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On the Syntax of Colophons in Jain Palm-Leaf and Paper Manuscripts from Western India

Abstract: Based on the colophons found in Jain manuscripts consulted directly during cataloguing-work or in published collections of colophons, the present paper discusses the structure, language, contents, and purpose of this variety of paratexts. They provide rich material for the study of the development of scribal culture from palm-leaf to paper manuscripts. In particular, colophons are a space where Jain actors (laypeople and monastics) display their social and religious presence.

1 Introduction

The Jain teachings were transmitted orally for a very long time and at the beginning of the Common Era an important split occurred which led to the formation of two distinct groups: the Śvetāmbaras ('white-clad') and the Digambaras ('sky-clad'). Although they have a lot in common, each had its own literary culture, for they recognize the authority of distinct scriptures. The focus of this paper will be the colophons of Śvetāmbara manuscript culture as appeared in Western India, a large area understood to include what is known as Rajasthan and Gujarat today; Digambara manuscript culture emanating from North India has been the subject of recent investigations.¹ Texts that appear quite late on bear a keen emphasis that oral transmission of the teachings was insufficient and risked incurring more losses than had already been suffered.² This scenario took place in the fifth century CE when the Śvetāmbara scriptures were written down during the final collective recitation (*vācanā*) held in Valabhī in Gujarat. Then occasional observations made by various authors around the eleventh century show that manuscripts were available to them. They discuss their variants, their unreliability and point to the fact that some of the manuscripts had been damaged or eaten away by insects. From that time, the production of manuscripts has been an

1 Detige 2018.

2 See Balbir 2009.

uninterrupted practice among the Śvetāmbara Jains in the regions considered here. What is called in short ‘Jain manuscripts’ forms an extremely large amount of material. The manuscripts have been preserved in numerous temple-libraries in India and since the last decades of the nineteenth century are also contained in European and American libraries when a search for them was carried out quite systematically. Clearly the manuscripts are valuable for the texts they transmit. However, the manuscripts produced by the Śvetāmbara Jains are also of great interest for their colophons, although not all manuscripts contain them. All manuscripts considered here are in the pothi form. Another manuscript form, known as *guṭakā* or notebook, which has its own specificities, has also been used among Jains particularly in Rajasthan.³

Auto-designations of ‘manuscripts’ are found in the colophons of Jain manuscripts. They are mostly *pustaka-* (neuter) or *pustikā* (feminine), the ancestors of Neo-Indian *pothī*, or phonetic variations of the term *prati* (*parati*) ‘copy’, and in rare cases *hastākṣarāṇi* ‘graphemes [drawn] by hand’.⁴ But no term is systematically used to designate the colophons in the manuscripts themselves. When there is one, it is *praśasti* ‘praise’.⁵ In practice, however, this word is used with a restrictive meaning, introducing series of Sanskrit verses containing information and praise of the lay donor and the monk as a recipient. Modern Indian terminology differentiates between *granthapraśasti* ‘colophon of the work’ written by the author and *lekhakapraśasti* ‘colophon by the scribe’.⁶ There are cases in which both were written by the same person: these are autograph manuscripts such as the *Setrujauddhāra*, a Gujarati narrative poem on the Jain pilgrimage place Śātrunjaya, composed in 1670 vs⁷ / 1613 CE by a certain Saṃghavī Rṣabhadāsa Sāngana in Trambāvatī who, in the same place, copied a manuscript of his own work twenty-seven years later.⁸ Here, however, the concern is only with the copyists’ statements for which the word colophon is used as a synonym of the term ‘scribal remark’ employed by Tripāṭhī in his *Catalogue of the Strasbourg Jaina manuscripts*, an introduction that is seminal for the field.⁹ In Indian publications, another designation for colophons is *puṣpikā*.

3 See Detige 2018.

4 Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 2064 (Schubring 1944, no. 250), manuscript dated 1945 vs / 1888 CE. References to manuscripts are as follows: city, shelfmark, catalogue (author, date, catalogue entry number).

5 The use of the *praśasti* is discussed in Tripāṭhī 1975, 41–45.

6 Jinavijaya 1943 repeated by von Hinüber 2017.

7 Indigenous dating systems are discussed below in section 4.

8 Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 2025 (Schubring 1944, no. 677).

9 Tripāṭhī 1975.

Different types of sources are available to the investigator: manuscripts directly seen, manuscript catalogues where the colophons have been provided in full,¹⁰ but also special printed collections of Jain manuscript colophons issued within Jain contexts. The existence of such collections is clear evidence that colophons are a large-scale and striking phenomenon in this specific culture. Differentiating between the two material supports that have been used for manuscripts produced among Śvetāmbara Jains of Western India, Shah's (1937) collection is divided into two sections: one on the colophons of 163 palm-leaf manuscripts (the main centres of production and collection of which were Patan and Cambay in Gujarat and Jaisalmer in Rajasthan) and another one on 1276 colophons of paper manuscripts.¹¹ On the other hand, Jinavijaya's (1943) collection covers only palm-leaf manuscripts with a total of 111 + 433 entries.¹² Both Shah and Jinavijaya proceed in the same way, supplying the following information for each item: title of the work copied, name of the temple-library where the manuscript is kept and the text of the colophon. Their books are provided with various indices, Shah provides a list of dated manuscripts in chronological order. The oldest colophon both researchers record is dated 927 vs / 870 CE: *Paryuṣaṇā graṁthāgraṁ 1216 saṁvat 927 varṣe Āṣāḍha sudi 11budhe*.¹³ '(It was) the Kalpasūtra. Extent: 1216. In the year 927 of the Vikrama era, Wednesday, the 11th day of the bright fortnight of Āṣāḍha'. The early date is quite odd. Jinavijaya considered it suspicious and added a question-mark. The youngest palm-leaf manuscript in Shah's collection is dated 1498 vs / 1441 CE. The use of palm-leaf came to an end in the mid-fifteenth century to be superseded by paper. The use of paper, however, had already begun in the late twelfth century. The oldest dated paper manuscript examined by Shah is dated 1236 vs / 1179 CE.

Discussing the grammar of colophons can be done on the basis of a single collection. This method – we maintain – is not easy to apply to the Jain manuscripts as they have been widely dispersed in libraries all over India but also beyond India. Hence the present discussion will be based on material from all the sources mentioned above and cover a wide chronological range. It does not resort

¹⁰ E.g., Berlin: Weber 1886–1892 and Schubring 1944; British Library: Balbir et al. 2006; Cambridge: Digital University Library website (<https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/>); Udine: Balbir 2019. The colophons of Jain manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France have not been included here as the investigation of this collection is still in progress (Nalini Balbir and Jérôme Petit) and its results will be published in another context.

¹¹ Unless otherwise specified all references given here from Shah 1937 are to the manuscript number of the second section on paper manuscripts.

¹² Used in Balbir 2014 and Chojnacki 2018.

¹³ Shah 1937, section I, no. 6 = Jinavijaya 1943, 149, § 399.

to statistics as in order to be meaningful, statistics would have to be based on a unitary corpus. Here the purpose is actually to underline and understand the salient features of the colophons in a large corpus on the basis of representative instances to attempt some preliminary conclusions on the history of colophons, e.g. do clear differences appear between early and later colophons? Do differences arise caused by the use of palm-leaf as opposed to paper - and vice-versa?

2 Visual markers and general structure

Palm-leaf manuscripts render a visual continuity between the text copied and the colophon.¹⁴ Mostly there is no space or other visual marker between the two. But in paper manuscripts the colophon often forms an entity that is marked as distinct from what precedes. The most common means used to achieve this is red ink, to contrast sharply with the ordinary default black. Red is also the usual emphazier for other paratexts such as the initial homage formulas or verse numbers and punctuation (*daṇḍas*).¹⁵ The colophon is usually of the same hand and in the same script as the text copied. However, some cases exist in which the colophon is written by the same hand yet in a cursive script.

The basic components of a colophon in its fullest form are: title of the work that has been copied preceded by *iti* and followed, or not, by *samāptam* or *pūrṇam* ‘ended, completed’ – extent of the work (*granthāgra*)¹⁶ – date – place¹⁷ – copyist’s name – donor – recipient – benedictory phrases – scribal maxims. But all possible variations of this pattern are available, with combinations, expansions or elements not mentioned. This paper is not a treatise on colophons, and therefore does not discuss each and every component of this format, which, basically, is no different to colophons in Indian manuscripts outside the Jain milieu.

¹⁴ E.g., London, British Library, Or. 1385 (Balbir et al. 2006, no. 158–159), and Cambay collection palm-leaf manuscript dated 1184 vs / 1127 CE (Punyavijaya 1961, 25).

¹⁵ E.g., London, British Library, Or. 13524 (Balbir et al. 2006, no. 747).

¹⁶ *granthāgra*, *granthaparimāna* or the like: number of *akṣaras* per line, number of lines per page. Product multiplied by number of pages and divided by 32: see Balbir 2017, 49.

¹⁷ Mentions of place-names in our colophons are not systematic. When present, they refer to the name of the village or the town, whether high centres of Jain culture in Rajasthan and Gujarat, or small places often difficult to identify. The name of the specific area or building may be added, e.g. Udine, FP4476 (Balbir 2019, no. 229): *śrīUdepura dharmāśālā madhyai*. The seemingly abstract formula ‘with the favour of/thanks (*°prasādāt*) to the Jina X’ in fact means that the copy was done at the temple, or at one temple, dedicated to this Jina found in the locality.

Instead, the focus is on features worthy of note and more conspicuous in this particular tradition.

In addition, a post-colophon unit, mostly written by a later hand or one different to the rest, may follow often containing information on the ownership, re-appropriation or inclusion of the manuscript into a collection (see below).

