

Tantric ritual components in the initiation of a Digambara Jain

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In this volume and in other scholarship, a defining component of a Tantric community is a particular type of non-Vedic initiation (*dīkṣā*) its members must undertake in order to perform the ritual practices of their cult.¹ Various Buddhist and Hindu traditions have been deemed “Tantric” because they require this type of initiation, which usually involves the construction of a *maṇḍala* and the imparting of esoteric *mantras* from *guru* to disciple.² Jainism, however, has not been considered a “Tantric tradition,” or “Tantric cult,” nor have Jains been seen as members of a “Tantric community,” in part because their initiations have been understood as monastic, not Tantric. The few examinations of Jain *dīkṣā* that have been published³ emphasise

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¹ Hamburg’s Centre for Tantric Studies, for example, has titled its journal *Tantric Studies: A Journal for the Study of Initiatory Religions of Indian Origin*, and defined “tantric traditions” as “initiatory and esoteric forms of religion emphasizing mantric forms of deities.”

² SHINOHARA (2014a: xiii) notes that the beginning of the use of the All-Gathering Maṇḍala in Chinese Buddhist initiation ceremonies in the sixth century “may be taken as the beginning of the self-aware Esoteric [i.e. ‘Tantric’] tradition.” GOODALL (2004: xxi) argues that “the central fact that characterizes these [Śaiva] tantric cults is that they are private cults for individuals who take a non-Vedic initiation (*dīkṣā*) that uses non-Vedic (as well as Veda-derived) mantras and that is the means to liberation, a liberation which consists in being omnipotent and omniscient, in other words in realizing the powers of Śiva.”

³ AGRAWAL 1972, CORT 1991, and HOLMSTROM 1988 have described image-worshipping Śvetāmbara *dīkṣā* ceremonies, but they do not discuss the uses of *mantras* and *maṇḍalas*. SHĀNTĀ (1997: 444–472; 653–660), from her fieldwork on Jain *sādhvīs* of various sects in the 1970s, provides the most detailed portraits of *dīkṣā* found in secondary literature on Jains, but she confesses that when it comes to the

the ascetic and monastic components of the ceremonies, such as the taking of mendicant vows and the pulling out of hair. Michael Carrithers, for example, highlights the ascetic core of modern Digambara *dīkṣās* by focusing on how the initiate severs ties with all worldly connections upon initiation:

[T]he form of the ceremony (...) gives no place to the notion of the *muni saṅgha*. Unlike the Buddhists, the Digambar Jains do not enshrine the collectivity of ascetics in their initiation (...) Nor is anything passed on which might form a bond, such as the *mantra* which is part of many Hindu ascetics' *dīkṣā*.⁴

Carrithers emphasises how modern Digambaras reject the ties to a worldly community and thus uphold the “original project of Jainism, which stressed *tapas*,” not collectivity (CARRITHERS 1990: 154). He promotes a common view⁵ that Jains, since the formation of the tradition around the fifth century BCE, have maintained a deeply ascetic, individualistic tradition: unlike Buddhists and Hindus, they were not influenced by medieval Tantric developments in initiation practices that required the transmission of esoteric *mantras* from *guru* to disciple.

Modern Digambara *dīkṣās* contain several components of Hindu and Buddhist initiations termed “Tantric”: the construction of a *maṇḍala*-like diagram, the transmission of karma-destroying non-Vedic *mantras* from *guru* to disciple, and the imparting of non-Vedic rites of passage (*samskāra*). And searching for these modern components in pre-modern texts can lead us to previously unstudied medieval Digambara discussions of initiations. Indeed, no pre-modern manual on Digambara *dīkṣā* has been published, Digambara texts are not *entirely* devoid of discussions of initiation, and if we know what to look for, we can find it. If we reverse the more common methodology of using texts to lead us to the field – if we allow fieldwork to determine how and what we read – we can bring a new perspective to pre-modern texts.⁶

dīkṣā ceremony, “the subject of *mantras* is too vast and too complex to be considered here, for it requires a separate study” (SHĀNTĀ 1997: 656, n. 56).

⁴ CARRITHERS 1990: 153–154.

⁵ To date, too little scholarship has been produced to discredit JAINI's (1979: 254) claim that “Jainism has remained for the most part untouched by the sort of tantric practices which typified many Śaivite cults and eventually permeated the Buddhist community as well.”

⁶ This methodology is encouraged in CORT 1990.

In the following pages, I will do use close study of a modern Digambara initiation to guide us to medieval textual descriptions of Jain *dīkṣā* rites that exemplify a blend of monasticism and Tantrism. We will see how medieval Digambaras had, probably by the ninth century, integrated the “Tantric” construction of a *maṇḍala* and imparting of karma-destroying *mantras* with earlier ascetic rites of mendicant initiations. Jains,⁷ then, unlike their Buddhist counterparts, require their followers to undertake a “Tantric” initiation into a *maṇḍala* in order to become a celibate mendicant. While Buddhist monks can undergo a Tantric initiation into a *maṇḍala* (*abhiṣeka*), unlike Jains, they do not have to construct a *maṇḍala* and receive esoteric *mantras* from their guru in order to become a monk.

Examining this blend of a monastic and Tantric initiation raises questions about the nature of the “Tantric communities” at the focus of this volume. While Digambara monks could, in one sense, be considered to be “Tantrics,” in part because they undergo a Tantric initiation, they are only in *some* ways Tantrics, and it would be too simplistic to claim that they belong to a “Tantric community” or a “Tantric cult.” Indeed, it may be too simplistic to designate people, or religious traditions, or even rituals as wholly “Tantric,” because, as we will see in the case of Jain initiations, religious actors, communities, and rituals cannot be defined by one term – they are composites of many layers of history. Rather than thinking in terms of “Tantric communities,” it might be better to think in terms of Tantric ritual components that allow for the formation of communities. Examining the history of a modern Digambara *dīkṣā* will allow us to do just that.

Modern Digambara mendicant initiations

For many Digambaras today, the story of modern *dīkṣā* begins at the outset of the twentieth century, specifically, on November 25, 1913. On this day, on a remote hilltop in Kuntalgiri, Maharashtra, a 47-year-old lay Digambara Jain named Śivgoudā Pāṭil stood in front of a temple icon of a Jina, removed his clothes, pulled out his own hair, and, according to his followers, reinstated the order of naked Jain monks after a near-complete absence for hundreds of years. This man, who was known as Muni Ādisāgara Aṅkalikara after his initiation, chose to stand before an image of the Jina – he chose the

⁷ This chapter will focus on Digambaras, but image-worshipping Śvetāmbara monks also include Tantric components in their initiations and promotions. On the use of the *sūrimantra* in the promotion of a Śvetāmbara *ācārya*, see DUNDAS 1998.

founder of Jainism as his initiatory *guru* – because he did not know of any living naked monks who could initiate him. From about the beginning of the thirteenth century, the Digambara Jain community had been mostly led by *bhaṭṭārakas*, sedentary renunciants who wore orange robes and had established themselves as leaders of certain caste groups and the trustees of the temple complexes where they reside.⁸

Muni Ādisāgara, in rejecting these *bhaṭṭārakas* and embracing nudity, made a radical departure from the Digambara Jainism of his day and an argument for a return to the ascetic practices of the first Jain monks. And this departure was extremely successful. By the time of his death in 1944, he had initiated 32 naked monks, many of whom would go on to establish mendicant lineages that persist to this day.⁹ Today, no *bhaṭṭārakas* remain in North India, only 14 remain in South India,¹⁰ and peripatetic successors of Ādisāgara and his disciples number in the hundreds.¹¹

In CARRITHERS' (1990) study of Digambara *dīkṣā*, he uses the example of self-initiation in front of a temple icon to emphasise the solitary nature of these modern, reformed Digambara *munis*.¹² However, modern Digambara *dīkṣās* are anything but solitary endeavours, and they include processions throughout the town, communal offerings of foodstuffs to a *maṇḍala* made of coloured powder, and a daylong ceremony in which dozens of *mantras* are imparted from *guru* to disciple on stage in front of cheering laypeople. Ādisāgara may have rejected the orange robes of the *bhaṭṭārakas*, but his followers quickly readopted the devotional, communal, and Tantric components of mendicant initiations that had been layered onto the ritual before and during the rule of these pontiffs. By outlining the components of a modern Digambara initiation and then searching in earlier texts for precedents for these components, we can see how medieval, early modern, and modern Digambaras added devotional and Tantric layers to

⁸ On the *bhaṭṭārakas*, see FLÜGEL 2006: 339–344.

⁹ For a collection of essays on Ādisāgara, see JAIN (B.M.) 1996.

¹⁰ For brief biographies of each of these *Bhaṭṭārakas*, see JAIN TĪRTHVANDANĀ 2012: 26–47.

¹¹ SAUDHARMBRĤATTAPOGACCHĪYA JAIN ŚVETĀMBAR TRISTUTIK ŚRĪSANGH (2013: 407) documents 740 living Digambara *munis*, though it is not specified how many of them trace their lineages to Ādisāgara, and not to one of the other founders of modern *muni* lineages, Śāntisāgara “Dakṣiṇa” and Śāntisāgara “Chāṇī.”

¹² CARRITHERS (1990: 141–150) focuses on the other modern Digambara *muni* to self-initiate, Śāntisāgara “Dakṣiṇa,” who did so in 1918 and is identified as the founder of the majority of contemporary Digambara lineages.

the ascetic core of early Jain mendicant initiations not to emphasise individuality, but in order to strengthen communal ties.

Becoming a Digambara monk in 2013

In November 2013, in a small town 90 miles southwest of Jaipur, in Kekri, Rajasthan, I joined hundreds of Digambara laypeople to witness a *dīkṣā* ceremony of three people into the mendicant community (*saṅgha*) of the Digambara Ācārya Vairāgyanandī. Ācārya Vairāgyanandī traces his lineage to Ādisāgara Aṅkalīkara, and, from the two main traditions lay Digambaras follow – the “Path of Twenty,” the Bīsapantha, or the “Path of Thirteen,” the Terāpantha – he identifies as a Bīsapanthī.¹³ In 1994, Vairāgyanandī was initiated as a *muni* in Kunthalgiri, Maharashtra, by Ācārya Kunthusāgara, himself a disciple of Ādisāgara Aṅkalīkara’s successor Mahāvīrakīrti (1910–1972). Eleven years later, in 2005, Ācārya Vairāgyanandī was promoted to the rank of *ācārya*, becoming a leader of his own mendicant community.

In Kekri in November of 2013, Ācārya Vairāgyanandī initiated a husband and wife as a full monk (*muni*) and nun (*āryikā*), respectively, and one man as a lower-level initiate who wears two garments (*kṣullaka*). In my interview with Ācārya Vairāgyanandī after the initiation ceremony in Kekri, he would not tell me the details of the *dīkṣāvidhi* he follows, stressing that the instructions for performing *dīkṣā* must only be passed from *guru* to devoted disciple. Even so, he admitted that the basic structure of the initiation ceremonies he performs are found in a manual of mendicant rituals entitled “Collection of Pure Devotion,” *Vimal Bhakti Saṃgrah* (VBhS), which was compiled by the contemporary nun Āryikā Syādvādamatī Mātā, who also belongs to one of the lineages stemming from Ādisāgara Aṅkalīkara.¹⁴

Monks and nuns of different lineages have compiled several different manuals of this sort, but often multiple lineages accept the same manuals, and the descriptions of rites are nearly identical in these collections.¹⁵ The

¹³ On Bīsapanthīs and Terāpanthīs, see FLÜGEL 2006: 339–344.

¹⁴ VBhS, pp. 442–452. Āryikā Syādvādamatī belongs to a different sub-lineage of Ādisāgara Aṅkalīkara called the “Vimala Saṅgha,” which traces its origins to another of Ādisāgara Aṅkalīkara’s disciples, Vimalasāgara (1915–1961).

