

Renunciation in Jain Stories

Renunciation in Jain Stories

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to examine Jain attitudes toward renunciation in the final two books of the *Triṣaṣṭīśālākāpuruṣacaritra*, the *Pārśvanāthacaritra* and the *Mahāvīracaritra*, through the creation of a typology of the stories of male renunciation. I argue that tensions exist between the two distinct models of renunciation found in the text – spontaneous renunciation early in life, and late, stage of life based renunciation. Such tensions also exist between the models of renunciation advocated by the heterodox and orthodox traditions of India. The early time renunciation is consistent with the model of renunciation presented by heterodox traditions, while the late time of renunciation parallels the orthodox *asrama* system's model of renunciation.

The forty-nine stories discussed in this thesis are organized according to a tripartite typology based on the social position of the renunciant, the time of renunciation, and the cause of renunciation. The stories are initially divided into three groups according to the social position of the renunciant– ordinary individuals, kings, and princes. Each group is then discussed according to the remaining two aspects of the typology. Stories of ordinary individuals portray spontaneous, early renunciation, while stories of kings predominantly portray renunciation late in life, based on a particular stage. The stories of princes reveal

that renouncing immediately upon experiencing the desire to do so is not always the most effective time to renounce. As such, the text clearly shows that a homogenous model of renunciation does not exist in the text and reveals flexibility on the proper time of renunciation.

Although the time of renunciation is the focus of this thesis, other aspects of Jain attitudes toward renunciation are discussed, such as the importance of a personal and catalytic experience in bringing about firm resolve in renouncing.

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INTRODUCTION

The ascetic life and renunciation of worldly existence are central aspects of the philosophy and religious practice of many groups in the Indian tradition. Renunciation is the method of attaining liberation (*mokṣa*) from the cycle of rebirth (*saṃsāra*). As M. Hiriyanna points out, there are “two elements common to all Indian thought – the pursuit of *mokṣa* the final ideal and the ascetic spirit of the discipline recommended for its attainment” (Hiriyanna 1993, 24). However, this is not to say that the practice of renouncing is the same across the boundaries of traditions, or that they all agree on what constitutes the proper time for renunciation.

The following thesis is an investigation of Jain attitudes toward renunciation as portrayed in the final two books of the *Triṣaṣṭiśalākāpuruṣacaritra*¹ (hereafter *Triṣaṣṭi*²): the *Pārśvanāthacaritra*³ and the

¹ The *Triṣaṣṭi* (the full title of which can be translated as “the deeds of sixty-three extraordinary individuals”) was composed by the Śvetāmbara Jain monk Hemacandra during the third quarter of the 12th century CE, under the patronage of the Caulukya king, Kumārapāla. It is a massive work consisting of 32,000 *slokas* which, according to Jagdish Sharma, vies with the *Mahābhārata* in size (Sharma 1975, 209). Often referred to as encyclopedic in nature, the *Triṣaṣṭi* narrates the lives of the 63 *śalākāpuruṣas*, or illustrious/eminant individuals, of Jain history: twenty-four *tīrthaṅkaras*, twelve *cakravartins* (universal emperors), nine *baladevas* (righteous Jain kings), nine *vasudevas* (their half-brothers who help them), and nine *prativasudevas* (enemies of the previous two). According to John Cort, this genre of text forms a Jain universal history, as it includes the complete biographies, including past lives, of all the significant figures in the current time cycle (Cort 1995, 477).

² For this study, I work from an English translation of the *Triṣaṣṭi* by Helen Johnson.

³ Hereafter referred to as *Pc* in notes and *Pārśvanāthacaritra* in text.

Mahāvīracaritra.⁴ I examine the stories contained in both biographies as one group of stories.⁵ I do not separate the stories based on the particular biography in which they are found. The goal of this study is two-fold: to create a typology of stories of renunciation by men⁶ in the *Pārśvanāthacaritra* and the *Mahāvīracaritra*, and, through this, to gain a more complete understanding of the attitudes toward renunciation in the text. It is my hope that this study will lead to a further inquiry into the broader context of Jain attitudes toward renunciation. Nevertheless, even this restricted inquiry may lead to some hypotheses. In this thesis, I argue that the tension between spontaneous renunciation early in life and renunciation based on a specific, late stage of life, which exists between the heterodox and orthodox traditions (discussed below), also can be seen among the various renunciation stories of the *Pārśvanāthacaritra* and the *Mahāvīracaritra*. That the model of spontaneous, early renunciation exists in the texts is to be expected, given that the tradition originated in the *śramaṇa* movement, in which renunciation was advocated without any concern for the fulfilment of social and familial obligations. Surprisingly, the text also describes a model of renunciation that occurs late in life, as a particular stage, suggesting the validity of an alternate approach, more comparable to that seen in the orthodox

⁴ Hereafter referred to as *Mc* in notes and *Mahāvīracaritra* in text.

⁵ Hence, throughout the thesis I refer to both the *Pārśvanāthacaritra* and the *Mahāvīracaritra* as "the text".

⁶ As the breadth of this study is already large, I have narrowed the scope by choosing to focus solely on stories depicting male renunciation in the Jain tradition. The story literature clearly shows that men and women renounce for different reasons and under different circumstances. In addition, as Jain literature is written largely by monks, stories of male renunciants dominate the literature. I do not discuss stories of conversion in which the individual has already renounced into another tradition, nor do I discuss the stories of persons renouncing into non-Jain traditions.

āśrama system. Though the main argument of this thesis deals with the timing of renunciation, other aspects of Jain attitudes toward renunciation are treated in the discussion of various stories.

In this study, I deem renunciation to be spontaneous if the individual renounces immediately upon recognizing the urge to do so, or very shortly thereafter. I allow for brief delays between the individual experiencing the catalyst that causes him to want to renounce and the actual act of renouncing itself. Although delays are noteworthy and reveal interesting information about Jain attitudes toward renunciation, a brief delay does not detract from the image of spontaneity in these stories. In addition, for a renunciation to be spontaneous, it must be clear that the protagonist is not renouncing as an old man, and that his renunciation is not a premeditated act, or based on a stage of life. I have found that the element of spontaneity portrayed in the stories is consistent with the heterodox emphasis on the need to renounce immediately, that is, as soon as a person achieves the proper insight and disgust for worldly existence. Conversely, for a given account of renunciation to be a late, stage of life renunciation, it must be clear that the individual is renouncing as an old man, having fulfilled his social and familial duties. The dichotomy between these two models of renunciation is a point of difference between the religious traditions of India. First, I discuss how these two models of renunciation, early and late, fit into the broader context of the Indian tradition. Then, I outline the parameters of my study and discuss the contents of each chapter.

Broadly, two models of renunciation co-exist in the Indian tradition: one associated with the orthodox, *brāhmaṇa* tradition, and the other from the heterodox, *śramaṇa*⁷ tradition. As expected, there are several important differences between orthodox and heterodox views. First, the orthodox traditions accept the authority of the Vedas, whereas the heterodox schools deny the Vedas any authority. In addition, the orthodox traditions also accept the caste supremacy of Brahmins while the heterodox schools do not (Bhagat 1976, 146). There are also a number of differences in terms of renunciation. In the orthodox tradition, renunciation is open only to a few: males of the twice born castes (Olivelle 1993, 25). Lower caste people are not acceptable candidates according to the orthodox model. By contrast, renunciation into a heterodox tradition is open to anyone. Hirianna points to another important difference: “The heterodox held that a man should once and for all turn away from the world whatever his circumstances might be. But the orthodox regarded the ascetic ideal as only to be progressively realised” (Hirianna 1993, 21-22). According to the heterodox sects, one should renounce as soon as he has recognised the need to do so, regardless of what his current life situation may be. This means that even if the potential renunciant has recently had a child, he should abandon his wife and child in order to take up the ascetic life, as seen in the stories of the Buddha and Mahāvīra. The heterodox sects argue that renunciation should occur as soon as

⁷ Though Padmanabh Jaini points out, “While ancient India abounded with various heterodox mendicant sects, only those which displayed [a] pronounced antagonism toward brahmanical tradition received the appellation *śramaṇa*” (Jaini 1979, 2 n. 2), it is acceptable for

one is ready for it. Renunciation can even seem an impulsive act, as we shall see in the following accounts. Contrary to this, the orthodox view predominantly advocates that the individual needs to fulfil all of his social duties before renouncing; he is to move gradually through predetermined stages of life toward this final goal.

In the context of orthodox traditions, the “progressively realised” goal of the ascetic life can be understood more fully through an understanding of the *āśrama* system.⁸ Essentially, there are four stages of life through which the individual passes under the *asrama* system: student (*brahmacārin*), householder (*gṛhastha*), hermit (*vānaprasthin*) and ascetic (*sannyāsin*). In the early formulation of this system, all individuals passed a mandatory period as a student, after which time they were free to choose any of the four *āśramas* as their permanent mode of existence (Olivelle 1993, 74-79). Over time, the *āśrama* system was further refined and the choices open to those who had completed their education are absent in the classical version of the system (Olivelle 1993, 132). Under the later, classical system, the individual does not choose one but rather moves from one stage to the next, as part of this highly ordered system. Marriage marks the beginning of the householder stage (Olivelle 1993, 131 and Thapar 1982, 282). In this stage of life, the primary duties of the individual are to

our purposes to use the term more loosely in this discussion as synonymous with heterodox traditions generally.

⁸ For a full account of the development of the *asrama* system, see Patrick Olivelle’s *The Āśrama System*. See also Romila Thapar’s “Householders and Renouncers in the Brahmanical and Buddhist Tradition”, Haripada Chakraborti’s *Asceticism in Ancient India* (p. 50-82), and M.G. Bhagat’s *Ancient Indian Asceticism* (p. 298-311).

produce offspring and to continue the performance of domestic rituals (Thapar 1982, 282). The third stage of the system is the hermit. Both the hermit stage and the fourth, renunciant stage relate to old age. The distinction between the hermit and the renunciant can be confusing as both stages involve some degree of renunciation. However, by the time of the classical version of the system, the hermit stage had become obsolete.⁹ In old age then, the individual may take the life of the renunciant, abandoning all property, social and familial ties, and the performance of any form of ritual (Thapar 1982, 286-287).

Unlike the heterodox tradition, the orthodox tradition strongly emphasises the importance of the householder stage. Many scholars, in discussing the *āśrama* system, point out that the vast majority of texts, such as *dharma* texts and the *Upaniṣads*, clearly emphasise the importance and necessity of the householder stage (Thapar 1982, 283-286, Bhagat 1976, 145, and Chakraborti 1973, 50-58). One reason for this is that the householder is essential to the renunciant, as it is the householder who provides the alms on which the renunciant survives. However, this is also the case for mendicants in heterodox traditions. Therefore, this fact does not offer much of an explanation of the orthodox traditions' emphasis on the householder stage. Romila Thapar suggests another explanation:

It is frequently stated that the grhastha [householder] is both crucial and necessary almost to the point of suggesting that true renunciation can only be attained once one has passed through the stage of grhastha (Manu VI. 133-7) ... This insistence may have been an attempt to counteract the entry into monkhood

⁹ For a more detailed discussion of the obsolescence of the hermit stage, see Olivelle 1993, 173-177.

at a young age which was being encouraged by Buddhists and Jainas. (Thapar 1982, 280-281)

Thapar's explanation suggests that the time at which renunciation was to occur became an issue between the heterodox schools, specifically the Buddhists and the Jains, and the orthodox schools of thought.¹⁰ To a large degree, the *āśrama* system, or orthodox tradition supports a model of renunciation that occurs later in life, after one has completed his necessary familial and social duties. It is an event that is to take place at a particular stage of life, which is late in life.

Though heterodox traditions are also advocates of renunciation, they do not view their ascetic life as an *āśrama* as the orthodox traditions do (Olivelle 1993, 25). The heterodox sects flourished during the sixth century BCE. Jain sources indicate the existence of as many as 363 different sects at the time, while Buddhist sources describe 63 different sects (Bhagat 1976, 147). The vast majority of these groups, however, did not survive much beyond the deaths of their founders (Jaini 1979, 274). No doubt, the exclusivity of the orthodox traditions facilitated the proliferation of *śramaṇa* sects: "Asceticism was now the only door open for non-Brahmins, who sought spiritual, mental and intellectual fulfilment" (Bhagat 1976, 146). The heterodox traditions emphasize renunciation, and do not laud the householder stage to nearly the same degree as the orthodox traditions do. In fact much of their rhetoric is anti- householder. The heterodox schools, such as Buddhism and Jainism, are more forceful in their

¹⁰ Thapar's explanation also indicates that the orthodox tradition needed a weapon against the popularity of Buddhism and Jainism and that they used the issue of timing as a point of difference.

advocacy of renunciation. Part of this is seen in their position against relegating the appropriate time for renunciation to old age. Indeed, there is an element of immediacy, or spontaneity to renunciation in the heterodox traditions. One should renounce as soon as possible, or immediately upon recognising the need or desire to do so. Some groups even went so far as to argue that it is necessary to omit the householder stage of life altogether (Thapar 1982, 282).

The tension between the orthodox and heterodox traditions regarding the proper time to renounce is evident in the story literature. The Buddhist story, *Hatthipāla Jātaka* describes a king and his minister trying to convince the prince, Hatthipāla, to take the kingdom over renunciation (*Jātaka* 509, 293-304).¹¹ They argue,

First learn the Vedas, get you wealth and wife
And sons, enjoy the pleasant things in life,
Smell, taste, and every sense: sweet is the wood
To live in then, and then the sage is good. (*Jātaka* 509, 296)

This passage clearly describes and advocates the *āśrama* model of renunciation. Not surprisingly, as this is a Buddhist story, Hatthipāla does not accept this suggestion and chooses to renounce immediately. Such a discussion between a father and his two sons regarding the proper time for renunciation can also be found in the fourteenth chapter of the Jain text, *Uttaradhyana*¹² (*Jaina Sūtras* 61-69). The son informs his father, described as a brahmanical *purohita*, that he intends to become an ascetic. The father replies, “My sons, after you have

¹¹ A full reference appears in note 13 of the introduction. As all the *jātaka* stories I use come from the translation edited by E.B. Cowell, I only refer to the stories by number (and page number where necessary).

studied the Vedas, and fed priests, after you have placed your own sons at the head of your house, and after you have enjoyed life together with you wives, then depart to the woods as praiseworthy sages” (*Jaina Sūtras*, 62-63). Here again, we see a father presenting the model of renouncing late in life in an effort to prevent his sons’ early renunciation. In this story, as in *Haṭṭhipāla Jātaka*, the sons’ explanation of the nature of *samsara* leads to a mass renunciation by the entire family (*Jātaka* 509, 301ff. and *Jaina Sūtras*, 65ff.). In the end, both stories validate the heterodox model of renunciation. As we shall see in section 2.4, a similar discussion takes place in this text, in the story of King Prasannacandra (*Mc*, 320). This story also validates the model of spontaneous renunciation early in life, after presenting arguments for both models of renunciation. As all three stories come from heterodox traditions, it is clear that the model of spontaneous, early renunciation is favoured over late, stage-of-life-based renunciation.

One might therefore expect that the portrayal of renunciation in the *Pārśvanāthacaritra* and the *Mahāvīracaritra* would be homogeneous, depicting only spontaneous renunciation by young men. This is not the case. Although a slight majority of stories (29 of 49 stories) portray spontaneous, early renunciation, this ratio decreases when we consider that five of these stories of spontaneous renunciation depict the protagonist later breaking his vows. Considering this, only half the stories examined portray the model of renunciation expected for the Jain tradition (24 of 49 stories). Eighteen of the remaining

¹² For this study, I use an English translation of the story in *Jaina Sūtras*, translated by

stories clearly portray late, stage of life-based renunciation, and the stories of the two *tīrthaṅkaras* describe a time of renunciation somewhere between these two models. As such, the numbers reveal that a homogenous model for renunciation does not exist in the text.

There are fifty-four stories of renunciation in the *Pārśvanāthacaritra* and the *Mahāvīracaritra*. However, I do not discuss the five stories describing renunciation into non-Jain traditions. Hence, the total number of stories that I discuss in this thesis is forty-nine. The renunciation stories of the two *tīrthaṅkaras*, Pārśva and Mahāvīra are not discussed in the body of this text, but in Appendix E. As *tīrthaṅkaras* are extraordinary individuals, and as the text describes them in such a way that the reader immediately understands that he cannot emulate their actions, I have chosen to discuss their stories outside the main body of this thesis. The *tīrthaṅkaras*' stories reveal a different model of renunciation altogether, one specifically based on their eminent position in the tradition. Although the *tīrthaṅkaras* renounce as young men, they do not renounce immediately upon desiring to do so. I discuss the implications of two such eminent individuals not following the predominant model of renunciation for the heterodox traditions.