3 Language of the colophons

The legacy of Jain manuscripts contains a large variety of texts and the Jain tradition has never been associated with one specific language to the exclusion of others, at least since the point at which manuscripts became available. This has had some effect on the language used in the colophons. During the palm-leaf manuscript phase, the following classes of works are represented: canonical works in Ardhamāgadhī Prakrit, early verse and prose commentaries on these works in Jaina Māhārāṣṭrī Prakrit, all kinds of literary compositions in Prakrit (stories, didactic literature, hymns of praise), Sanskrit commentaries on all types of works and Sanskrit literary compositions. During the paper manuscript phase all these categories continued to be represented, despite a decrease regarding early Prakrit commentaries, to which the immense production of vernacular commentaries in Old Gujarati is added as well as creative writing in this language, resulting in an extremely broad range of works.

In palm-leaf manuscripts, isolated instances exist in which the language of the colophons is Prakrit for a Prakrit work. A manuscript containing the *Uttarādhyāyanasūtra*, a Jain canonical work in Ardhamāgadhī, ends with two Māhārāṣṭrī verses saying:

Maṇḍaliya-samāvāsiya-lekhaka-Sohiya-nāmeṇa
suhi-sajjaṇ'ikka-vallabha-ṭhakkura-Kesava-su-putteṇa 1
saṃvat bāra-chattisai [1236] Māghamāsa-sukila-pakkhammi
tīyāe sukka-vārāe phuḍaṃ lihiyā vara-putthiyā esā 2

This excellent manuscript was copied in a very clear manner on the third day of the bright fortnight of the month of Māgha (November–December) in the year 1236 vs / 1179 CE by the son of the chief Kesava, who is so affectionate to good people and friends, the copyist/scribe named Sohiya, resident of Maṇḍali.¹⁸

¹⁸ Cambay, Punyavijaya 1961, 102, no. 77 = Jinavijaya 1943 § 101 (with slight variations in vs. 1a which is metrically problematic).

In another case, however, a Prakrit verse provides the date of copy and the information is repeated in a short Sanskrit sentence:

ekkārasasu saesumī chāsū(e) samahiesu varisāṇaṁ
Magasira-paṁcami-some lihiyam iṇaṁ Parigahapamāṇaṁ [...]
saṁvat 1186 [1129 CE] Mārgasira vadi 5 some likhitam iti.¹⁹

It was copied in 1186 on the fifth day of the dark fortnight of Mārgasiras, a Monday.

Aside from such limited cases, the language of colophons in palm-leaf manuscripts is predominantly Sanskrit, whether prose or verse. Detailed verse-colophons, which are extremely informative about the actors involved in the process of manuscript production as we will see, are conspicuous at this stage. During the paper phase, they do not disappear but tend to decrease and seem to be predominantly found in manuscripts of the early stage, i.e. late fourteenth/fifteenth century. They form *kāvya*-like pieces with occasionally rare vocabulary and a tendency to use uncommon verbal forms. Otherwise, the prose form which was already spread in the palm-leaf manuscript phase tends to become the rule.

In the vast majority of paper manuscripts, from the fourteenth to the nineteenth century, the language of the prose colophons is overwhelmingly intended to be Sanskrit (it may be often grammatically incorrect), independent of the language of the text copied (Prakrit, Sanskrit, Gujarati, Rajasthani, etc.). Post-colophon paratexts are usually written in the vernacular, very often from another later hand, focusing especially on ownership, a kind of information that is not systematically given. Two examples of such post-colophons are: *Vorā-Rupāḍekarajī nu pustaka che*²⁰ (This is the manuscript of Vorā Rupāḍekara), *prati ṛṣi Dhannā ṛṣiNaṁdā kī bhaṁḍāra mukī chai* (written in black ink and smaller script)²¹ (The monk Dhannā deposited the manuscript in the library of monk Nandā), and *śrī Thāra. Hirajī ni bhaṁḍāra rakṣaṇika sā. Rāghavajī lekhaka bha. Jivarāja, Khaṁbhāyati nā bhaṁḍāra nī prati cha*²² (Mr. Rāghava is the keeper of the collection of Mr. Hira, the copyist is Jivarāja; this is a manuscript of the Cambay collection).

The language of the colophon *stricto sensu* in paper manuscripts is Sanskrit containing some peculiarities. Dozens feature unexpected spellings of words very common in colophons such as *saṁvat*,²³ *samāpta* or *sampūrṇa* written as *samāta*

¹⁹ Patan, Dalal 1937 p. 392 = Jinavijaya 1943 § 30.

²⁰ Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 885 (Weber 1886, no. 1748).

²¹ Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 1000 (Weber 1888, no. 1824).

²² Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 771 (Weber 1888, no. 2020).

²³ Tripāthī 1975, 28.

(hybrid Prakrit Sanskrit) or *saṃpuraṇa*, *saṃpūna*, *liṣattaṃ*, *laṣyāpita* ‘commissioned to be written’,²⁴ *tata-putra* for *tat-putra* ‘his son’, *madhe* for *madhye* ‘in, at’, or variant spellings of the names of days and months.²⁵ The nasalization of vowels in endings or within the words is also a well attested phenomenon, e.g. *gacchem*.²⁶ The Sanskrit of the colophons is subject to vernacular influence from the scribe’s first language: instead of *X varṣe* ‘in the year X’, the phrase *saṃ 1932 nā varṣa*²⁷ uses a Gujarati counterpart with the genitive postposition ‘in the year of 1932 vs / 1875 CE’ but, in Schubring 1944, no. 136, continues with Sanskrit for the place name (*madhye*), and the usual phrase *likhitam grantham* with the instrumental of the scribe’s name. On the other hand, *saṃvat 1945 kā varṣe*²⁸ [1888 CE] is the corresponding Hindi version. A step further is the use of the word *miti*, with variants in the length of the *i*. This word, based on the Skt. locative *mite* ‘measured’ is commonly used in Jain paper manuscripts colophons and inscriptions as an indeclinable noun meaning ‘date’ (like the Nepali word)²⁹ or even ‘year’. It can be employed alone or followed by the month, fortnight, and day. Phrases such as *saṃvat 1782* [1725 CE] *rā varṣe miti*,³⁰ *saṃvat 1941 / 1884 CE rā miti*³¹ or *saṃvat 1950* [1893 CE] *rā miti*,³² show the Rajasthani substratum of the scribe’s language through the genitive postposition. These are instances of how a colophon’s (and inscription’s) technical language is being shaped, parallel to the ordinary usage. This can lead to occasional coinage of a special vocabulary. One such word is the Skt. locative *karmavāṭyāṃ* used in some colophons of paper manuscripts from the fifteenth century onwards at the place where *tithau* would occur within the structural module devoted to expressing the date.³³ Listed wrongly among place names in some catalogues, it is not a ghost word, but was recorded in Hemacandra’s synonymic lexicon in the twelfth century, the *Abhidhānacintāmaṇi* (II.61), among words referring to time vocabulary and may

24 For instance, Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 1011 (Weber 1888, no. 1846).

25 Chart for both in Tripāṭhi 1975, 384.

26 E.g., Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 2086 (Schubring 1944, no. 167).

27 Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 1807 (Schubring 1944, no. 136); Berlin, Ms.or.8° 524 (Schubring 1944, no. 339).

28 Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 2064 (Schubring 1944, no. 250).

29 Strasbourg, Wickersheimer 4469 (Tripāṭhi 1975, no. 151 p. 387) and Wickersheimer 4493 (no. 155 p. 388).

30 Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 2000 (Schubring 1944, no. 175).

31 Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 2466 (Schubring 1944, no. 713).

32 Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 2380 (Schubring 1944, no. 27).

33 Balbir 2011 is fully devoted to this word. The content is only briefly summarized here.

understood as ‘civil day’, parallel to *karmamāsa* and *karmasaṃvatsara* and equivalent to *karmadivasa* attested in astronomical treatises in particular.

In addition, cases of hybridity through the borrowing of vernacular forms have been well attested in the colophons: in the phrase *pastāliṣa* (= *pistāliṣa*) *āgamasūtravṛttipustakaṃ kāritaṃ*³⁴ (‘this manuscript of 45 sūtras and commentaries was commissioned’), the number is the Hindi or Gujarati word and not the Sanskrit one. One can thus discuss as to what extent *vācanārthaṃ* should be differentiated from *paṭhanārthaṃ*. Should the first one mean ‘for recitation’ in a loud voice and the second one ‘for reading’? In my opinion, two parameters have to be taken into account to understand this: the identity of the recipient of the manuscript and the specificity of the Sanskrit used in colophons. If the recipient is a Jain monk, *vācanārthaṃ* could perhaps refer to public recitation, during the sermons which punctuate Jain daily religious life. There is, however, no way to prove this. The hypothesis would be less likely if the recipient were a lay person. On the other hand, *vācanā* in these contexts could also be a transposition of the Gujarati verb *vāṃcavūṃ* ‘to read’, so both verbal stems would mean the same. When both terms appear together, *paṭhanārthaṃ vācanārthaṃ*,³⁵ they could refer to two different actions but, understood against the background of the general phraseology, they could well be equivalent.