¹⁵ In Jaipur in February 2013, when I met with a monk who is mostly connected to Terāpanthīs, Ācārya Vibhavasāgara, he also mentioned the *Vimal Bhakti Saṃgrah* as his main published reference for the rituals for mendicant initiation.

exact same outline of the initiation rites in the *Vimal Bhakti Saṃgrah* is also included in other texts on renunciation of various lineages, both Bīṣapanthī and Terāpanthī.¹⁶ While each mendicant leader certainly must individualise the rituals included in these manuals, the published text available in these sources seems to have become the standard framework for modern Digambara initiations of all Digambara lineages.¹⁷

Because Ācārya Vairāgyanandī mentioned the *Vimal Bhakti Saṃgrah*, I will provide an outline of that text's instructions for initiating different levels of mendicants and then compare the text to the rituals I observed in Kekri. The *dīkṣāvidhi* in *Vimal Bhakti Saṃgrah*, composed in simple Sanskrit with some Prakrit *mantras*, outlines the rituals for four levels of mendicant: (1) *muni*, a fully initiated naked monk, (2) *kṣullaka*, a "junior" monk who wears a loincloth, a white cloth around his shoulders, and can eat from a plate, not his hands, (3) *upādhyāya*, a higher-level initiate who is trained as a mendicant teacher, and (4) *ācārya*, a monk at the highest level of promotion, a leader of a mendicant group (*saṅgha*) who can initiate disciples. The *munidīkṣā* is summarised below.

- On the day before the initiate takes the five vows of a mendicant, he should eat a meal and then go to the temple, where he should approach his initiatory *guru* and take a vow to fast for a particular period of time (*pratyākhyāna*). As part of this vow, he should recite two of the Sanskrit devotional praise poems called "Bhaktis," the *Siddhabhakti* and the *Yogibhakti*. These different Bhaktis play an important role in the *dīkṣā* ceremony and will be discussed in more detail below. Having taken this vow, he should bow before his *guru* and recite more of these praise po-

¹⁶ These manuals include the "Collection of Rituals," the *Kriyā-kalāpaḥ* (KK), a compendium of ritual instructions the lay Terāpanthī scholar Pannalāl Sonī-Śāstrī compiled in Agra in 1935, and the "Ritual Actions of a Monk," *Municaryā* (MC), a collection of rites compiled by the most prolific living Digambara nun (*āryikā*), the Bīṣapanthī Jñānamatī Mātā. For an English summary of many of the rites outlined in these manuals, mixed with accounts from interviews, see SHĀNTĀ 1997: 656–660.

¹⁷ Even the handwritten notes of ritual specialists (*pratiṣṭhācārya*) align with these texts. Paṇḍit Vimalkumār Jain, a ritual specialist who resides in Jaipur, has outlined 24 rites (*kriyā*) that correspond exactly to the rituals described in published manuals. He confirmed that he performs these rites for both Bīṣapanthī and Terāpanthī mendicants. Interview with author, Jaipur, February 2013.

ems addressing different objects of devotion, the *Ācāryabhakti*, *Śāntibhakti*, and *Samādhibhakti*.

- According to their means, members of the community should then worship the diagram for the pacification of bad omens (*śāntika*) and another geometric diagram, the “Ring of Disciples” (*gaṇadharvalaya*). Below, I will discuss the “Ring of Disciples” in detail and outline what this text means when it prescribes its “worship” (*pūjā*).
- After the completion of the worship of these diagrams, the initiand is ritually bathed and ornamented as lavishly as his means allow. The *guru* should then, with grand celebration (*mahāmahotsavena*), lead the initiand to a temple.
- [The next morning] the initiand should worship the Tīrthaṅkaras and ask for forgiveness from the community.
- In front of the community, next to his *guru*, having put on white clothing, the initiand should sit on an eastward-facing seat that married women whose husbands are still living (*saubhāgyavatī*) have decorated with a *svastika* symbol and covered in a white cloth.¹⁸
- Having recited the *Yogibhakti* and the *Siddhabhakti*, the *guru*, with his left hand, should sprinkle scented water on the head of the initiand three times while reciting the Sanskrit *mantra* for the removal of adversity (*śāntimantra*) that invokes the sixteenth Tīrthaṅkara, Śānti, who is said to destroy all obstacles, diseases, accidental death, misfortune caused by others, and damaging fires.¹⁹ The *guru* should place his left hand on the initiand’s head.

¹⁸ Paṇḍit Vimalkumār Jain’s notebook instructs that the *svastika* should be made of unbroken rice (*akṣata*). Photographed in Jaipur, February 2013. SHĀNTA (1997: 657), describing the initiation of a nun, explains this part of the ceremony as follows: “On arrival, *śrāvik[ā]* (a laywoman) makes the outline of a *svastika* with saffron-coloured grains of rice on a low table that she then covers with a new white cloth....the *gaṇinī* [nun] seats the *vairāgiṇī* [initiand] on the low table, facing either towards the East or the North, and sits down herself beside her.”

¹⁹ The mantra reads: *om namo 'rhathe bhagavate prakṣiṇāśeṣakalmaṣāya divyatejo*

- The *guru* should put curd, rice (*akṣata*), other cow products (*gomaya*),²⁰ and a blade of *dūrva* grass (*dūrvāṅkara*) on the head of the initiand and pronounce the Prakrit *vardhamānamantra*,²¹ which asks for protection in the court of the king, in battle, and in various other pursuits.²²
- The *guru* should sprinkle a mixture of saffron and ash on the initiand's head and recite a Sanskrit *mantra* to the one whose body is attired with purity and the three jewels of right faith, knowledge, and conduct, who is made of light, and who has sensory and scriptural knowledge, mind-reading capabilities, clairvoyance, and omniscience (i.e., the Jina).²³ He should begin pulling out the initiand's hair, reciting a *mantra* of syllables.²⁴
- To complete pulling out the initiand's hair, the *guru* should pull out five fistfuls of the initiand's hair while reciting a Sanskrit version of the *pañcanamaskāra* *mantra* that honours the Five Supreme Lords of Jainism, (1) the enlightened being (*arhat*), (2) the liberated soul (*siddha*), (3) the mendicant leader (*ācārya*), (4) the mendicant teacher (*upādhyāya*), and (5) all ordinary mendicants (*sādhū*).²⁵ The *Siddhabhakti* then should be recited.

mūrtaye śrī śāntināthāya śāntikārāya sarvavighnapraṇāśanāya sarvarogāpamṛtyuvināśanāya sarvaparakṛtakṣudropadravavināśanāya sarvaṣāmadāmaravināśanāya om hrām hrīm hrūm hrauṃ hraḥ a si ā u sā amukasya (i.e., name of initiand) *sarva-śāntiṃ kuru kuru svāhā* (VBhS, p. 444). Here, the *a* stands for the enlightened soul (*arhat*), *si* for the liberated soul (*siddha*), *ā* for the mendicant leader (*ācārya*), *u* for the mendicant teacher (*upādhyāya*), and *sā* for the ordinary mendicant (*sādhū*).

²⁰ Paṇḍit Vimalkumār Jain's notebook names milk, curd, ghee, saffron, *akṣata*, and *dūrvāṅkura* as the substances to be sprinkled on the head of the initiand.

²¹ Paṇḍit Vimalkumār Jain's notebook notes that the *vardhamānamantra* is also called the "Mantra for Victory," the *vijayamantra*.

²² The mantra reads: *om namo bhayavado vaddhamāṇassa risahassa cakkam jalaṃtaṃ gacchai āyāsaṃ pāyālaṃ loyāṇaṃ bhūyāṇaṃ jaye vā vivāde vā thaṃbhaṇe vā raṇaṃgaṇe vā rāyaṃgaṇe vā moheṇa vā savvīvasattāṇaṃ aparājido bhavadu rakkha rakkha svāhā* (VBhS, p. 444).

²³ The mantra reads: *ratnatrayapavitṛkṛtattamāṅgāya jyotirmayāya mati-śrutāvadhimanahparyayakevalajñānāya a si ā u sā svāhā* (VBhS, p. 445).

²⁴ The mantra reads: *om hrīm śrīm klīm aiṃ arhaṃ a si ā u sā svāhā* (VBhS, p. 445).

²⁵ *om hrām arhadbhyo namaḥ om hrīm siddhebhyo namaḥ om hrūm sūribhyo namaḥ om hrauṃ pāṭhakebhyo namaḥ om hraḥ sarvasādhubhyo namaḥ* (VBhS, p. 445).

- Having had his head washed and having recited the *Gurubhakti*, the initiand should remove his clothes and other ornaments.
- The *guru* should pronounce 108 times a *mantra* that comprises seed syllables and the first letters of the *pañcanamaskāra**mantra*.²⁶ He then should recite a Prakrit verse (*gāthā*) that praises the three jewels, the 24 Jinas, the Five Supreme Lords, and right conduct.²⁷
- Having made these recitations, the *guru* should use saffron, camphor, and sandalwood paste to write the seed-syllable *śrī* 34 times on the forehead of the initiand in the four directions: three *śrīs* should be painted to the east (*pūrva*), twenty-four to the south (*dakṣiṇa*), five to the west (*paścima*), and two to the north (*uttara*). Having written these *śrīs*, he should pronounce Sanskrit praises to right faith, knowledge, and conduct.
- The *guru* should recite the *Siddhabhakti*, the *Cāritrabhakti*, and the *Yogibhakti*, and place rice (*taṇḍula*), a coconut, and betel (*pūgīphala*) in the cupped hands of the initiand.
- The *guru* accepts from the initiand a commitment to the 28 root qualities (*mūlaguṇa*) of a monk: (1-5) the five vows of nonviolence (*ahiṃsā*), truth (*satya*), not taking what is not given (*asteya*), celibacy (*brahmacarya*), and non-possession (*aparigraha*), (6-10) the five *samitis* of care in walking, care in speaking, care in accepting alms, care in picking things up and putting them down, and care in relieving oneself, (11-15) restraining the five senses (*indriyarodha*), (16-21) the six essential duties of equanimity (*samāyika*), praise of the 24 Jinas (*caturviṃśatistava*), praise of the *guru* (*vandana*), confession (*pratikramaṇa*), performance of meditative standing pose (*kāyotsarga*), and taking short-term vows (*pratyākhyāna*), (22) pulling out one's hair, (23) nudity, (24) not bathing, (25) sleep-

445). The original *pañcanamaskāra**mantra* was composed in Prakrit. On this mantra, see ROTH 1974.

²⁶ The mantra reads: *oṃ hrīm arhaṃ a si ā u sā hrīm svāhā* (VBhS, p. 445).

²⁷ The verse reads: *rayanattayaṃ ca vaṃde cauṃṣajīṇaṃ tahā vaṃde | paṃcagurūṇāṃ vaṃde cāraṇajugalaṃ tahā vaṃde |* (VBhS, p. 445).

ing on the ground, (26) not brushing one's teeth, (27) eating standing, and (28) taking meals once a day.²⁸

To accept these vows, the initiand recites a Prakrit verse first found in Kundakunda's "Essence of the Teachings," the *Pravacanasāra* (ca. first few centuries CE). *Pravacanasāra* 3.8 reads:

[The root qualities of a *śramaṇa* are] vows (Skt. *vrata*), religious observances (Skt. *samiti*), restraint of the senses (Skt. *indriyarodha*), pulling out the hair (Skt. *luñcana*), essential duties (Skt. *āvaśyaka*), nudity (Skt. *acailakya*), not bathing (Skt. *asnāna*), sleeping on the ground (Skt. *kṣitiśayana*), not brushing one's teeth (Skt. *adantadhāvana*), eating standing (Skt. *sthitibhojana*), and taking meals once a day (Skt. *ekabhakta*).²⁹

- Having repeated, three times, "May you have the correct vows, fixed vows that constitute correct faith (*samyaktva*)," the *guru* should recite the *Śāntibhakti*, and various foodstuffs (rice etc.) should be offered to the disciple.³⁰
- The *guru* should impart to the initiand 16 rites of passage (*saṃskāra*) by reciting a *mantra* requesting that each quality or power of the *saṃskāra* blossom in the soon-to-be monk (*iha munau sphuratu*) and sprinkling cloves and flowers on the initiand's head. These *saṃskāras*, unlike the worldly Brahmanical *saṃskāras* of conception, birth, naming, marriage, etc., impart the ideal qualities of a mendicant. The first four *saṃskāras*, for example, impart right faith (*samyagdarśana*), right knowledge

²⁸ Digambara nuns adopt only 15 of the *mūlaguṇas*. They do not eat standing, they do not take the full vow of non-possession, as they wear white robes (they adopt 105 of the 108 requirements of *aparigraha*), and they do not uphold the *guṇa* of not bathing, as they are required to bathe when they menstruate. Āryikā Śubhamatī Mātā, personal communication with the author, Mumbai, July 2013.

