaṃ uvacare . . .*

10. *pāṇā dehaṃ vihiṃsanāṭi—ḷhāṇāo na viubbhame*

12. *ayaṃ se aware dhamme Nāyapulleṇa sāhie: . . . pādīyāraṃ vijahejjā . . .*

15. *abhikkame paḍikkame saṃkucāe pasāraē kāya-sāhāraṇ'aḷḷhāē, etthaṃ vā vi aceyaṇe.*

16. . . . *ḷhāṇeṇa parikilante nīsejjā ya*

19. *ayaṃ c'āyayatare siyā jo evaṃ aṇupātaē: savva-gāya-nīrodhe vi ḷhāṇāo na viubbhame.*

20. *ayaṃ se uttame dhamme puva-ḷḷhāṇassa paggahe . . .*

[III] 19. Still more heroic is he who follows (the third method): he shall, while checking all motion of the body, not stir from his place (/position).

20. This is the higher Law, superior to the preceding method(s).'

Then, *Āyār* recapitulates some basic tenets of Jinism, on which the muni should concentrate.

Gāthā 25 concludes: 'Totally undisturbed, he reaches the end of his life. — When one knows that there is nothing above forbearance, one or the other of these three paths of Deliverance is salutary':

savv'aḥḥehiṇ amucchie āu-kālassa pārae;
tiikkham paramaṇ naccā vimoh'annayaraṇ hiyaṇ.

Thus, this old disciplinary text expressly requests a long, minute training, in the course of which the doctrinal knowledge, the physical and moral abilities of the religious are unceasingly controlled: whatever progress there is must be tested. Severe as they are, the austerities are never recommended as such, but only in so far as the religious will tolerate them,—in so much as they are fruitful, and evidently lead to the highest Goal.

Whereas the *Āyāranga* groups very old prescriptions, the book of the *Paṇṇayas*, or 'Miscellanea' is of late composition.⁶⁸ Here, the general conditions are not so grim, the requirements are comparatively mild, though the fundamental attitude has remained the same.

I shall not go into all the details that are mentioned in the various pamphlets collected in this section of the Śvetāmbara Canon.⁶⁹ Two trends of thought can be distinguished, according to the emphasis laid on the previous training; in all cases, however, the dying man is expressly assisted unto the last by his guru.

Some information will first be gleaned from the *Candāv(ejjhaya)*, which appears to be comparatively traditional. The main stages of the religious life are analysed: first, that of the novice, receiving

⁶⁸ Some śvetāmbaras even deny the authenticity of the *P.*, see Alsdorf, *Etudes*, 31.

⁶⁹ See Kurt von Kamptz, *Über die vom Sterbefasten handelnden älteren Paṇṇa des Jaina-Kanons*. — Also '*Bhagavati Ārādhanā*': analysis by A. N. Upadhye, in *Bṛhat Kathākośa* (Bombay, 1963), p. 50–51 (and, on the meaning of *ārādhanā*, p. 47).

a good education; later, that of the mature monk, who should be proficient in ascetic discipline as well as in the superior religious knowledge; then comes the culminating point of the monk's career, when he will have to die the wise man's death.⁷⁰ The *Candāv* here emphasizes that this last stage has to be prepared by constant exercise, that it requires unflinching watchfulness and the total purity of spiritual life. This requirement is fulfilled through confession, repentance, atonement, in the presence of one's guru, *guru-sayāse* (gāthā 151). His presence is absolutely necessary: for who can possibly foresee how he will react at the time of disintegration, in the face of death?⁷¹ Being well trained, having performed all these preparatory rites, the muni takes his place on his death-bed (*saṃthāra*, skr. *saṃstāra*-). Then, having confessed, repented, made atonement, he is absorbed in meditation on religious themes.⁷² One should concentrate, it is said, on the scriptural phrases, or words, which have previously proved spiritually efficient, for they will be propitious at the instant of death also.⁷³ This is how, with the assistance of one's spiri-

⁷⁰ *Candāv*, successively gā. 4-67; 68-116; 117-173; cf. Caillat, § 96.

⁷¹ *Candāv* 150:

*handī baliyaṇi pi dhīrā, pacchā, maraṇe uvaṃṣiṭe sante,
maraṇa-samugghāṇaṇi avasā niḷḷanti micchattaṇi,*

'Alas! even the firm and wise, later, when death is imminent, because of the blowing up that is death, are, against their will, drawn towards error.'

