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Introduction: Dependency and Jaina Studies in Karnataka

1 Dependency Studies on Jainism in Medieval Karnataka

The study of dependencies involves examining situations where some people have access to resources which others do not have, resulting in asymmetrical power relations and asymmetrical dependencies. The main aim of the Jainas, as presumably of the followers of most religious groups, is the attainment of salvation. In an Indic context, this is represented by release from the distresses of being continuously reborn into a world of suffering (*saṃsāra*). On the one hand, therefore, the story of dependencies in medieval Karnataka is about who, or which faith group, promises the most convincing and safest access to liberation, or at least which religious movement achieves predominance in a region at a given time. In addition, as religion and politics are tightly intertwined in this and in most contexts, the dominant religious group also has access to the greatest royal and societal support and can most easily control economic exchanges. In our case, in Karnataka, these are mainly commerce and trade. As such, the discussion in this book is about rival religious groups, the support they won from rulers and other influential sections of society, and the power of economics. Whilst the Jainas managed to offer attractive positions in most dependency-related areas from about the second to the eleventh or early twelfth century CE, they lost this comfortable position in all respects from the later twelfth to thirteenth century onwards. The various facets of this story will be presented in the following chapters.

2 The History and Development of the Research Project

This publication represents the results of an interdisciplinary research project on Jainism, Jaina culture, history, and religion as well as art and architecture in Karnataka, which ran over a number of years.¹ Initially, it was funded by the German Re-

¹ The official title of the project, which started in 2005, was: “Der Jainismus in Karnataka (Südindien), Entwicklung und Wandel von Architektur, Geschichte und Religion, insbesondere nach dem Machverlust im frühen 12. Jahrhundert,” meaning “Jainism in Karnataka (South India), Development and Change of Architecture, History and Religion, especially after the loss of influence in the early twelfth century.”

search Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG) through their Emmy Noether Programme. It started with a research team, which I headed, at the South Asia Institute at Heidelberg University (2005–2007). When I was appointed Lecturer and later Reader in Art History and Visual Studies (AHVS) at The University of Manchester, the group moved with me to the UK to continue its work there (2007–2010). When I obtained the chair in Oriental Art History as head of the Department of Asian and Islamic Art History (AIK) in the Institute for Oriental and Asian Studies (IOA) at the University of Bonn, the project shifted back to Germany (2010–2014). I am particularly indebted to the DFG for their continuous support and for their enormous flexibility in allowing me first to take not only my research project, but also the entire team and funding, abroad and then to bring them back to Germany again.

After the official end of the DFG funding period in 2014, I and my departmental colleagues went on digitising photographic slides taken during the Karnataka research project, and built up a detailed webpage.² The academic exchange continued, especially with the two team members Tiziana Lorenzetti and Pius F. Pinto, and the project carried on and expanded within the Bonn department.

The venture gained even more new impetus with the commencement of my involvement in the application for the Cluster of Excellence “Beyond Slavery and Freedom: Asymmetrical Dependencies in Pre-Modern Societies.” The Cluster of Excellence was approved by the DFG in 2018 and started officially at the University of Bonn the following year. This provided me with the funds to revisit some of the sites, to intensify the academic exchange with my colleagues Pius F. Pinto and Tiziana Lorenzetti and to further develop and expand the project from the angle of dependencies. This led to three further substantial new book publications: the monograph *Jaina Tradition of the Deccan: Shravanabelagola, Mudabidri, Karkala*,³ focusing on climatic dependencies, in 2021, and in 2023 the conference volume *Embodied Dependencies and Freedoms: Artistic Communities and Patronage in Asia*.⁴ Last but not least, I am presenting to you now this comprehensive joint study in the form of a concluding book, summarising the findings of this long-term research project, which ran for just over eighteen years, and kept expanding and developing in often entirely unforeseen ways.⁵

2 See: <https://www.ioa.uni-bonn.de/aik/de/forschung/projekte-1/jainism-in-karnataka-history-architecture-and-religion> [accessed 24.07.2023].