²⁹ *Pravacanasāra* (PraSār) 3.8: *vadasamidīndiyarodho locāvāsayaṃ acelaṃ aṇhāṇaṃ | khidisayaṇaṃ adantadhāvanaṃ ṭhidibhoyaṇaṃ eyabhataṃ ca ||*. The reading here, "*adantadhāvana*" corrects the reading of "*adantavaṇaṃ*" in VBhS, p. 446.

³⁰ Paṇḍit Vimalkumār Jain's notes prescribe that the mother and father of the initiand offer these foodstuffs.

(*samyagjñāna*), right conduct (*samyagcāritra*), and the ability to perform external and internal austerities (*bāhyābhyantaratapās*).

- The *guru* should place his hand on the initiand's head and pronounce a *mantra* that consists of the Prakrit *pañcanamaskāra-mantra* – *ṇamo arihaṃtāṇaṃ ṇamo siddhāṇaṃ ṇamo āriyāṇaṃ ṇamo uvajjhāyāṇaṃ ṇamo loe savvasāhūṇaṃ* – plus the Sanskrit *mantra* *oṃ paramahaṃsāya parameṣṭhine haṃsa haṃsa haṃ hrāṃ hrīṃ hrīm hrūṃ hrauṃ hrah jināya namaḥ jinam sthāpayāmi samvauṣaṭ*.³¹
- The *guru* should read the names of the monks in the mendicant lineage of the initiand (*gurvāvali*), ending by pronouncing the initiand's new mendicant name. All current Digambara mendicant groups trace their lineages back to Kundakunda, whom they believe flourished in the first century CE. Monks initiating a disciple thus first recite “Kundakundādī” or “Kundakunda etc.” and then recite the names of the monks in their twentieth-century lineage. Monks in Ācārya Vairāgyanandī's lineage, then, recite the names of: Ācārya Ādisāgara Aṅkalīkara, Ācārya Mahāvīrakīrti, Ācārya Kunthusāgara, and Ācārya Vairāgyanandī. Thus, by simply reciting “etc.” or “*ādi*,” modern monks create the illusion of a continuous chain of monks going all the way back to Kundakunda, but they do not have to provide specific names from the late medieval and early modern period, when there were effectively no naked monks.
- Community members should gift the new initiate the insignia of a Digambara monk: (1) a broom of peacock feathers (*picchikā*), (2) a scripture (*śāstra*), and (3) a water pot (*kamaṇḍalu*). Modern monks are given the earliest Digambara text on mendicant rules, the *Mūlācāra*, which will be discussed below.
- The initiate should wash the ritual substances off his face and head (*mukhaśuddhakriyā*) (VBhS, pp. 442–449).

³¹ Paṇḍit Vimalkumār Jain's notes term this mantra the “*guru mantra*.”

This outline provides only a glimpse of the ostentation and complexity of modern Digambara *dīkṣā* ceremonies. In the *dīkṣā* I witnessed in Kekri in November 2013, it took eleven days to perform all of the following rites:³²

November 10–17: Worship of a large ritual diagram, the “Ring of Disciples” (*gaṇadharavalaya*). Inside a ritual pavilion (*maṇḍapa*) in a worship hall (*upāśraya*), ritual specialists constructed a large diagram of coloured powder measuring approximately 10ft x 10ft. An icon of the Jina was established at the centre of the diagram, surrounded by three coloured rings decorated with 1,452 white dots. Each dot represented one of the original disciples (*gaṇadhara*) of the 24 Tīrthaṅkaras. To worship the diagram of coloured powder, the initiands would recite a Hindi line of praise to one of these disciples and then place a coconut on the diagram for that disciple.

November 17: Performance of the *śāntividhāna*, or the offering of food-stuffs to a coloured diagram dedicated to the sixteenth Tīrthaṅkara Śāntinātha in order to remove obstacles.³³

November 18: Fire offerings (*havana*) to complete the worship of the ritual diagram, application of turmeric paste (*haldī*) and henna (*mahendī*) to the hands and feet of the initiands.

November 19: Procession of the initiands around town, singing of songs by women (ladies’ *saṅgīta*).

November 20: Initiands take a ritual bath (*maṅgalasnāna*), perform the physical worship (*pūjā*) and ablution (*abhiṣeka*) of a Tīrthaṅkara icon, and then, on a stage in front of the lay community, undertake the rites of monastic ordination as outlined above, pulling out their hair, removing their clothing, taking the vows, receiving *mantras* from their *guru* and a water pot (*kamaṇḍalu*), broom (*picchikā*), and scripture (*śāstra*) from the lay community.

³² The key difference between the performance in Kekri and the prescriptions in *Vimal Bhakti Saṃgrah* was the use of substances. Ācārya Vairāgyanandī and his fellow monks used only mixtures of sandalwood paste and cloves to impart the vows and *mantras*, and did not use flowers, ash, cow products, blades of *dūrvā* grass, etc.

³³ On this diagram, also known as the *Śāntinātha Maṇḍala Vidhāna*, see CORT 2008: 146–155.

The diversity of rites undertaken in the above outlines – from the worship of the Ring of Disciples to the final day of ordination – shows how this Digambara ceremony, like every ritual, did not emerge as a coherent whole, but is instead a product of a variety of historical developments and agendas. In these rituals, we can see multiple layers. We can see the extravagant, communal rites such as the procession around town and the ladies' *saṅgīta* that show off and celebrate renunciation as the ultimate event in the life of a Jain. Performing ceremonies usually associated with the most celebrated life event, a wedding, by dressing the initiands in expensive garments and decorating their bodies with henna establishes renunciation as the life event whose celebration should usurp all others. On top of these communal rites, the fundamental acts of monastic renunciation performed on the final day – pulling out one's hair, taking the vows of a mendicant, and standing on stage in front of hundreds of laypeople in a meditative posture (*kāyotsarga*) and removing one's clothes – constitute another ascetic layer of the rite. There are also acts of great devotion, such as the recitation of the Bhaktis. At the same time, the ceremony also contains key components of Tantric initiation: the construction of a *maṇḍala* preceding the initiation proper, and the imparting of *mantras* from the *guru* to initiand. Digambaras do, then, enshrine collectivity through their initiation rites. Through the use of ascetic, devotional, and Tantric ritual elements, they establish fundamental connections between *guru* and disciple, *gaṇadhara* and modern *muni*, and layperson and mendicant. How were all these elements incorporated into modern Digambara *dīkṣā* ceremonies? We can answer this question by moving chronologically through Jain texts, searching for the components of modern Digambara initiation ceremonies.

Early Jain sources on mendicant initiation

The earliest account of Digambara initiation may be found in Kundakunda's Prakrit text the "Essence of the Teachings," the *Pravacanasāra*, which likely dates to the first half of the first millennium and must have been composed before the eighth century.³⁴ The beginning of the third chapter dedicated to mendicant duties briefly describes the process of renouncing the world:

³⁴ For some datings of Kundakunda to between the first and third centuries CE, see UPADHYE 1935: 10–16. For a placement of him in the eighth century, see DHAKY 1991.

Having again and again honoured the enlightened souls (Skt. *siddha*), the mighty, supreme Jinās, and the monks (Skt. *muni*), if he desires release from suffering, may he become a monk, having taken leave of all his relatives, having been let go by elders, his wife and children, and being intent on the cultivation of knowledge, faith, conduct, austerities, and power (Skt. *vīrya*).³⁵

He prostrates himself before a monk (Skt. *śramaṇa*) who is the head of a mendicant group (Skt. *gaṇin*), fixed in virtues, endowed with distinctive family, form, and age, and honoured by mendicants, saying “Admit me,” and he is accepted into the mendicant order.³⁶

I do not belong to others, nor do others belong to me; there is nothing that is mine here: thus determined and conquering his senses, he adopts a form similar to that in which he was born [i.e., nudity] (Skt. *yathājātarūpadhara*).³⁷

The [external] mark [of a Jain monk] consists in possessing a form in which one is born (being nude), in pulling out the hair on one’s head and face, in being pure, in being devoid of violence, etc., and in not attending to the body (Skt. *apratikarman*). The [internal]³⁸ mark [of a Jain monk], which is the cause of freedom from rebirth, consists in being free from infatuation and preliminary sins, in being endowed with purity of manifestation of consciousness and activities, and in having no desire for anything else.³⁹

³⁵ PraSār III.1–2: *evaṃ paṇamiya siddhe jīṇavaravasahe puṇo puṇo samaṇe | paḍivajjadu sāmaṇṇaṃ jadi icchadi dukkhaparimokkhaṃ || āpiccha baṇdhugaggaṃ vimocido gurukalattaputtehiṃ | āsijja nāṇadaṃsaṇacarittatavavīriyāyāraṃ ||*

³⁶ PraSār III.3: *samaṇaṃ gaṇiṃ guṇaḍḍhaṃ kulaṛūvavayovisiṭṭhamiṭṭhadaraṃ | samaṇehi taṃ pi paṇado paḍiccha maṃ cedi aṇugahido ||*

³⁷ PraSār III.4: *nāhaṃ homi paresiṃ na me pare ṇatthi majjhamiha kiṃci | idi ṇicchido jidiṃdo jādo jadhaḍḍarūvadharo ||*

³⁸ The twelfth-century commentator Jayasena understands the first “*liṅgaṃ*” of this verse to be the *dravyaliṅgaṃ*, and the second the *bhāvaliṅgaṃ* (Sanskrit text in UPADHYE 1935: 279).

³⁹ PraSār III.5–6: *jadhajādarūvajādaṃ uppāḍidakesamaṃsugaṃ suddhaṃ | ra-hidaṃ hiṃsāḍḍido uppāḍikammaṃ havadi liṅgaṃ || mucchāraṃbhavimukkaṃ juttaṃ uvajogajogasuddhiṃ | liṅgaṃ na parāvekkhaṃ apuṇavbhavakāraṇaṃ jainaṃ ||*

Having adopted [these] mark[s] at the hands of an excellent *guru*, having bowed before him, and having heard the course of duties consisting of vows, when one begins to practice [these vows], he becomes a monk (Skt. *śramaṇa*).⁴⁰

The next verse, *Pravacanasāra* 8.8, which outline the 28 root qualities of a mendicant, from accepting the five vows to eating only once a day, is recited to this day as part of modern Digambara initiation ceremonies (see above). These 28 qualities, which stress asceticism, were likely formulated quite early, with one of the earliest Digambara texts on mendicant conduct, the *Mūlācāra* (ca. second to fifth century CE),⁴¹ also identifying the same 28 *mūlaguṇas* of a monk.⁴²

Early Digambara sources do not provide any more information about the performance of renunciation. Śvetāmbara canonical texts (*āgama*) from the first few centuries CE,⁴³ however, do give us some descriptions of the initial entrance into a mendicant group that may shed light on the practices undertaken by members of both of these sects, especially since the distinction between Digambara and Śvetāmbara may not have been formally fixed at this early stage. Narrative accounts of the initial entrance into a mendicant group (*pravrajyā*) from Śvetāmbara Āgamas such as the *Bhagavatīsūtra* (BhS) and the *Jñātādharmakathā* (Jñā) suggest that there was at that time a somewhat formalised ritual of renunciation. The majority of these accounts describe how the initiands face the northeast, ritually pull out their hair, remove their clothes and ornaments, and approach a senior

⁴⁰ PraSār III.7: *ādāya taṃ pi liṅgaṃ guruṇā parmeṇaṃ taṃ ṇamaṃsittā | soccā savadaṃ kiriyaṃ uvaṭṭhido hodi so samaṇo ||*. The translation above is adapted from the one found in UPADHYE ²1935: 405–406.