Cp. *Matsya Purāṇa* 182, 22-25, quoted and translated in Kane, *HDh* IV 611 foll. and n. 1389:

*anta-kāle manuṣyāṇāṇi chidyamāneṣu marmeṣu
vāyunā preryamānānāṇi smṛtir natvōpajāyate,*

'at the time of death when the vital parts of the human body are being shattered, memory must fail a human being that is about to be pushed on (to another body) by the vital breath (when it leaves the mortal coil).'

⁷² *Candāv* 159-169:

*saṃthāraṇi paḍivanno iṇamo hiyaṇa cintejjā: (159 c-d),
'ekko me sāsao appā . . . (160),
'ekko 'haṇi n'alḷhi me koī n'alḷhi vā kassaī ahaṇi (161);*

etc., enumerating various *aṇupekkhās* (compare 160-161 and *Āyār* 1, 37, 7-9, n. 59).

⁷³ *Candāv* 93-95 (and others; cf. Caillat, p. 52 for concordances):

*ekkammi vī jammī pae saṇvegaṇi vīyarāya-maggammī
vaccaī naro abbhikkhaṇi taṇi maraṇ'ante na mottavaṇi (Candāv 93).*

tual master, one can die a pure death, leading to perfect Attainment.

The paramount importance of the last moments is considerably stressed in other *Paiṇṇayas*: for instance, in the *Bhallaṭṭapaccakkhāṇa* ('Renouncing of food') and the *Sañṭhāra* ('Deathbed'), where the last rites are detailed.⁷⁴ In these booklets, there is, as it were, a shift of emphasis: they do not insist on the necessity of a hard, lifelong training; this, apparently, could be replaced by the ceremonial which they teach. Moreover, they apparently make no basic difference between the lay-follower and the monk, whose case they examine jointly.⁷⁵

Whereas the *Āyār* required a long experience, a hard ascetic training, before the monk would be allowed to fast unto death, the younger texts seem mainly to consider objective circumstances: old age, illness, difficult material conditions, etc.⁷⁶

The *Bh(atta-paccakkhāṇa)* and *S(aṇṭhāra)* prescribe the scrutiny of the place and the death-bed; and the preparation of the devotee spiritually (*S* 53-54). The dying man should have time enough to make himself ready for death, and to perform a sort of rehearsal.

First, he should solemnly proclaim his decision, in the presence of his guru, whose help he asks for (*Bh* 17-18). He further must know, accept, and observe the three conditions of the 'wise man's death': confession, expiation of his faults, and renewal of the Jaina Vows (*Bh* 19; 27-29). Then, the man takes his place on his death-bed, thus signifying that he is henceforth no longer in the world.⁷⁷

Now comes an intermediate phase,—of renunciation. Master

⁷⁴ See the critical detailed analysis of *Bh* and *S* and, moreover, of the relevant passages from other *Paiṇṇayas*, in Kamptz, *Sterbefasten*, p. 8 foll.; specially p. 18 foll.

⁷⁵ Cf. *Bh* 28-29.

⁷⁶ *Bh* 14; *S* 32; Kamptz, p. 18. Cf. the Brahmanic dispositions discussed by Kane, *H Dh* II, 2, 926; Buddhaghosa's statements (*supra* n. 6); the decision of the Indian 'philosopher' Kalanos who, being more than seventy, and being afflicted with illness, requests Alexander to have a funeral pyre prepared for him and perishes in its flames (Diodorus Siculus XVII, 107, etc., often quoted).

⁷⁷ Cf. *Bh* 33: *saṇṭhāraya-pavvajjaṃ pavvajjai . . .*

and disciple have proclaimed the refusal of food, and the dying man solemnly renounces three sorts of aliments (out of the four which, in the Jaina phraseology, form the normal meal). He gives all his belongings away, even his unnecessary religious paraphernalia. Henceforward, he is outside the Community.⁷⁸

Then, the final purifying rites take place: the dying man absorbs potions that should act as purgatives and sedatives.⁷⁹ Whereas the assistants engage in helpful rites (*Bh* 44-45), the dying man renounces the four sorts of food: he will thus also abstain from all liquids. He asks for forgiveness, and himself forgives (*Bh* 47-49). He listens to his master's discourse, for the guru's words are like a beverage of immortality. The guru assists and instructs his disciple,⁸⁰ recalling the fundamental tenets of the Right Faith, reminding his pupil of the legendary saints who have died this wise man's death;⁸¹ and he helps him to keep his mind absorbed in auspicious meditation.