The syntax of the Jain colophons – viewed in its linguistic aspects – is another feature worthy of note. To some extent the Sanskrit sentence is deconstructed. In a sentence like *gaṇiHitasamudra Oghaniryuktisiddhānta saṃpūrṇa lilekhayāṃ cakre*³⁶ (‘Gaṇi Hitasamudra wrote the complete canonical work Oghaniryukti’), the use of the periphrastic perfect contrasts with the absence of any nominal ending. In short formulas such as *liṣataṃ mahātmā Mānasimgha*,³⁷ ‘copied by mahātmā Mānasimgha’ or *liṣataṃ Pāṇḍe Dāsū*,³⁸ which are rather frequent, juxtaposition becomes the rule, even though here the absence of ending occurs in an otherwise ordinary Sanskrit syntax. The absence of ending is no hindrance when the statement is simple and straightforward. But a structure of this kind can also apply in an expanded way to situations involving several actors of different status, as in the following instance where juxtaposition prevails: *saṃvat 1806* [1749 CE] *varṣye Caitra sudi 1 dinēṃ vāra bhaume sakalabhaṭṭāraka*

³⁴ Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 1905 (Schubring 1944, no. 35).

³⁵ Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 2274 (Schubring 1944, no. 186).

³⁶ Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 1067 (Weber 1888, no. 1923).

³⁷ Strasbourg, Wickersheimer 4510 (Tripāthī 1975, no. 68): *saṃvat 1794 Poṣa-māse śubhe śuklapakṣe tithyau pūrṇimāyāṃ sūryavāsare liṣataṃ mahātmā Mānasimgha Āmbāvaṭi-nagara-madhye*.

³⁸ Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 989 (Weber 1892, no. 1960).

*purīṇḍara-bhaṭṭāraka śrī108 śrīśrīVijayaprabhasūriśvara tatśiṣya paṇḍitaśrīHemavijayagaṇi tatśiṣya paṇḍitaśrīGangavijayagaṇi tatśiṣya paṇ. Gajavijayagaṇi tatśiṣya Harṣajī vā. śrīBeṃnātaṭṭeṃ śrīŚāntināthaprasādāt śrīVidhipakṣagaccheṃ śrāvaka sā. Rūpā sūta Rājasi liṣāvītaṃ.*³⁹ Casual endings are present in expressions of circumstance: locative for date, copying place (*Beṃnātaṭṭeṃ*), sectarian affiliation (*Vidhipakṣagaccheṃ*, i.e. the Śvetāmbara religious order also known as Añcalagaccha), ablative for the indication of the favouring Jina (*Śāntināthaprasādāt*) under whose auspices the copying has been undertaken, amounting, in practice, to designating the temple dedicated to him in the locality previously named. But the commissioner, the layman Rājasi, is just named, and his location in the family ('son of') is not expressed through any grammatical link. This absence of any grammatical marker is even more conspicuous when naming and locating the monk involved: his name, Harṣajī vācaka, comes at the end of a genealogical string. His precise role in the manuscript production is not grammatically expressed, but it is easily understood from the modular structure of colophons: the layman is the commissioner, the monk is the instigator. So having the latter's name followed by *°upadeśāt* as may be done to refer to the instigating monk (see examples above) becomes unnecessary. This example is representative of the general situation in colophons. Such phenomena testify to a language in a transitional phase, but they are also in tune with the modular structure of colophons and their regular formal pattern. In extreme cases of hybridity, the balance Sanskrit / vernacular is in favour of the latter: *bāi Dhanakuyara ne ātama arthe laṣyo che Surata-baṇḍare śrīŚāntinātha-prasādāt, saṃvat 192x nā Vesāṣa vada 11 dīne muni-Vidyāvīje lapīkṛtaṃ Navapurā-madhye Loḍiposāla ne upāsare comāso (ra)hā tāre laṣi che,*⁴⁰ 'he copied for Mrs. Dh., for her own sake, copied in Surat, with Śāntinātha's favour, on the 11th day of the dark fortnight of V. in the year 192x by monk Vidyāvijaya. He wrote (the ms., i.e. *prati*) in the area Navapurā while he was staying in the monastic hall L. for the rainy season'. Here Sanskrit is present only through traces. On the other hand, the repetition of the verb 'copy' in three different forms makes the wording rather awkward, if not confusing.

39 Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 2073 (Schubring 1944, no. 287).

40 Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 2511 (Schubring 1944, no. 420).

4 Dates, Jain religious calendar, historical data

The first type of information expected in a colophon is the date. But this was apparently not an indispensable element in the eyes of the scribes, as there are several instances of detailed colophons featuring no date. The year is always expressed in reference to the Vikrama era, whether this point of reference is explicit or not, so that *saṃvat* means Vikrama saṃvat ($- 56/57 =$ date according to CE). Optionally, the current year of the Śāka era can be given as well ($+ 77/78 =$ date according to CE). The number is given either as digits or expressed in words through chronograms (*bhūtasamkhyas*). Both appearing together in the same manuscript is quite uncommon. One example is the Berlin manuscript in which the year as well as further information, copyist's name and place of copy, is expressed first in a verse and then repeated in a prose sentence:

*śrīŚāṃtināthasya mudā caritraṃ
lipikṛtaṃ Labdhisudhāṃśunā hi
suRohitāse vararāgayuktaṃ
gaja-rttu-śaileṃdu-mite hi vatsare 1
likhitaś cāyaṃ sakala-vibudha-gaṇa-tridaśa-surapati-samāna-paṇḍita-
śrī21śrīJitacaṃdragani-śiṣya-muniLabdhicaṃdreṇa Rohitāsanagare paṃ-
śrī5śrīRūpakamalajī-pārśve saṃvat 1768 varṣe Kārttika śudi 3 dine.*⁴¹

The date is expressed in words in the verse and repeated in digits in the prose part: *indu* 'moon' = 1, *śaila* 'mountain' = 7, *ṛtu* 'season' = 6, *gaja* 'elephant' (associated with the directions) = 8, i.e. 1768 / 1711 CE.

Although chronograms are more frequent in verse than in prose colophons, they are by no means restricted to verses. In the fullest form, the year is followed by the name of the month, description of the fortnight (dark / bright), the serial number of the lunar day (*tithi*) and the day of the week: *saṃvat 1227 varṣe Mārgasira sudi 11 śanau*⁴² 'In the year 1227 vs / 1170 CE, in the month M. (= November–December) on the 11th day of the bright half, a Saturday' in a palm-leaf manuscript is the prevalent format attested without interruption throughout, in paper manuscripts as well. The fortnight is indicated by the indeclinable abbreviations *sudi* (for *śuddha* or *śukla-dine/divase*) and *vadi* (for *bahula-dine/divase*). All possible synonyms are used for the names of the months and of the days, e.g. *ravi-vāre* or *āditya-vāre* for Sun-day, etc.⁴³ References to astrological conjunctions are

⁴¹ Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 1954 (Schubring 1944, no. 204, *Śāntināthacaritra* in Gujarati by Jñānasāgara).

⁴² Jinavijaya § 91 p. 110.

⁴³ See the chart in Tripāṭhi 1975, 384.

also found occasionally, as well as information on the time of the day.⁴⁴ Less common are the colophons indicating the time that was necessary for the completion of the work copied: *saṃvat 1643 ... Bhādrapada vadi 5 dine ārābhya saṃvat 1644 Phāguṇa śudī 13 dine ... saṃpūrṇā* ‘started on the fifth day of the dark half of Bhādrapada in 1643 vs / 1786 CE and completed on the 13th day of the bright half of Phāguṇa in 1644 vs / 1787 CE, thus about 5 months for this 187 folio manuscript.’⁴⁵ When additional information relating to time is occasionally found it is more context-specific. A monk copyist would then say his copying work was done in the month of Śrāvaṇa (= July–August) when stationed at the locality for the rainy-season:⁴⁶ *granthāgraṃ 9500 ślokaṃānena yathā. likhitaṃ śrī-Vikāneramadhye saṃvat 1888 varṣe śāke 1753 pravarttamāne Śrāvaṇamāse śuklapakṣe pūrṇimā 15 tithau, kujavāsare, caturmāsikṛtāḥ*⁴⁷ ‘Size in śloka 9500. Copied in Bikaner in 1888 of the Vikrama era / 1831 CE, 1753 of the current Śāka era, in the month of Śrāvaṇa, on the full moon day, a Tuesday,⁴⁸ he was spending the rainy-season’. Such mentions are rather frequent.⁴⁹ For Jain monks, this period of four months (from July to November) is a special one as it is the only time of the year when monastic regulations recommend they stay in the same place rather than go on with their wandering life. It is a period of more leisure both for intellectual work and interaction with lay followers resident in the area. It is almost a standard of reference in time-counting. Thus it is not surprising to see another copyist monk declaring the completion of his task coincided with his sixteenth rainy season, that is to say his sixteenth year of religious life: *saṃvat 1816 varṣe Śrāvaṇa sudi 10 dinem śukravāsareṃ laṣitaṃ sakalapamḍitapūjya ṛṣi śrī5Velajijī vidyamāṃna cīraṃjivī tatśiṣya muṃni Devacandreṇa lipikṛtaṃ śrīMāṃḍavibindare comāso solamo kīdhāṃ chatāṃ*⁵⁰ ‘Copied in the year 1816 vs / 1759 CE, on the tenth day of the bright half of Śrāvaṇa, a Friday, by the monk Devacandra, pupil of the venerable pandits among all, Velajī, who was then active – may he have a long life – in Māṃḍavibindara, when he was spending his sixteenth rainy-season’.

⁴⁴ See respectively Strasbourg, Wickersheimer 4387 (Tripāṭhi 1975, no. 58 p. 386) and Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 2422 (Schubring 1944, no. 926: *prathamaprahare saṃpūrṇam*).

⁴⁵ Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 1341 (Weber 1888, no. 1905: manuscript of the *Uttarādhyayanāsūtra* and *dīpikā*).

⁴⁶ See also the examples given in the Section on language.

⁴⁷ Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 722 (Weber 1888, no. 1853).

⁴⁸ *Kuja* ‘born from the earth’ = Mars.