3 Julia A.B. Hegewald, *Jaina Tradition of the Deccan: Shravanabelagola, Mudabidri, Karkala*, Jaico Guidebook Series (Mumbai: Jaico Publishing House, 2021).

4 Julia A.B. Hegewald, ed., *Embodied Dependencies and Freedoms: Artistic Communities and Patronage in Asia*, Dependency and Slavery Studies (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2023).

5 I am delighted that the book did not go to print earlier, as in the past five to ten years, in particular, a large number of indispensable new publications have added valuable facets to the many aspects of this multi-disciplinary project.

3 The Present Volume

Chapter 1 represents a comprehensive summary of this major academic enquiry, posing our research questions and in the course providing the answers resulting from our joint project. As such, it represents a comprehensive summary on the subject of this major scientific enquiry. With regards to the individual disciplines, the later detailed chapters offer a deeper insight into their respective areas. However, with regards to the main project question, Chapter 1 in many areas goes beyond the material presented in the later specialised contributions. The first chapter is followed by the separate contributions of the expert team members, which consist of chapters focusing on the history of Karnataka (Chapter 2 by Pinto), the religions of the region—in this instance Jainism (Chapter 3 by Scholz) and Viraśaivism (Chapter 4 by Lorenzetti)—and the temple architecture of the Jainas there (Chapter 5 by Hegewald), as well as the contemporary perspective on Jainas and Muslims, another religion which threatened the Jainas in Karnataka (Chapter 6 by Lauer and Scholz). The members of the team express their own individual views, which are not necessarily shared by the editor or by the other authors who contributed to this book. The core chapters are followed by a comprehensive glossary of technical terms used in the various chapters in the publication. Information on the copyright of the illustrations can be found in the subsequent ‘List of Plates;’ the captions below the images in the text provide only content information. The volume closes with some notes on contributors and a comprehensive index.

4 Acknowledgements and Thanks

Between 2005 and 2024, a number of young and more established academics at varying stages in their careers have worked as part of the team. At professorial rank, I am grateful to Professor Dr Tiziana Lorenzetti and at postdoctoral level to Dr Pius Fidelis Pinto for contributing their expertise to this joint venture, our conferences and publications. Sabine Scholz obtained her PhD as part of the project at the University of Manchester in 2011. Julia Lauer in Heidelberg integrated parts of her research conducted on behalf of this project into her Masters dissertation at Heidelberg University and worked for us as a student assistant. I am grateful to a number of other student assistants who supported this large research venture over the years: in Heidelberg, to Anna Shiian, Navina Sarma, Claudia Scheufele, Rebecca Steiner and Klaus Vettel; in Manchester to Irene Martin Alvarez; and in Bonn to Markus Schoenenborn, Sarah Kansu, Erika Schwager, Alexandros Kotzias, Daniel Michels, Laura Drinck, Verena Bodenstein, Susanne Löffler, Demet Cetin, Sophie-Marie Schreurs, Karina Linke and Antonia Fuchs. I would like to thank all of them for their varied contributions at different stages of the research work. During fieldwork in India, we were assisted by a

number of colleagues, above all by Prof. Dr S. Joganshankar, Prof. Dr B.S. Sannaiah, the late Dr Edward Noronha, H.T. Talwar, Dr Nigel Chancellor, the late Prof. Dr K.S. Shivanna and Prof. Dr Hampa Nagarajaiah. In Germany, fruitful discussions were had with Prof. Dr Robert Zydenbos, Prof. Dr Subrata K. Mitra, Prof. Dr Hans Haderer and with the late Prof. Dr Willem Bollée and in the UK, with Prof. Dr Richard Gombrich, Dr George Michell, the late Prof. Dr John Fritz and Dr Helen Philon.