For the purpose of discussing and understanding Jain attitudes toward renunciation as they are portrayed in the text, I have created a typology based on the following three criteria: 1) the social position of the renunciant, 2) the time of

renunciation, and 3) the catalyst, or cause of renunciation. Social position is divided into the following three categories: 1) ordinary individuals, 2) kings, and 3) princes (see Appendix A). It is according to these groups that the chapters are divided. When we examine the groups of stories according to social position, it is immediately apparent that in these stories different times for renunciation are appropriate for different social groups. This is particularly clear in the stories of ordinary individuals and the stories of kings. The stories of ordinary individuals reveal a model of spontaneous, early renunciation, while the stories of kings reveal renunciation based on a particular stage of life, as is set forth by the *āśrama* system. The stories of princes tend to raise issues that could be problematic both in terms of the dominant heterodox model of early, spontaneous renunciations, and in terms of the necessary dedication to one's vows. Within each chapter, I further subdivide the stories, first according to the time of renunciation and second, according to the catalyst for renunciation. These secondary divisions reveal other issues that are essential to furthering our understanding of Jain attitudes toward renunciation.

Throughout my discussion of these forty-nine stories and the issues they present, I refer to other stories from Indian story literature. As my focus pertains predominantly to the stories contained in the *Pārśvanāthacaritra* and the *Mahāvīracaritra*, this is not intended to be a comprehensive cross-listing of stories and story types, nor does my study include all the major collections of Indian story literature. I have found that referring to other stories outside the text

and outside the Jain tradition can add insight to the discussion. Predominantly, I refer to other Jain and Buddhist sources. However, I also refer to some Hindu story literature.¹³

I now describe the contents and major arguments of each of the three chapters. Each chapter has its own corresponding appendix. These appendices show my division of the stories in chart form. Each chart is accompanied by a list of all the stories, their page references, and in which subsection of the chapter

¹³ The following is a list of textual sources to which I refer frequently, and a description of these texts (other sources are given as they appear):

- 1) Aśvaghōṣa's *The Buddhacarita*. This is a text from the second century BCE. I use this biography of the Buddha as an example of the Buddha biography and as an example of Buddhist story literature. The translation I use is by E.H. Johnston.
- 2) Hemacandra's *Triṣaṣṭīśālākāpuruṣacaritra*, books I-X. I refer to the title of the specific biography in which the story appears, as well as the page number.
- 3) Hemacandra's *The Lives of the Jain Elders*. This text is understood to be self-contained, but it also functions as an appendix to the *Triṣaṣṭī*. It narrates the lives of Mahāvīra's immediate disciples. I use a translation by R.C.C. Fynes. Henceforth, I refer to this text as *Jain Elders*. Citations are given by chapter and verse.
- 4) Hemacandra's *Yogaśāstra*. Although this is a text on proper meditation technique, the initial four chapters discuss appropriate behaviour for monks and lay people. I use A.S. Gopani's translation, entitled *The Yoga Shāstra of Hemacandra*. Henceforth, I refer to this text as *Yogasastra*, giving references by chapter and verse.
- 5) *The Jātaka* is a collection of narratives of the Buddha's past births. Each story is framed by another story that contextualizes the message of the narrative. For this thesis, all references to *jātaka* stories come from the translation edited by E.B. Cowell. As this paper is not a comprehensive study of renunciation in *jātaka* stories, I do not refer to nearly all the stories in which a given type of incident occurs. Henceforth, I refer to the particular story by number and page in the notes, but I include the name of the story in the body of the text.
- 6) Bhadrabāhu's *The Kalpa Sūtra*. This is an incomplete version of the universal history of the Jain tradition, as it does not narrate the lives of all 63 eminent individuals. It narrates the biography of Mahāvīra in the detail, as well as the biographies of Pārśva, Nemi and Ṛṣabha. However, the translation I am using only gives a full translation of Mahavira's biography. For this reason, I only use this text in my discussion of Mahāvīra's story (see section 3.4). I use J. Stevenson's translation, entitled *The Kalpa Sūtra and Nava Tatva*. Henceforth, I refer to this text as *Kalpa Sūtra* and by page number.
- 7) *The Forest of Thieves and The Magic Garden: An Anthology of Medieval Jain Stories*. As indicated by the title this is a collection of stories from various sources. When using a story from this translation, I refer to the author and text. Subsequently, I reference *Forest of Thieves* and the page number. The stories in this collection have been selected and translated by Phyllis Granoff.

they are discussed. Both the charts and the lists are organized in the same order as the stories are discussed in the chapter.

In chapter one, I discuss the sixteen renunciation stories of ordinary individuals. This chapter corresponds to Appendix B. The vast majority of these stories (15 of 16 stories) reveal the expected model of renunciation for a heterodox tradition - they portray spontaneous renunciation early in life. This group of stories therefore sets up one side of the dichotomy between early and late renunciation. When we compare the renunciation stories of ordinary individuals to the renunciation stories of kings, which predominantly portray late renunciation, we begin to see the existence of a significant tension between the two models of renunciation in the text. The one story of an ordinary individual that depicts a late renunciation is very short, and thus I argue that it does not detract from the overall impression that renunciation by ordinary individuals is to occur early in life as a spontaneous response to a catalyst.

By catalyst I mean some event that propels the individual toward renunciation. I further subdivide the catalysts into two different types, and discuss the stories in this context. The first type of catalyst is hearing an abstract discourse on Jain *dharma*. This is not something that relates to the individual personally; it is a universally applicable teaching. The second type of catalyst is an experience or event that connects more directly to the individual's personal experience than would a theoretical discourse. Such an event usually upsets the individual to such a degree that it causes him to re-evaluate his relationship with

worldly life. Effectively, the individual recognises the problems associated with *saṃsāra*, and thus becomes disgusted with worldly life.

In this chapter, I also begin to argue that an abstract discourse is not as life-altering as an event or experience that connects directly with the individual's life. The personal element of the second type of catalyst serves to propel the individual toward renunciation more readily and more permanently. I expand on this idea throughout the thesis, but give it particular emphasis in section 3.3. Several other issues are revealed in the stories of ordinary individuals. I discuss the difference between the narrative role of women in bringing about a man's renunciation in these stories as compared to Buddhist stories. Another issue I raise is that some of these stories put forth the idea that renunciation expiates sin, which is contrary to the normative understanding of why a person renounces.

Chapter two focuses on the twenty-one renunciation stories of kings. This chapter is augmented by Appendix C. The majority of these stories portray a late, stage-of-life based renunciation. In this way, these stories present the other side of the tension between early and late renunciation. The majority (16 of 21 stories), though not all, of the stories of kings portrays late renunciation. To determine the time of renunciation, I examine the description of the succession to the throne (if any is given) or other references to time. I relate these sixteen accounts of late renunciation to the broader context of kingly renunciation in Indian narrative literature. The story of King Prasannacandra is the only explicit example of a king renouncing early in life. In the remaining four stories, the time

of renunciation is unclear, but it is clearly not based on a stage of life. I argue that, based on their similarity to the narratives of ordinary individuals, these four stories describe spontaneous, early renunciation and do not fit with the dominant model of kingly renunciation found in the text. I argue that these four stories, along with the one story of early renunciation, create tension between early and late renunciation within the stories of kings, describing a more “Jain” type of renunciation than the rest of the stories of kings. This discussion predominantly takes place in my discussion of the story of King Prasannacandra (section 2.4). As the story of Prasannacandra includes a discussion of both models of renunciation, I also use this story to elucidate further the tension between early and late renunciation that the text generally reveals.

The third and final chapter of this thesis, in which I discuss the ten stories of princes who renounce, is the longest of the three chapters. It corresponds to Appendix D. Although there are actually twelve stories of princes renouncing in the text, Parsva and Mahavira, the two *tīrthaṅkaras* are not discussed in this chapter, but in Appendix E. Pārśva and Mahāvīra’s position as *tīrthaṅkaras* supercedes their position as princes. Thus ten stories of princes remain. These ten stories reveals some interesting information regarding the proper time to renounce. Initially, it would appear that the majority of these stories (9 of 10 stories) support the model of renunciation described in the first chapter - spontaneous, early renunciation. However, four princes break their vows, three of them doing so precisely because they have renounced too early (section 3.3).

First, I discuss the one case of a prince renouncing late in life. This prince, Abhayakumara, renounces late in life because he initially intended to be king before renouncing. This story reveals that the kingly model of renunciation is an option for princes who intend to become kings. This story reminds us that a prince is not yet a king, and that kingship is in no way guaranteed. It also reveals a lack of certainty in a prince's future. I then discuss all nine examples of early renunciation of princes, based on the catalyst for their renunciation (section 3.2). These stories both reveal the importance of seeking parental consent before renouncing, and portray parental concern for their son's suffering in the ascetic life. Although parents do not always support of their son's decision, they do not display the vehement opposition described in Buddhist literature. This may indicate that Jain literature portrays renunciation as less inherently problematic than does Buddhist literature.

I follow the discussion of stories of early renunciation with a detailed discussion of the stories of the four princes who break their vows after renouncing spontaneously, early in life. Throughout this section, I refer repeatedly to the one case of an ordinary individual who also breaks his vows, Sāmāyika. All the individuals who break their vows, with the exception of one, renounced as a result of hearing some discourse on *dharma*, which suggests that an abstract discourse does not create the same level of dedication to one's vows as does a personal experience. Other points that appear in these stories are the unavoidable nature of *karma* and the difficulty of the Jain ascetic life. The

idea of a proper time of renunciation is also a factor in the reasons for which certain monks break their vows. This notion modifies somewhat the Jain doctrine that one should renounce as soon as he understands the nature of *samsara*. Unlike the orthodox tradition, the Jains here are not arguing for an arbitrary moment at which renunciation should occur. Nevertheless, they seem to concede that for some people there is a more appropriate time to renounce.

The stories of princes reveal the greatest degree of tension between early and late renunciation. I argue that this partially relates to their ambiguous social position. They are not kings, but they are also not ordinary individuals. Although a prince might expect to become king, there is no guarantee of this until he is installed on the throne. The fact that three stories reveal the possibility that an individual can renounce too early in life implies a tension between early and late renunciations that also exists between the heterodox and orthodox traditions.

CHAPTER ONE:

Renunciation by Ordinary Individuals

Sixteen of the forty-nine renunciation stories in the *Pārśvanāthacaritra* and the *Mahāvīracaritra* portray renunciation by ordinary individuals. By ordinary individuals, I refer to people who are non-royalty; the other two chapters deal with stories of persons of royal descent. Fifteen of the sixteen renunciation stories of ordinary individuals portray what I call spontaneous renunciation early in life; the other story describes a late stage of life renunciation (see Appendix B). As a clear majority of the stories of ordinary individuals describes this spontaneous type of renunciation, this group is most consistent with the model of renunciation ascribed to the *śramaṇa* movement. In these stories, individuals become disgusted with worldly existence after experiencing a catalyst, and renounce shortly after this feeling arises. I define spontaneous renunciation as something that occurs shortly after the individual experiences a catalyst. In addition, it is also something that must occur early in a person's life. The definition of spontaneous renunciation allows for a delay between experiencing the catalyst and the act of renouncing, but this delay must be brief. For example, Mahāvīra's renunciation does not qualify as spontaneous although he renounces as a young man, because the text is clear that he has wanted to renounce since his birth. The stories of ordinary individuals describe the expected model of renunciation

for a heterodox sect. Later, I contrast this group of stories with the stage of life based model of renunciation that appears in the stories of kings.

1.1 – The Story of Late Renunciation

The only example of late, stage of life based renunciation by an ordinary individual is the case of Gobhadra (*Mc*, 256). No reason is given for Gobhadra's renunciation,¹ which implies that he is renouncing according to actions appropriate for his stage of life. His son is married and thus, Gobhadra has insured the continuation of his line. Now he may leave mundane responsibilities behind and move on to a life of mendicancy. The story of Gobhadra's renunciation occupies only one line in the text. As it is so short, and as it is the only example in the text of a late, stage of life renunciation by an ordinary individual, I do not consider it a major challenge to the overall impression that ordinary individuals renounce early in life.

1.2 – Stories of Spontaneous, Early Renunciation

I have subdivided the category of early renunciation into three groups based on the cause of renunciation: 1) renunciation after hearing an abstract discourse on Jain *dharma* (5 stories), 2) renunciation after experiencing an event that affects the individual personally (8 stories), and 3) renunciation after

¹ The only other examples in the *Mahāvīracaritra* and the *Pārśvanāthacaritra* that give no reason for the renunciation are the stories of two kings, Vajravīrya and Vidyudgati. These men

experiencing both types of catalyst (2 stories) (see Appendix B). Before entering into a discussion of the stories, I will further define the two types of catalysts that appear in these stories. An abstract discourse on Jain *dharma* takes the form of a universally applicable sermon or a teaching. This discourse does not relate to the individual's life or experience; it is a general, universally applicable teaching. The second type of catalyst, an event that influences the individual personally and directly, is an experience that shocks the person into recognizing the mistake in his complacent acceptance of worldly life and brings about the desire to renounce. This type of catalyst is further subdivided for the purpose of discussion in section 1.2.1. One topic, which I discuss in relation to the stories of early renunciation by ordinary individuals, is the idea that an abstract discourse on *dharma* carries less strength than does something directly related to one's personal experience. This is a point that I develop throughout the thesis, as it does not relate solely to cases of ordinary individuals.² As we shall see in the stories of ordinary individuals, a delay before renouncing only occurs in the stories that portray renunciation after hearing a discourse on Jain *dharma*. By contrast, persons who experience an event of high personal impact renounce instantly upon experiencing the catalyst.³ Among the accounts of ordinary

are clearly renouncing as a stage of life. I discuss the portrayal of renunciation without an explicit cause more fully in section 2.1.

² As we shall see in chapter three, the majority of renunciants who give up their vows are people who renounced after hearing an abstract discourse (4 of 5 cases). As four of the five accounts of monks breaking their vows have princes as the protagonist, I discuss the implication of these stories of monks breaking their vows in section 3.3.

³ As we shall see in the second chapter, kings often delay their renunciation in order to install someone on the throne; some even after experiencing an event of personal impact, for further discussion see chapter two.

individuals that have an abstract discourse as the cause of renunciation, stories portraying a delay are a minority. However, one individual breaks his vows after renouncing because of a sermon. As such, the stories still reveal that an abstract discourse is less effective than a personal experience in bringing about an immediate and dedicated renunciation.

1.2.1 – A Discourse on Jain *Dharma* as a Catalyst for Renunciation

In five of the fifteen stories comprising the category of spontaneous, early renunciation, the ordinary individual in question renounces because he hears a discourse on Jain *dharma* that is unrelated to his personal experience. Three of the five accounts portray no delay while two portray a brief delay (see Appendix B). The fact that more ordinary individuals, who renounce after hearing an abstract discourse, do so without a delay is unique to the category of ordinary individuals. As we shall see in the stories of princely renunciation (chapter three), it is more usual for an individual who renounces after hearing a sermon to delay his renunciation. The stories of kingly renunciation also corroborate this observation, although the circumstances are somewhat different for the kings, as we shall see in chapter two.

The first account of renouncing without a delay after hearing an abstract discourse on Jain *dharma* is the story of Sāmāyika (*Mc*, 181-182). It is short and straightforward. Sāmāyika hears a sermon with his wife, Bandhumatī, and renounces immediately. The interesting aspect of this story is that Sāmāyika

breaks his vows, finding the vow of chastity particularly difficult to maintain.

Sometime after renouncing, Sāmāyika sees Bandhumatī and desires her. This is not a momentary experience of lust: Sāmāyika becomes obsessed with Bandhumatī. Experiencing such lust is, of course, contrary to the vow of chastity. When it comes to Bandhumatī's attention that Sāmāyika desires her, Bandhumatī fasts and hangs herself so that neither she nor her husband will break their vows. Sāmāyika is troubled by his wife's suicide. He thinks, "She, having strong resolution, died from fear of breaking her vow. I, on the other hand, have broken the vow" (*Mc*, 182). Sāmāyika then fasts and kills himself. Although Sāmāyika breaks his vows only mentally, this is nevertheless sufficient to cause his rebirth into a non-Aryan line, which is considered a low rebirth (*Mc*, 182).⁴ This case shows that experiencing on-going desire, even without acting on that desire, constitutes a breach of one's vows. Though Sāmāyika does not delay before renouncing, his resolve is not strong enough to maintain his vow. As we shall see in the discussions below, I use delays as one means of determining the lesser impact of an abstract discourse compared to a personal experience. The story of Sāmāyika fits with a different way of determining this lesser impact; Sāmāyika is among the four individuals who break their vows, who renounced because of a sermon (see section 3.3 for a full discussion).

The two remaining stories of instantaneous renunciation after hearing a sermon follow the same pattern: both involve a group of 500 thieves who

⁴ The text describes the non-Aryan line of Sāmāyika's birth as "without *dharma*".

renounce after hearing a discourse by a Jain ascetic who has renounced earlier in the text. In the first story, Kapila begins his teaching with a description of the nature of *saṃsāra* (Mc, 299). The text states that his teaching is 500 verses long, which affords him ample time to address a number of aspects of Jain *dharma*. There is no reason to doubt that Kapila's teaching is the cause of the renunciation of the thieves. However, it is not so clear that the teaching alone causes the renunciation in the second story, Ādrakakumāra's⁵ conversion of 500 thieves (Mc, 187).