⁴¹ The common dating of the *Mūlācāra* to the second century (see, e.g., CORT 2002: 72; JAINI 1991: 46) is not confirmed, but evidence suggests that the text is quite old. The seventh chapter of this text is understood to be an earlier version of the Śvetāmbara *Āvaśyakaniryukti* attributed to Bhadrabāhu (see LEUMANN 2010: 44–58). Based on *paṭṭāvalī*s, LEUMANN (2010: 78) places the earliest possible date for the completion of the *Āvaśyakaniryukti* at 80 CE. OHIRA (1994: 11, 163) argues that the majority of the contents of the present-day *Āvaśyakaniryukti*, after a long period of development, were codified between the first and fifth centuries CE. We can thus place the *Mūlācāra* in the first half of the first millennium, and parts may, indeed, date to the second century CE.

⁴² For the entire list of these 28 *mūlaguṇas*, see Mūl vv. 2–3.

⁴³ For these dates, I rely on the “canonical stages” proposed in OHIRA 1994: 1–39.

mendicant, circumambulating him three times and expressing the intent to renounce using a standard formula found in multiple texts.

The *Jñātādharmakathā* contains a lengthy description of the renunciation of Prince Megha (Pkt. Meha), who decides to renounce into the mendicant order of the twenty-fourth Tīrthāṅkara, Mahāvīra. In this account, Prince Megha has his hair cut to the length of four fingers, is ritually bathed with gold and silver pots, and is paraded through the city in a palanquin. Facing east, the prince sits in the palanquin with his mother and his nurse, who carries the two symbols of a Śvetāmbara monk – a broom (Pkt. *ra-yaharaṇa*) and an alms bowl (Pkt. *paḍiggaha*)⁴⁴ – which were bought from a shop and to be gifted to the prince upon his renunciation. After reaching a temple outside the city of Rājagṛha (Pkt. Rāyagiha), the prince stands to the northeast of Mahāvīra, removes his clothes and ornaments (Pkt. *ābharaṇamallālaṃkāraṃ omuyai*), pulls out his hair in five fistfuls (Pkt. *paṃcamuṭṭhiyaṃ loyaṃ karei*), and makes three circumambulations of Mahāvīra. While circumambulating, he recites an intention to renounce found in several sources⁴⁵ and that includes a description of the state of the world as ablaze with the fire of decay and death, a statement of faith in the Jain teachings, and a declared desire to have one's hair pulled out and to accept the ascetic way of life.⁴⁶ The key rite of renunciation in this and other early Jain accounts seems to be the moment of pulling out one's hair. While the general Prakrit term for pulling out one's hair is *muṇḍāvaṇa*, the specific rite performed at renunciation is known as “pulling out of five fistfuls of hair” (*paṃcamuṭṭhiyaṃ loyaṃ karaṇa*), and this phrase is often used as shorthand for renunciation.

In these accounts from the *Jñātādharmakathā* and the *Pravacanasāra*, we can see the celebratory and ascetic components of modern Digambara initiations. We see the procession around town of the initiand that promotes these Jain ideals to the larger community, proclaiming renunciation as the ideal undertaking. We also see the ascetic core of the rite: the removal of

⁴⁴ Jñā 1.143.

⁴⁵ Jñā 1.159. For this same statement of intent to renounce, see also BhS 2.1.34, 9.32.16, and 9.32.17.

⁴⁶ Jñā 1.140–159. For a more detailed summary of Megha's renunciation, see DEO 1956: 142. This story seems to have been drawn from a template for royal initiations, as King Śailaka's initiation in Jñā 5.53–57 is described in essentially the same way as King Megha's. BhS 9.33.21–82 also contains a lengthy description of the renunciation of Prince Jamālī that parallels the renunciations of royalty described in the *Jñātādharmakathā*.

clothes, the pulling out of one's hair, the gifting of the insignia of a mendicant, and an *ācārya*'s acceptance of a disciple. These components belong to the earliest layer of the rite, found in texts from the first few centuries of the first millennium.

The medieval tantricisation of Jain mendicant initiation

In medieval texts, we begin to see the rites of renunciation change. Published medieval Digambara texts do not provide a full account of the rituals involved in mendicant initiation, but we can gain some ideas about these ceremonies from a few descriptions of rituals that are modelled on mendicant initiations. The first is an account of lay initiation (*upāsakadīkṣā*) found in Ācārya Jinasena's *Ādipurāṇa* (ĀP), a ninth-century universal history structured around the life story of the first Tīrthankara, Ṛṣabha (Ādinātha). Because Jinasena was a converted Vaiṣṇava Brahmin, multiple scholars have noted the "Hinduisation" of Jain rituals in the *Ādipurāṇa*, in particular the fortieth chapter, which outlines 16 life-cycle rites (*saṃskāra*) for "Jain brahmins" (JAINI 1979: 292–304; DUNDAS 1998: 35). Jinasena likely had access to knowledge about non-Jain Tantric traditions, since he was employed in the court of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Amoghavarṣa (r. 814–880). While Amoghavarṣa himself supported Jain endeavours, there was certainly acceptance of non-Jain, especially Śaiva, Tantric sects by Rāṣṭrakūṭa kings before, after, and around his time (ALTEKAR 1934: 19–23).⁴⁷

Chapter 38 of the *Ādipurāṇa* describes how Bharata, Ṛṣabha's son and the universal emperor (*cakravartin*), having established himself as king in his capital, Ayodhyā, lectures his subjects on the proper ritual actions of a lay Jain. In this narrative, Bharata insists that a twice-born, or a Brahmin, has two births: one from his mother, and another from ritual actions.⁴⁸ A true twice-born performs 108 rites: 53 rituals related to birth (*garbhānvayakriyā*), 48 rituals related to initiation (*dīkṣānvayakriyā*), and

⁴⁷ NANDI (1973: 76–78) has drawn upon epigraphic evidence to document the flourishing of Āgamic Śaiva monastic institutions in the areas of Central and South India where Rāṣṭrakūṭa kings ruled from the eighth to tenth centuries.

⁴⁸ Bharata emphasises that a person who does not perform the proper ritual actions and recite the proper *mantras* is a twice-born in name only (ĀP 38.48: *dvir jāto hi dvijanmeṣṭaḥ kriyāto garbhataḥ ca yaḥ | kriyāmantravihīnas tu kevalaṃ nāma-dhārakaḥ ||*).

the seven “fruition” acts that occur only because of the fruition of meritorious acts (*kartranvayakriyā*).⁴⁹

For the purpose of our discussion, chapter 39, which outlines 19 of the 48 ritual acts (*kriyā*) that a Jain should perform to lead one towards *dīkṣā* (*dīkṣānvayakriyā*), is key. In essence, the *dīkṣānvaya* rituals outline Jinasena’s understanding of the process of converting to Jainism. They include the rites for accepting the Jain teachings, removing false gods from one’s home, and other rituals that lead up to renunciation (*dīkṣā*), which is referred to as the rite of removing one’s clothes or “taking the form of the Jina” (*jinarūpitākriyā*) (ĀP 39.78). While Jinasena does not give the particulars of the rites involved in *munidīkṣā*, his brief outline of the rituals for an initiation of a layperson, or an *upāsakadīkṣā*, is likely modelled on contemporaneous mendicant initiations.

This lay initiation is called “gaining a place [in the Jain community],” *sthānalābha*, and is listed as the third *dīkṣānvaya* ritual one should undertake on one’s path to renunciation, after the first rite, “descent [into the right path]” (*avatāra*), in which the aspirant is compelled by a worthy teacher’s sermon to follow the true teaching and reject false teachings, and the second rite, “adopting right conduct” (*ṛttalābha*), in which the aspirant who has approached a teacher to take an unspecified group of vows (*vratavrāta*) bows before the *guru*.⁵⁰ Jinasena prescribes that after one accepts a *guru* and the Jain teachings in this way, experts should construct one of two types of colored ritual diagrams inside a pure Jain temple (*jinālaya*) using finely ground powder (*cūrṇa*) mixed with either water or sandalwood paste etc. They should construct either an eight-petalled lotus or a representation of the Jina’s Preaching Assembly (*samavasaraṇa*), in which a newly enlightened Jina sits on a divinely made throne, surrounded by all the beings of the universe seated in concentric circles who have gathered to hear the teachings on the truths of life and death. The diagram should be worshiped, and the mendicant head (*sūri*), according to ritual prescription, should have the initiand enter (the *maṇḍala*) facing the icon of the Jina (presumably placed at the centre of the diagram).

Touching the head of the disciple, he should pronounce, “This is your lay initiation (*upāsakadīkṣā*).”⁵¹ Having touched the initiand’s head accord-

⁴⁹ For a list of these 108 rites, see ĀP 38.51–62.

⁵⁰ ĀP 39.36: *tato 'sya ṛttalābhah syāt tadaiva gurupādayoḥ | pranatasya vrata-vrātaṃ *vidhānenopaseduṣaḥ* (em. *vidhānenupaleduṣaḥ* ed.) ||.

⁵¹ ĀP 39.38–41: *jinālaye śucau raṅge padmam aṣṭadalaṃ likhet | vilikhet vā jina-sthānamaṇḍalaṃ samavṛttakam || ślakṣeṇa piṣṭacūrṇeṇa salilāloḍiteṇa vā | vartanaṃ*

ing to the procedure of the rite of “pulling out five fistfuls of hair” and having said, “You are purified by means of this *dīkṣā*,” the *guru*, pronouncing, “By this *mantra*, all of your bad *karma* (*pāpa*) is purified,” should teach him the *pañcanamaskāra**mantra*.⁵² Above, we saw how modern Digambaras impart a Sanskrit version of this *mantra* at the time of the *guru*’s pulling out of the disciple’s hair, but this text presumably refers to the original version of the *mantra*, which is a Prakrit litany to the Five Supreme Lords of Jainism that is first found as an auspicious benediction (*maṅgala*) at the start of a text on *karma* theory dated to the first half of the first millennium, the “Scripture of Six Parts,” the *Ṣaṭkhaṇḍāgama* (ŚkhĀ).⁵³

Praise to the enlightened beings, praise to the liberated beings,
praise to the mendicant leaders, praise to the mendicant teachers,
praise to all mendicants in the world.⁵⁴

Having been taught this *mantra*, the initiate is then allowed to break his fast and return home,⁵⁵ where he should expel the icons of false gods (*mithyādevatā*) from his house, taking them elsewhere.⁵⁶ In the next step, he is to

maṇḍalasyeṣṭaṃ candanādidravaṇa vā || tasminn aṣṭadale padme jaine vā’*’sthāna-maṇḍale | vidhinā likhite tajiñair viṣvaviracitārcane || jinārcābhīmukhaṃ sūrī vidhinaināṃ niveśayet | tavopāsakadīkṣeyam iti mūrdhni muhuḥ sprśan ||*

⁵² ĀP 39.40–43: *pañcamuṣṭivīdhānena sprṣṭvainaṃ adhimastakam | pūto ’sī dīkṣayety uktvā siddhaśeṣā ca lambhayet || tataḥ pañcanamaskārapadāny asmā upādiśet | mantrō ’yam akhilāt pāpāt tvām punitādiṭṭṛayan ||*. The text here that reads “*siddhaśeṣā ca lambhayet*” is not clear, so I have avoided summarising it above. However, as we saw in the description of the *dīkṣā* from 2013, and as we will see below in discussions of medieval texts, recitations of certain praise poems called Bhaktis are key components of *dīkṣās*, and the Siddhabhakti is recited at the time of the pulling out of the initiate’s hair. I hypothesise, then, that this unusual term (*siddhaśeṣā*) could be a bahuvrīhi compound referring to the Bhaktis, of which the remaining is the *siddha*. The text could be instructing the *guru* to cause the recitation of the *Siddhabhakti*. I thank Phyllis Granoff for this suggestion.