A number of exhibitions, workshops and international conferences were organised as part of this large project. We started with a small workshop entitled “Der Jainismus in Karnataka: Entwicklung und Wandel von Geschichte, Religion und Architektur” (Jainism in Karnataka: Development and Change of History, Religion and Architecture) held at the South Asia Institute, Heidelberg University, in October 2005. This was followed in 2006 by an exhibition documenting the ritual proceedings of the Mahāmastakābhīṣeka, which we as a team had witnessed live in Shravanabelgola earlier in the year. The workshop and the exhibition were organised by the Emmy Noether team members and funded by the DFG. I am particularly grateful to the participants and contributors of three conferences which contributed substantially to the results of this complex research project. The first, entitled “Jainism in Karnataka: Art, History, Literature and Religion” was held at the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) in Bangalore in February 2007.⁶ With regards to this symposium, I am grateful for the support extended to us by Prof. Dr S. Settar. The second symposium “In the Shadow of the Golden Age: Art and Identity in Asia from Gandhara to the Modern Age” was organised by my own department at the University of Bonn in October 2011.⁷ Both conferences were funded by the DFG. Third and last, I organised a digital conference during the Corona pandemic, entitled “Embodied Dependencies and Freedoms: Artistic Communities and Patronage in Asia” in 2021, which set the question posed in the present publication with regards to the Jaina community in Karnataka in a wider regional, cultural Asian and artistic context. The conference volume was published in the book series of the Cluster of Excellence “Dependency and Slavery Studies” (DSS) in 2023.⁸

During the publication process of this book, I also received generous support from the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS). I am particularly grateful to the speaker of the Cluster of Excellence, Prof. Dr Stephan Conermann, the managing director, Jeannine Bischoff, and to the members of the Steering Committee for funding this publication. In this context, the support of the publications manager, Dr Janico Albrecht, in advising on and copy editing this volume is also acknowledged

⁶ The results of this conference have been edited by Julia A.B. Hegewald under the title *The Jaina Heritage: Distinction, Decline and Resilience* and been published as part of the Heidelberg Series in South Asian and Comparative Studies by Samskriti Publishers, New Delhi, in 2011.

⁷ The papers of this symposium have appeared in the series *Studies in Asian Art and Culture* (SAAC) 1, with EB-Publishers, Berlin, in 2014 under the title *In the Shadow of the Golden Age: Art and Identity in Asia from Gandhara to the Modern Age*, edited by Julia A.B. Hegewald.

⁸ Julia A.B. Hegewald, ed., *Embodied Dependencies and Freedoms*.

with the greatest appreciation. Furthermore, I am particularly grateful to Abigail Graham as language editor, for taking such meticulous care and applying such enormous sensitivity in checking the English throughout this volume. In my own department, I would like to express my sincere thanks to Sabine Haessler for adapting the chapters to the house style of the series, for carefully checking through them repeatedly and for acting as a such a reliable assistant during almost the whole process of editing this collection of research papers. At the very end, Tamara Sans took over from her and I am equally grateful to her for all her support during the final stages of the publication process. Final thanks are due to the team at De Gruyter, for seeing this publication into print.