The thieves in this second story were formerly Ādrakakumāra's vassals and therefore have a duty of loyalty to him. These vassals are now thieves because, earlier in the story, Ādrakakumāra's father, the king, had ordered them to guard Ādrakakumāra (Mc, 182).⁶ When Ādrakakumāra escaped, the vassals could no longer return to the palace in good faith. Without honest employ, they turned to thievery (Mc, 187). In the course of giving his sermon, which begins with a discussion of the nature of *saṃsāra* and the benefits of human birth, Ādrakakumāra also plays on the fact that these men were once his vassals, saying "you are devoted to your master. Look sirs! I am your master like a king ... enter on this road of mine" (Mc, 187). Interestingly, they respond to Ādrakakumāra's teaching by saying, "At first you were our master. Now you are

⁵ Another version of the story of Ardrakakumara (here his name is given as Addaya) appears in Pradyumnasūri's *Mūlaśuddhiprakaraṇa*. A translation of this story is found in *Forest of Thieves*, 21-37.

⁶ This part of the story is reminiscent of the Buddha biography, in which Siddhārtha's father places him under guard in an attempt to prevent his renunciation. I discuss this idea further in chapter three.

our guru" (Mc, 187). In this way, the story of Ādrakakumāra places the impact of the teaching in a somewhat ambiguous position.⁷

It must be noted that such an interpretation of Ādrakakumāra's story is not applicable to another version of the story that appears in Pradyumnasūri's *Mūlaśuddhiprakaraṇa*. In Pradyumnasūri's version of the story, Addaya does not use the rhetoric of having been the lord of these men, but focuses solely on the importance of a human birth and the results of sinful action (*Forest of Thieves*, 34-35). The thieves are concerned that they may not be worthy of becoming ascetics, but this is not a problem according to Addaya (*Forest of Thieves*, 35). One possible interpretation of the two stories is that mendicancy offers the thieves a viable, alternative to theft. As mendicants, they would have a role in society and a legitimate means of sustaining themselves through begging. The question of a thief's suitability as a candidate for mendicancy is interesting. I discuss this idea further in conjunction with the story of Rauhiṇeya (below).

Now, we move to the two stories of individuals who delay their renunciation in order to close their personal affairs, Rauhiṇeya and Sāgaradatta.

⁷ Both the story of Kapila and that of Ādrakakumāra fall into a larger group of stories in Jain literature that depict an individual renouncing with his entire following or family. Examples of this can be found in the text. For instance, five hundred members of the warrior caste follow Jamāli into the ascetic life (Mc, 193). Jamāli's wife also renounces at this point, along with 1000 of her women. In addition, Phyllis Granoff has written an article in which she discusses the pattern of clans/families converting to the Jain lay tradition in clan histories and sectarian biographies. Generally, one member of the family converts to the Jain religion as part of a bargain to get a miracle from a Jain monk. The entire family or clan converts along with the individual (Granoff 1989, 195-215). The stories Granoff discusses describe individuals converting to Jainism as lay devotees. However, while this is similar to our stories, it is important to remember that the thieves in our story are renouncing, not just converting. Buddhist literature also portrays entire households following an individual into the ascetic life. For examples, see *Jātaka* 522, 70, *Jātaka* 525, 97-99, and *Jātaka* 532, 165.

Rauhiṇeya delays his renunciation in order to make amends for his past crimes; he confesses to being a notorious thief and reveals to the king the location of all the stolen goods (*Mc*, 268-269). In the *Yogaśāstra*, Hemacandra refers to Rauhiṇeya's story as an example of the proper course of action for a thief.⁸ Rauhiṇeya seeks out Mahāvīra for instruction, having earlier overheard Mahāvīra's description of the gods. This information helps Rauhiṇeya elude a trap set for him by the police, who pose as gods in an attempt to gain a confession. Consequently, Rauhiṇeya wonders, "If a part of [Mahāvīra's] instruction bears such fruit, what will his teaching, regarded in its entirety, accomplish?" (*Mc*, 268). After this incident, Rauhiṇeya confesses to Mahāvīra and asks him to give him instruction. Having received instruction from Mahāvīra, Rauhiṇeya wishes to renounce. Although Rauhiṇeya wonders at his suitability for initiation, Mahāvīra says that he is indeed a suitable candidate. At this point Rauhiṇeya makes his confession and then renounces.

S. B. Deo states that according to Abhayadeva's commentary on the *Thananga*, thieves are not suitable candidates for entrance into a Jain mendicant order.⁹ The Buddhist Vinaya rules also prohibit the ordination of thieves.¹⁰

⁸ "The king puts into fetters the thief even if he be his relative, just like Mandika. If the thief gives up stealing, he gets heaven just like Rauhiṇeya" (*Yogaśāstra*, 2:73).

⁹ Deo gives the following list of specific types of people who are not acceptable as candidates for ordination into a Jain order, taken from Abhayadeva's commentary on the *Thananga*: a child under eight year of age, an old person, a eunuch, a sick person, a person devoid of limbs, a timid person, a person of dull intellect, a robber, an enemy of the king, a mad person, a blind person, a slave, a wicked person, a stupid person, a person who is in debt, an attendant, a servant, a kidnapped person, a pregnant woman, a woman having a small child (or possibly a young girl) (Deo 1956, 140). Of these, the only types of people listed in the text itself are a eunuch, a sick person, and a timid person (Deo 1956, 140 n.3).

However, the story literature of both traditions reveals a different position on the ordination of thieves. As we have seen, different stories show Mahāvīra, Kapila and Ādrakakumāra admitting thieves into their followings. Both Mahāvīra and Ādrakakumāra (in the *Mūlaśuddhiprakaraṇa* version of the story) state explicitly that there is no problem with a thief becoming a mendicant. Furthermore, Buddhist literature portrays the Buddha himself as having converted a thief to the ascetic life. The story of Aṅgulimāla is one such case (*Dhammapadakathā* 13:6).¹¹ Angulimala is not only a thief; he is also an extremely violent man - another quality antithetical to Buddhist renunciatory values. The Buddha converts Āṅgulimāla, who renounces worldly existence and follows the Buddha. This story clearly shows that monkhood expiates sin: Aṅgulimāla achieves liberation. This perplexes the other monks because they are aware of Āṅgulimāla's past sins. The Buddha explains that "in times past, because [Āṅgulimāla] lacked a good counselor, he committed all these evil deeds. Afterwards, when he obtained the support of a good counselor, he adopted the life of heedfulness. Even thus did he cover his past deeds with good deeds" (*Dhammapadakathā* 13:6, 14). The idea that an ascetic life expiates sin¹² is interesting because the common

¹⁰ Deo also states that the Buddhist text, the *Mahāvagga*, prohibits the ordination of thieves (Deo 1956, 140, n.3).

¹¹ The translation of the *Dhammapadakathā* that I use is taken from Eugene Watson Burlingame's *Buddhist Legends* Part 3, 6-14.

¹² The idea that an ascetic life expiates sin is also found in the final paragraph of the story of Lobhadeva, found in Ratnaprabhasūri's *Kuvalayamālākathā*. The translation I use is taken from *Forest of Thieves*, 137-148.

understanding is the reverse; the desire to renounce is contingent upon a preponderance of good *karma*.¹³

There is an interesting difference between the story of Rauhiṇeya and two stories of mass conversion of thieves; Rauhiṇeya confesses his crimes before renouncing. Confession is an essential aspect of the Jain monastic tradition (Deo 1956, 307). Mahāvīra does not instruct Rauhiṇeya to confess; he does so of his own accord. Indeed, not confessing one's sins can have unpleasant results. For example, in the text there is the story of Abhīci, King Udāyana's son (*Mc*, 307). Abhīci is reborn as an Asura because of his failure to confess his hostility toward his father before he dies.

Sāgaradatta also delays his renunciation, but does so in order to perform an act of veneration, wishing to install a statue of a *tīrthaṅkara* (*Pc*, 405-407). Thankful for surviving an attempt on his life, Sāgaradatta wants to know the identity of the god of gods so that he may honour him. He receives a statue of the god of gods by performing penance¹⁴ and takes the image to some sages to discover its identity. They teach him the Jain *dharma* and Sāgaradatta becomes a lay devotee. Shortly thereafter, he wishes to install the statue and the sages refer him to Pārśva in order to learn the process of installing an image. Pārśva

¹³ In the text, the following stories show this more "normative" understanding: the story of Kapila (*Mc*, 297), the story of Aravinda (*Pc*, 360), and the story of Daśarṇabhadrā (*Mc*, 254).

¹⁴ The miraculous way in which Sāgaradatta receives the image fits with part of the pattern Granoff discusses in "The Householder as Shaman" (Granoff 1992, 301-317). In this article, Granoff points to the prevalence of interactions with demi-gods surrounding obtaining images and building temples. One common element of these stories that Granoff discusses, which does not appear in our story, is the presence of a hostile deity, who tries to prevent the statue from the image's installation, or the temple's construction. Sāgaradatta does not experience any hostility in the process of installing the image.

not only tells him how to install the statue, but explains “with reference to his own samavasarana all the supernatural powers of the Arhats [and] the worship of Jinas” (*Pc*, 407). It is through his interaction with Pārśva that Sāgaradatta learns of the powers of the *tīrthaṅkaras*, which leads to his renunciation. This interaction is a form of discourse on the conceptual aspects of the Jain tradition.

Sāgaradatta installs the statue and renounces the following day. Theoretically, renunciation involves giving up all of one’s possessions;¹⁵ therefore, if Sāgaradatta had to install the image before he renounced. Thus, Sāgaradatta delays his renunciation so that he may perform this act of veneration, having already planned to do so before deciding to renounce

Of the five stories portraying renunciation as a result of hearing an abstract discourse on Jain *dharma*, only two describe a delay between hearing the teaching and renouncing.¹⁶ Both of these stories describe the individual as delaying his renunciation in order to close his personal affairs. It is more common in the renunciation stories in the text for there to be a delay between hearing a sermon and renouncing, usually in order to close one’s personal affairs further (discussion in chapter three). However, this does show that ordinary individuals are the least likely of the three groups to delay their renunciation, regardless of

¹⁵ Here we see a normative understanding: as monks are not allowed to have any possessions, it would be impossible for them to make donations of any kind. However, there is evidence of monks owning possessions and making donations. Through the story of Sāgaradatta, the text clearly expresses the understanding that making donations is a lay activity.

¹⁶ Another example of renunciation without a delay after hearing a sermon is found in the story of Bhadrabāhu (*Jain Elders*, 6:8). Four men renounce in this story.

the catalyst. None of these stories, however, deviates from the model of early, spontaneous renunciation we might expect from a Jain renunciation story.

1.2.2 – Renunciation Caused by a Personal Experience

The catalysts for renunciation in this group of eight stories are personal in nature, connecting directly to the individual's life. Two stories in this section involve an interaction with a *tīrthaṅkara* that does not involve a universally applicable discourse on Jain *dharma*. In the other six stories, the catalyst is an event in the person's life that causes enough disgust with worldly life to lead directly to renunciation. I subdivide these six stories into the three following groups: 1) witnessing an action by another individual (4 examples), 2) a change in one's own life situation (1 example), 3) one's own insight (1 example) (see Appendix B).

First, I shall discuss the two stories involving an interaction with a *tīrthaṅkara*, the story of Bandhudatta and the story of Puṇyapāla. In both cases, the information learned from the *tīrthaṅkara* leads these men directly and immediately to renounce. In the first case, Pārśva recounts several of Bandhudatta's past lives¹⁷ to him and Bandhudatta takes initiation immediately

¹⁷ At this point in the story, Bandhudatta already believes that the Jain doctrine is the only thing of worth in existence. After hearing a sermon given by Pārśva, he asks Pārśva why his first six wives died and why he was imprisoned and separated from his seventh wife. Bandhudatta receives a personally directed lesson in the nature of *samsāra*: he is told that the main reason for his suffering is the maturation of bad *karma* accrued by separating animals a number of births ago. Pārśva describes Bandhudatta's soul bouncing from birth to birth as different forms of *karma* mature. He then informs Bandhudatta that he will be reborn in heaven. After his time there, he will receive another human birth as a king. In that life he will achieve emancipation. Through all the

(*Pc*, 422). In this story, Bandhudatta gains a knowledge of his past lives that teaches him the nature of *saṃsāra* and the power of *karma* through a concrete and personal medium.¹⁸ The story of Puṇyapāla (*Mc*, 336-339) introduces us to another important Jain doctrine. The information Puṇyapāla receives does not relate to *saṃsāra*, but to the declining morality of his times. The age in which liberation is possible ends shortly after the death of Mahāvīra, and Puṇyapāla's interaction with Mahāvīra occurs shortly before this time, meaning that Puṇyapāla has very little time to escape *saṃsāra*. Puṇyapāla has eight dreams, which Mahāvīra interprets. Each of the dreams represents a different aspect of the declining age and the lax morality inherent in it.¹⁹ This information terrifies Puṇyapāla, as it clearly indicates to him the need to renounce before the age changes. Puṇyapāla therefore renounces and subsequently attains emancipation.

lives Pārśva recounts for Bandhudatta, he is married to the same woman, his seventh wife in this life. She will achieve emancipation at the same time Bandhudatta does (*Pc*, 420-422). This story also illustrates the Jain phenomenon of souls bound together travelling through a number of lives together, bound together by some emotional bond (Bloomfield 1985, 13).

¹⁸ The importance of the personal aspect of gaining knowledge of one's past lives is fully discussed in Phyllis Granoff "This Was My Life: Autobiographical Narrative and Renunciation in Medieval Jainism" (Granoff 1994/95, 25-50).

¹⁹ The following is a list of Puṇyapāla's prophetic dreams and their meanings: 1) the elephant dream means men with discernment will remain householders and not take initiation; 2) the monkey dream means that the piety of the ascetics will decline and those who hold to the *dharma* and teach it will be ridiculed; 3) the fig tree dream indicates that false *sadhus* and false doctrine will proliferate and oppress pious laymen; 4) the cow dream means that sages will jump from sect to sect, always unsatisfied; 5) the lion dream means that the doctrine of the Jinas will be forgotten and false *sadhus* will arise from power previously acquired; 6) the lotus dream means that righteous people will not be born in good families and righteous people will be inferior; 7) the seed dream means that people will not know what is proper and what is improper; 8) the pitcher in succession dream means that wise sages will still exist but that they will have to hide or blend in to wait for a more righteous time to arrive (*Mc*, 336-339).

Both Bandhudatta and Puṇyapāla receive information that could have been imparted in a theoretical discourse. These two men, however, receive an understanding of theoretical things with a personal touch. Bandhudatta hears of his own past lives and how his *karma* has affected his experiences, which gives him an understanding of the nature of *saṃsāra* and the effects of *karma*. Puṇyapāla learns the prophetic meaning of his dreams, which teaches him the negative aspects of the declining age. Both men renounce immediately because of what they learn. These stories reveal the strong impact of theoretical things taught through a personal medium.

The following six stories portray catalysts for renunciation that stem from a distressing personal experience (see Appendix B). One story portrays the protagonist renouncing because of a change in his life situation, and four of these stories depict this experience occurring because of the action of others. The final story is unique among the stories portraying the immediate renunciation of ordinary individuals in the text, as the protagonist renounces because of his own insight (see Appendix B). One difference between these stories and the stories of Bandhudatta and Puṇyapāla is that none of these stories describes any external discussion with an authority on Jain *dharma*. Here the individual simply experiences the event and wishes to abandon worldly life immediately. The predominant difference between the remaining six tales is the nature of the event that shakes the individual from his complacent acceptance of worldly life. It is interesting to note that in the majority of these six stories (5 of 6 stories), the

catalyst is in some way relates to the negative consequences of attachment to women and the experience of lust. When we come to section 3.3, we will also see that lust can cause a monk to break his vows.

The story of Gāndhāra (*Mc*, 294) is extremely brief. Gāndhāra renounces after falling ill. This is an appropriate action according to the *Sthanangasutram*, which lists sickness as one of ten reasons²⁰ for renunciation. However, the list that Deo gives from the commentary to the *Thanaṅga* (see note 9) states that a sick person is not an acceptable candidate for renunciation (Deo 1956, 140).²¹ As we have already seen from the stories of thieves, the renunciations described in the story literature do not necessarily correspond to these types of lists.

In four stories of an external event, based on the actions of others, particularly women, leads to the protagonist's renunciation.²² The events that hasten the renunciations in these stories lead to implicit and personal realizations of the nature of *saṃsāra*. The following three stories describe actions that relate to lust and immoral action by women. In one of his past lives, Sāgaradatta renounces after his wife tries to poison him (*Pc*, 404). Another story²³ tells of

²⁰ The following are the ten reasons for renunciation according to the *Sthanangasutram*: the individual's desire to renounce, anger, poverty, the prompting of a dream, the promise to leave the world, the memory of previous births, sickness, lack of respect, being enlightened by a god and following one's child into the order (Dundas 1992, 132, Chakraborti 1973, 363, Deo 1956, 140).

²¹ Further inquiry into what aspects of these types of lists are and are not reflected in story literature would certainly further our understanding of medieval Jain attitudes toward renunciation.

²² Two Buddhist *jātakas* portray renouncing as a result of another's actions. In *Jātaka* 530, Samkicca renounces after learning of his friend's plan to murder his father. In *Jātaka* 543, Somadatta renounces because his father is a cheat and a sinner.