⁴⁹ Shah 1937, no. 609 dated 1655 vs / 1598 CE: *X cāturmāsakasthiteṇa śrīNāṇānagare*; Shah 1937, no. 621, no. 708; *cāturmāsam kṛtvā*, no. 1193.

⁵⁰ Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 2383 (Schubring 1944, no. 1072).

When the completion day corresponds to a Jain festival, this may be taken note of in the colophon. Two circumstances are noteworthy. One is the Akṣayaṭṭīyā festival which takes place on the third day of the bright fortnight of Vaiśākha (April–May) and has been a date in the Jain religious calendar since the tenth century having been connected with the first proper gift of food offered by Prince Śreyāṃsa to the first Jina Rṣabha. One example is: *saṃvat 1492 varṣe* [1435 CE] *Vaiśākhe ikṣuṭṭīyāyāṃ alekhi* (colophon of the mūla); *saṃvat 1492 varṣe Vaiśākhe śuklapakṣe Akṣayaṭṭīyāyāṃ likhitā Sādhuvīraṇinā likhitā-tmapaṭhanārthaṃ* (colophon of the commentary).⁵¹ *ikṣuṭṭīyāyāṃ*, if the reading is correct, would be a substitute for the expected *Akṣayaṭṭīyāyāṃ*, and refers to the gift associated with this holy day, namely sugar-cane (*ikṣu*). Another one is: *iti śrīKṣetrasamāsaprakaraṇaṃ saṃpūrṇaṃ || saṃvat 1644 varṣe* [1584 CE] *Vaiśāṣa sudi Akṣaṭṭīyādīne gurau vāre śrīPattane lipikṛtaiṣā paratiḥ || Ichall śubhaṃ bhavatu leṣakavācakayoḥ*.⁵² The second sacred date often taken note of in colophons is the festival of knowledge (*jñānapaṃcamī*) closely connected with manuscript restoration, copy and diffusion. In the following instance, the colophon records the fact that the manuscript copied had been presented by a pious layman to a monk at the conclusion of this festival: (...) *vā. Cāritrasimha-gaṇīvarāṇāṃ (...) suśrāvaka Co. Māidāsena śrījñānapaṃcamy-udyāpane idaṃ śrīĀcārāṃgavṛttipustakaṃ pratilābhitaṃ* ‘The good layman Māidāsa got this manuscript of the *Ācārāṃga* commentary presented to the excellent head-monk Cāritrasimha on the occasion of the completion of Knowledge Fifth’.⁵³ Occasionally other significant dates of the Jain religious calendar, such as Dipāvalī or Maunaikādaśī are also mentioned.⁵⁴ Completion of a fast is another special occasion for celebration which may be marked by commissioning a manuscript to be offered to the religious teacher. Thus in 1570 vs / 1513 CE a whole family offered a manuscript of the *Upāsakadaśāṅga* for the completion of a fourteen days fast.⁵⁵

New trends in Jain religious life are both evidenced and supported by manuscript colophons. At the end of an Oxford manuscript of the *Mahānīśīthasūtra*

⁵¹ Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 2615 (Schubring 1944, no. 780).

⁵² Udine, FP4450 (Balbir 2019, no. 62: *Laghukṣetrasamāsa*); see also Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 2414 (Schubring 1944, no. 1089: *Baisāṣamāsasubhaśuklapakṣe tithau 3 aṣaṭṭī. 3 liṣataṃ*); Shah 1937, no. 307, no. 326, no. 798.

⁵³ Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 1694 (Schubring 1944, no. 3: second hand colophon). Other examples: Shah 1937, no. 42 (1504 vs / 1447 CE), no. 63 (*paṃcamyudyāpanaṃ kurvatā*, 1511 vs / 1454 CE), no. 617 (dated 1656 vs / 1599 CE).

⁵⁴ See respectively Shah 1937, no. 413 *Kārttika vadi Dipālikādīne*; no. 801 *Mauna ekādaśadīne* (1710 vs / 1653 CE).

⁵⁵ Shah 1937, no. 265 (*caturdaśī udyāpane*).

copied in 1834 vs / 1777 CE it becomes evident that it was a collective undertaking, commissioned by a group of laywomen residing in Surat following the instigation of the monk Uttamavijayagaṇi: *paṃcacatvāriṃśad-āgama-tapodyāpana-nimittam idaṃ sūtraṃ śrīSūratibaṃdīra-vāstaya-śrāvīkā-samudāyair likhāpitaṃ paṃ. ŚrīUttamavijayajīgaṇi-upadeśāt* “For the completion of the Forty-five Āgama-fast a group of Jain laywomen residing in Surat got this sacred text copied, following the instigation of the monk Uttamavijayagaṇi”.⁵⁶ It was copied to conclude the fast called ‘45 Āgamas’. This must be understood in a wider religious context. From the seventeenth century onwards, the number of canonical scriptures recognized as authoritative became an issue for two opposing Śvetāmbaras groups: the so-called image-worshippers (Mūrtipūjakas) who admitted 45 works, and those against image-worship (the Sthānakavāsins) who admitted only 32 works, considering the remaining 13 as not genuine. Special fasts and ceremonies developed around the worship of the 45 canonical scriptures admitted by the image-worshippers and were promoted by leading monastic figures of the group. These rituals are a way of publicly asserting their sectarian identity. Uttamavijayagaṇi, the instigator of the manuscript’s copying, is a teacher and author known from other sources to have played a significant role in promoting such ritualized worships. The text in this manuscript is a work whose authority has been disputed among Śvetāmbaras and admitted as canonical only in the list of the image-worshippers. This gives even more significance to the monk’s gesture in encouraging this copy and make it the focus of a worship.

The outside world presents itself in the mention of contemporary political leaders, usually medieval sultans, the Moghol emperors (*pātasāhi*) with the recurring compound *X-vijayarājye* ‘during the victorious reign of X’ e.g. *pātasāhasrīMahamadavijayarājye*,⁵⁷ *Alāvaddīna*,⁵⁸ *pātasāhi Akabara*,⁵⁹ *pātasāhi śrīJāhāṃgīra*⁶⁰ or regional kings such as *Kumbhakaraṇa*.⁶¹ However, briefly they occur, they are a means for positive acknowledgement of the support, or at least benevolence of these figures.

⁵⁶ *Mahānīśitha* manuscript, Oxford, Bodleian Library.

⁵⁷ E.g., Shah 1937, no. 2 (dated 1313 vs / 1256 CE).

⁵⁸ E.g., Shah 1937, no. 35 (dated 1502 vs / 1445 CE).

⁵⁹ E.g., Shah 1937, no. 550 (1645 vs / 1588 CE), no. 553 (1646 vs / 1589 CE).

⁶⁰ E.g., Shah 1937, no. 689 (1605 vs / 1548 CE).

⁶¹ E.g., Shah 1937, no. 83 (dated 1515 vs / 1458 CE).

5 Prosopography of the actors

Jain manuscript colophons provide copious material for a prosopographic study of the actors involved in the manuscript commissioning, copying and usages, for their wealth in anthroponyms. This chapter could have been enormous but significant results would require a complete, if not exhaustive, database. Here only a few salient features will be described, to be completed with material from the paper's other sections. Basic syntactic patterns involve a two-person formula: the copyist (instrumental case) and the recipient (genitive case, 'for the reading of', 'for the good of'). Copyists are very often mendicants or laypeople (see here *passim*) but there are also numerous examples of persons who are non-Jain professional scribes indicated by their names or caste-identification: *leṣaka Kanhā, kāyastha Māthura Sudarśanena, Josī Jagannātha, Joṣī Pitāmbara, Joṣī Ṣopā, Josī Poyā, Paṇḍayā Saṃkar*.⁶² All the works these persons copied are central works of the Jain tradition.

In a three-person formula the commissioner's name is also included. A frequent variant of this pattern includes the spiritual teacher's name who acted as instigator (the genitive, often followed by *upadeśāt*) followed by the name of the copyist (instrumental), in these instances, usually a monk. The number of names is easily increased in complex colophons which, in their maximal form, include spiritual genealogies on the one hand and genealogies of Jain lay followers' families on the other (see below). In such extensive patterns the names are often listed in juxtaposition, with minimal information on how the persons relate to each other, sometimes at the cost of clarity. Mendicants within the Jain community can be located through their sectarian affiliation indicated by the name of their monastic order, their *gaccha* in Śvetāmbara contexts. Ideally it is possible to cross-check the data either with other manuscript colophons or via inscriptions, completed and supported by material found in detailed compilations of monastic order history such as the invaluable works by Vinayasagar (2005, for all that relates to the Kharataragaccha), Pārśva (1968, for the Añcalagaccha), etc., to delineate the figure and activities of given mendicants more precisely. But the colophons are intended primarily for internal use and the *gaccha* name is frequently absent. In such cases religious titles may enable a more precise location: e.g. *ṛṣi* in Śvetāmbara environments plausibly points to Sthānakavāsins in monastic

⁶² See respectively Shah 1937, no. 106; no. 705 (1671 vs / 1614 CE; Māthura is the name of one subcaste of the Kāyasthas, who are well-known for their role as professional scribes); no. 638 (1659 vs / 1602 CE); no. 229 (1557 vs / 1500 CE); no. 203 (1550 vs / 1493 CE); no. 232 (1557 vs / 1500 CE); no. 282 (1572 vs / 1515 CE).

orders.⁶³ The importance of name-patterns has been emphasised and explored at length by P. Flügel (2018). The corresponding procedure for locating Jain lay followers would be to indicate their place of residence (*°vāstavya*) but what is found seems to refer to the person's geographic origin rather than their residence at the time the name is recorded in a colophon. Location in society is indicated via caste affiliation (*jñāti*, *jāti*). Recurrences of a given caste affiliation and a given monastic affiliation in different manuscript colophons (or inscriptions) show privileged relationships between lay families and mendicants. Ties of a different kind emerge when the mendicant was actually a member of the indicated family in his pre-monastic life.