⁵³ Scholars have hypothesised a variety of dates for the ŚkhĀ, from the first century BCE to the sixth century CE. For a good overview of the debate, see WILEY 2008: 57, n. 36.

⁵⁴ ŚkhĀ 1.1.: *ṇamo arihaṃtāṇaṃ ṇamo siddhāṇaṃ ṇamo āriyāṇaṃ | ṇamo uvajjhāyāṇaṃ ṇamo loe savvasāhūṇaṃ ||*

⁵⁵ ĀP 39.44: *kṛtvā vidhim imaṃ paścāt pāraṇāya visarjayet | guror anugrahāt so ’pi saṃprītaḥ svagrhaṃ vrajat ||*

⁵⁶ On this rite, known as the *gaṇagrahakriyā*, see ĀP 39.45–48.

perform Jain rites (the *pūjārādhyakriyā*) such as fasting, temple worship, and listening to the meanings of the Jain scriptures (*aṅga*).⁵⁷

After outlining 19 of the 48 rites that lead to initiation, the text describes the seven “fruition acts” (*kartranvayakriyā*) that chart the progression of a soul from birth as a man to eventual liberation: (1) birth as a human male in a good family (*sajjāti*), (2) being an honourable householder (*sadgrhitva*), (3) initiating as a monk (*pārivrājya*), (4) rebirth as a god (*surendratā*), (5) subsequent birth as a universal emperor (*sāmrājya*), (6) becoming enlightened (*ārhanṭya*), and (7) achieving liberation (*nirvṛtti*) (ĀP 39.82–211). Here, in the verses on initiating as a monk, the term for renunciation used in early Digambara texts, *pārivrājya*, is glossed as “liberating initiation,” or *nirvāṇadīkṣā*. It is further described, recalling the *Pravacanasāra*, as adopting one’s appearance at birth (*jātarūpa*), i.e., nudity.⁵⁸ The text emphasises that a person who desires to be liberated (a *mumukṣu*) must approach a Jain mendicant leader, an *ācārya*, on an auspicious day and at an auspicious time, to undertake this *dīkṣā*.⁵⁹ Other than this remark, the remaining description of *munidīkṣā* does not provide any information about the rituals involved in renouncing.

While the *Ādipurāṇa* thus does not provide us with a detailed description of the renunciation of a monk, its discussions of initiations hint at the “tantrification” of Digambara *dīkṣā*, as several aspects of the *upāsaka* and *muni dīkṣā*s echo contemporaneous non-Jain Tantric initiations. To begin with, Jināsena’s renaming of *pārivrājya* as *nirvāṇadīkṣā* suggests a correspondence with Tantric traditions such as the Śaiva Mantramārga, whose members use this very term for their highest level of initiation.⁶⁰ The *upāsakadīkṣā* outlined by Jināsena also includes a key component of Tantric initiations scholars familiar with the Pāñcarātra, Śaiva Siddhānta, and other Tantric initiations will immediately recognise: the construction of a

⁵⁷ ĀP 39.49: *pūjārādhyākhyayā khyātā kriyā’sya syād ataḥ parā | pūjopavāsa-sampattyā śṛṇvato ’ṅgārthasaṃgraham ||*

⁵⁸ ĀP 39.156: *pārivrājyaṃ parivrājo bhāvo nirvāṇadīkṣaṇam | tatra nirmamatā vṛtṭyā jātarūpasya dharaṇam ||*

⁵⁹ ĀP 39.157: *praśastatithinakṣatrayogalagna[muhūrtaḥ] grahāṃśake | nirgranthācāryam āśṛitya dīkṣā grāhyā mumukṣuṇā ||*

⁶⁰ For a good overview of the different types of initiation found in the Śaiva Āgamas, the three initiations (*samaya*, *viśeṣa*, and *nirvāṇa*) codified in later ritual manuals (*paddhati*), and the levels of initiate (*sādhaka*, *ācārya*), see BHATT 1977: xviii–xxiii. For an overview of Pāñcarātra initiation rites and levels, see GUPTA 1983: 69–91.

maṇḍala.⁶¹ In addition, readers might be reminded of non-Jain Tantric initiations when they read about the principle that *mantras* destroy *karma*. Quoting from the sixth chapter of the *Kiraṇāgama*, Alexis Sanderson has described how in the *nirvāṇadīkṣā* of the Śaiva Mantramārga, the *mantras* “are the immediate agents by which the fetters are destroyed” (SANDERSON 1992: 286). The construction of a ritual diagram and the usage of a *karma*-destroying *mantra* are thus two components of the *Ādipurāṇa*’s descriptions of initiation not found in early Jain outlines of renunciation but found in medieval non-Jain Tantric texts.

The *Ādipurāṇa*’s discussion of lay and mendicant initiations is not, however, a mere adoption of Śaiva Tantric ritual culture. It is, in many ways, exceptionally Jain. Jinasena has expertly combined early Jain teachings with medieval ritual developments. Firstly, he transforms the Jina’s Preaching Assembly (*samavasaraṇa*) into an initiation *maṇḍala*. The *samavasaraṇa*, in which the entire universe surrounds the newly enlightened Jina in concentric circles to hear him preach, is depicted in Jain texts and art from the early centuries CE,⁶² and in the medieval period this preaching assembly became the ideal diagram to be used in Tantric rites such as *dīkṣā*.⁶³

Jinasena’s description of the *guru*’s imparting of the *pañcanamaskāra-mantra*, said to destroy all bad *karma*, also draws upon earlier Jain teachings and practices. This idea that the *pañcanamaskāra* destroys bad *karma* is found in the above-mentioned Digambara text on mendicant conduct dated to the first few centuries CE, the *Mūlācāra*, which uses the *pañcanamaskāra* as a *maṅgala* – an auspicious start to the text – and declares that “this five-fold praise destroys all bad *karma* and is the foremost *maṅgala* of all *maṅgalas*.”⁶⁴ Jinasena thus relies upon an old Jain understanding of the

⁶¹ For the construction of *maṇḍalas* in Śaiva initiation ceremonies, see TÖRZSÖK 2003: 179–224.

⁶² For some of the early textual accounts of the *samavasaraṇa*, see SHAH 1955: 85–95 and BALBIR 1994: 67–104. For a recent discussion of the *samavasaraṇa* in both Digambara and Śvetāmbara art, see HEGEWALD 2010: 1–20.

⁶³ See, for example, the second chapter of the *Pañcāśakaprakaraṇa* (PP) by the eighth-century Haribhadra, which outlines the *dīkṣāvidhi* in which an initiand, blindfolded, should throw a flower onto a diagram of the Preaching Assembly in order to determine his worthiness for renunciation and his future birth placement (PP 2.16–29).

⁶⁴ Mūl 514: *eso pañcanamoyāro savvapāvapaṇāsano | maṅgalesu ya savvesu paḍamaṃ havadi maṅgalaṃ ||*.

power of sound to develop a Tantric rite of initiation. Indeed, of all the so-called “Tantric” initiations that emerged in the medieval period, this Digambara version may have the most coherent genealogy of the soteriological function of ritual utterances.

This genealogy continues into the present day, because, as noted above, modern Digambara *ācāryas* pronounce the *pañcanamaskāra* when they complete the pulling out of the initiand’s hair. This parallel between the lay initiation described in the ninth-century *Ādipurāṇa* and modern mendicant initiations suggests that Jinasena’s *upāsakadīkṣā* was modelled on a mendicant initiation. By the ninth century, it is likely that mendicant initiations, like this lay initiation, had been tantricised in ways that persist to this day. Unfortunately, few medieval Digambara texts provide evidence for this claim. The other medieval mentions of *dīkṣā* in texts of prominent Digambara monks who followed Jinasena shed no light on the medieval ritual use of *maṇḍalas* and *mantras* in Digambara *dīkṣā* ceremonies. Instead, they focus on the recitation of praise poems called Bhaktis.

Emphasising devotion: the medieval silence on the tantricisation of initiation

Published pre-modern Digambara accounts of the initiation of a mendicant (*munidīkṣā*) suggest that it was appropriate for monks to emphasise the ascetic components of *dīkṣā* and to outline the praises to Jain ideals recited in these ceremonies, but little else could be discussed. As research stands now, there are two known coherent⁶⁵ accounts of the rituals involved in *munidīkṣā* in medieval Digambara texts: Cāmuṇḍarāya’s “Essence of Correct Conduct,” the *Cāritrasāra* (ca. 1000), and Āśādhara’s “Nectar of Righteous Conduct for a Mendicant,” the *Anagāradharmāmṛta* composed in 1240. Both of these texts focus mostly on which of the hymns called “Devotions,” Bhaktis, should be recited for different parts of initiation.

The exact history of these Bhaktis is not known, though they feature in most Digambara lay and mendicant rituals today. Compilations of these recitations will group them into two sets of hymns called “Ten Bhaktis,” one set of Prakrit praise poems attributed to the Digambara monk Kundakunda who, as noted above, can be placed in the first half of the first

⁶⁵ The only other known published Digambara *dīkṣāvidhi* in a pre-modern source, five verses in *Vidyānuśāsana* (VA), pp. 263–264, is too cryptic and corrupt to examine at this point.

millennium, and another set of ten Sanskrit Bhaktis attributed to the Digambara monk Pūjyapāda, who can be placed in the seventh century.⁶⁶ Pūjyapāda and Kundakunda likely did not compose these recitations, however, and the number and names of Bhaktis in various sources are not uniform, nor is the content of the recitations. Many contemporary lists of the so-called “Ten Bhaktis” contain more than ten hymns.⁶⁷ A serious study of the history and contents of these praises is desperately needed, but for now we will just note that descriptions of Digambara *dīkṣā* ceremonies from the eleventh and thirteenth centuries focus mostly on the recitation of these praises, and little else.

After Jinasena’s *Ādipurāṇa*, the next published account of a Digambara *dīkṣā* is found in a Sanskrit text composed by Cāmuṇḍarāya, a disciple of Jinasena. Despite being a disciple of the monk who revealed that Digambara Jains likely used *maṇḍalas* and *mantras* in their mendicant initiations, Cāmuṇḍarāya says nothing of the use of these ritual components in his manual on lay and mendicant conduct, the “Essence of Conduct,” the *Cāritrasāra* (ca. 1000). Cāmuṇḍarāya does, however, describe two stages of renunciation: (1) leaving the world to join a mendicant order (*saṃnyāsa*), and (2) the initiation (*dīkṣā*), which is characterised by pulling out one’s hair. He also outlines the promotion to the rank of mendicant leader (*ācārya*), but for all of these rites Cāmuṇḍarāya remains silent on “Tantric” topics, focusing mostly on when to recite certain Bhaktis.

At the beginning of the ceremony for renunciation (*saṃnyāsa*), Cāmuṇḍarāya explains, one should recite the *Siddhabhakti* praising the liberated soul. One should then listen to teachings (*vācanā*) and then recite the *Sūribhakti* and the *Śrutabhakti*, in praise of the mendicant leader and

⁶⁶ For the best (if brief) introduction to the Bhaktis, see UPADHYE §1935: xxvi–xxix. LEUMANN (2010: 6–15) examines the Bhaktis as found in different manuscripts of Prabhācandra’s sixteenth-century commentary on the *Kriyākālāpa*. CORT 2016 has examined a Sanskrit and Prakrit version of the *Yogibhakti*.