²³ This story is used to convert a number of high-ranking women, particularly queens. In their former lives this brother and sister were husband and wife. The sister in this story was the

future life of a goldsmith in which a man who learns that his sister is the “willing wife” of 500 thieves. Finding her wanton sexual behavior abhorrent, he renounces (Mc, 206). Nagila, a pious Jain lay devotee, is appalled by his friend's choice to die for lust, and he renounces immediately upon witnessing it (Mc, 287). Nagila's friend agrees to marry two Vyantara goddesses as their husband without balking at the required means to do so; he must die by fire before he may be reborn in their realm.

The catalytic events portrayed in all four stories relate to women and lust. There is a vast body of misogynistic writing among the literature of ascetic, celibate traditions. Women tend to be viewed as an impediment to a man deciding to take an ascetic life because of its necessary celibacy. Often, in Buddhist literature, men realize the nature of impermanence through some experience, which frequently relates to the female body.²⁴ For example, in the *Aśokāvadāna*,²⁵ Upagupta realizes disgust for desire after seeing Vasavadattā, whose hands, feet, and nose have been cut off. This is the final preparation for Upagupta's enlightenment. In addition, the final stage through which Siddhārtha passes before he firmly renounces is a full recognition of women's beauty as illusory and of their true nature as reflected in their unattractive bodies. The *Buddhacarita* describes this in a long graphic passage (*Buddhacarita*, 5:47-64)

wealthy and jealous husband of 500 women and the wife is now the brother. The husband ends up killing one of the wives in a jealous rage. She is reborn as the brother. This story shows the effects of *karma* and it shows that strong feelings for other individuals can result in encountering them again in a subsequent life (Mc, 203-206).

²⁴ For a detailed discussion of this phenomenon, see Liz Wilson's *Charming Cadavers*.

after which Siddhārtha concludes, “Such is the real nature of women in the world of the living, impure and loathsome; yet man, deceives by dress and ornaments, succumbs to passion for women” (*Buddhacarita*, 5:64). The emphasis in these two stories is on the disgusting nature of the body. By contrast, the stories in the *Mahāvīracaritra* and the *Pārśvanāthacaritra* do not use the female body as a tool for teaching. Rather, these stories tend to focus on the actions of certain women.

Women are also the cause of Dhanya’s renunciation (*Mc*, 259-260), but in a significantly different way. The story does not describe wanton or violent behaviour on the part of Dhanya’s wives, nor does it describe Dhanya feeling disgust for existence. The story of Dhanya is the fourth and final story in our discussion of renunciation based on a catalyst that stems from another individual’s actions. In the story, Dhanya’s wives suggest in jest that he renounce when Dhanya mocks the cautious approach to the renunciatory life of his brother-in-law, Śalibhadra. Śalibhadra (whose story I discuss below) is giving up his luxurious life slowly; this according to Dhanya makes him a coward. Dhanya’s wives respond to his claim by teasingly asking him why he does not take vows if it is so easy to do. Dhanya’s reaction to the challenge made by his wives indicates that he does have some desire to renounce already, stating that “these women who were an obstacle to the vow have given their consent to me today because of my merit. So I shall take the vow quickly” (*Mc*, 260). Despite the protests of his wives, Dhanya renounces immediately.

²⁵ This story of Upagupta and Vasavadattā is found in the following translation of the

The stories we have examined thus far describe people renouncing as a result of external events. Generally, this takes the form of the individual either witnessing some act that distresses him on some personal level, or gaining a new understanding of worldly existence through an external medium. The catalyst in story of Kapila (*Mc*, 295-298) is different; it is purely internal. The catalyst that causes Kapila to renounce is not an externally occurring event, as portrayed in the last five stories, but rather, his own insight and personal realization of greed. Kapila is a poor Brahman boy who falls in love with a slave girl. She tells him of a wealthy man who gives two *masas* of gold to the person who wakes him. Kapila goes in the night to the wealthy man's house, but before he can get the gold, he is arrested as a thief. When he is brought before King Prasenajit, he explains about the gold he sought. The king is overwhelmed with compassion for the boy and offers him anything he wants. Kapila requests, and is granted, time to consider the offer. While he ponders what he might request, he realizes that the amount of gold he desires continually grows and is never sufficient (*Mc*, 298).²⁶ The text is clear that this insight is a result of the maturation of good *karma*.²⁷ Kapila also realizes that he has been in love with a slave girl who is far below his social status. He becomes disgusted with worldly desires, attains a desire for emancipation, and remembers his past lives. The text

Āśokāvadāna: The Legend of King Aśoka, translated by John Strong, 179-84.

²⁶ Very similar circumstances give rise to the same realisation, which in turn leads to renunciation in *Jātaka* 421.

²⁷ The text does not explain the type of *karma* further, or explain how it was acquired. This is of interest in comparison to the pleasure-producing-*karma* used as a both as a reason for

calls him “self-enlightened” (*Mc*, 298). At this point in the story, Kapila pulls out his hair and accepts the garb of a mendicant brought to him by a deity.

The story of Kapila follows a pattern unique among the stories of ordinary individuals. Kapila arrives at his insight by witnessing the growth of greed within himself.²⁸ This relates to the growth of desire and his liaison with the slave girl. Once again, we see lust and a woman propelling a man toward renunciation. That the text describes Kapila as “self-enlightened”, and that a deity brings him his mendicant’s garb, is reminiscent of the stories of *paccekabuddhas* in the Buddhist and Jain traditions. In Buddhism, *paccekabuddhas* are also described as “self-enlightened” because they appear at times when there is no Buddha, or are contemporary to him. They receive no instruction, but arrive at emancipation independently (Kloppenborg 1974, 15 and 19). The *Darīmukha Jātaka* (*Jātaka* 378) portrays Darīmukha’s householder’s garb disappearing and his monk’s garb appearing when Darīmukha achieves *paccekabodhi* (*Jātaka* 378, 157). The *Paṇīya Jātaka* (*Jātaka* 459) tells of the insights through which five *paccekabuddhas* arrive in order to gain emancipation. The insights that bring the first two men in *Paṇīya Jātaka* to enlightenment relate to increasing desire (*Jataka* 459, 71-72), which is similar to Kapila’s insights.

the delays in the renunciation of the *tīrthaṅkaras* (section 3.4) and as a reason for certain monks breaking their vows (section 3.3).

²⁸ Some kings arrive at insight leading to renunciation by witnessing an external but mundane event, such as wind dispersing a cloud in the story of King Aravinda (*Pc*, 360). In the case of the kings, the event is not something that would generally lead to renunciation. In this way, both the story of Kapila and the accounts of some kings are similar to the stories of *paccekabuddhas* in Buddhist and Jain literature. Ordinary individuals tend to require some sort of external event that shocks them out of complacency and to move them toward renunciation.

The different types of catalysts described in these eight stories show us that a variety of experiences can cause a man to recognize the detriments of worldly life. We see that the most common impetus to renounce relates to the recognition that women and lust bring about negative consequences. This teaches us that though women, lust, and bonds of affection generally are initially pleasing, they are not permanent and renunciation is a better option. The eight stories discussed in the section all portray renunciation immediately after experiencing a catalyst. These stories further develop the image of renunciation in stories of ordinary individuals, as something that occurs spontaneously upon experiencing a catalyst, such as a message, fits well with the heterodox understanding of renunciation.

1.2.3 – Renunciation Caused by Both a Discourse and an Experience

Finally, two stories of ordinary individuals portray a combination of both types of catalyst, hearing a discourse and experiencing a personal event (see Appendix B). In these cases, the combined effect of the two catalysts causes the renunciation. In the story of Ṛṣabhadatta (*Mc*, 192), he and his wife, Devānandā, attend one of Mahāvīra's sermons and learn that Mahāvīra is their son.²⁹

However, this is not the case in the story of Kapila, *paccekabuddhas*, and some kings. For further connections between *paccekabuddhas* and kings, see section 2.2.

²⁹ Ṛṣabhadatta is the husband of Devānandā, the woman who would have been Mahāvīra's mother had the embryonic transfer not occurred. The story is predominantly about Devānandā; Ṛṣabhadatta follows her lead. When Devānandā sees Mahāvīra, "milk flowed from her body and the hair on her body was erect from delight" (*Mc*, 191). Mahāvīra explains that Devānandā responds to him in this way because she is his mother; she carried him in her womb for 82 days.

Mahāvīra's sermon, delivered immediately after this revelation, prompts Ṛṣabhadatta and Devānandā to renounce with a great display.³⁰ The revelation that Mahāvīra is their son profoundly affects Ṛṣabhadatta and Devānandā. Although they are pleased by Mahāvīra's achievement, it serves to make their lower status even more apparent to them. They remark, "On one hand, our son is Lord of the Three worlds; on the other hand, we are nothing but householders" (*Mc*, 192). Discovering that Mahāvīra is their son affects their understanding of their position in the world and when combined with the Mahāvīra's sermon, leads to renunciation. As both types of catalyst follow each other immediately, it is impossible to discern whether one had a greater impact than the other did.

The second story depicting both an event and a teaching is somewhat different. Initially, the story of Śālibhadra (*Mc*, 256-260) follows the pattern of the story of Ṛṣabhadatta. Śālibhadra has an experience that causes him to begin considering renunciation; this is followed by a persuasive teaching. However, Śālibhadra's story is different from Ṛṣabhadatta's in two ways. Śālibhadra does not renounce immediately after realizing that he wants to renounce, requiring instead a third catalyst - another event - before he renounces.

Śālibhadra is an extremely wealthy man³¹ who is obviously quite accustomed to his position of superiority. Śālibhadra initially begins to consider

³⁰ Ṛṣabhadatta and Devānandā reveal their sincerity by pulling out their hair and throwing down their ornaments. This is a rare gesture among the stories in the two texts, reminiscent of the actions of the *tīrthaṅkaras* at the time of their renunciations. The stories of Kapila and King Daśarṇabhadra also portray this sort of dramatic display.

³¹ The wealth of Śālibhadra's family is compared to that of the king twice. Each time the king's wealth appears to fall short. For instance, a seller of cloth comes to the city and offers his

renunciation when he learns that there are men superior to him in the world, such as the king. He thinks, “Out upon this lordship in worldly existence since there is another lord of even me” and decides to take initiation “very soon” (*Mc*, 258).

Śalibhadra then seeks to hear the *dharma* from a sage. Apparently, Śalibhadra is still interested in superiority because the sage’s words, “all people ... who take initiation, share in lordship” (*Mc*, 258), seem to move Śalibhadra even further toward renunciation. He replies, “If that is so, lord, I shall take the vow” (*Mc* 259). When Śalibhadra approaches his mother to seek her consent,³² she advises him to relinquish the luxury of his life slowly before taking initiation.³³ Śalibhadra follows his mother’s advice for a while, but when he learns that his brother-in-law has renounced, he immediately follows, “thinking himself excelled” (*Mc*, 260). He seems to be motivated at least in part by a sense of competition, something that would not be a positive motivation. There is no comment on his motives in the text, but Śalibhadra goes on to become a powerful ascetic.

Śalibhadra’s reasons for renouncing make him a notable exception to the other stories discussed in this chapter. The immediate cause of his renunciation

goods to the king, who declines because the price is too high. The merchant then goes to Salibhadra’s house and is able to sell his cloth. The jeweled cloth is then cut up to be used as foot rags for Śalibhadra’s wives (*Mc*, 256-57, 258).

³² This is the only case of an ordinary individual seeking parental consent before renouncing. As we shall see, many princes seek parental consent before renouncing. The princes do not renounce unless they gain the consent. I discuss the topic of gaining parental consent further in section 3.2.

³³ Parental concern for a child’s encounter with the harsh realities of the ascetic life commonly appears in the stories of princes. Part of this is because those are also the stories that portray the protagonist seeking permission to renounce; therefore, the parents have an opportunity to give their opinion. This could also relate to privilege. Śalibhadra is a wealthy man. As such, he would be less accustomed to physically harsh situation. The same would be the case for princes. This is further discussed in section 3.2.

is his fear that his brother-in-law has surpassed him by renouncing before he does. The realization that there are people superior to him and the teaching only serve to move Śalibhadra closer to the goal of renunciation. Śalibhadra's mother is partly responsible for his delay because she advises him to take on the ascetic life slowly. In this case, a woman acts as an impediment to renunciation rather than a catalyst. Still, this is not a positive depiction of a woman.

The catalysts portrayed in these stories of ordinary are primarily external in nature. Only Kapila renounces purely because of his own insights. Some men renounce after hearing a discourse on the theoretical aspects of Jain *dharma*. In these five stories, there are two accounts of a brief delay between hearing the discourse and the act of renouncing. The delays in both stories raise important issues. Rauhiṇeya's story emphasizes the importance of confession and is another example of thieves being acceptable candidates for initiation. The story of Sāgaradatta portrays the donation of images as strictly a lay concern. No delays occur in the stories of ordinary individuals who renounce after experiencing an event that affects them personally. Together the stories of ordinary individuals suggest that a person should renounce at once. They also suggest that an abstract discourse on Jain *dharma* is not as effective in bringing renunciation as an event of personal impact. The group of renunciation stories of ordinary individuals also reveals little of tension within the group between early and late renunciation that I will argue exists in the other groups of stories.

CHAPTER TWO: Renunciation by Kings

There are 21 stories of kings renouncing in the *Pārśvanāthacaritra* and the *Mahāvīracaritra*. Examining these stories we see that the dominant model for kingly renunciation in the text is based on renouncing at a particular stage of life – the final stage. This model of renunciation fits well with the *āśrama* system¹ of the orthodox traditions insofar as the individual – in this case, the king – is to renounce only after fulfilling his duties as a householder. This implies a later time of renunciation as compared to the model developed for the renunciation of ordinary individuals. Hartmut Scharfe, in his discussion of Jain attitudes toward kingship and the state, points out that Jinasena's text, the *Adipurana*, recommends that kings renounce in old age and live out the rest of their lives in religious seclusion (Scharfe 1989, 255). In fact, historical evidence suggests many dynasties settled the question of succession by having the king give his son the kingdom as soon as he reached maturity (Scharfe 1989, 63); this allowed the king to move on to the next stage of life. The *Mahāvīracaritra* further corroborates this idea stating that “when a son of a king has reached military age, he (the king) is entitled to renounce” (Mc, 313). I have found that the majority of stories (16 of 21 stories) in the *Mahāvīracaritra* and the

¹ We will recall from the introduction that the *āśrama* system promotes moving from one stage of life to the next as part of a highly ordered system. Each stage must be completed before

Pārśvanāthacaritra portray kings renouncing in late in life (see Appendix C). The remaining five stories portray early and spontaneous renunciation. I argue that these five stories reveal a greater degree of tension between early and late renunciation than exists among the stories of ordinary individuals.

Late renunciation by kings is not a scenario unique to the Jain tradition. Indeed, it is also quite common in Buddhist and Hindu stories to portray kings renouncing late in life.² A commonly used motif in these stories is the renunciation of the king upon the appearance of his first gray hair.³ However, this motif does not appear in the stories of renunciation in either the *Mahāvīracaritra* or the *Pārśvanāthacaritra*. The stories in the text use different clues to indicate the stage of life at which a king renounces.

Succession is an essential element in discerning the stage of life at which a king renounces. If the king is able to pass the kingdom to an adult son, then it is clear that he has fulfilled his worldly obligations as a householder⁴ and is ready

moving on to the next. Renunciation is the final stage of life and is meant to be embarked upon in old age. See Patrick Olivelle's *The Āśrama System*.

² The following is a list of Jain, Buddhist, and Hindu stories that portray a king renouncing late in life after giving the kingdom to a mature son. Examples from Jain stories are the story of Nala and Damayantī from Somanprabhasūri's *Kumārapālāpratibodha* (*Forest of Thieves*, 177-223), the Siṃhika story from Raviṣeṇa's *Padmapūraṇa* (*Forest of Thieves*, 224-26), and the Aramasoha story from Pradyumnasūri's *Mūlaśuddhiprakaraṇa* (*Forest of Thieves*, 263-91). Buddhist examples include *Jātaka* 378, 158, *Jātaka* 541, which describes 84,000 kings following the pattern of renouncing late in life after installing their eldest son, *Jātaka* 525, 92, and *Jātaka* 529, 131. Some Hindu examples from Kālidāsa's *Raghuvamśa* are 1:7-9, 8:11, 8:94. Patrick Olivelle also cites a number of examples of this phenomenon from Pali texts and the Hindu epics. He lists the following examples: *Digha Nikaya* III, 60-64, *Majjhima Nikaya* II, 75-82, *Rāmāyaṇa* 1.41.3, 2.20.21, 7.69.1, and *Mahābhārata* 1.81.1-2, 1.92.23, 1.94.18, 1.154.89, 2.17.22-23, 3.106.40, 3.186.2-3, 3.190.43, 3.193.6-7, 12.29.91, 12.280.22, 15.5.201. Olivelle, p.116 and n.15.

³ Some *jātakas* depicting this motif are *Jātaka* 411, *Jātaka* 541 (in this *jātaka* we see the 84,000 kings renounce after the appearance of their first grey hair), and *Jātaka* 525.