To assess the presence of women in manuscript production through the examination of colophons correctly, requires the compilation of statistics to avoid exaggerations or minimisations. The first step has been approached here based on the material available in Shah's collection of paper manuscript colophons (part 2 in 1937). The index of *ācāryas* and other male mendicants' names occupy 23 two-column pages, whereas just one two-column page suffices in listing the *sādhvīs*' names. Nuns feature as readers of manuscripts copied by their male colleagues or professional scribes in just 17 from a total of 1276 colophons.⁶⁴ The following case is remarkable because it records a nun as instigator in the copying process and a laywoman as reader: *sakalasādhvīmukhyapravarapradhāna sādhvī śrīMāñikyaśrīvacaṇāt samastaśrāvīkāmukhya śrīKalyāṇabāī vācanakṛte*.⁶⁵ Here the nun's name is accompanied by praising epithets, which is extremely rare, as usually there is no more than *sādhvī* (or *āryā*). From 109 versified palm-leaf manuscript colophons (*praśastis*) collected in Jinavijaya (1943) only one records a nun as head of a group (*gaṇinī*) and instigator of copying a manuscript intended for a monk locating the nun within a monastic group of male colleagues.⁶⁶ Only three colophons in Shah 1937 show nuns as copyists. A simple format example is *sādhvī Dayāsundarījī celī Prabhāvatī likhitaṃ* 'Copied by P., disciple of the nun D.'⁶⁷ A Berlin manuscript colophon records a nun as copyist, giving her monastic lineage, and stating that she copied both the *Gotamaṃcchā*,

⁶³ E.g. Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 674 (Weber 1888, no. 1835); Ms.or.fol. 817 (Weber 1888, no. 1856); British Library, Or. 7621(D) (Balbir et al. 2006, no. 261) and I.O.San. 1564e (no. 274: Āvaśyaka formulas specific to two different Lonkāgacchas).

⁶⁴ Shah 1937, nos 95, 106, 362, 437, 477, 520, 673, 695, 697, 703, 705, 854, 859, 990, 992, 1029, 1263.

⁶⁵ Shah 1937, no. 896 (dated 1717 VS / 1660 CE).

⁶⁶ Jinavijaya 1943, no. 25 (1292 VS / 1235 CE). See Balbir 2014, 241 for more details.

⁶⁷ Shah 1937, no. 709. The two other examples are nos 143 and 223.

a Prakrit work and its Gujarati commentary for her own reading.⁶⁸ A colophon in the Udine manuscript collection states that the nun Gulāvoji (probably a Sthānakavāsin nun given the title *mahāsati*) copied the *Dasagīta*, a vernacular rendering of the *Daśavaikālikasūtra* by Jaitasī for her disciple to read.⁶⁹ Although the authors of Jain works were predominantly monks, or to a lesser degree male lay followers, isolated instances exist of nuns in this role. They emerge as more colophons are unearthed. Thus, a Jayalabdhī *gaṇinī* appears as redactor of a commentary on Devendrasūri's *Śataka*, a Karma work.⁷⁰ Her title indicates she was the head of a group of nuns. Thus proofs of nuns' literacy and their interest in the transmission of knowledge do exist but appear not to be prevalent. On the other hand, female Jain lay followers (*śrāvikā*) are prominent in the role of manuscript recipients as readers. Their names are often accompanied with praising epithets stating their pious personality with the frequent phrase *suśrāvikā puṇya-prabhāvikā*,⁷¹ and more rarely with expanded variants such as *suśrāvikā puṇyaprabhāvikā dvādaśavratadhārikā jinājñāpratipālikā*⁷² 'holder of the twelve vows, follower of the Jinās' command'.⁷³ Some enhance their qualities by comparing them with paradigmatic laywomen contemporary with Mahāvīra: *Sulasā-Revatī-samāna śrāvikā Rūpāvahūnāmnī paṭhanakṛte*.⁷⁴ Of 109 *praśastis* collected by Jinavijaya (1943), 36 show laywomen as commissioners. They largely feature in this role within their male lineage, as wives of X or sons of Y. Colophons often imply a four stage process: 1) a laywoman's direct interaction with a mendicant; 2) mendicant's incentive to get a manuscript copied; 3) wish conveyed by the laywomen to her husband (and other male representatives of the family); 4) commissioning via the husband's finances.⁷⁵ Rather isolated cases occur, such as a certain Ālhū who, as commissioner in 1454 vs / 1397 CE of a palm-leaf manuscript containing five canonical works and their commentaries, is placed at the centre of the family genealogy.⁷⁶

68 Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 1076 (Weber 1892, no. 1931).

69 Udine, FP4380 (Balbir 2019, no. 32).

70 Udine, FP4409 (Balbir 2019, no. 82).

71 Shah 1937, no. 1105; see also no. 1132; Udine, FP4338 (Balbir 2019, no. 78), etc.

72 Shah 1937, no. 1106 (1771 vs / 1714 CE).

73 See also Shah 1937, no. 800 (1710 vs / 1653 CE): *suśrāvikā dvādaśavratadhāriṇī bāi Nāṃnā paṭhanārtham*; Udine, FP4373 (Balbir 2019, no. 183): *śrāvikā puṇyaprabhāvikā dvādaśavratadhārikā*.

74 Shah 1937, no. 1022 (1758 vs / 1701 CE).

75 See Balbir 2014, 241 and following for examples and details.

76 See Balbir 2014, 247 (Patan, Dalal 1937, no. 395, p. 240).

Examples of lay female scribes, however, are much rarer. Kapadia notes: ‘Very rarely have *śrāvikās* written Jaina manuscripts. One Rūpade wrote a manuscript of the *Āvaśyaka-ṭikā* of Malayagiri’.⁷⁷ A lady named Jāu whose lineage is recorded in the colophon of the manuscript she copied in 1487 vs / 1430 CE is another example.⁷⁸ The following is an instance of manuscript copying and destination taking place between ladies. It is addressed to a Sthānakavāsin nun named Jīujī *mahāsati* to celebrate her thirty two years of religious life, emphasising her perfect conduct, the various fasts she observed, including fasting unto death; the climax of a pious mendicant life. The author of this Rajasthani poem composed in 1760 CE is one of the nun’s female lay disciples.⁷⁹

Occasionally, one comes across colophons staging actors from the colonial period, emphasizing interaction between Indians and Europeans. Thus a group of manuscripts of Jain works in Old Gujarati kept in the Cambridge University Library, all copied in 1822 CE / 1879 vs in Palanpur (North Gujarat), may be considered commissioned by or copied for Lieutenant Colonel Miles, the resident agent interested in the Jain community of the place, whose name is mentioned in one manuscript as *Mahila sāhiba* and as *kapatāmna mehajara Mehala* in another. These documents served as the basis of parts of the author’s essay ‘On the Jainas of Gujerat and Marwar’ (1833).⁸⁰ Italian Indologist Luigi Pio Tessitori (1887–1919) based in Rajasthan, gathered manuscripts from the region but also obtained texts copied specially for him by his own employees, the details of which have been given in his published and unpublished papers. Among them is Bālārāma who comes to life in the verses he composed as the colophon of a manuscript he copied in 1914 CE / 1971 vs), giving the date in the form of a chronogram and the name of his father.⁸¹

6 Ownership and circulation information

How manuscripts were used and handled once copied often comes to light through the post-colophon additions of a later hand. The main colophon, for instance, gives the original copying date, whereas the post-colophon explains how the same manuscript came into the possession of others. A significant example is the

⁷⁷ Kapadia 1938, 25.

⁷⁸ London, British Library, Or. 2111 (Balbir et al. 2006, no. 670), or Cambridge, University Library, MS Add.1781, also analysed in Balbir 2014, 243.

⁷⁹ Udine, FP4365 (Balbir 2019, no. 339).

⁸⁰ See Balbir 2017, 71–75 for the full demonstration.

⁸¹ Udine, FP4428 (Balbir 2019, no. 335).

Pañcasamgrahavṛtti manuscript now kept in Berlin.⁸² The main colophon has a simple structure, providing the expected basic information: *saṃvat 1555 varṣe Jyeṣṭha vadi 4 bhaume śrīAṇahillapurapattane pustikā likhitā* ‘The manuscript was copied in 1555 vs / 1498 CE on the fourth day of the dark half of Jyeṣṭha (May-June), a Tuesday, in Patan’. A second hand records the title of this manuscript, stating it has been copied (*likhitam*) by members of a family, named and precisely located in their clan and lineage, on the second day of Āṣāḍha (June-July), a Monday, and donated to the monk Kṣāntimandira Upādhyāya, disciple of Merusundara Upādhyāya. This situation suggests that the first hand is that of the copyist, while the second is that of the commissioners. Even if *likhita* is used in both cases, it should be understood as a causative in the second occurrence. The copyist did his work, after which those who commissioned it left their mark. The story does not end there, for a third hand writing in elaborate Sanskrit, explains that in 1649 vs / 1592 CE, almost hundred years later, king Rāyasimha (of Bikaner), transferred (*vihāritam*) the manuscript to śrī(Jina)candrasūri, the then leader of the Kharataragaccha honoured by Akbar, and to his colleague Jinasimhasūri, for ‘increasing knowledge’ (*jñānavṛddhyartham*), after which they deposited the manuscript in the Bikaner library (*Vikramanagare bhāṇḍāgare sthāpitam*). The joint activity of the king and monks is confirmed by other sources⁸³ and was one of the main origins for the development of the Bikaner manuscript collection. Among the motivations of those having manuscripts copied is expanding a library (see below section 9).