When he passes away, the monk who has followed this path can attain Deliverance either immediately, or after his third rebirth.⁸² The layman is reborn in blissful heavens. Whether the dead man was a religious or a lay-follower, the consequences of the bad deeds which had been heaped up during ages are dispelled in a moment.⁸³

These prescriptions are certainly very far from the stern, terrifying rules, which are laid down in the *Āyār*.⁸⁴ Preparation for death is milder in the *Paññayas*, and it has been considerably shortened. Nevertheless, the preparatory purification, the spiritual dispositions required from the dying man do presuppose previous

⁷⁸ *Bh* 34-39; Kamptz, p. 19. Cp. the sati distributing her jewels, throwing her household utensils into the funeral pyre (n. 8).

⁷⁹ *Bh* 40 foll.

⁸⁰ *apusaññiñ dei gañi-vasaho*, *Bh* 52.

⁸¹ *Bh* 52 foll. On the help that can be derived from the evocation of heroic deeds, Gonda, *Remarks on Stīles in Sanskrit Literature* (Leiden 1949), p. 79 foll.

⁸² *S* 117, etc. The number of rebirths mentioned is sometimes seven (Kamptz, 21).

⁸³ *S* 115-116, etc. (Kamptz, 22).

⁸⁴ The rules laid down in the *Paññayas* seem to have remained in force, the case being, ever since (*infra* 65). Cf. A. N. Upadhye, in *M. M. Potdar Commemoration Volume* ['Jainas and Jainism', 157-175], 170.

training. In many respects, it appears that, in this case also, life is preparing for death.

The medieval treatises which deal with the lay-believer's conduct also admit that religious death by starvation is not restricted to the monk. But, on the whole, they do not give much information on this practice,⁸⁵ whose aim, it is said, is to help the soul depart from a body that will then be like a dry leaf or a lamp with no oil left.⁸⁶

But some *sampekhanās* have been particularly notorious: that of the last Rāṣtrakūṭa (982);⁸⁷ and, as is well known, that of King Kumārapāla of Gujarat who, like his ācārya Hemacandra, ended his life by starvation (12th cent.). In the same way, the Jainas hold that, in the 4th–3rd cent. B.C., Candragupta Maurya starved to death on the Candragiri Hill at Sravana Belgola.

Be that as it may, the epigraphical evidence shows that this ritual was, in fact, sometimes resorted to, in different holy places of India.⁸⁸

A clear example has been published lately. An inscription, engraved on the Satrunjaya Hill, in the 11th cent. A.D., commemorates the death of Muni Sangamasiddha. It states that he meditated on Mount Satrunjaya, at the feet of the first Prophet, Rṣabha; he went through all the ritual purifications; he died in 1006 A.D., having fasted unto death during one month and four days. On the very place where this heroic feat had been achieved, a rich lay-follower had a sanctuary erected, and a statue installed,

⁸⁵ On the *sallekhanā-vrata*, cf. R. Williams' survey, *Jaina Yoga*, p. 166–172.

⁸⁶ Quoted *ib.*, 172.

⁸⁷ References in Guérinot, *Répertoire d'épigraphie jaina*, n° 163.

⁸⁸ Guérinot, *Répertoire, passim*, quoted by J. Filliozat, 'L'abandon de la vie', p. 72 n. 2, who adds S. R. Sharma, *Jainism and Karṇāṭaka Culture*, p. 192–194. See also P. B. Desai, *Jainism in South India and some Jaina Epigraphs*, (Sholapur 1957), cf. index, p. 450, s.v. *sallekhana(nā)*, cf. *infra* n. 90; Thakur, *The History of Suicide*, p. 104, quoting *EI* XX, p. 98, n. 691, concerning the suicide of a Jaina congregation at Kālandrī, Sirohi State. — A. N. Upadhye, 'More Light on the Yāpanīya Saṅgha', *29th CO* (Paris, 1973), *passim*, cf. *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, 55, 1974, (9–22), p. 16.