⁴ Renunciation in the *āśrama* system is not merely a form of retirement or an activity based solely on age. Olivelle points out that "the proper time to leave home ... is not just when

to begin the next stage of life as a renunciant. It is important to note that although installing one's son and renouncing is not the only method found in the *Triṣaṣṭi* for a king to ensure succession before he dies, it is clearly depicted as the better one. For example, King Śreṇika gives the kingdom to his son Kūṇika but does not renounce, choosing to remain in the palace (*Mc*, 313).⁵ However, the message of the story fully supports kingly renunciation in old age because Śreṇika is imprisoned, tortured and subsequently killed by Kūṇika, who feels threatened by his father's presence. Although primogeniture usually determines succession (Kane 1974, volume 3, 41 and 87, and Scharfe 1989, 27), there is historical evidence of kings occasionally installing an individual other than his eldest son (Scharfe 1989, 27). This is also corroborated in the text. The story of Udāyana, discussed below in section 2.1, shows the king installing an individual other than his son. In most cases, I understand this as an indication of early renunciation. In stories where succession is not described, there is often a comment on the duration of the king's reign to show that he is ready to move on to the final stage of life. In cases where neither of these elements occurs, I deem the time of renunciation to be unclear.

one has become old but also when one has completed one's duties as a father by seeing to it that his children are settled down" (Olivelle 1993, 139). In the text, King Vajranābha echoes this idea and describes the importance of sons in a discussion with his son, to whom he wishes to pass the kingdom. Vajranābha says, "But sons, like horses, are guarded for lifting a burden. Do you, having been born and having reached military age, fulfil my wish in the sphere of mendicancy now. For it has been known since your birth" (*Mc*, 367). What has been known since the son's birth is that the son has been groomed and protected to assume the throne so that Vajranābha may renounce.

⁵ Kūṇika, King Śreṇika's son, who is impatient to gain the kingdom, makes this statement. Kūṇika expresses a common understanding of the proper course of action for an ageing king.

I have divided the stories of kings into three broad categories based on the time and cause of renunciation: 1) kings who renounce strictly as a stage of life (9 stories), 2) kings who renounce late in life after experiencing a catalytic event (7 stories), 3) kings who renounce early or at an undetermined time (5 stories) (see Appendix C). One of these five stories, the story of King Prasannacandra, explicitly portrays spontaneous renunciation early in life. I discuss this story separately because it clearly reveals the tension between early and late renunciation. I will now discuss each group of stories in order to show that the model of kingly renunciation is one of renouncing late in life, as well as to show that the stories portraying an early or ambiguous time of renunciation create a tension between dominant social ideals of renunciation – renouncing late in life - and Jain renunciatory ideals, which imply an early time of renunciation.

2.1 – Cases of Late Renunciation Solely Related to Stage of Life

I have subdivided the nine stories that comprise this category of renunciation into two sub-categories: 1) stage of life only renunciation (6 stories) and 2) stage of life renunciation in conjunction with the development of personal piety (3 stories) (see Appendix C). The first category consists of five stylistically similar stories and one story that deviates from this pattern. In the five stylised stories, the king, who is not the principle character in the story, renounces after

passing the kingdom on to his son, who is the principle character in story.⁶ In these stories, the father's renunciation allows the son to come to power. Later in each story, the son also renounces. I call these stories the "fathers of kings" pattern.

The general pattern of these stories is a single statement about the father's renunciation between two statements about the son. The first statement either describes the accomplishments of the son's youth, or is a statement saying that the son has attained either youth or maturity. Effectively, this implies that the son is now of a suitable age and is prepared to rule the kingdom.⁷ In terms of our discussion of the *āśrama* system, these sons have completed the stage of student and are now ready to embark on the stage of householder. At this point, the father is also ready to move to another stage of life, from householder to renunciant. The statement that follows the father's renunciation is some comment on the son's reign, generally, that he rules the kingdom well. This statement not only expresses that the son is a good ruler, but also that the succession has been smooth. Inheriting a the kingship is a distinct sign of legitimacy (Scharfe 1989, 57). Clearly, a significant aspect of the renunciation is its role in the story plot; the old king's renunciation explains how the protagonist of the story legitimately achieved his kingship.

⁶ The following are the father-son pairings of these five stories: Dhanañjaya and Priyamitra (*Mc*, 15), Jitaśatru and Nandana (*Mc*, 17), Kuśilabāhu and Suvarṇabāhu (*Pc*, 370), Vidyudgati and Kiraṇavega (*Pc*, 364), and Vajravīrya and Vajranābha (*Pc*, 367).

⁷ *Jātaka* 524 portrays a king renouncing as soon as his son returns from being educated.

The cause of renunciation in these stories further supports the idea that these kings are renouncing as a matter of course: they are performing an act suitable to their stage of life. In the cases of Kuliśabāhu, Dhanañjaya, and Jitaśatru, the cause of renunciation is disgust for existence, yet no reason is given for this disgust. This differs from the stories of ordinary individuals, in which the text accounts for the individual's disgust by giving a reason for it. In the accounts of Vajravīrya and Vidyudgati, no reason whatsoever is given for the decision to renounce. This is an extremely rare occurrence in the texts and is therefore noteworthy. The story of Śalibhadra's father Gobhadra is the only other example of a renunciation without any stated cause (see section 1.1). The fact that no cause is given for the renunciations of these kings suggests that they do so primarily because it is an action appropriate to their stage of life.

The sixth account of a king renouncing purely as a stage of life is the story of Nandana (*Mc*, 17-19), who renounces because of a disgust for existence, for which no cause is given. This story differs from the above-discussed "fathers of kings" pattern only because Nandana is the principle character of the story. As a result of this, there is considerably less emphasis placed on the story of his son. Like three of the kings discussed above, Nandana renounces because of a disgust for existence that has no cause ascribed to it. Rather than following the life of Nandana's son, the text goes on to describe Nandana's life as an ascetic.⁸

⁸ Nandana is a previous incarnation of Mahāvīra. It is in this life that he binds the specific type of *karma* that leads to becoming a *tīrthaṅkara* (*Mc*, 19).

Disgust for worldly existence is also a chief factor in the decision to renounce in the stories of Kings Vajranābha (*Pc*, 367), Naravarman (*Pc*, 382), and Udāyana (*Mc*, 304-305). While the exact circumstances of the decision to renounce differ, their disgust for existence is correlated in the text with the development of their piety over a long period of time. All three kings become increasingly pious and ultimately renounce in their old age. Vajranābha's desire for mendicancy is a result of his fear of worldly existence. The text explains that this desire increases as his son ages. When his son is of a suitable age to take over the kingdom, Vajranābha seeks initiation. He describes the vows of an ascetic as something he has desired for a long time. Clearly, Vajranābha has delayed his personal desire for mendicancy to fulfill his social and familial duties; renunciation is the natural conclusion of his state of mind.

King Naravarman is described as a pious man. The text describes him as "always devoted to Jaina *dharma* [and] eager to listen to *sadhus*" (*Pc*, 382). Naravarman's renunciation, which takes place after he has been king for a long time, is caused by a disgust for existence. Having always been a Jain devotee, Naravarman only becomes disgusted with existence late in his life. This is not a random disgust, however, but one that the text connects directly with his long and pious life.

Finally, there is the renunciation of King Udāyana. Initially, Udāyana is not a practicing Jain. He converts to Jainism because of an illusion created by his

wife,⁹ who has died and become a god. Following this, Udāyana practices the religion as a lay person for a long time. The inclination to renounce arises in Udāyana during the course of a two-week fast. This desire connects with the realization that all things exposed to Mahāvīra are blessed and purified. Having recently finished a gruesome war, Udāyana decides that “if the Master purifies Vitabhaya [his city] by his wandering, then [he] shall be satisfied, when [he has] taken the vow of mendicancy at his feet” (*Mc*, 305). Aware of this, Mahāvīra proceeds to Vitabhaya. After hearing a sermon by Mahāvīra, Udāyana renounces. Although he does hear a sermon before renouncing, Udāyana has already made the decision to renounce before the sermon is given.

Before renouncing, Udāyana installs his nephew on the throne. The text explains that Udāyana consciously passed over a perfectly acceptable son, explaining that by giving his son the kingship he would be forcing him to act in worldly affairs. Udāyana finds this incongruent with his personal desire for renunciation (*Mc*, 305). This is the only case of a king who, renouncing in old age, installs someone other than his son as king. The story describes an unpleasant end for both Udāyana and his son. Udāyana is later killed by his nephew when he returns to Vitabhaya, as the nephew fears Udāyana has returned to reclaim the throne (*Mc*, 307). Udāyana’s son is humiliated because his father chose another successor. Because of this, he experiences hostility

⁹ The king is brought some delicious fruit. Wishing for more he goes to the hermitage, whence it is supposed to have come. As king, he does not doubt that they will give him the fruit he seeks, but he is wrong. The ascetics chase him away and insult him. After gaining protection

toward his father that leads to a lesser rebirth (*Mc*, 308). In the end, Udāyana did not help his son's spiritual progress, but instead hindered it by causing his son's humiliation. From this, we can infer that one aspect of this story's message is the validation of the practice of primogeniture.

Renunciation in conjunction with the natural development of piety might be understood to occur later in life. However, in these three stories there are other indications of the king's stage of life that strengthen this assumption: all three kings have adult sons who could take over the kingdom. After a lifetime of cultivating piety as a lay person, both Naravarman and Udāyana take the next step and become monks. The story of Vajranābha is the most explicit example of an individual specifically delaying his renunciation until the proper stage of life.

Each of the nine stories discussed in this section portrays kings renouncing at a particular stage of life. The last three stories combine the kings' stage of life with the progression of their piety. Thus, we can see that renunciation is a suitable end to a pious Jain life. The first six stories discussed portray a more pure stage-of-life renunciation. Here, there are no external factors in the kings' decisions to renounce. Although the pattern of "fathers of kings" functions as a means of legitimizing the principle character in the story, the son, it is nonetheless significant that these "fathers of kings" renounce. These stories emphasize that renunciation is the proper activity for one who has completed the householder stage of life.

from a group of Jain ascetics, Udāyana realizes that he has not been following the true religion

The repetition in these stories further reveals the overall image of late renunciation. Klaus Bruhn, in an article discussing repetition in Jain literature, notes one form of repetition occurring in the genre of universal history, which he calls “slot-filler” repetition (Bruhn 1983, 40-41). Bruhn relates “slot-filler” repetition to what he calls hero-variation repetition in Varga literature. Both types of repetition involve a standard, repeated story in which the identity of the protagonist changes, with or without changes to other details of the story. Bruhn’s discussion deals with the protagonists of the biographies of the 63 *śalākāpuruṣas* of the universal histories. John Cort, in his article on the genres of Jain history, uses Bruhn’s analysis in his discussion of the identity of Jinās in universal histories (Cort 1995, 475). Cort takes the analysis of “slot-filler” repetition further, noting that the five *kalyāṇakas*, or major life events of the Jinās, are the same. He states, that despite variation in detail, “On a fundamental level, nothing new ever happens in the universal history, and the identities of the Jinās elide into a composite image of the Jina, God” (Cort 1995, 475). The repetition in these stories of kings could also be deemed an example of “slot-filler” repetition creating a composite image of the renouncing king: King X desires renunciation, installs his son on the throne, and then renounces. The presence of an element of developing piety over time could then be regarded as a form of variation. The catalysts in the following accounts of renunciation late in life could also be deemed forms of variation according to this type of reasoning.

2.2 – Cases of Late Renunciation with a Catalyst

Unlike the stories of kings discussed in the previous section, the seven kings I discuss here experience a specific catalyst that leads directly to their renunciation. I subdivide these stories into two categories based on the same types of catalysts encountered in the first chapter: five renounce after hearing a sermon on Jain *dharma*, and two renounce after having a personal experience that leads to their personal insights into the nature of *saṃsāra* (see Appendix C). In terms of our discussion of a delay in chapter one, all these stories portray a delay between experiencing the catalyst for renunciation and renouncing. The importance of succession seems to outweigh the desire for immediate renunciation.¹⁰ Although all but two kings in the previous section renounce in conjunction with the development of a personal disgust for existence, the text lists no specific cause for this disgust. It is in this way that the stories in this section are different from those in the previous section, giving a specific catalyst that is responsible for these kings' disgust with existence.

The five kings who renounce because they hear an abstract discourse on Jain *dharma* are Kiraṇavega (*Pc*, 364), Mahāpadma (*Mc*, 242), Aśvasena (*Pc*, 402), Gāgali (*Mc*, 240), and Priyamiṭra (*Mc*, 15). After hearing the sermon, the content of which is not given in the text, each of these kings delays his

¹⁰ Succession seems to be very important based on the number of stories that portray it. *Jātaka* 529 emphasizes this idea. In this story, the king is about to renounce when his ministers

renunciation briefly in order to install his son on the throne. The existence of a delay is congruent with the majority of stories portraying ordinary individuals who renounce after hearing an abstract discourse on Jain *dharma*. Indeed, an argument could be made that these stories are examples of spontaneous renunciation and therefore, similar to the stories of ordinary individuals. However, unlike the stories in the previous chapter, the catalyst and the renunciation in these stories clearly occur in later life. Hence, these stories of kings also portray late renunciation. All five stories follow a similar pattern: the king hears the sermon, installs his son, and renounces.¹¹ Again, as in the stories of kings who renounce strictly based on their stage of life, the installation of a son on the throne implies that the king's renunciation takes place in later life, after his son has reached maturity.

Although these stories do not explicitly state that the son is of a suitable age to rule the kingdom, we can assume that this is the case for two reasons. First, given the pattern established above of fathers installing adult sons on the throne, and given the similar structure of this group of stories, it is likely that we are to understand that the sons in these stories are old enough to reign. Second, when we examine the story of Prasannacandra (section 2.4), it is clear that when a child is installed on the throne, there is a need to justify the action in the text.

approach him. They beg him to install his son before he renounces. The king agrees, but insists that it be done quickly so that he may renounce (*Jātaka* 529, 131).

¹¹ The fact that the contents of the sermon are not described in the text gives us another standardized version of kingly renunciation. In these cases, the repetition of this standard renunciation story constitutes "slot-filler" repetition. The identity of the king is the only thing that changes. These stories add to the picture of the composite image of the renouncing king.

As no such justifications are made, we can assume the sons in these stories are of a suitable age to rule a kingdom. Hence, the stories of these five kings add to the overall picture of kingly renunciation as something that occurs in later life.

The type of catalyst for renunciation in the stories of King Aravinda and King Suvarṇabāhu differs greatly from the abstract discourse on Jain *dharma* in the above stories. Both kings experience an event that leads to a personal insight into the nature of *saṃsāra*. In each case, this insight is explicitly stated in the text. These stories are similar to that of Kapila (section 1.2.2), and are reminiscent of the stories of *paccekabuddhas* from the Buddhist tradition.¹² According to Ria Kloppenborg, individuals who go on to become *paccekabuddhas* exhibit a level of maturity that enables them to recognize certain natural and seemingly accidental events, such as a leaf falling from a tree, as extremely significant to their own spiritual development (Kloppenborg, 41). Both Aravinda and Suvarṇabāhu exhibit this type of spiritual maturity insofar as they are able to come to insight into the nature of *saṃsāra* clearly and unassisted.

The story of Aravinda's renunciation (*Pc*, 360) follows the pattern of *paccekabuddha* stories closely. Aravinda witnesses a mundane event, a beautiful cloud destroyed in a moment by wind.¹³ This event causes him to reflect on the impermanent nature of *saṃsāra*. While reflecting on this new insight, his

¹² Some *jātakas* that portray individuals becoming *paccekabuddhas* are *Jātaka* 378, 406, 408, 459, 529, and 539.

¹³ This is the same cause of renunciation as is found in the story of the prince Sāgaradatta found in *Jain Elders*, 1:407-411.

knowledge-obscuring *karma* and conduct-deluding *karma* are destroyed and he achieves clairvoyance at once. He immediately installs his son on the throne and renounces. In Buddhist *jātaka* stories that describe an individual achieving *paccekabodhi*, there is no explicit mention of particular *karmas* being consumed in the process. Both the specificity of the types of *karmas* destroyed and their explicit mention show a particularly Jain emphasis.

By comparison, Suvarṇabāhu does not witness a mundane event. Suvarṇabāhu's insight occurs after he recognizes certain gods attending the same sermon he attends (*Pc*, 376). In trying to discern how he could recognize these gods, Suvarṇabāhu remembers his past lives. From this memory, he develops insight into *saṃsāra* and specifically into the benefits of a human birth. He then renounces after giving his kingdom to his son. Although a supernatural event propels Suvarṇabāhu's spiritual progress, remembering one's past lives unassisted - a rare occurrence in these texts - shows a significant level of spiritual maturity.¹⁴ Unlike the cases of Kapila and Aravinda, there is no mention in the story of Suvarṇabāhu of any particular *karmas* being destroyed.