⁶⁷ Thirteen different Bhaktis are listed by SHĀNTĀ 1997: 654–655. These are: Siddhabhakti, Cāritrabhakti, Yogibhakti, Ācāryabhakti, Pañcagurubhakti, Tīrthaṅkarabhakti, Śāntibhakti, Samādhibhakti, Nirvāṇabhakti, Caityabhakti, Nandīśvarabhakti, and Virabhakti. Twelve Bhaktis are listed as the “Ten Sanskrit Bhaktis,” (*saṃskṛt das bhaktiyām*) in KĀMAKUMĀRANANDĪ 2009: xiv–xv. These Sanskrit Bhaktis are listed as: Arhadbhakti, Siddhabhakti, Caityabhakti, Śrutabhakti, Cāritrabhakti, Yogibhakti, Ācāryabhakti, Pañcamahāgurubhakti, Śāntibhakti, Samādhibhakti, Nirvāṇabhakti, and Nandīśvarabhakti. In this same compilation, seven Bhaktis are listed as the “Ten Prakrit Bhaktis” (*prākṛt das bhaktiyām*): Siddhabhakti, Śrutabhakti, Cāritrabhakti, Yogabhakti, Ācāryabhakti, and Pañcamahāgurubhakti.

the scriptures, respectively. At the completion of studying (*svādhyāya*), one should recite the *Śrutabhakti*. Then, when the initiate finishes delivering a sermon, he should recite the *Śāntibhakti* in praise of the Jina Śānti, an appropriate pacification rite at the end of the ceremony to ensure a positive outcome of the ritual. After spending some time living as a monk, performing the required duties such as confession (*pratikramaṇa*), study (*svādhyāya*), and the practice of *yoga*, one should undertake *dīkṣā*. For this rite, when pulling out one's hair (*luñcana*), one should recite the *Siddhabhakti* and the *Yogibhakti* in praise of correct conduct and austerities. When all of one's hair has been pulled out, the monk should recite the *Siddhabhakti*, listen to a lecture by the *guru*, recite the *Ācāryabhakti*, praise the *ācārya*, and then recite the *Siddhabhakti* (CS, pp. 148–150).⁶⁸

The account of mendicant initiation and promotion in one of the most well-known Digambara guides to mendicant conduct, the Sanskrit text *Anagāradharmāmṛta* (published as *Dharmāmṛtānagāra*; DhA), composed in 1240 by one of the most influential Digambara scholars, Paṇḍita Āśādhara, a layman who lived in the Paramara Kingdom, Malwa, also focuses mostly on when to recite certain Bhaktis. In this text, a single Sanskrit verse describes initiation. Āśādhara describes how when one receives the symbols of renunciation – pulling out one's hair (*luñca*), receiving a new name, becoming naked, and receiving a broom – one should recite the *Siddhabhakti* and the *Yogibhakti*. Upon the completion of the rite, the *Siddhabhakti* should be recited.⁶⁹

It is difficult to form a complete understanding of the historical development of the use of the Bhaktis in initiations by comparing the accounts in the texts of Cāmuṇḍarāya and Āśādhara with the modern manual outlined above, the *Vimal Bhakti Saṃgrah*. While modern Digambaras use Sanskrit versions of the Bhaktis published in the sources listed above, it is not clear

⁶⁸ Cāmuṇḍarāya then describes promotion to the rank of mendicant leader. After spending some time as a monk (*sādhu*), with the command of the *guru*, humble (*vinīta*) and virtuous (*dharmasīla*) candidates who have been designated as appropriate to become an *ācārya* should, in the presence of the *guru*, recite the *Siddhabhakti* and the *Ācāryabhakti*. To complete the ceremonial promotion to the rank of mendicant leader, the monk should recite the *Śāntibhakti* (CS, p. 152).

⁶⁹ The promotion to the rank of mendicant leader (*ācārya*) is also described with just one verse. Āśādhara says that a monk whose virtues shine (*sphuradguṇa*), having recited the *Siddhabhakti* and the *Ācāryabhakti*, at the auspicious time, with the permission of his *guru*, should be promoted to the rank of *ācārya* and then recite the *Śāntibhakti* (DhA 9.83).

what the contents of the praises were in the medieval period, or whether Cāmuṇḍarāya and Āśādhara were referring to Sanskrit or Prakrit Bhaktis. However, there does seem to be some continuity between these three accounts. Āśādhara was aware of Cāmuṇḍarāya's text, as his own commentary on the *Anagāradharmāmṛta* the *Jñānadīpikā*, composed in 1243/44, cites the *Cāritrasāra* when explaining the meaning of the verse on the promotion of an *ācārya* (DhA 9.75). And the modern manual seems to have continued the tradition of these medieval accounts, as it, too, structures the *dīkṣā* around the recitation of certain Bhaktis and prescribes that the *Siddhabhakti* should be recited when the initiate's hair is pulled out. Reciting praises to a liberated soul at the moment when one undertakes the required action to become that liberated soul – ascetic renunciation – highlights the purpose of this ritual action.

From the accounts of Āśādhara and Cāmuṇḍarāya, therefore, we can reason that along with the early ascetic components, the “devotional” layer of modern renunciation ceremonies, for lack of a better term, was also present by the medieval period. Not much else can be deduced from these accounts, however. If we were to base our analysis on these three known pre-modern outlines of Digambara initiation – the accounts of Jinasena, Cāmuṇḍarāya, and Āśādhara – we might be left thinking that the fundamental acts of initiation are the recitation of hymns of praise. The only evidence about Digambaras' uses of *maṇḍalas* and *mantras* in mendicant initiation would come from a single text, the *Ādipurāṇa*, that clearly has been influenced by non-Jain traditions. There would be no way to confirm whether or not Jinasena's account in the *Ādipurāṇa* was just an idiosyncratic account, so we could not confirm whether or not medieval Digambaras used *mantras* and *maṇḍalas* in mendicant initiations. Thankfully, however, there are other medieval sources for information on Digambara *dīkṣā*: manuals on the consecration and establishment (*pratiṣṭhā*) of temple images (*bimba*, *pratimā*, etc.).

The initiation of a monk as depicted in image consecration rites

Of Digambara published sources, manuals on *pratiṣṭhā* provide some of the best clues about the details of medieval mendicant initiations, because they not only embed the initiation of a monk into the consecration of a temple image of a Jina, they also model parts of the consecration ceremony on a *dīkṣā*. By looking at two of these texts from the thirteenth century, Nemican-

dra's *Pratiṣṭhātilaka* (PrT) and Āśādhara's *Pratiṣṭhāsāroddhāra* (PrSā), we can find medieval roots of three of the Tantric components of the modern Digambara *dīkṣā* ceremony outlined above: the recitation of the *vardhamānāmantra*, the imparting of the rites of passage (*samskāra*), and the construction of the *maṇḍala* called the Ring of Disciples. In these manuals, transforming an inert material to the physical presence of the Jina requires ritual specialists to use the stone or metal representations of the Jinās to reenact the five auspicious events (*pañcakalyāṇaka*) in the life of the Jina: (1) conception (*garbha*), (2) birth (*janman*), (3) renunciation (*dīkṣā/tapas/niṣkrāma*), (4) omniscience or enlightenment (*kevalajñāna*), and (5) death and liberation (*mokṣa*). Because the medieval authors of these texts prescribed the same rites for the icon of the Jina that were performed on humans, focusing on these texts' descriptions of the third auspicious event (*dīkṣā*) sheds light on the tantricisation of this ceremony in this period.

To this day, ritual specialists performing rites for Bīṣapanthīs, members of the Digambara tradition more popular in South India, follow Nemicandra's *Pratiṣṭhātilaka* in image consecration ceremonies. Nemicandra composed his manual in Kanchipuram, Tamil Nadu, around 1200, towards the end of the rule of the Coḷa kings, who were famous for undertaking massive temple-building projects based on the prescriptions of Śaiva Saiddhāntika texts (NAGASWAMY n.d.). As such, Nemicandra's manual, like other Digambara *pratiṣṭhā* handbooks, aligns with these Tantric sources in many ways. The first thirteen verses of the tenth chapter of Nemicandra's *Pratiṣṭhātilaka* outline all the rites involved in what it terms the *niṣkrāmaṇakalyāṇaka*, or the rite in which the temple icons being consecrated are made to renounce the world. On the ninth day of the image consecration ceremony,⁷⁰ the *pūjā* of a ritual diagram called the *yāgamaṇḍala* should be performed, and the Jina icon should be established in front of the diagram. Lay worshipers representing gods should sing praises, taking the Jina to a pavilion established for the initiation ceremony (*dīkṣāmaṇḍapa*), and seating the icon below a representation of a tree, where it should be bathed, worshiped, ornamented, and rubbed with ointments (PrT 10.1–4, p. 234). Then the *vardhamānāmantra* should be pronounced seven times, and married women (*saubhāgyavati*) should perform a lamp offering to the icon (PrT 10.5, p. 234).⁷¹ After offerings are made to the icon, it is taken to a rep-

⁷⁰ Eight days after the completion of the purification rites and establishment of the ritual space on the first day of the ceremony (*aṅkurārpaṇādi*, the establishment of pots of grains, etc.) (PrT 10.1, p. 234).

⁷¹ For another mention of the *vardhamānāmantra*, see PrT 10.8, p. 236.

resentation of a forest on a palanquin (PrT 10.5, p. 234). The Jina should then take *dīkṣā*: his hair should be pulled out and worshiped by laypeople representing gods (*indra*), his clothes are to be removed and worshiped, and four lamps should be lit in order to symbolise the Jina's attainment of the fourth type of knowledge, clairvoyance (*manaḥparyāya*) (PrT 10.9–11, p. 234).⁷²

The above summary of the *dīkṣā* ceremony for the Jina icon provides further evidence that some of the Tantric elements in the modern Digambara ceremony in Kekri had already in the medieval period been integrated with earlier renunciation rites of communal celebration and ascetic undertakings. Nemicandra here mentions that the Jina icon should be given the *vardhamānamantra*, the *mantra* that Digambara *gurus* today impart to their disciples when they become monks. While the contents of the *vardhamānamantra* are not outlined, Nemicandra's *Pratiṣṭhātīlaka* suggests that the modern practice of imparting the *vardhamānamantra* to the initiand traces back to at least the thirteenth century, whether or not the contents of the *mantra* have remained uniform over time.

Āśādhara's *Pratiṣṭhāsāroddhāra*, composed in Rajasthan in the first half of the thirteenth century, provides further evidence of the medieval tantricisation of Digambara mendicant initiations. Āśādhara's account of the auspicious event of renunciation also requires laypeople to bring the icon of the Jina to a representation of a forest, where it should be established below the tree where renunciation occurs (*dīkṣāvṛkṣa*), have its hair removed, etc., and be placed behind four lamps representing the attainment of clairvoyance (PrSā, 4.99–112, pp. 100b–102b). On top of these rites, the *Pratiṣṭhāsāroddhāra* also prescribes that 48 rites of passage, or *saṃskāras*, be given to the Jina image (PrSā 4.130–135, pp. 105b–106a). Each of the 48 *saṃskāras* should be imparted to the icon with a sprinkling of flowers (PrSā, p. 106b). While we saw above that modern *dīkṣā* ceremonies list 18 rites of passage to be imparted to initiands, not 48, the first 18 *saṃskāras* of Āśādhara's list are identical to the 18 imparted to initiands today,⁷³ suggesting that this practice, like the imparting of the *vardhamānamantra*, has persisted in Digambara *dīkṣās* since at least the thirteenth century.

Both of these components – the *guru*'s transmission of an initiatory *mantra* and the imparting of non-Vedic *saṃskāras* – are common components of non-Jain Tantric initiations. Scholars have examined how Tantric

⁷² On the five types of knowledge, see WILEY 2009: 112.