5 Concluding Thoughts

This volume was not conceived as a monograph with a single, carefully honed argument. Over a period of many years, individual chapters were written by professionals at various stages of their academic development and careers, from Masters, doctoral and postdoctoral levels. The aim was to involve young scholars, to guide them into research and to combine expertise from many different academic fields to obtain a fuller and more multifaceted understanding of the issues involved in the rise and decline of Jainism in Karnataka during the Indian Middle Ages. Specialists from different disciplines—history, religious studies, anthropology, history of art and architecture—therefore worked closely together to provide the most comprehensive view and interpretation of the situation at this time in the south of India. However, this also means that the disciplinal cultures of different subject areas were combined and are still visible in the individual chapters. Wherever possible, we have updated the material in 2022 and 2023 and brought it up to date with the latest knowledge and data. In this context, the spelling “Jaina” (rather than “Jain”) has been standardised throughout the publication, the individual chapter by Pius F. Pinto and the joint contribution by Julia Lauer and Sabine Scholz have—wherever possible—been provided with diacritical marks. The spellings of place- and personal names have been standardised throughout the book to prevent confusion and to ease the preparation of the joint index. As will be explained in more detail in the following chapters, this publication predominantly uses the term *Vīraśaiva* and not *Liṅgāyat*, which are sometimes treated as terms referring to different religious groups and sometimes as synonyms. This will be discussed in detail in Chapters 1 and 4. We hope that the reader will find pleasure in the individuality and originality of the distinctive approaches taken in the independent chapters.

6 Note on Transliteration

For the transliteration of terms and personal names from a Sanskrit, Hindi, Kannada, other south Indian or entirely different language background, we have applied the standard transliteration systems. Most words have been derived from Sanskrit or Kannada. For Sanskrit and Sanskrit-related vernacular languages, we have applied the standard transliteration method. However, for Kannada, which in contrast to Sanskrit and north Indian languages also differentiates between long and short mid-vowels, ‘e’ and ‘o,’ the long versions have been marked with a macron as ‘ē’ and ‘ō.’ Despite the enormous variety of languages and their adapted forms used in this publication, we hope to have respected and correctly applied the transliteration practices which are standard for each of them. However, this is not a linguistic study and questions of content and interpretation were at the forefront of our minds. When the chapters were first submitted, some of our authors had used diacritical marks for place names, while others had not. In order to retain easy readability and to permit readers to locate place names on modern maps, what has been perceived as the standard English spelling has been used throughout and these spellings have been standardised through the publication. This should allow the reader to establish connections between the different contributions more easily. However, the first time a place name is given in each chapter, the name with diacritical marks is provided, either in brackets behind the place name or sometimes in a footnote. If a word does not need diacritical marks for its correct spelling it is not repeated in brackets. Where modern names or common alternative versions of names exist, where the individual author preferred a different spelling or where an ancient name for a place is used in the inscriptions or historical accounts, these are also given in brackets after the first usage. Subsequently, a standard version of the place name without diacritics is used throughout the chapters.

7 Dedications

This book is dedicated to the members of the Emmy Noether Research Group, who all devoted several years of their lives to the work on this project. In 2006, we undertook fieldwork together in Karnataka and also attended the celebrations of the Mahāmastakābhiṣeka at Shravanabelgola, which was a very remarkable and inspiring experience for us all. Pius F. Pinto, Tiziana Lorenzetti and Julia Lauer have seen the project to its very end. In particular, however, this publication is dedicated to Sabine Scholz, who was part of the research group in Heidelberg from almost the first day and who moved with me to the University of Manchester, where she completed her PhD on Digambara asceticism in Karnataka in 2011. Unfortunately, the entire team, as well as all the friends and acquaintances of Sabine whom we knew, have lost contact with her. Although it

seems almost impossible today, in a digitally connected and global world, we have not been able to reconnect with her since. To us, Sabine has left even fewer traces than the “disappearing” Jains of Karnataka⁹ whom we studied for so many years. We hope that she is well and that the published book will perhaps find its way to her one day and surprise and delight her.

As Jaina culture in Karnataka continues to flourish and change, despite a political situation in the subcontinent at present which is not always conducive to harmony and peaceful coexistence between different religious groups, this will not be the last publication on the survival of this remarkable ancient religious group and its inexhaustible creativity in art and architecture.

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⁹ This is with reference to the publication by Richard H. Davis, “The Story of the Disappearing Jains: Retelling the Śaiva-Jain Encounter in Medieval South India,” in *Open Boundaries: Jain Communities and Cultures in Indian History*, ed. John E. Cort (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, Indian Book Centre, 1998): 213–24.