Although each of these kings renounces late in life, they renounce immediately after experiencing some sort of catalytic event. These stories could be interpreted as cases of spontaneous renunciation and thus, more similar to the model of renunciation for ordinary individuals than to the kingly model of

¹⁴ This also happens elsewhere in Jain narratives. For example, the prince Valkacīrin, remembers his past lives while cleaning his father's implements and attains omniscience immediately (*Jain Elders* 1:250-52). Regarding the importance of remembering one's past lives in causing immediate liberation, see Granoff 1994/95, 29 n.4.

stage-of-life renunciation. However, the facts that none of the kings is a young man when the desire to renounce arises, and that they are all able to install adult sons on the throne, show that they renounce in a final stage of life. Hence, these stories clearly contribute to the overall impression that kings renounce late in life.

2.3 – Cases of Renunciation without Reference to Time or Stage of Life

Until this point, all the stories have clearly portrayed renunciation late in life. This model is congruent with the *āśrama* system in which the proper time for renunciation is after one has completed the householder stage. In the four following stories (see Appendix C), it is unclear whether the renunciations of the kings are late, and thus congruent with the model of kingly renunciation, or whether they are closer to the model of ordinary individuals described in the first chapter. However, it is most probable that these stories are examples of early renunciation. In the first two stories, those of King Puṇḍarīka (*Mc*, 244), King Sāla (*Mc*, 240), the king gives the kingdom to a relative other than his son before he renounces. In the stories of an unnamed king (*Pc*, 243) and of King Daśarṇabhadra (*Mc*, 251-254), there is no mention of succession at all. Although there is no way to determine with certainty these individuals renounced early in life, as young men, it is clear that they do not follow the dominant model of kingly renunciation established above.

In the stories of Puṇḍarīka and Sāla, the king gives the kingdom to an individual other than his son. Puṇḍarīka installs his brother, Kaṇḍarīka (*Mc*, 244),

and Sāla installs his nephew, Gāgali (*Mc*, 240). Both kings renounce after hearing a sermon on Jain *dharma*. The importance of succession is clear in the story of Puṇḍarīka. Initially, Kaṇḍarīka refuses the kingdom in favour of renunciation (Kaṇḍarīka's story is discussed in sections 3.2 and 3.3). Because there is no one to succeed him, Puṇḍarīka remains king despite his desire to renounce. Eventually, Kaṇḍarīka returns, after having given up his vows, leaving Puṇḍarīka free to renounce, which he does immediately. Since passing the kingdom to one's son is the most common method of ensuring succession both in the text and in the broader context of Indian tradition (as noted earlier from Kane and Scharfe), it is most likely that Puṇḍarīka and Sāla did not have the option of installing a son. In addition, recalling the story of King Udāyana, the text offers us an explanation as to why the king chose someone other than his son as his successor.

The following stories clearly portray an immediate renunciation following an event that affects the kings on a personal level, in much the same way as the stories discussed in the first chapter. In the first account, an unnamed king hears his past lives and renounces immediately (*Pc*, 423). He does not pause to ensure succession and there is no mention of what stage of life he is in. The cause of renunciation and the affinity of this story to stories of spontaneous, early renunciation in the cases of ordinary individuals leads one to believe that this is also a story of immediate renunciation.

The last king in this section, King Daśarṇabhadra, renounces for different, and possibly less honorable reasons: a major aspect of his decision to renounce is to surpass another. Initially, Daśarṇabhadra has been surpassed.

Daśarṇabhadra produces a large display of his magnificence to welcome and honor Mahāvīra. However, Daśarṇabhadra's display is not solely in honour of Mahāvīra, as he arrives at the assembly proud of his own splendor. In order to teach Daśarṇabhadra a lesson about pride, the god Pākaśāsana produces an even more magnificent display. Humbled by the god's display, Daśarṇabhadra reflects on the inappropriateness of his pride and becomes disgusted with existence. However, this alone does not propel him to renunciation:

Daśarṇabhadra still wants to surpass Pākaśāsana. Because he cannot do this through his own magnificence, Daśarṇabhadra decides to surpass him by renouncing, thinking,

I have been surpassed by [Pākaśāsana] by that magnificence, nevertheless I shall surpass him now by taking initiation. Not only shall I surpass him now by taking the vow, but I shall defeat the enemies in the form of *karma* that cause wandering through births. (*Mc*, 254)

Indeed, it would seem that some of Daśarṇabhadra's pride is intact even in his decision to renounce. From his statement, it appears that surpassing Pākaśāsana is Daśarṇabhadra's primary reason for renouncing and that he regards escaping *saṃsāra* only as an additional benefit of his action.

Daśarṇabhadra's tendency to boast seems unchanged, as he renounces making a great display of discarding his ornaments and tearing out his hair.

The motivation for renouncing in this story is reminiscent of the story of Śalibhadra; there is a competitive edge to both characters' decision to renounce. Stories of competitiveness and wealth seem incongruent with Jain renunciatory values. However, as both men have successful renunciations, it would appear that competitiveness as a motivation for renunciation is not highly problematic for the Jain tradition.

The spontaneous nature of the renunciation of both Daśarṇabhadra and the unnamed king indicates that there was no thought of succession at the time of their renunciation. Because there is no reference to a son who is of an appropriate age, nor is there any reference made to the duration of their respective reigns, there is no way to determine at what point in their lives these two kings renounce. This is much like the stories of Puṇḍarīka and Sāla. The similarity between these four stories and the stories of spontaneous renunciation among ordinary individuals leads me to posit that these are stories of early renunciation, even though the text leaves the time of renunciation ambiguous. These stories can be contrasted with the stories of kings discussed in the first two sections of this chapter. The stories in which the time of renunciation is ambiguous fit much more closely with the model of renunciation revealed in the stories of ordinary individuals: spontaneous renunciation early in life. In the cases of kingly renunciation, the main difference seems to be between renouncing with regard to one's stage of life and renouncing without regard to one's stage of life; and, it is less an issue between early and late renunciation. This further

strengthens the idea that kingly renunciation is predominantly an activity for a particular stage of life.

2.4 – The Story of King Prasannacandra: The Tension Between Early and Late Renunciation

The story of King Prasannacandra differs from all the other stories of kingly renunciation in the text for several reasons. First, Prasannacandra clearly renounces early in life, installing his son, a child, on the throne. Second, unlike any other renunciation story in the *Mahāvīracaritra* and the *Pārśvanāthacaritra*, Prasannacandra's renunciation is criticized. This criticism arises precisely because Prasannacandra renounces early and leaves a child to rule the kingdom. In this way, the story of King Prasannacandra brings the tension between renunciation early in life and renunciation later in life to the forefront. The text presents both sides of the argument. The events of the story make it clear that the Prasannacandra's decision to renounce early is the correct choice according to the text; yet the presentation also gives weight to the drawbacks of leaving a child in charge of a kingdom. This story is particularly interesting because it appears again in the first canto of Hemacandra's *The Lives of the Jain Elders* (*Jain Elders*, 1:40-266). Though this version of the story is longer, the plot remains essentially the same as in the *Mahāvīracaritra*. R.C.C. Fynes, translator of *The Lives of the Jain Elders*, refers to this text as an appendix to the *Triṣaṣṭi* (*Jain Elders*, introduction, xi). The fact that this story appears twice may indicate

its importance, which is significant to our discussion of the tension between early and late renunciation.

Because the story of Prasannacandra so clearly depicts the tension between early and late renunciation, I shall give a detailed summary of the story as it appears in the *Mahāvīracaritra* (Mc, 231-233). Two men in the retinue of King Śreṇika pass Prasannacandra while he is performing austerities. The severity of Prasannacandra's penance impresses the first man, but not the second. The second man, Durmukha, recognizes Prasannacandra and says,

That is King Prasannacandra, Lord of Potana, certainly. How is there [*dharmā*] of that man by whom his son, a child, is yoked to the burden of the kingdom, like a young bull to a very large cart? His son will be deprived of the kingdom by Dadhivāhana, Lord of Campā, together with the ministers. The royal ethic has been trodden under foot by him; even his wives have gone somewhere. Therefore he, by whom a heretical doctrine is held, is not worthy of a visit. (Mc, 231)

Durmukha's position is discredited in the text by discrediting repeatedly Durmukha himself. First, when the two men are introduced into the story, they are described as having "wrong-belief" (Mc, 231). Durmukha is discredited further through his name. Helen Johnson, the translator, brackets a translation of "*durmukha*" as meaning "abusive" (Mc, 231).¹⁵ Thirdly, in his final statement, Durmukha refers to the Jain tradition as heretical. Obviously, we are not to take Durmukha's position as a correct understanding of the appropriate time to renounce. Nevertheless, Durmukha does raise the issue of the problems associated with early renunciation.

¹⁵ This is one of the few places that Johnson offers a translation of a character's name, indicating that the use of *durmukha* as the name of this character is essential to understanding some of the implications in the story.

One implication of Durmukha's statement relates to the problems with child rulers.¹⁶ Durmukha observes that Prasannacandra's son will lose the kingdom because he is too immature for the responsibility thrust upon him by his father's early renunciation. Upon hearing this, Prasannacandra is not only distracted from his meditation, but he becomes angry and wishes to punish the ministers to whom he entrusted his son. He temporarily forgets his vow. According to the story, Prasannacandra is fit for the seventh hell at this time. This is problematic because, as we saw in the story of Sāmāyika (section 1.2.1), breaking one's vows mentally can lead to disastrous results. However, Prasannacandra soon remembers his vow and continues on the course of his mendicancy. If he were to die at that moment, according to Mahāvīra, he would go to heaven. Prasannacandra attains his omniscience immediately after Mahavira makes this statement. This is an obvious validation of Prasannacandra's actions.

This story clearly depicts the tension that we have documented in the text between renunciation in later life, consistent with the model of renunciation presented through the majority of the stories of kings, and renunciation as a younger man, which is more consistent with the idea of the spontaneous, early renunciation of ordinary people. Durmukha's position supports an understanding

¹⁶ In the *Brahmadattakricaritra*, the biography that immediately precedes the *Pārśvanāthacaritra*, there are problems with the child ruler Brahmadatta. When Brahmadatta's father dies, his mother and a close friend of his late father's act as regents until Brahmadatta is old enough to rule. This transitional period is not smooth. Brahmadatta's mother and the friend end up in a sexual relationship, which ends in a failed attempt on Brahmadatta's life because of

of the life cycle that is congruent with the *āśrama* system. This view is deeply entrenched in the understanding that renunciation ought to happen only after one's mundane responsibilities have been completed. This clearly involves waiting until a son is of a suitable age to rule. Although the text overtly supports and validates Prasannacandra's decision to renounce while his son is still a child, the fact that Prasannacandra is distracted from his meditation by the thought of his son's being deposed indicates that he is not fully detached from his previous life as king and father. The story shows that leaving a child on the throne can threaten one's ability to become fully detached from worldly concerns.¹⁷ The story of King Prasannacandra is the only example in the text in which the fact that the son is still a child is expressed explicitly. The fact that Prasannacandra installs a child in his place is such a significant issue shows that this is a special and unique case. Although the time of his renunciation is questioned, and arguments are presented against his decision to renounce before his son is old enough to rule, the text is clearly in support of Prasannacandra's decision.

Although there are a few exceptions (5 of 21 stories), the dominant model of kingly renunciation is based on renouncing late in life. The emphasis on succession (found in 19 of 21 stories) indicates that kings have more than their own spiritual well-being to think of when it comes to renouncing. This is consistent with the dominant social model of renunciation, which requires that the

his opposition to their liaison. This story clearly shows that child rulers cannot maintain order in the kingdom.

¹⁷ Leaving a child behind is understood to be very difficult, as we shall see the story of Ādrakakumāra in section 3.3.

individual complete his worldly responsibilities before moving on to renunciation. The model of kingly renunciation in the *Mahāvīracaritra* and the *Pārśvanāthacaritra* shows that kings have a distinct social role, namely ruling a kingdom. Until there is a suitable person to replace them, they must remain in their worldly role. The stories of Puṇḍarīka and of Vajranābha, both of whom delay their renunciation for a substantial period of time before someone is ready to replace them, reveal this idea most clearly.

As we saw in the first chapter, these constraints do not effect ordinary individuals to the same degree. The vast majority of their stories depict spontaneous and early renunciation. The dominant model of kingship in our stories, a late renunciation based on a stage of life, is also consistent with the stories of kings from other religious traditions. It would appear that kings are supposed to insure that the kingdom is in good hands before they may follow their personal, spiritual goals. For kings, secular responsibilities take precedence over the spiritual quest, although we should note that the outcome of the kingly renunciation is not different from that of spontaneous renunciation. We now turn to the stories of princely renunciation. As we shall see, their stories reveal a great deal of tension around renunciation and, specifically, between early and late renunciation. The ambiguities surrounding the role of renunciation in the lives of princes correspond to the ambiguity of their social role; if a prince is to become king then his path is clear. However, if he is not, the prince finds himself in an ambiguous situation, in which renunciation is one possible option.

CHAPTER THREE: Renunciation by Princes

Ten princes renounce in the *Mahāvīracaritra* and the *Pārśvanāthacaritra*. When we examine the stories of their renunciations, it becomes immediately apparent that a number of renunciation stories differ from the dominant models seen in the stories of renunciation of kings and of ordinary individuals. The stories of princely renunciation reveal an ambiguity in the area of proper action for princes, which I posit could relate to the ambiguity of their social role. As princes, these men can potentially become kings. However, not all princes end up becoming kings. If a prince is not to become king, then he must find an alternative role for himself in society. One option is to renounce worldly life in favour of an ascetic life. Although a number of princes choose this option, we shall see that the stories of their renunciations do not reveal the same degree of clarity and consistency in terms of the proper course of action as do the stories of ordinary individuals or kings. As we have discussed in chapter one, the stories of ordinary individuals present a model for spontaneous renunciation early in life. There is little tension in these stories between early and late renunciation and, with the exception of Sāmāyika (see section 1.2.1), ordinary individuals maintain their vows diligently. Conversely, the text consistently portrays kingly renunciation as something that occurs late in life. In the case of the stories of

princes, however, we shall see a greater degree of ambiguity in terms of both the time of renunciation and in terms of the level of dedication to one's vows.

I have divided the ten stories into the two following groups: 1) late, stage of life renunciation (1 story), 2) early, spontaneous renunciation (9 stories) (see Appendix D). First, I address the single example of late, stage of life renunciation (section 3.1). This account fits the model of kingly renunciation and depicts the protagonist's piety growing throughout the story. Next, I discuss the stories of early, spontaneous renunciation (section 3.2). These stories reveal several interesting points, such as parental concern for a son's ability to suffer the hardships of asceticism and the practice of gaining parental consent before renouncing. In the final section of this chapter, I discuss the implications of the four stories involving monks, who were princes breaking their vows (section 3.3). One account cites the difficulty of maintaining the vows as the reason for breaking them, while the remaining three stories ascribe the renunciants' failure to their having renounced too early – a point that is particularly interesting given our discussion of the timing of renunciation. Throughout this discussion, I also refer to a fifth story, the story of Sāmāyika, as this is the only other example in the text of a monk breaking his vows.

3.1 – The Story of Late Renunciation

The only story of late renunciation among the stories of princes is that of Abhayakumāra (*Mc*, 312). This story fits the kingly model of renunciation as it was developed in the previous chapter. One explanation for Abhayakumāra's late renunciation is that, as his father's favourite son, he had intended to become king before renouncing. Upon learning from Mahāvīra that there are to be no more sage-kings in this time cycle,¹ he seeks his father's consent and renounces.² The implication here is that Abhayakumāra follows the model of renunciation that is appropriate for kings because he had intended to be one. Despite his intention to rule, Abhayakumāra opts for renunciation over kingship when he must choose between the two. In this story then Abhayakumāra's spiritual goal supersedes his worldly aims.

The story of Abhayakumāra is noteworthy because of its description of the development of Abhayakumāra's piety. As Abhayakumāra had intended to become king, we should recall that three accounts of kings also describe pious

¹ The Jain conception of the cycle of time includes the idea of a golden age and a completely degenerate age. The conventional analogy to illustrate the time cycle is a wheel. Time is divided into downward (*avasarpini*) and upward (*utsarpini*) motions of the wheel, both of which are divided into six. In the downward cycle, the ages appear in the order of one through six. The order then reverses and the ages flow from six to one. The first *tīrthaṅkara*, Ṛṣabha appears near the end of the third age. Before this time, human existence was too pleasurable for religion to flourish. The ease of human existence degenerates continually over time and so, by the time of Ṛṣabha, it has degenerated sufficiently to allow for the possibility of religion. The other twenty-three *tīrthaṅkaras* all live during the fourth age. In addition, the *Mahāvīracaritra* teaches that with the beginning of the fifth age, just less than three years after the death of Mahāvīra, liberation is no longer possible. In the sixth age, the Jain religion dies out. The upward motion now begins with the ages appearing in the reverse order, thereby allowing the Jain religion to flourish again. This cycle continues endlessly (Dundas 1992, 18 and *Mc*, 399).