wishing, says the epigraph, to increase his own merit thanks to these pious donations.⁸⁹

In South India, in temples, etc., a number of inscriptions are found attesting cases of religious suicides.⁹⁰ They are particularly numerous in Sravana Belgola, one of the holiest centres of the Digambaras,—where more than fifty have been counted in the 7th and 8th centuries. Many of them are now blurred; but we know of their contents thanks to Lewis Rice's and Narasimhacar's editions.⁹¹

On the hillock where the so-called Candragupta temple is built, on the even, curving surface of the rocky summit, in all directions (but mostly running in a sort of semi-circle from the southwest to the northeast of the temple, facing which they must be read), inscriptions have been engraved on the places where members of the Jaina community have fasted unto death. Most of the epigraphs are very short and stereotyped. Some others are more elaborate, and furnish details which, on the whole, tally with the prescriptions of the *Paiṇṇayas* and with a sort of versified Sanskrit summary that had been very popular in these parts of India.⁹²

Among these heroic believers, there have been monks and lay-people, some of them of royal families. The last inscription in this series seems to date from the beginning of the 19th cent. In 1873,

⁸⁹ Ambalal Premchand Shah, 'Some Inscriptions and Images on Mount Śatruñjaya', *Shri Mahavir Jaina Vidyalyaya Golden Jubilee Volume* (Bombay, 1968) I [162-169], p. 162-164.

⁹⁰ Cf. Guérinot, *loc. cit.* Desai, *loc. cit.*: inser. n° 19, on a hill-rock, at Kopbal, mentions the *saṃnyasana* death, at that place, in the year śaka 803, of 'the illustrious teacher Sarvanandi Bhaṭāra'; n° 22 (Kopbal) praises the *ingini-marapa* 'of the great teacher Śiṅhanandi who repaired to the summit of this lofty mountain and attained his end under the vow of Voluntary Death renouncing everything'. — Cf. p. 339-343; 345-350.

⁹¹ L. Rice, *IA* II 1873, *Jain Inscriptions at Śravaṇa Belgola*, I, p. 265-266; II, p. 322-324; id, *Inscriptions at Śravaṇa Belgola a Chief Seat of the Jains* (Bangalore, 1889), a revised edition of which, published by R. Narasimhacharya, has been revised anew: *Epigraphia Carnatica II, Sravanabelgola*, (Institute of Kannada Studies, Univ. of Mysore, 1973), of which see Intr. p. LXXII f., and, for instance, the inscription n° 176 (West face), relating the end of Māchikabbe, a dead queen's mother.

⁹² The *Ratna Karaṇḍaka*, by Āyīta-Varmmā, quoted, and translated into English, L. Rice, *IA* II, p. 322-323.

Rice, the first editor of the epigraphs, remarks that it is difficult to ascertain whether this practice is still in use. In Mysore, he writes, it is admitted that some people resort to it when ill or very near death.⁹³

Nowadays, it is a fact that some monks or nuns do submit to fasting unto death. In Northern India, such a religious suicide was witnessed by M. and Mme. Louis Renou, in Rajasthan, in the 1940s.⁹⁴ In Southern India, the existence of this ceremonial is attested.⁹⁵

With emotion, Rice, in his publications, evokes the last days of these dying devotees in Sravana Belgola, seated on the burning Candragiri rock, with no shade, under a fiery sun:⁹⁶ valiant, strong-willed believers, who endeavoured to determine, and control, their lives unto the end.

⁹³ *IA II*, p. 323. Cf., also, by Bühler, *Über die indische Secte der Jaina*, n. 10 p. 36.

⁹⁴ L. Renou, 'Une secte religieuse dans l'Inde contemporaine', *Etudes*, 1951, p. 343-351; quoted by J. Filliozat, 'L'abandon de la vie', p. 72 n. 3. Cf., also, the cases quoted by Deo, *History of Jaina Monachism*, p. 420 and n. 217, p. 562 n. 433 (of a Jaina nun in Poona, in 1945; of Śrī Śāntisāgara Mahārāj, a digambara, in 1955).

⁹⁵ Personal information (Dr. A. N. Upadhye, 1972).

⁹⁶ *IA II*, 322.