The post-colophon space may be used by hands other than those of the manuscript scribe in recording how these transferable objects change hands via the buying and selling of them. According to its main colophon, a Berlin manuscript of the *Anuyogadvāra* commentary was copied in 1631 vs / 1574 CE. Two hundred years later the post-colophon addition records: *saṃvat 1832 varṣe [1775 CE] Kārttike śudi 2 gurau bha. śrīPuṇyasāgarasūribhiḥ bhaṭa-Vijayarāma-pārśvāt ru 5 mulyena gṛhīteyaṃ pratiḥ*⁸⁴ ‘This manuscript has been acquired by the monk Puṇyasāgara from Vijayarāma at the price of 5 rupees’. Similarly, the Sanskrit colophon of another item states that it was copied in 1646 vs / 1589 CE. Then a further, second hand states in Gujarati how two hundred and forty-one years later a pontiff took the same item for six rupees from another monk and gave it to a lady in Baroda.⁸⁵

⁸² Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 2453 (Schubring 1944, no. 770).

⁸³ Vinayasagar 2005, 229.

⁸⁴ Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 1063 (Weber 1888, no. 1899).

⁸⁵ Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 1028 (Weber 1892, no. 1939): *bha-śrīŚāntisāgarasūrisvarajūṃ paṃ. D(a)yāvijaya-ga. haste parata 2 lidhī che ru. 6 Nagade āpīne śrīVaḍodrāmadhye saṃvat 1887 nā vaṣe bijā Vaisāṣa suda 14 divaseṃ śreyastu*. Not everything is clear in this sentence.

In all these cases, it is worthwhile noting that monks were involved in the financial transactions, mediated, most likely, by lay members of the community. A third hand in a Strasbourg manuscript states that '[the Manuscript] has been sold to Pt. Gūlābahaṃsa by Pt. Narottamavijaya', while a fourth person states 'it is the property of the revered monk' referring either to himself or a contemporary monk.⁸⁶

A Jain library is therefore something that can be described as extremely mobile. Manuscripts are kept in boxes and cupboards. When they do have a reference number, and this is far from systematic, it features as paratext, after the text and colophon or on a separate page. It is for internal use, for instance *dā*. (for Gujarati *dābo*) 2 parati 27 'box 2 manuscript 27',⁸⁷ with no mention of the original place to which the manuscript belonged. Yet, reading the colophons enables a reconnecting with the *membra disjecta* which are today either in India or in Europe, where they were brought in the last decades of the nineteenth century when systematic searches for manuscripts were carried out. An example of a colophon in a Śvetāmbara canonical scripture dated 1694 vs / 1637 CE states that the copying of the manuscript was a part of a broader project undertaken by a Jain layman named Jayakaraṇa, a resident of Cambay, to commission or collect all the 45 scriptures that comprised the Śvetāmbara canon. Nowadays it is common to refer to this canon as an entity, but there is, in fact, no single manuscript available that would contain all the books together. Witnesses to Jayakaraṇa's project emerged slowly and partly by chance. Seven have been traced so far: one in Cambay, one in Surat, one in Ahmedabad, two in Berlin and two in Cambridge. All the colophons contain the same information about the commissioner and his family, noting the same year, and the serial number of the scripture copied within the list of 45. They underline the cohesion of the project. Four pieces have been traced from another similar project created by Pāsavīra in 1721 vs / 1664 CE: Gujarat, Rajasthan, Berlin and Leipzig each contain one. Of those described in recent years are the Jain manuscript collections at Cambridge and Leipzig.⁸⁸ One is yet to find evidence of the earlier project created in 1665 vs / 1608 CE by Udayasiṃha, save its mention in the manuscript now kept in Berlin. Similarly, colophons form the thread linking the collection of manuscripts made by Sahasakiraṇa, a prominent seventeenth-century layman and his sons. Thirty-two items have been traced so far in various libraries. They were either manuscripts he specially commissioned

⁸⁶ Strasbourg, Wickersheimer 4536 (Tripāṭhi 1975, no. 226): *paṃ. Gūlābahaṃsajī ne paṃ. Narottamavijaye vecā thī āpi che sahi*, translated p. 388 followed by *muniji-nī parata che*.

⁸⁷ Oxford, Bodleian Library, *Mahānīśīthasūtra* fol. 142^v; see Tripāṭhi 1975, 45–46 n. 24 and Balbir 2017, 70–71.

⁸⁸ See respectively Balbir 2006, 334, Cambridge University Digital Library and Krause 2013.

or existing manuscripts he acquired (*grhīta*). They comprise a scholarly collection containing only Prakrit and Sanskrit texts –in spite of it being commonplace at that time, they feature no vernacular. In other instances, reading colophons in manuscripts geographically distant from one another enables one to follow a scribe and observe how he specialized in copying particular works. As is the case with Mantri Vācaka of Patan, whose name is identified in the colophons of eleven manuscripts of the *Kalpasūtra*, produced during the fifteenth century over a forty-year period.

Colophons often bear visual signs of manipulations testifying a change of hands and the desire to erase traces of previous ownership. The *Jambūdvīpa-prajñapti* manuscript kept at the Bodleian Library (SK. 109, fol. 116^v) is one among many. The size of the manuscript (*granthāgṛaṃ śloka* 4154) is followed on line 2 by the concluding sentence (*evaṃ saṃkhyā Jambūdvīpaprajñaptikā samāpta:*) and the common scribal maxim (*yādṛśaṃ pustake dṛṣṭaṃ // tādṛśaṃ laṣitaṃ mayā / yadi śuddhaṃ aśuddhaṃ vā // mama doṣo na dīyate:*) on line 3 and by benedictory phrases with auspicious signs on line 4. Line 5, written in red ink, continues with the date and mention of the Śvetāmbara sub-sect involved in the process of commissioning and copying (*saṃvat 1652 [1595 CE] varṣe Vaiṣāṣa śudi 5 dine / śrīBṛhatKharataragache*), whereas the last third of the line and the first third of line 6, originally written in black, have been covered with a layer of black, so only the first two *aḥṣaras* are legible as *dravya*. The remaining part of this line and all of lines 7 to 11, originally written in red, remain visible but covered by a layer of yellow pigment making them illegible. What remains legible is only on line 12: *rtha: / ciraṃ nandatu: // śubhaṃ bhavatu: // kalyāṇaṃ bhūyāt // śubhaṃ bhavatu: // śrīr astu: // cha: //* ‘May the manuscript rejoice for a long time! May there be wellbeing! May there be good! May there be wellbeing! May there be prosperity’. The lines deliberately deleted certainly contained names of individuals involved in the manuscript production as instigators, commissioners or recipients. Such acts are not uncommon, suggesting competition and rivalry between monastic groups or local communities. The colophon is thus a means to manifest the issue of appropriation or sectarian competition in the public space.

One important concern of philological investigation is to determine the genealogy of manuscripts available for a given work: what was the source a copyist used for his task? In quite exceptional cases the colophon is the channel through which explicit information about this is provided: Buddhivimala, the copyist of a *Panca-mīmāhātmya* in 1651 vs / 1594 CE in Jaisalmer states that he wrote ‘from a palm leaf manuscript (*tāḍapatrīyapustakāt*) which had been copied in 1009 vs’ [sic; = 952 CE].⁸⁹

⁸⁹ Shah 1937, no. 582.

The Jains are renowned for their contribution to the preservation and dissemination of pan-Indian literary heritage and knowledge in various disciplines expressed in works by non-Jain authors. The colophon is the channel through which it is confirmed that works of this category circulated among Śvetāmbara Jains and were integrated in their scholarship and intellectual training. This holds true primarily for Sanskrit classics. The following colophon is found at the end of a *Gītagovinda* kept at the British Library: *vācanācārya-śrīSukhanidhānagaṇi-gajendrāṇi-śiṣya-paṇḍita°Sakalakīrtti lipikṛto granthaḥ || saṃvat 1671 varṣe 11 Poha vadi 3 dine śukravāre śrīJinasimhasūri-vijaya-rājye || bhadraṃ*⁹⁰ ‘Work copied by Pandit Sakalakīrti, pupil of the chief monk Sukhanidhāna in 1671 vs / 1614 CE, on Friday, the third day of the bright fortnight of month Poṣa, when Jinasimhasūri was the ruling pontiff’. Here, more than once, the sectarian affiliation of the monks is not mentioned, but, crossed with the dates, probable identification with Jinasimhasūri, the sixty-second pontiff of the Kharataragaccha, is possible.⁹¹ Another comparable instance is the following colophon in which the Śvetāmbara teacher Bhāvaratnasūri, providing his spiritual lineage (*gaccha*-name not given), states he copied the *Raghuvamśa* (commentary) for his own sake.⁹² Pan-Indian handbooks relating to śāstric disciplines are another such area. The following colophon ends a British Library manuscript of Bhāskarācārya’s *Līlāvatī*, a famous mathematical treatise: *saṃvat 1697 varṣe Śāke 1563 [1640 CE] pravarttamāne mājā-māṅgalya-prada-Caitra-māse asita-pakṣe aṣṭamī śubhatithau budha-vāsare || sandhyāyām || śrīVidhipakṣa-gacche || pūjya-bhaṭṭāraka-śrī5śrīKalyāṇasāgara-sūriśvara-vijaya-rājye śrīmadGajanagare vācanācārya-śrī5Vivekaśeṣara-gaṇinām śiṣya paṇḍita° śrīśrīśrīBhāvaśeṣara-gaṇinām likhitam || śrīḥ || tat-śiṣya mu° Bhuvanaśeṣara paṭhina kṛte || śrīCandraprabhu-pāda-praśādāt || ciraṃ ||*. The copyist is an eminent monk of the Añcalagaccha, one of the Śvetāmbara monastic orders associated with the Kutch area of Gujarat. He features among prominent monks working around Kalyāṇasāgarasūri, the then pontiff of the order. He is known to have composed at least one Gujarati narrative poem and to have copied several manuscripts, among which two for the reading of the disciple Bhuvanaśekharaṇi mentioned there. His spiritual lineage given there is confirmed by the information he provides at the end of the poem he authored. Bhuvanaśekharaṇi, Bhāvaśekharaṇi and Kalyāṇasāgarasūri appear together in another manuscript dated 1709 vs / 1652 CE copied for a different

⁹⁰ London, British Library Or. 2145 D (Balbir et al. 2006, no. 1314).