² For a full discussion of the practice of gaining parental consent before renouncing, see section 3.2.

individuals waiting until late in life to renounce.³ This adds to the image of Abhayakumāra following a kingly model of renunciation. Abhayakumāra hears the same sermon that leads his brother, Meghakumāra to renounce (*Mc*, 163) (discussed below). Abhayakumara, however, opts for the path of a lay devotee at this time. Throughout the latter half of the *Mahāvīracaritra*, Abhayakumāra is first minister to his father, King Śreṇika. At one point, he informs his father of his intention to renounce, but clarifies that this will happen only “at a suitable time” (*Mc*, 169). The implication here is that the appropriate time to renounce is late in life, and the story shows that this time is also after one has completed his worldly duties. Abhayakumāra never intended to renounce early. This renders another element of timing in this story significant. Abhayakumāra’s worldly duties are complete when he renounces, as Śreṇika is ready to pass on his kingdom, which he does in the next story. Although Abhayakumāra no longer intends to be king, his duties as chief minister would only be complete when his father gives up the kingdom. Hence, Abhayakumāra has renounced at the proper stage of life, in conjunction with the *āśrama* model of renunciation.

This story presents some options for a prince’s life; he may go on to become king and/or he may play some role in the king’s entourage. However, the story also shows that, regardless of one’s intentions, the future is uncertain and

³ King Udāyana (*Mc*, 305), King Naravarman (*Pc*, 382-83), and King Vajranābha in (*Pc*, 366-68).

kingship is never guaranteed.⁴ As soon as Abhayakumāra realises that he cannot renounce after becoming king, he renounces.

3.2 – Stories of Early Renunciation

The stories of princes who renounce early in life portray spontaneous renunciation. As we saw in the cases of ordinary individuals, a catalytic event precedes spontaneous renunciation. I subdivide this second group of stories of princely renunciation, which depicts spontaneous, early renunciation, into the following three groups based on the catalyst for renunciation: 1) renunciation because of an abstract discourse on Jain *dharma* (4 stories), 2) renunciation resulting from an event that affects the individual personally (3 stories), and 3) renunciation requiring both types of catalyst (2 stories)(see Appendix D). These stories of princely renunciation also reveal other aspects of renunciation such as the need for parental consent before renouncing and parental fears about their sons suffering in the ascetic life.

3.2.1 – Early Renunciation with a Discourse as Catalyst

Four of the stories portray spontaneous, early renunciation after hearing a teaching. The first two stories, the renunciation of Maṇḍi (Mc, 3) and the renunciation of Kaṇḍarīka (Mc, 242), do not portray any delay. Both men hear the

⁴ The idea that kingship is never guaranteed is further supported by the story of King Udāyana's son. Though Abhīci expects that he will become king, Udāyana chooses another as his successor (Mc, 307), and see section 2.2.

teaching and take the ascetic life immediately. In the following two stories, of Jamāli (*Mc*, 193) and of Nandiṣeṇa (*Mc*, 164), the princes delay briefly to gain their parents' consent. Since the Śvetāmbara tradition teaches that gaining the consent of one's parents before renouncing is a proper course of action (Jaini 1979, 244), this is not a problematic delay. Although gaining parental consent is the proper course of action, there is only one example of an ordinary individual, Śalibhadra, who follows this practice. Although seeking the consent of one's parents is an appropriate action, I consider it a delay because the majority of renunciants in this text do not practice it. As we saw in the first chapter, only those individuals who renounce after hearing a teaching delay their renunciations. Nandiṣeṇa receives some opposition from his father, King Śreṇika, obtaining his permission only "with difficulty" (*Mc*, 164). In these stories, parents are not generally in full support of their son's interest in taking the ascetic life. However, the *Triṣaṣṭi* never depicts the kind of opposition that exists in the Buddha biography.⁵

This is a very interesting difference between Jain and Buddhist stories of renunciation. Buddhist literature describes more consternation around

⁵ In Aśvaghoṣa's *Buddhacarita*, a representative version of the Buddha biography, Siddhārtha's father goes to great lengths to prevent his son from renouncing. When Siddhārtha is born, there is a prophecy that he will become a great ascetic. We are told that this causes the king great concern (1:79). One method through which the king attempts to prevent this is to keep Siddhārtha in special quarters in the upper parts of the palace, where he cannot witness any disturbing events (2:28-32). Another such method appears when Siddhārtha wished to view the city. The king beautifies the city and clears away the old, the sick, the poor, and the infirm, once again to prevent Siddhārtha from becoming disgusted or unsettled (3:4-12). When Siddhārtha approaches his father to gain his consent, the king refuses him (5:39). Consequently, Siddhārtha must sneak out of the palace (5:67-87). Even after Siddhārtha has renounced, the king tries to bring him back to the palace by sending a deputation after him (7:87).

renunciation than Jain literature. One aspect of this, seen in Buddhist stories, is the description of individuals sneaking away to renounce, as the Buddha must do.⁶ The fact that these potential renunciants cannot be open about their decision to renounce indicates that their families may be against their actions. Another aspect of Buddhist stories of renunciation that reveals familial opposition to renunciation is the degree of distress that the family undergoes when the protagonist renounces. In Aśvaghoṣa's *Buddhacarita*, an entire chapter is devoted to the grief of Siddhārtha's parents, his wives, and his people.⁷ By comparison, Jain stories describe parental fears for the comfort of their sons as well as difficulties in gaining parental consent for renunciation; but they do not include abundant descriptions of grief. As we shall see below in the story of Ardrakakumara (sections 3.2.2 and 3.3), Jain stories occasionally describe an individual sneaking out of his home to renounce. However, these examples remain exceptions that are particularly rare in our text. The choice to renounce gains greater familial support more easily in Jain stories of monks than it does in Buddhist stories of the same genre.⁸

⁶ Other examples of an individual sneaking away to renounce are found in *Jātaka* 522 and *Jātaka* 530. It is possible that these stories are repeating aspects of the Buddha biography in stories of ordinary renunciants. Nevertheless, these stories serve to create an overall image that a potential renunciant may not be able to gain the support of his family.

⁷ *Buddhacarita*, 8. Other Buddhist stories also portray the family lamenting the protagonist's renunciation. For example, *Jātaka* 378, 411, 459, 525 (a long passage here, p.92-95), 539.

⁸ One possible explanation for the greater degree of acceptance of renunciation in the Jain tradition in comparison to the Buddhist tradition is based on the biographies of the *tīrthaṅkaras* and the Buddha. The Buddha's renunciation is not supported by his family, while both Pārśva and Mahāvīra's families support their decision in the end. It is possible that other renunciation narratives reflect this difference.

3.2.2 – Early Renunciation with a Personal Experience as the Catalyst

Three stories portray princes who renounce after experiencing some sort of event that affects their personal understanding of life. The first two accounts, the story of Viśvabhūti (*Mc*, 8-9) and the story of Halla and Vihalla (*Mc*, 325), depict early, spontaneous renunciation after experiencing an event that influences the individual personally and leads to his renunciation immediately. Viśvabhūti, a previous incarnation of Mahāvīra,⁹ renounces because he has been tricked into leaving the pleasure garden so that his cousin may enter it. Angered by the deceit, Viśvabhūti declares, “Enough for me of pleasure beginning with such deceit” (*Mc*, 9). Part of Viśvabhūti’s decision to renounce relates to his connection of deceit with sensual pleasure. Once again, as in the stories portraying personal experiences in the first chapter (section 1.2.2), we see lust and women as catalysts for renunciation. The other aspect of Viśvabhūti’s renunciation relates to anger. Although this might seem to be at odds with the dispassionate ideals of renunciation, anger does appear on the list of valid reasons to renounce given in the *Sthanangasutram* (this list appears in Dundas 1992, 139, Chakrabherti 1973, 363, and Deo 1956, 141).

The second story of princes renouncing after experiencing an event of personal impact, depicts a renunciation that occurs because of the characters’

⁹ A more complete version of this story appears earlier in the *Trisasti* as part of the *Śreyāṇsanāthacaritra* but it does not differ from the summary in the *Mahāvīracaritra*. See Johnson translation, volume 3,10.

disgust with their own actions. The princes Halla and Vihalla cause the death of their elephant, Secanaka,¹⁰ by forcing him to ride into a pit trap (*Mc*, 325).

Secanaka is aware of the trap that lies ahead and initially refuses to go forward. Not trusting the elephant's instinct, Halla and Vihalla abuse Secanaka verbally and physically. Eventually the elephant obeys but, before he falls into the trap, he throws Halla and Vihalla to safety. Filled with guilt, they lament: "After leading him to death ourselves, we evil-minded, are still alive ... Henceforth, if we live it will be as disciple of the Arhat" (*Mc*, 325). They renounce immediately.

Interestingly, the text does not explicitly present Halla and Vihalla as being afraid of the bad *karma* that will necessarily ensue from their actions. Indeed, there is no mention of *karma* in this story whatsoever. Renouncing in order to alleviate the bad *karma* accrued by such an action is, however, a viable option. This is seen in my discussion of the stories of thieves in the first chapter (section 1.2.1), and by the story of Lobhadeva in the *Kuvalayamālākathā* of Ratnaprabhasūri (*Forest of Thieves*, 137-148). The story of Lobhadeva explicitly states that the practice of severe austerities can destroy the sin of an action (*Forest of Thieves*, 147-148). In terms of our discussion of the time of renunciation, the story of Lobhadeva differs from that of Halla and Vihalla in that Lobhadeva does not renounce immediately after murdering his friend, while Halla and Vihalla renounce immediately after causing the death of their elephant. Only

¹⁰ Secanaka, the royal elephant, is one of four things over which a massive war is fought between Kūṇika, the heir to Śreṇika's throne and his maternal uncle Ceṭaka. Ceṭaka is harbouring Halla and Vihalla, who possess the four things (*Mc*, 320).

after a number of calamities befall Lobhadeva does he realise the effect of his sinful action, seek instruction from an ascetic, and renounce.

The story of Ādrakakumāra (*Mc*, 182-183) is different from the previous two stories because it is unclear at exactly what point Ādrakakumāra begins to desire renunciation. Ādrakakumāra remembers his past lives because he sees a statue of the *tīrthaṅkara* Adinātha, which is a gift from Srenika's son, Abhayakumāra. Enlightened by seeing the statue, Ādrakakumāra begins to worship it and call Ābhayakumāra his *guru*. Ādrakakumāra strongly desires to meet Abhayakumara, but his father's command and the guard of 500 vassals restrain him. His father places him under the guard of 500 vassals. It would seem that Ādrakakumāra's father is afraid of the possible consequence of his son's having any further interaction with Abhayakumāra.¹¹ It is possible that Ādrakakumāra's father fears that this will cause Ādrakakumāra to enter the Jain life fully and renounce, although there is no explicit mention of this in the text.

Finally, Ādrakakumāra escapes and sails to Aryan lands. Upon landing, he renounces. He does not take initiation under anyone - the text describes him as being "enlightened by himself" (*Mc*, 183).¹² There is no mention of renunciation or disgust with worldly life, while Ādrakakumāra is still in his father's house. Ādrakakumāra's explicit desire is to go to Magadha and meet Abhayakumāra. However, when he arrives in Magadha, he sends the statue to

¹¹ The actions of Ādrakakumāra's father are reminiscent of the actions of Siddhārtha's father in Buddha biography, see note 5 of this chapter. Ādrakakumāra's father, however, does not surround his son with women in an attempt to keep him at home, as Siddhārtha's father does.

Abhayakumāra, gives gifts, and becomes a mendicant - he does not meet Abhayakumāra until much later in the story. Hence, we may infer that Ādrakakumāra's desire to meet Abhayakumāra somehow connects with a desire to renounce. If this is the case, then we can say that this story reveals a unique sort of delay among the stories in our text, a delay caused by parental interference.

The only other stories in the text to depict a delay caused by one's parents are the story of Śalibhadra (section 1.2.3) and the story of Meghakumāra (below). Śalibhadra's mother does not oppose her son's renunciation outright, but prefers him to approach the austerity of the ascetic life cautiously. The difference in the other two stories, which feature princes as the protagonists, is that they portray parents actively attempting to prevent their sons from renouncing. This seems to indicate that the parents of princes have less desire to see their sons become mendicants than do the parents of ordinary individuals, which might imply that the stakes are higher in royal families. Given a king's practical responsibility to pass on the kingdom, a son's renunciation leaves fewer possible future rulers. As such, renunciation in the lives of princes is more problematic in these than it is in the lives of ordinary individuals and certainly, a prince's potential future role as king is a part of this.

¹² This aspect of the story is reminiscent of the stories of *paccekabuddhas*, which are discussed in the first and second chapter.

3.2.3 – Stories of Renunciation with Both Types of Catalyst

Finally, two stories portray an event of personal impact and a teaching acting together as a catalyst for renunciation. These are the stories of Acala (*Mc*, 14)¹³ and of Meghakumāra (*Mc*, 162-164). The combined effect of the two kinds of catalysts is the cause of the renunciation in these stories. According to the *Mahāvīracaritra*, the character Acala renounces because of the pain of separation¹⁴ from his younger brother, Tripṛṣṭha, who has died. The emphasis on Tripṛṣṭha and Acala as a pair, achieved through repeated reference to their position as Baladeva and Vasudeva (*Mc*, 10, 12, and 13), implies that separation would be extremely painful. Indeed, the text describes Acala and Tripṛṣṭha as inseparable throughout their lives.¹⁵ When we examine the story as it appears earlier in the *Śreyāṇsanāthacaritra*, however, we learn that Acala also hears a

¹³ This story also appears in the *Śreyāṇsanāthacaritra* is found in volume three of Johnson's translation. As this version of the story appears earlier in the text, it is reasonable to assume that we would be expected to know the details of the story, and that the version in the *Mahāvīracaritra* would only serve as a reminder. Thus, because both types of catalysts appear in the earlier version of the story, I include the account of Acala's renunciation in this section, although only one catalyst appears in the version found in the *Mahāvīracaritra*. However, this reading assumes that medieval Jains read the text from beginning to end, which quite possibly was not the case. If indeed it is not so, it would be interesting to examine variation on the same story as they appear throughout the text. This could possibly further our understanding of the use of repetition in the *Triṣaṣṭi*.

¹⁴ The pain of separation from a loved one is understood to have a profound effect on an individual in the Indian literary tradition. It can cause people to behave most irrationally. For example, in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the text goes on at length about Rāma's pain; he wanders aimlessly, weeping and collapsing from grief when Sitā is kidnapped. For an example of this, see *Rāmāyaṇa*, 3:60:61-66. In the Jain *Rāmāyaṇa* as it is portrayed in the *Padmapūraṇa* of Raviṣeṇa (*Forest of Thieves*, 120-24), Rāma is unable to bring himself to believe that Lakṣmaṇa is dead, carrying the body with him and caring for it. The same type of inordinate grief also occurs in the story of Sundarī (*Forest of Thieves*, 112-114). Sundarī carries the body of her deceased husband around with her. The pain of separation can also lead to painful meditations, which in turn leads to bad *karma*. This phenomenon is referred to in the *Mahāvīracaritra*, when the embryonic Mahavira decides not to renounce until after his parents die (*Mc*, 27-28).

sermon before he renounces. Because of the grief he experiences as a result of his brother's death, Acala weeps frequently, no longer enjoys sense objects and passes his time "meditating on the worthlessness of *saṃsāra*" (*Śreyāṅsanāthacaritra*, 63). Nevertheless, he does not renounce. It is only after hearing a sermon that causes him to become "all the more disgusted with existence" (*Śreyāṅsanāthacaritra*, 63) that he renounces. In this story, the event (the death of his brother and the subsequent pain) moves Acala's state of mind much closer to that of a renunciant, but he still needs to hear a teaching before he is compelled to renounce. In this story, the abstract discourse on Jain *dharma* clearly pushes Acala to renounce. This is not generally the case in stories of renunciation that depict both catalysts. More often when both types of catalyst appear in a story, it is the personal experience that finally pushes the individual to renounce, which is the case in the story of Meghakumāra.

The story of Meghakumāra is particularly interesting because it portrays a renewal of vows. This is the only case in our text in which a *tīrthaṅkara* interferes with a monk's intention to break his vows.¹⁶ In addition, this story clearly portrays two themes important to our discussion of Jain attitudes toward renunciation: parental hesitation to support their son's desire to renounce and the difficulty of the mendicant's life.

¹⁵ "Tripṛṣṭha was never without Acala, nor Acala without Tripṛṣṭha" (*Śreyāṅsanāthacaritra*, 13).

¹⁶ As we shall see below, Mahāvīra is opposed to Nandiṣeṇa's renunciation because he has unmatured pleasure *karma* that will inevitably force him to break his vows. However, Mahāvīra does not prevent Nandiṣeṇa from renouncing.

Initially, Meghakumāra renounces after he hears a sermon from Mahāvīra with his family. The sermon affects Meghakumāra more profoundly than it affects the other members of his family,¹⁷ causing him to desire mendicancy and liberation. As is appropriate, he seeks his parents' permission, and an interesting discussion ensues as his parents attempt to dissuade him from his goal. First, his parents argue that the life of an ascetic is very difficult, particularly for one raised in a privileged environment. This is similar to the position of Śalibhadra's mother, expressed in her advice that Śalibhadra move toward the ascetic life slowly (section 1.2.3). By comparison, Meghakumāra's parents do not advise approaching asceticism slowly: they seem to want to dissuade Meghakumāra from the ascetic life entirely. Meghakumāra acknowledges the severity of the life he wishes to undertake, but claims that his fear of rebirth will keep him on course. In response to Meghakumāra's insistence, Śreṇika offers him the kingdom. Surprisingly, Meghakumāra accepts the throne, despite his apparent conviction in the preceding exchange. Meghakumāra then renounces immediately - as king, no one may prevent him from renouncing. Meghakumāra's parents try to dissuade him and then try to bribe him, but both attempts fail. They do not, however, take the approach of the Buddha's father (*Buddhacarita*, 5:39) and outright forbid their son from renouncing.