⁷³ Nemicandra's *Pratiṣṭhātīlaka* also requires the imparting of *saṃskāras*, but for the *kevalajñānakalyāṇaka*, not the *niṣkramaṇakalyāṇaka*. See PrT, pp. 247–250.

Vaiṣṇavas⁷⁴ and Śaivas⁷⁵ adapted the Vedic paradigm of imparting rites of passage to create kinship ties separate from those of the community of Brahmins who had undertaken Vedic initiation rites (*upanayana*). A similar idea underlies the imparting of 48 *saṃskāras* to the Jina icon before it achieves enlightenment. Here, the icon of the Jina, representing all Jain mendicants, must enter the Jain community through the ritual transfer of the *saṃskāras* of right faith, right knowledge, etc., and the subsequent embodiment of the ideal characteristics of a follower of the Jain teachings. Thus, the descriptions of the auspicious rite of renunciation in these medieval handbooks on *pratiṣṭhā* provide a wealth of information about the introduction of Tantric components into Digambara *dīkṣā* ceremonies in the medieval period.

These image consecration manuals also shed light on the tantricisation of the *dīkṣā* because the construction of *maṇḍalas* made out of colored powder in *pratiṣṭhā* ceremonies parallels the construction of a *maṇḍala* for the initiation of a mendicant.⁷⁶ In Nemicandra's *Pratiṣṭhātilaka* and in Āśādhara's *Pratiṣṭhāsāroddhāra*, depending on the image being installed – whether it be a Jina icon, a representation of a mendicant leader (*ācārya*), the footprints of a monk, or another type of image – a different diagram must be constructed out of colored powder in the days leading up to the moment when the image becomes established in the temple. These handbooks suggest that in order for these images to become sacred objects of worship, they must be sacralised by being placed in front of ritual diagrams into which the ideals those objects represent are invoked and onto which foodstuffs are offered. In this way, the consecration of an image is similar to Tantric initiations that require the invocation of various deities into a *maṇḍala* preceding the key moment of initiation.

In the summary of Nemicandra's text above, we saw how he prescribes the *yāgamāṇḍala* to be offered flowers (*puṣpañjali*) at the outset of the

⁷⁴ For the imparting of *saṃskāras* in the Pāñcarātra text the *Paramasaṃhitā* (composed before 1000 CE), see CZERNIAK-DROZDŹOWICZ 2003: 141.

⁷⁵ On the imparting of *saṃskāras* (*saṃskāradīkṣā*) as part of the *viśeṣadīkṣā* in the eleventh-century Śaiva text the *Somaśambhupaddhati*, with ample references to other Śaiva sources that outline the imparting of *saṃskāras* (*garbhādhāna* etc.) as part of different *dīkṣā* rites, see BRUNNER-LACHAUX 1977: 112–142.

⁷⁶ SHINOHARA (2014b: 280–294) has shown how medieval Chinese esoteric Buddhist manuals on image consecration have modelled the worship of a *maṇḍala* and the ritual ablution (*abhiṣeka*) of images in the *pratiṣṭhā* on the same rites performed in the *abhiṣeka* of an *ācārya*.

auspicious event of renunciation; indeed, he dictates that the deities and ideals called into this diagram be offered flowers at the outset of each day of the consecration ceremony. To this day, Digambaras will construct this diagram out of synthetic colored powders and, each morning of the consecration ceremony, while reciting prayers to the deities that have been called into the *maṇḍala*, they will place coconuts on the diagram (GOUGH 2017: 285–286). These actions are consistent with the requirement in both Nemicandra’s *Pratiṣṭhātilaka* and in Āśādhara’s *Pratiṣṭhāsāroddhāra* that flowers (*puṣpañjali*) be offered to the *yāgaṃaṇḍala* in order to consecrate a temple image of a Jina (PrT, pp. 118–122; PraSā 1.173–184, pp. 19a–21a). In these texts, however, other *maṇḍalas* are required for other types of images,⁷⁷ and Nemicandra and Āśādhara agree that the consecration of an image of an *ācārya* or another type of mendicant (*ācāryādi*)⁷⁸ requires the construction of a diagram called the “Ring of Disciples,” the *gaṇadharavalaya* (PrT, pp. 328–329; PrSā, pp. 230a–231a). Nemicandra prescribes the construction of the *gaṇadharavalaya* on a ritual platform (*vedī*) on the sixth day of the worship ceremony. While the size of the diagram and the materials used to make it are not specified,⁷⁹ Āśādhara’s and Nemicandra’s outlines of the *gaṇadharavalaya* are word-for-word identical. At the center of the *gaṇadharavalaya* sits a six-cornered figure with the seed syllable *ṣmā* at its center. Inside the six corners of this figure, the syllables *a pra ti ca kre phaṭ* should be inscribed from left to right. On the outside of this central figure, between each of its six corners, the six syllables *vi ca krā ya svā hā*, going from left to right and ending with *jhraum*, should be inscribed. A circle of deities – Śrī, Hrī, Dhṛti, Kīrti, Buddhi, and Lakṣmī – should be placed at the tips of the six-sided figure. 48 petals surround this central figure, which contain 48 different Prakrit praises to ascetic practitioners who have achieved superhuman powers (*labdhi*, *ṛddhi*).

Like the *pañcanamaskāra*, these praises inscribed in the petals, beginning with *ṇamo jiṇāṇaṃ*, *ṇamo ohijiṇāṇaṃ*, “praise to the Jinas, praise to the Jinas with clairvoyance (Skt. *avadhi*),” are first found as a *maṅgala* in

⁷⁷ On the construction of the *siddhacakra* to consecrate a temple image of an enlightened soul (*siddha*), see GOUGH 2015a.

⁷⁸ Temple icons of historical monks, often the *gurus* of wealthy lay patrons, seem to have been commonplace from the medieval period onwards. NANDI (1973: 72), in discussing the growth of the temple cult of the *ācārya* in the medieval period, references an inscription from 1060 to an installation of an icon of an *ācārya*.

⁷⁹ PrT, p. 326, says that the *siddhacakra* for a *siddhapratimā* should be made of five colours.

the Digambara text on *karma* theory, the *Ṣaṭkhaṇḍāgama*, dated to the first half of the first millennium. In Śvetāmbara and Digambara texts from this period, the superhuman powers praised in these lines, such as the ability to fly and clairvoyance, were associated with the disciples of the 24 Tīrthaṅkaras (*gaṇadhara*). Thus, this diagram, the “Ring of Disciples” (*gaṇadharavalaya*), is named for these praises to superhuman powers inscribed in rings (*valaya*) around the central six-cornered figure.⁸⁰ Because many parts of these image consecration ceremonies involve icons acting the rituals of humans, it would make sense that medieval Digambaras would model the consecration of an icon of a monk on the initiation of a human mendicant. Thus, we can hypothesise that by at least the thirteenth century, Digambaras constructed the Ring of Disciples as part of their initiation ceremonies. Here, too, medieval Digambaras remodelled an older Jain ritual component – an existing Prakrit invocation to powers associated with the disciples of the Tīrthaṅkaras – to fit a Tantric ritual. They inscribed these praises on a *maṇḍala* so that new mendicants who made offerings to this diagram as part of their initiations could link themselves to the origins of their lineage, the *gaṇadharas*, by honouring the powers of these monks.

While Āśādhara in his manual on mendicant conduct says nothing about the construction of a *maṇḍala* as part of initiation rites, preferring to follow Cāmuṇḍarāya in emphasising the recitation of devotional prayers, Bhaktis, his image consecration manual suggests that the Digambara *dīkṣā* had fully incorporated this Tantric element of *maṇḍala* worship by the thirteenth century. The account of initiation in the *Ādipurāṇa* and these image consecration manuals confirm that three key Tantric elements of modern Digambara *dīkṣās* – the worship of the Ring of Disciples, the recitation of the *vardhamānamantra* to initiate *munis*, and the imparting of the rites of passage (*saṃskāra*) – were combined with earlier Jain ideas of renunciation (pulling out the hair etc.) and devotional currents (the recitation of the Bhaktis) in the medieval period. The description of the Ring of Disciples diagram in Āśādhara’s and Nemicandra’s image consecration texts, however, differs considerably from the Ring of Disciples diagram constructed today. While the diagram of these medieval manuals has 48 praises to practitioners with superhuman powers, modern Ring of Disciples diagrams contain 1,452 dots. To understand the connection between these two different diagrams with the same name, it is necessary to study one last important stage in the history of Digambara *dīkṣā* – the period of the dominance of

⁸⁰ For information on this *mantra* and diagram, see GOUGH 2015b.

the orange-robed *bhaṭṭārakas*, whom twentieth-century *munis* supposedly rejected. The rituals these pontiffs composed allow us to fully understand how the modern Digambara *dīkṣā* was developed as an unusual combination of a monastic and Tantric ordination.

***Bhaṭṭārakas'* formulations of modern initiations**

Catalogues of the texts composed by *bhaṭṭārakas* and inscriptions detailing their activities in the early-modern-to-colonial period (fifteenth to nineteenth centuries)⁸¹ confirm that one of the primary roles of these pontiffs was the performance of large public rituals – the worship of large colored *maṇḍalas* and temple consecrations – that garnered funds and visibility for the communities and mendicant lineages, which had by this point been divided into several *gaṇas* and *saṅghas*.⁸² To promote their lineages and temple complexes, *bhaṭṭārakas* fully embraced the Tantric elements that had entered Jainism in the medieval period and expanded many of the *maṇḍalas* mentioned in earlier sources, composing elaborate rituals for these diagrams. Before this period, the Ring of Disciples diagram had barely been mentioned in texts. Between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, however, several different *bhaṭṭārakas* composed manuals (*vidhāna*) on the worship of the Ring of Disciples, including Sakalakīrti (Balātkara Gaṇa, ca. 1386–1442), Padmanandī (Balātkara Gaṇa, *bhaṭṭāraka* from ca. 1514–1522), Prabhācandra⁸³ (Nandi Saṅgha, consecrated as *bhaṭṭāraka* in 1514), and Śubhacandra (Balātkara Gaṇa, *bhaṭṭāraka* from ca. 1516–1556).⁸⁴

The Ring of Disciples likely rose to prominence in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries because it was worshiped as part of the promotion of a *bhaṭṭāraka*; extant manuscripts on *bhaṭṭārakapadasthāpanā* mention the *gaṇadharavalaya* as an essential component of the rite.⁸⁵ Because the Ring

⁸¹ For the *bhaṭṭārakas* of North India, see KĀSLIVĀL 1967 and JOHRAPURKAR 1958.

⁸² On these different groupings of Digambaras, see the introduction to JOHRAPURKAR 1958: 1–12 and FLÜGEL 2006: 342–344.

⁸³ For the manuals of Sakalakīrti, Śubhacandra, Padmanandī, and Prabhācandra texts, see *Śrīgandharvalay Pūjan Saṁgrah* (SPS).

⁸⁴ On the dates of these *bhaṭṭārakas*, see the translated lists of *bhaṭṭāraka* successions (*paṭṭāvali*) translated in HOERNLE 1892.

⁸⁵ Tillo Detige has collected several undated manuscripts on *bhaṭṭārakapadasthāpanā* from the Sonāgiri Bhaṭṭāraka Granthālāya in the pilgrimage site of Sonāgiri, Madhya Pradesh, that confirm that *bhaṭṭārakas* worshiped the *gaṇadharavalaya* as part of their promotions. Tillo Detige, e-mail to author, December 30, 2013.

of Disciples became a key symbol of initiations and promotions in the pre-modern period, erected for the public celebrations of the appointment of a new *bhaṭṭāraka*, these pontiffs would have wanted to make the diagram's components more explicitly relate to the disciples of the Tīrthaṅkaras, thus linking themselves to the founders of Jainism. Lay Digambaras in the pre-modern period were likely not aware that early Jain texts associate the *gaṇadharas* with the superhuman powers of the earliest version of the Ring of the Disciples diagram described in the medieval image consecration texts. Thus, *bhaṭṭārakas* transformed this earlier diagram with 48 praises to superhuman powers into a diagram of 1,452 dots – each dot representing one of the original disciples of the Tīrthaṅkaras – and composed ritual manuals that had laypeople singing praises to each of these disciples.