⁹¹ His dates are: born 1615 vs / 1558 CE, ācārya 1649 vs / 1592 CE, sūri 1670 vs / 1613 CE, died 1674 vs / 1617 CE.

⁹² Shah 1937, no. 1045 (1761 vs / 1704 CE).

person. Such colophons justify the label ‘Jain manuscript’ given to this kind of manuscripts. They tend to suggest a readership consisting of learned monks that had a prominent role within their groups, which does not necessarily imply that they did not come into the hands of the common man.

7 Motivations for the act of copying as expressed in the colophons

In the paper manuscripts considered here, motivations for commissioning a copy are generally expressed rather briefly. Of the most frequent is the wish to transmit knowledge at an individual level – through stereotyped compounds such as *paṭhanārthaṃ* with mention of the reader. Reading (mentally or publicly, see above) is the main concern, but there are colophons of illustrated manuscripts where viewing is added explicitly. Such mentions, however, are exceptional. A case in point is the British Library *Śālibhadracopāī* by Matisāra copied in Jaisalmer in 1783 vs / 1726 CE. In addition to the name of the copyist (Pandit Devakuśala) the colophon specifies that the manuscript ‘was illustrated by Pandit Kanakakīrti, a monk. The reason for its being copied was for the sake of increasing knowledge, to be seen (and) read by the Muṃkaurapālāsa family, remarkable for the excellence of their judgment.’⁹³ Another important motivation for having a manuscript copied is to increase or build a collection. Jinabhadrasūri, a fifteenth-century monastic leader of the Kharataragaccha, was renowned for establishing libraries in various places and played a prominent role in this development. Dhāraṇaka, one of his main lay followers, established a library in Cambay and in Jaisalmer (Balbir 2014, 237). Manuscript colophons show how he got manuscripts copied for them to be deposited in libraries: a copy of the *Nandisūtra* commentary was thus commissioned by a Jain family, copied by Tri. Vināyaka, a non-Jain scribe, for his library.⁹⁴ Another manuscript, of a *Viśeṣāvaśyakabhāṣyavṛtti*, was commissioned for his collection in Patan.⁹⁵

⁹³ London, British Library, Or. 13524 (Balbir et al. 2006, no. 747): *paṇḍita Devakuśalena likhitā pratir iyaṃ / paṇḍo Kanakakīrti-muninā ca citritāṃ / vivekāṭireka-nipuṇa-Muṃkaurapālāsa-parivāra-pāṭhanāya darśanāya jñāna-vṛddhy-arthaṃ likhāpitā*:|| See also Balbir 2015, 217–219.

⁹⁴ Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 1821 (Schubring 1944, no. 94), dated 1503 vs / 1446 CE. Instances of minimal wordings are: *Jesalamerau Kharataragacche śrīJinabhadrasūribhiḥ pustikeyaṃ likhāpitam* (Shah 1937, no. 31, dated 1501 vs / 1444 CE).

⁹⁵ Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 1322 (Weber 1888, no. 1915), dated 1490 vs / 1433 CE. This seems to have aroused some doubt in Weber’s mind. ‘Hiernach scheint die Handschrift einer auf Jinabhadra

Mentions of the following kind (clearly valuable when attempting to trace the life of a manuscript in terms of place, time and persons involved) throw light on the constitution of monastic collections via the gathering of individual manuscript items: *idaṃ pustakaṃ śrīTapāgacchīya-śrīśrīVijayadevasūri-bhāṃḍāre muktaṃ* ‘This manuscript was deposited in the collection of Vijayadevasūri, the leader of the Tapāgaccha’.⁹⁶ Although information on costs and expenses is lacking, colophons or post-colophons often state that individuals used their own personal finances to obtain a manuscript for a library. Indicated by stray references such as *jñānadravyeṇa prati bhāṃḍāre mukta*⁹⁷ or ... *sā. Rāyamallaputra sā. Rāyakaraṇa Sahasrakiraṇābhīyāṃ svaśreyase śrīKālakācāryakathā svīyadravyavyayena bhāṇḍāgārārthaṃ gṛhīte* ‘Rāyakaraṇa and Sahasrakiraṇa, the two sons of Rāyamalla, acquired this [manuscript of the] Kālakācārya story with their own money for a library’. But colophons also reveal that families forming real manuscript collectors invested money to acquire manuscripts.

Frequent mention of other motivations occurs, as with the desire to commemorate a deceased relative articulated by expressions such as ‘for the welfare of X’ (X-śreyase, X-puṇyārthaṃ), one’s own benefit, less frequently, the benefit of others, or more generally the aspiration to remove knowledge-obscuring karmas and reach Liberation.⁹⁸

The overall brevity of wording through stereotyped formulas in paper manuscript colophons contrasts sharply compared with palm-leaf manuscripts in which Sanskrit verse-*praśastis* construct a somewhat dramatic staging telling of the necessity to transmit teaching through manuscripts as if it was a new or recent phenomenon requiring justification or explanation, rather than the routine fact it became later.⁹⁹ In recurring scenarios a Jain layman or laywoman (*śrāvaka* or *śrāvikā*) and their family members has heard the teaching of a monk. The act of listening presents itself as the starting point of the decision to commission a copy or acquire a manuscript. A teacher, for instance who convinced the Dedākā family to acquire an *Uttarādhyāyanasūtra* manuscript in 1352 vs / 1295 CE did so

selbst zurückgehenden Bibliotheksstiftung (*bhāṇḍāgāra*) zu entstammen; sie ist stark mit Moschus durchduftet’.

⁹⁶ *Mahānīśītha* manuscript at the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

⁹⁷ Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 814 (Weber 1888, no. 1801).

⁹⁸ E.g., Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 658 (Weber 1888, no. 1788), ms. of the fifth book of the Śvetāmbara canon, dated 1555 vs / 1488 CE): *idaṃ Bhagavatyaṃgaṃ svajñānāvāraṇīkarmmacchide likhitam*; Shah 1937 no. 758 *jñānāvāraṇakarmakṣayārthaṃ*; no. 762 *karmakṣayārthaṃ likhāpitaṃ*; no. 1028 *svajñānāvāraṇakarmakṣayanimittaṃ*. This kind of motivation seems to be even more frequent in manuscripts produced among Digambara circles.

⁹⁹ The following is partly a summary of the investigation detailed in Balbir 2014.

by praising the canonical tradition, the practice of the gift, especially the gift of knowledge, materialized by having manuscripts copied, finally declaring that any layperson having the Jain canon copied according to his means and possibilities will only reap benefits. In some cases, the colophons evidence a kind of emergency tone pervading the scenario: feeling that his life is coming to an end, a rich Jain calls his son, urging him to organize pilgrimages and invest in Jain images, but also to get manuscripts copied. No matter the number of details given, a similar line of reasoning is pursued in all these colophons: Jain teaching is the only refuge against rebirth. It cannot be approached without knowledge: 'In our times, it is said, knowledge has to be mediated through manuscripts. Therefore pious people perform a meaningful activity when they spend money in order to get manuscripts copied'. The need to possess manuscripts was justified by reference to the decline of the time. Such considerations are echoed by the treatises Jain monks composed during the period, the intention being to provide laypeople with a framework for pious behaviour and propagating the faith (*prabhāvanā*). A typical image used to this end was that of 'sowing in seven fields' (*saptakṣetryām VAP-*), meaning spending wealth for one of seven recommended actions. One of which being manuscript production and preservation which appears of significant concern during this first phase corresponding to the twelfth-thirteenth centuries. Hence in the palm-leaf manuscript phase, the colophon may be described as a discourse for the promotion of writing and manuscript production. During this period manuscript recipients are predominantly monks. The connection between lay Jains and monks in the process of knowledge transmission takes on a circular character: the monk preaches – the lay person commissions a manuscript – the monk uses this manuscript for reading or preaching (*vyākhyānārtham*). In paper manuscript colophons, the stated relation between commissioning a manuscript out of concern for using one's own money in a proper, pious way continues at least occasionally e.g. *tatputra dharmaśiromaṇi sāha śrīRāghava punyārthe saptakṣetrī dhanavitaraṇārthe śrīVimalanāthacaritraṃ lekhitam* 'the V. was commissioned for the benefit of their son R. and in order to assign wealth to the seven fields'.¹⁰⁰

The absence of a given element in colophons pertaining to a particular manuscript culture may also be significant. In Buddhist manuscripts a wishing formula is frequently found in which the copyist hopes to gain merit and become an Arhat in the presence of the future Buddha Metteyya. Statements of a similar kind and intention are totally lacking in our corpus. General blessing phrases for the scribe and the reader (e.g. *śubham lekhaḥkapāṭhakayoḥ*, ubiquitous), the Jain

¹⁰⁰ Shah 1937, no. 125 (1524 vs / 1467 CE).

community (e.g. *śrīḥ syāt saṃghasya*)¹⁰¹ or Jain teaching (e.g., *śrīJinadharmas ciraṃ naṃdatāt*) occur.¹⁰² In addition, the copyist's personal involvement in the act of writing or the future of his work may be conveyed by what has been labelled as 'scribal maxims' appearing as either one or as a set representing standardized patterns.¹⁰³ The copyist may ask here for the reader's indulgence, underline the difficulty of his task, how it implies physical strain, wish a long life for the manuscript or appeal to its recipients to take care of it for it to be protected from all dangers.

8 The colophon as a space for expressing individual or group presence

The promotion of teaching is crucial. But the promotion of the commissioner, the lay person, and the monk instigator is equally important. The copyist himself, however, is not presented as a major player in this process. Indeed, as was attempted to demonstrate elsewhere (Balbir 2014), many colophons, particularly the verse-*praśastis*, provide a space designed to construct an elaborate genealogical discourse, often divided in two parts, underlining the vital link between the lay and the monastic components. One purpose of this part is to display the commissioner's prestige not only as an individual but one of a lineage whose behaviour is exemplary in terms of pious activity. These genealogies are all the more prestigious should they extend over a large number of generations and include a dense group around the individual that is the colophon's main focus and the grammatical agent of a long sentence that progressively unfolds. The radiance of piety diffuses beyond the individual and propagates to the entire group. Such a technique results in a fabulous number of proper names. Joint family genealogies may occupy up to thirty verses. One such example:¹⁰⁴ in a versified colophon of an illustrated *Kalpasūtra* manuscript written in golden ink, a prestigious object in itself, dated 1524 vs / 1467 CE, a total of fifty-six names was listed covering seven generations, including second marriages and offspring thereof. The ladies'

101 Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 658 (Weber 1888, no. 1788) or Ms.or.fol. 1068 (no.1925); *śubhaṃ bhavatu caturvidhaśrīśramaṇasaṃghāya*, Shah 1937, no. 17 (1449 vs / 1392 CE).

102 Berlin, Ms.or.fol. 671(F) (Weber 1888, no. 1803); Ms.or.fol. 1095 (no. 1935): *śrīJinapravacanam ciraṃ jayatu*.

103 Kapadia 1938, 26–27, Tripāthī 1975, 48.

104 See Balbir 2014; see also recently Chanchani 2021.

names are accompanied by laudatory epithets praising their religiosity. Certain names are then singled out of men who distinguished themselves by specific pious activity such as the organization of pilgrimages, community celebrations, sponsoring of community buildings. This is a means for indicating illustrious families and declare that commissioning the manuscript is but one manifestation of religious dedication among many others. In fact, when data from manuscript colophons are crossed with material from inscriptions, the presence of such families as a part of an elite society becomes even more evident. Some of the names found in the colophon recur in contemporary epigraphs in genealogies, not always extensive, but sufficient to guarantee the identification. It can be seen that relatives of the sixth generation sponsor the production and installation of a Jain image, and in a later inscription the younger members of the family follow their elders' path. This is not an isolated instance. Others also underline the continuous presence of large families in all areas of religious activity underlined in the manuscript colophon even if they are not connected to the commissioning of the manuscript. The following here is a case in point:¹⁰⁵

*saṃvat 1525 varṣe Māghasudī 15 Śukravāre. śrīśrīśrīTapāgacchanāyaka Surasumḍarasūra śi.
paṃ. Mahisamudra li., Āṃbālikhitaṃ.
Prāgvāṭaḥ śrīPattananagare vyavahārihārikoṭīraḥ.
Sāṃgākyah samajani jinasādhujanopāsanāvyasani.
rākāniśākarakāraḥ Rākābhidhāḥ sutas tasya.
tatsahacārī ca Pūrī dūrikṛtaduṣṭadoṣatatiḥ.
tattanayāḥ sadvinayāś catvāraḥ śobhitānvayāḥ sadayāḥ.
Varasiṃgha-śrīNarasīṃgha-Karmaṇāś caiva Naradevaḥ.
śrīpatisevyakalāvatpīyāḥ śrīyādhyāś ca satatam astāghāḥ
paritāḥ pāvitaḥ catvāras te mahodadhayaḥ,
śrīSiddhācala-Raivatārbudagiri-śrīfirapallī-mahā-
yātrā-saṃghapatir bhavan bahumahaiḥ saṃghān sukhaṃ kārāyan
śrīsamyaḥkṛtasajāyāśilakalanāmukhyair mahair darśana-
prodyanmodakalaṃbhanaś ca vipulaṃ vismāpayan viṣṭapaṃ.
Karmādevipriyāḥ kāntakriyāḥ puṇyamahodayaḥ,
Karmaṇaḥ Śarmaṇas¹⁰⁶ teṣu lekḥayan śrīJināgamaṃ.
śrīSurasumḍaragaṇādhīpasūri-śiṣyaśrīRatnamaṇḍanagurupravaropadeśāt
tattvākṣasomaśaradi 1525 śrutalekhanāya vyagro vyalilikhad imāṃ pratim Āgamasya.*

This *Uttarādhyayanasūtra* manuscript was copied in 1525 vs / 1468 CE, as indicated in the short prose sentence at the beginning of the colophon and repeated via a chronogram in the last of the verses following. It was done at the instigation

¹⁰⁵ Text given in Bhojak 1977, 20 and 44.

¹⁰⁶ Proposed correction. The text as quoted in the Indian edition has *Śarmaṇe*.

of Ratnamaṇḍana a pupil of the then leader of the Tapāgaccha monastic order, Surasundarasūri. So much for the monastic component. The copyist's name is recorded only in the initial portion. Clarity is lacking as two names (Mahīsamudra and Āmbā) are mentioned. They could refer to two different persons, the first, designated *paṇḍita*, the copyist of the text, and the second the one who wrote the verse-*praśasti*. This part, which occupies much more space than the rest, is devoted to the praise of the lay family, a business family from Patan, who acted as commissioner. The main sponsor is Karmaṇa, but his entire kinship is present through genealogical relations, as he represents the third generation after his grandfather (Sāṃga) and father and mother (Rāka and Pūri). He is the third of four brothers also named (1. Varasiṃgha, 2. Narasiṃgha, 4. Naradeva). All names are accompanied by positive epithets showing their bearers as pious men and a tradition of piety going back far in time: the adjective *jināsādhujanopāsānāvya-sanī* 'obsessed by the adoration of Jain monks' subtly enriches the stock of otherwise quite common epithets via the positive use of *vyasanin*, that is usually understood negatively. Normally, in such eulogies, the main commissioner's wife (Karmādevī) is also named and described positively; she joins in the process. Karmaṇa's position within the Jain community, his religiosity and social prestige are emphasised through his community action as group-leader (*saṅghapati*) and the organisation of pilgrimages to renowned Jain holy places in Gujarat and Rajasthan (see list above). This prestigious title implies high expenditure. The penultimate verse underlines how Karmaṇa frequently invested money in religious celebrations thus distinguishing himself as an eminent member of the community engaged in multiple religious actions, of which commissioning the present manuscript is just one. Another similar case, albeit slightly more modest, is indicated by two twin prose colophons in manuscripts dated 1532 vs / 1475 CE featuring the same Kharataragaccha monastic leaders and the same pious lay family. The main commissioner is credited with innumerable meritorious acts such as the installation of statues in Jain temples, participating in monastic promotion ceremonies and building halt-places for pilgrimages. He spent large amounts of money, earned due to his own strength. He is 'the good layman Maṇḍana', whose part in commissioning manuscripts is conveyed by the epithet *sakalasiddhāntena* applied to him and his care for enriching a manuscript collection in Mandu (Madhya Pradesh), the mention *Maṇḍapadurge citkoṣe* found at the beginning of the two colophons.¹⁰⁷

107 *śrījinaprāsādapratimā-ācāryapadapratīṣṭhā-śrīrthayātrāsatrāgarādy-aganya-punya-paramparā-pavitri-kriyamāṇa svajanmanā nijasvabhujārjītamukaladravyavyūha-vyaya lekḥita sakalasiddhāntena suśrāvaka saṃ.* *śrīMaṇḍanena*, Shah 1937, no. 150 (Darśanaśuddhiprakaraṇa) and no. 152

In the absence of precise information relating to financial or economic matters in our colophons, terms such as *saṅghapati* (applied for instance to our Maṇḍana), *mantrin* or similar are the signs that help deduce the financial status of the families and their proximity to those of local political power. A computerized database containing all the material present in both the colophons and inscriptions would help investigations of this kind taking place on a far larger scale, with the potential to produce really meaningful statistics. The occasional representation in painting or sculpture of prominent donors belonging to such families or, even of famous religious teachers showing special concern for the diffusion of manuscript culture, can be viewed as a consequence of this displaying process, manifested, in the first place, through manuscript colophons.

9 Concluding remarks

The format of Jain manuscript colophons is of course extremely diverse: from a simple date to long verse compositions. Sanskrit is the prevailing language. Whereas the palm-leaf manuscripts use it in its classical form, the paper manuscripts show a strong tendency to vernacularization, which increases from the eighteenth century on, parallel to the expansion of the pattern in prose format. But the level of language and style is also dependent on the identity of the copyist and/or the prestige attached to a given manuscript copy. The colophon often serves as a free space in which the protagonists involved in the production of the object as either sponsors or instigators express their own presence within the group (monastic or lay) to which they belong.

(Sāmācāri of the Kharataragaccha). The text given in Shah has some variations of reading in the two colophons and has been amended here. Other instances of laymen's multidirectional pious activities mentioned in colophons are Shah 1937, no. 275 or no. 418 (1615 vs / 1558 CE).

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