In the modern initiation in Kekri outlined above, the three initiands followed a Hindi adaption of the Sanskrit worship manual of the Ring of Disciples composed by the *bhaṭṭāraka* Śubhacandra in 1549 (RĀJAŚRĪ 2003). Śubhacandra belonged to the Balātkara Gaṇa Digambara lineage, and he was one of the most prolific and active *bhaṭṭārakas* of North India, traveling widely to consecrate new temples and composing multiple manuals on the worship *maṇḍalas* that remain popular today.⁸⁶ Śubhacandra's *Gaṇadharavalayavidhāna* followed in Kekri was translated into Hindi and compiled in 2000 by a nun in the same lineage as Ācārya Vairāgyanandī, another disciple of Ācārya Kunthusāgara, Gaṇinī Āryikā Rājaśrī. In the Hindi introduction to the text, her *guru*, Ācārya Guptinandī, stresses that Digambaras must worship the *gaṇadharavalaya* before initiating as a Digambara mendicant (RĀJAŚRĪ 2003: 4). This seems to have become standard for Digambaras of all modern mendicant lineages; during my research in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Haryana, Delhi, and Uttar Pradesh in 2013, I spoke to dozens of Digambara monks and nuns from various lineages who all confirmed that they worshiped the *gaṇadharavalaya* before their initiations.⁸⁷

Modern Digambara initiands usually take one, three, or five days to worship the Ring of Disciples before they take the vows of a mendicant, but the worship ceremony can be up to eight days long. The worship of the

⁸⁶ On Śubhacandra and the many texts he composed, see KĀSLIVĀL 1967: 63–105.

⁸⁷ More research needs to be done to confirm that it is, indeed, the case that all Digambaras construct the *gaṇadharavalaya* preceding their *dīkṣās*. SHĀNTĀ (1997: 656) notes that a *siddhacakra* is constructed before a Digambara *dīkṣā*, but the source of this claim is unclear, since she outlines a Śvetāmbara, not a Digambara, *siddhacakra*.

diagram in Kekri lasted eight days.⁸⁸ Inside a ritual pavilion (*maṇḍapa*) in a worship hall (*upāśraya*), ritual specialists constructed a large diagram made of synthetic colored powder with an icon of the Jina established at the center, surrounded by three concentric circles with 1,452 dots on it. On the first day of the *vidhāna*, Ācārya Vairāgyanandī and the ritual specialists led a few dozen lay worshipers, along with the three initiands, in performing preliminary rites familiar to scholars of Tantric ritual. Ritual specialists hoisted a banner at the entrance to the worship hall to signify the beginning of the worship ceremony, six pots of water and eight pots of herbs (*aṅkurārpaṇa*) were placed at the edges of the colored diagram to sanctify the space, and the three initiands and the other lay people performing the *pūjā* undertook the “transformation” (*sakalīkaraṇa*) rites in which they placed (performed *nyāsa*) the *pañcanamaskāra* on different parts of their bodies so they “transformed” into gods and goddesses (*indra*, *indrāṇī*), whom Jains envision as the ideal worshipers of the Jina.

For each of the following seven days, then, the worshipers in Kekri systematically honoured each and every one of the disciples of the 24 Tīrthaṅkaras, beginning with Vṛṣabhasena, the first disciple of the first Tīrthaṅkara, Rṣabha, and ending with Nirottama, the eleventh and final disciple of the twenty-fourth Tīrthaṅkara, Mahāvīra (RĀJAŚRĪ 2003: 59, 221). A ritual specialist would recite a Hindi verse honouring a disciple, Ācārya Vairāgyanandī would recite the Sanskrit *mantra* associated with the verse (“*om hrīm arhaṃ vṛṣabhasenagaṇadharāya namaḥ arghyam*” etc.), and upon completion of the *mantra*, the laypeople seated in rows in front of the diagram would transfer a mixture (*arghya*) of the substances of the eight-fold *pūjā*⁸⁹ from one plate to another. At the same time, the initiands would place a coconut on the colored diagram. In this way, with each praise

⁸⁸ The worship lasted eight days because it was also performed for the eight-day festival Aṣṭāhnikā Parva, for which laypeople also construct ritual diagrams. On the construction of *maṇḍalas* for Aṣṭāhnikā Parva, see GOUGH 2015a.

⁸⁹ Bīsapanthīs and Terāpanthīs offer slightly different substances, and both were present at the initiation in Kekri. The eight substances of a modern Bīsapanthī *pūjā* are: (1) water, (2) sandalwood paste (listed as *gandha* in ritual handbooks and used to trace a *svāstika* on the plate), (3) uncooked rice (*akṣata*), (4) flowers, (5) sweets (*naivaidya*), (6) a lamp (*dīpa*), (7) incense (*dhūpa*), and (8) fruit (*phala*). Terāpanthīs offer: (1) water, (2) sandalwood paste (*gandha*), (3) uncooked white rice (*akṣata*), (4) yellow-colored (from sandalwood) rice (*puspa*), (5) white coconut pieces (*nai-vaidya*), (6) yellow-colored (from sandalwood) coconut pieces (*dīpa*), (7) incense (*dhūpa*), and (8) nuts, raisins, dried dates, etc. (*phala*).

of a disciple, the three initiands connected themselves to the first monks – the original disciples of the Tīrthaṅkaras – and legitimated their place in the Digambara mendicant tradition that traces itself back to these *gaṇadharas*.

While this worship was structured around honouring the disciples represented by each of the 1,452 dots, Śubhacandra's manual, which these worshipers followed, also recognises the earlier form of the Ring of Disciples outlined in image consecration manuals. Śubhacandra's text begins, for example, with instructions for the ritual ablution (*abhiṣeka*) of an icon of the Jina along with a metal *yantra* on which the exact components outlined in the medieval image consecration manuals – a six-sided figure surrounded by rings of praises to these superhuman powers – are inscribed. In Kekri, each morning, when the worshipers would return to the worship hall to honour a section of the diagram, the ceremony would begin with these seven different ritual ablutions of a metal icon of the Jina. The lay worshipers would pour (1) sugarcane juice, (2) clarified butter (*ghṛta*), (3) milk, (4) curd, (5) water with herbs, (6) water from four pots, and (7) water mixed with sandalwood (*sugandhita*) on the Jina icon and a metal *yantra* (RĀJAŚRĪ 2003: 17-19). With each *abhiṣeka*, the worshipers would recite a Sanskrit verse composed by Śubhacandra asking for worldly goals and liberation, and then Ācārya Vairāgyanandī would recite a *mantra* that includes the *a pra ti ca kre phaṭ vi ca krā ya svā hā* we saw at the center of the earlier version of the Ring of Disciples diagram outlined in the medieval image consecration manuals. When performing the *abhiṣeka* with sugarcane juice, for example, he recited:

om hrīm jhvīm śrīm arhaṃ a si ā u sā apraticakre phaṭ vicakrāya jhrauṃ jhrauṃ. I perform the ablution with supremely sacred sugarcane juice.⁹⁰

In this way, Śubhacandra's sixteenth-century Sanskrit *Gaṇadharavalāya-vidhāna* and its subsequent adaptations expand upon the earlier Ring of Disciples, likely because the earlier version had been used for generations to initiate monks, and the *bhaṭṭārakas* developing these rites wished to maintain a link with these earlier practices while more explicitly connecting themselves to the first monks of Jainism.

⁹⁰ RĀJAŚRĪ 2003: 17: *om hrīm jhvīm śrīm arhaṃ a si ā u sā apraticakre phaṭ vicakrāya jhrauṃ jhrauṃ. pavitratareḥśurasena snapayāmi svāhā.*

Indeed, Ādisāgara Aṅkalīkara, the founder of the lineage of the Digambaras at Kekri, is an anomaly in the history of Digambara Jainism in emphasising that mendicant initiation should be about asceticism and an individual connection with the Jina. After Ādisāgara's self-initiation in front of an icon of the Jina, his followers quickly readopted the rituals developed by the *bhaṭṭārakas*. In 2002, the nun Āryikā Śītalamatī published a manual entitled "Various Rituals for the Initiation Rite of Passage," *Vividh Dīkṣā Saṃskār Vidhi*, that contains, in Sanskrit, the prescriptions for the rites of initiation for a mendicant teacher (*upādhyāya*), mendicant head (*ācārya*), and pontiff (*bhaṭṭāraka*) said to have been copied from an "ancient" (*prācīna*) manuscript a direct disciple of Ādisāgara, Muni Sanmatisāgara, found in a manuscript house in the pilgrimage site of Śrī Atiśaya Kṣetra Beḍiyā in Gujarat (JAIN 2009: 16). While no date or author is mentioned in the manuscript, it should be placed sometime in the early modern period – during the reign of the *bhaṭṭārakas* in Gujarat – and most certainly outlines rituals that were developed before the rise of the modern naked *muni* tradition in the twentieth century.⁹¹

The description of the initiation of a mendicant teacher (*upādhyāya*) in this pre-modern manuscript is word-for-word identical to the description of this rite in the modern manual used by the Digambaras in Kekri, the *Vimal Bhakti Saṃgrah*.⁹² This rite includes the worship of the Ring of Disciples, the *guru*'s imparting of *mantras* related to the rank of the *upādhyāya*, and the recitation of the *Siddha*, *Śruta*, *Śānti*, *Samādhi*, and *Guru Bhaktis*. Apart from a few anomalies such as Ādisāgara's self-initiation, Digambara *dīkṣās* have been, for at least 1,000 years, complex combinations of devotional, ascetic, and Tantric rituals. Each of these components of the *dīkṣā* – from the Tantric worship of a *maṇḍala* to the recitation of praise poems – strengthens communal ties between laypeople and mendicants and between Jains of the past and present.

⁹¹ JAIN (2009: 122) rightly notes that it must have been composed after the twelfth century, since the ritual outlining the promotion of a *bhaṭṭāraka* prescribes the *guru* promoting the pontiff to pronounce him as the head of either the Sarasvatī Gaccha, the Mūlasaṃgha, the Nandisaṃgha, or the Balāṅkara Gaṇa, and the latter two lineages emerged around the twelfth century.

⁹² Compare JAIN 2009: 121 with SYĀDVĀDAMATĪ 2002: 451.

Concluding remarks

This study of Digambara *dīkṣā* has highlighted some commonalities between the initiatory practices of Jains and those of so-called “Tantrics.” We have seen how Digambara Jain initiations, since at least the ninth century, have in some ways been “Tantric,” because they involve the construction of *maṇḍalas* and the imparting of karma-destroying, non-Vedic *mantras*. But this incorporation of Tantric elements into Jain initiations does not mean that Jains are Tantrics, or that Jains belong to a Tantric community. “Tantric” is not always an accurate or sufficiently precise term to designate religious actors or communities.

It can, however, be helpful to use the term to distinguish some ritual components from others. At an early stage, Jain mendicant initiations did not include *maṇḍalas* and *mantras*, and then, at some point, they did. Using the word “Tantric” here to refer to these components can help us chart ritual developments on the subcontinent and allow Jains access to a larger conversation about the emergence of these practices in the medieval period.

Once Jains enter this conversation from which they have been largely excluded, can we begin to see how Tantric practices are in some ways “Jain”? Can we examine how early Jain understandings about the power of certain recitations to destroy *karma* are echoed in later Tantric claims that initiatory *mantras* obliterate impurities? Can we study how the very idea of a non-Vedic initiation for soteriological purposes is rooted in early ascetic traditions such as Jainism? Jains may not belong to a Tantric community, but examining their images, texts, and practices can certainly enrich our understandings of how Tantric ritual components have been used to create communities.

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