During his first night as an ascetic, Meghakumāra sleeps poorly and realises the truth of his parents' concern. Because of his sheltered upbringing as

¹⁷ Meghakumāra's brother, Abhayakumāra, becomes a lay person at this time (section

a prince, he is completely unaccustomed to discomfort. Throughout the night, Meghakumāra's fragility becomes a hindrance to his ability to maintain his vows. He promises himself that he will return to the householder life the next morning. However, before Meghakumāra can break his vows, Mahāvīra intervenes,¹⁸ telling him about his past lives. In one life Meghakumāra was an elephant who stood with one foot raised for three days in order to avoid crushing a rabbit. When the rabbit finally left, the elephant was so weak that he could not walk far enough to get water. Consequently, he dies. This act of compassion for the rabbit leads directly to Meghakumāra's current birth and the opportunity to renounce inherent to a human birth. Mahāvīra points to the difference between Meghakumāra's willingness to undergo suffering in that life and his failure to do so in this life. Having learned this, Meghakumāra renews his commitment to his vows and remains a mendicant. The telling of past lives in this story serves as a more concrete and personal means of teaching the nature of *saṃsāra*. Gaining knowledge of one's own past lives is more shocking to the individual than an abstract discourse on *saṃsāra*. Thus, it is more likely to alter one's way of life (Granoff 1994/95).

The stories of early princely renunciation constitute a majority of stories of princes who renounce (9 of 10 stories). Largely, they portray early, spontaneous

3.2).

¹⁸ As we shall see in the stories of monks who break their vows (below) *tīrthaṅkaras* do not usually intervene in order to prevent monks from breaking their vows. This is the only instance of this in either the *Mahāvīracaritra* or the *Pārśvanāthacaritra*. By comparison, *The Jātaka* portrays the Buddha as being more likely to attempt to prevent his monks from sinning. The frame

renunciation, with delays occurring only in the accounts of Jamāli, Nandiṣeṇa, and Meghakumāra. These princes pause only to gain their parents' consent before renouncing. The catalyst for all three of these renunciations is an abstract discourse on Jain *dharma*. The stories of princes are consistent with the stories of ordinary individuals: a teaching is less effective than a personal event in moving an individual to renounce. The stories of those monks who break their vows further corroborate this idea (below).

3.3 – Stories of Monks Breaking Their Vows

Five stories appear in the *Pārśvanāthacaritra* and the *Mahāvīracaritra* in which an individual gives up his vows either permanently or temporarily (see Appendix D). The protagonists in four of these five stories are princes; the other is an ordinary individual, Sāmāyika (section 1.2.1). The fact that the majority of persons who break their vows in our text are princes reveals that early renunciation is somewhat problematic in the stories of princes - both in terms of the proper time for renunciation and in terms of their level of dedication to the ascetic life. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the model for renunciation in stories of kings is clearly renunciation late in life. The story of Abhayakumāra (section 3.1) shows that if a prince intends to become king, he may delay his renunciation until after he has been king and fulfilled his duties in that role. We have also seen, in the story of King Udāyana and his son (*Mc*, 307 and section

stories of a number of *jātaka* tales indicate that the story is told in order to help a wayward monk.

2.1), that even if a prince had anticipated becoming king, his position is not guaranteed until he is installed. As such, the course of a prince's life is not as clear as that of a king, nor is the role of renunciation as fixed. In comparison to the stories of princes, no stories of kings depict a king breaking his vows.

Having just discussed the nine stories of princely renunciation that portray spontaneous, early renunciation, I shall now discuss four of those stories in which princes who renounced early in life and subsequently break their vows. The stories describe the individual prince choosing different options for the rest of their lives. In the first story, the protagonist, Maṛīci, takes an intermediary life between ascetic and householder. The story of Kaṇḍarīka portrays the prince returning to take the kingdom after spending time as an ascetic. The other two stories portray the princes Nandiṣeṇa and Ādrakakumāra giving up their vows and re-entering worldly life.

All but one of the five monks who give up their vows in the *Pārśvanāthacaritra* and the *Mahāvīracaritra* have renounced as a result of hearing an abstract teaching on the subject of *dharma*. The exception is Ādrakakumāra, who renounces after remembering his past lives. Individuals give up their vows for one of two reasons: either the ascetic life proves to be too difficult for them (2 stories) or they have not renounced at the proper time (3 stories). In the four stories with princes as the protagonist, the text offers a *karma*-based reason for their actions; no such explanation is given in the story of

Some examples of this are *Jātaka* 191, 193, 198, 207, 212, 232, and 266.

Sāmāyika, the only ordinary individual to give up his vows. Two ideas that appear in these stories are the existence of social censure against one who has broken a vow, and validation for parental concern for their son's ability to deal with the hardship of the ascetic life.

The story of Marīci (*Mc*, 3-4),¹⁹ the first incarnation of Mahāvīra,²⁰ clearly describes how Marīci finds the vows too difficult. After following Ṛṣabha for a long time, Marīci finds the austerity of the ascetic life too much for him to bear. He decides that he cannot continue this way of life. Here, the text offers the maturation of good-conduct-obscuring-*karma* as the reason for his inability to maintain his vows fully. Because of his decision, Marīci chooses a unique course of action. In order to avoid the disgrace he fears he will encounter if he breaks his vows, Marīci decides to lessen the severity of his vows, rather than break them completely. He reasons,

I would certainly be disgraced before the world if I abandon [the vow]. I shall take this means to keep the vow from being a burden. These blessed ascetics are always free from the three hurtful acts (*tridanda*). The triple staff (*tridandin*) shall be a token of me who have been subdued by the hurtful acts. These are bald from pulling out their hair, but I shall have a tuft of hair (*sikhin*), bald by means of a razor. These observe the great vows; I shall observe the lesser vows. These *munis* have no possessions; I shall have a ring, et cetera. They are free from delusion; I, covered by delusion, shall have an umbrella. These sages walk without shoes; I shall have shoes as a means of protection for my feet. They have a good odor from their conduct; I have an evil odor from my conduct. To obtain a good odor, I shall have a tilaka, et cetera of sandal. These sages, free from passion, (*kasaya*), have old white garments; I, having passions, shall have reddish garments (*kasaya*). They give up the use of water which causes the destruction of many lives; I shall bathe and drink a moderate amount of water.
(*Mc*, 4)

¹⁹ This story also appears in Ṛṣabha's biography, found in the *Triṣaṣṭi* volume I of Johnson's translation.

²⁰ Marci binds the *karma* of having pride in one's family in this birth. This *karma* matures as his soul falls from heaven many lives later, which is the reason why Mahāvīra initially falls into Devānadā's womb.

Though Maṛīci no longer keeps the vows of a Jain ascetic, he does not return to the householder existence. He continues to follow Ṛṣabha, teaching the *dharma* to those who will listen. Ṛṣabha does not rebuke Maṛīci for his actions in either our text or in his own biography in the *Triṣaṣṭi*. At one point, Ṛṣabha predicts that Maṛīci will become the final *tīrthaṅkara* of this time cycle, but he is clear that Maṛīci's ascetic practices are not the cause of this, stating that Maṛīci's practices "are not to be honored" (*Mc*, 5). Insofar as Maṛīci does not practice asceticism in the proper way, he has effectively broken his vows.

The text, however, connects Maṛīci's breaking his vow to a specific event, the teaching of a false doctrine. When, in the course of giving instruction in Jain *dharma*, people ask Maṛīci why he does not follow the renunciant life himself, he responds honestly, saying that he himself is unable to bear the weight of the vows. In the beginning, Maṛīci refers those who wish to renounce to Ṛṣabha, understanding that he himself does not practice the true method of asceticism. Later in the story, however, Maṛīci takes a disciple of his own, Kapila (*Mc*, 6). Like others before him, Kapila asks why Maṛīci does not follow the practice that he teaches. As usual, Maṛīci replies honestly, saying that he is incapable of enduring the hardships required of a Jain ascetic. However, when Kapila inquires as to whether there is *dharma* on Maṛīci's path, Maṛīci replies that there is *dharma* on both his path and on the path of the *tīrthaṅkaras* (*Mc*, 6). This is the moment when, according to the text, Maṛīci fully breaks with the Jain tradition

and teaches a false doctrine.²¹ The *dharma* on Maṛīci's path does not lead to emancipation and, according to Ṛṣabha, it is not honourable. For this action in particular, Maṛīci receives a vast number of additional lives (*Mc*, 6). Until this point, Maṛīci had been living an intermediary life between worldly life and the life of a Jain renunciant.²²

Like Sāmāyika, Maṛīci finds the vows of a Jain ascetic too difficult to maintain. However, Maṛīci's weakness is more pervasive than Sāmāyika's. The harsh austerities of the ascetic lifestyle prove to be too much for him. Consequently, Maṛīci develops his own, more manageable, system of religious practices. He does not abandon the Jain path entirely, but he alters nearly all aspects of the ascetic life. The text offers a *karma*-based reason for Maṛīci's failure; good-conduct-obscuring-*karma* matures in him. This story clearly warns of the difficulty of a Jain ascetic's life. By comparison, Sāmāyika does not seem

²¹ The text goes on to explain that Kapila takes on his own disciples and teaches them the ascetic practices he learned from Maṛīci. Later, once he has been reborn as a god, Kapila transmits his own doctrine to his former disciples. This is the origin of the Sāṃkhya school of philosophy (*Mc*, 7). Though the text describes the origin of Sāṃkhya philosophy as Kapila's creation, the practices he followed during his life and taught to his disciples originally stem from Maṛīci's false practice and false teaching. This links a rival school of philosophy with the teaching of a fallen ascetic. Maṛīci only takes on one disciple and never teaches his ascetic practices as valid except to Kapila. The Jain appropriation of the Sāṃkhya teacher Maṛīci requires further study.

²² This story illustrates some of the difficulties in attempting to speak of Jain attitudes toward renunciation based on story types. I have chosen to include Maṛīci under the category of a Jain monk who gives up his vows because he renounces into the Jain tradition. However, there is also some justification for considering Maṛīci to be a false ascetic. The greatest problem in an effort to understand the story is the prediction that Maṛīci will become a *tīrthaṅkara*, although he practices false asceticism. Are we to understand this to mean that the way an ascetic's vows are practised is unimportant? In his discussion of the genre of universal history, John Cort points out that the purpose of the detailed rebirth narratives in the biographies of the *tīrthaṅkaras* is to show clearly the working of *karma* (Cort 1995, 475). As the birth as Maṛīci is quite early in the narrative of Mahāvīra's past lives, and because we are told he receives many additional lives because he taught a false doctrine, we can interpret this story as a lesson on the nature of *karma*. The fact

troubled by the harsh reality of the ascetic life, having difficulty with the vow of chastity alone. As noted in the first chapter, there is no *karma*-based explanation for why Sāmāyika breaks his vow. Sāmāyika simply does not possess the self-control necessary to maintain his vow.

Three stories describe individuals giving up their vows because they have not renounced at the proper time. First, I discuss the story of Kaṇḍarīka (*Mc*, 242-244), the only one of the three protagonists who does not renew his vows later in life. The other two princes are Nandiṣeṇa and Ādrakakumāra. It would seem that Kaṇḍarīka renounces too early in life, swept away by his initial excitement upon hearing a teaching. In addition, it would appear that his brother, King Puṇḍarīka, who has an obvious interest in renunciation, also inspires Kaṇḍarīka. Puṇḍarīka offers Kaṇḍarīka the throne because he wishes to renounce, to which Kaṇḍarīka replies, “Why do you make me fall into the cycle of births? I shall take the vow and cross the ocean of births” (*Mc*, 242). With that, Kaṇḍarīka renounces. Kaṇḍarīka passes some time among the ascetics, but good-conduct-obscuring-*karma* matures early on. Kaṇḍarīka decides to return and accept his brother’s offer of the throne. Puṇḍarīka gives a second explanation for Kaṇḍarīka’s rejection of the ascetic life. He explains that Kaṇḍarīka “took the vow at that time as a boy from excessive zeal” (*Mc*, 243). This story indicates that renunciation

that Maṛīci’s soul goes on to become a *tīrthaṅkara* shows that he has been able to expiate his sin over many lives.

involves a certain element of proper timing: one must possess a certain level of maturity before deciding to renounce.²³

When Kaṇḍarīka breaks his vows and returns to the palace, he loses the respect of his ministers and is ridiculed by the court. This sends Kaṇḍarīka into a fit of anger. He delays punishing those who ridiculed him until after he has eaten. After having eaten so sparsely as an ascetic, the rich food of the palace causes Kaṇḍarīka massive indigestion. His ministers do not retain medical help for him because they deem him “a wicked man with a broken vow” (*Mc*, 244). Although Kaṇḍarīka spent a great deal of time cultivating his mind, he ends up being reborn in hell because he dies harboring hostile thought toward his ministers. The mockery and loss of respect that Kaṇḍarīka faces when he returns to the palace is an extreme example of what Maṛīci feared would happen to him if he returned to worldly life. Though there is occasional opposition to an individual taking the ascetic life - for example when parents withhold their consent - the vows themselves are greatly respected; to break them costs an individual dearly. One who has given up his vows may not easily re-acquire the respect he formerly held in the world or the respect he had as an ascetic.

The following two stories also portray ascetics who give up their vows because they renounced too early in their lives. However, neither of these two

²³This is corroborated by the list that Deo cites from the Abhayadeva's commentary on the *Thanaṅga*, which states that a child under eight years old may not be initiated (Deo 1956, 140). In a note 4 on the same page, Deo points out that according to the Abhayadeva in his commentary to the *Bhagavai*; an exceptional individual may be ordained earlier. This list implies the need for a certain degree of maturity in order to decide to renounce. I do not maintain that Kaṇḍarīka is a child at the time of his renunciation.

men face the type of reactions Marīci feared and Kaṇḍarīka encountered, nor do they face retribution for their actions in their next lives. This is interesting because we might assume that the existence of some inevitable penalty for breaking vows. Rather, both of these men return to the ascetic life after the *karma* that caused them to break their vows has been consumed.

First is the story of Nandiṣeṇa (*Mc*, 164-166). On his way from the house to become an ascetic, a goddess warns Nandiṣeṇa that he still has pleasure-producing-*karma* that has not yet been consumed. The deity instructs him, “Wait for some time at home. Become a mendicant when that *karma* is destroyed. Action at the wrong time does not bear fruit” (*Mc*, 164). Mahāvīra also opposes Nandiṣeṇa’s renunciation for this reason. Nevertheless, Nandiṣeṇa is adamant and proceeds to take the vow. Although Nandiṣeṇa tries to avoid this *karma* by practising severe penance, he must eventually succumb to it, for, as the deity points out, “Even the Jinas are not able to get rid of *karma* that has pleasure as its fruit without consuming it” (*Mc*, 165). The implication is that if a *tirthankara* is subject to his *karma*, then Nandiṣeṇa, an individual with a lesser destiny, is most certainly at the mercy of his. Once again, we see that renunciation is not always best done immediately.

Despite his efforts, Nandiṣeṇa begins to feel the disturbance caused by his *karma*. To avoid breaking his vow, Nandiṣeṇa makes repeated attempts to kill himself. Each time, the goddess who initially warned him of his *karma* intervenes to save his life. Again, she reminds him of the unavoidable power of *karma*.

Then, Nandiṣeṇa encounters a courtesan who propositions him repeatedly. The text links this explicitly to Nandiṣeṇa's *karma*. Finally, Nandiṣeṇa agrees to the courtesan's requests "because of the subjection to pleasure-*karma*, although he knew that pleasures were sin" (*Mc*, 166). As a kind of compensation for breaking his vows, Nandiṣeṇa makes the following vow: "I shall enlighten ten or more persons every day. If I do not, then I shall take initiation again" (*Mc*, 166). From this passage, it would appear that Nandiṣeṇa is not fully the subject of his passions – he is aware of both the existence of pleasure-*karma* and the sinful nature of his action. He has even tried repeatedly to avoid this result, but to no avail. Nandiṣeṇa's new vow makes the abandonment of his original vows conditional and serves as a tool to indicate when his pleasure-*karma* has been eradicated.

One day, Nandiṣeṇa is unable to enlighten the tenth man and must therefore take initiation again. After death, Nandiṣeṇa goes to heaven. It would appear that Nandiṣeṇa only lives outside his ascetic vows for a period of days before taking his second initiation. Since his pleasure-*karma* has now been consumed, he is able to follow his vow successfully. There is an emphasis in this story on the firm and unavoidable nature of *karma*, particularly pleasure-producing-*karma*. Like Sāmāyika (chapter one), Nandiṣeṇa is unable to maintain the vow of chastity in particular.²⁴ The discourse in Nandiṣeṇa's story, however,

²⁴ *Jātaka* 509 tells the story of an ascetic who breaks his vow of chastity with a woman. Consequently, he loses all his ascetic powers. After hearing a diatribe against the deluding nature of women, he realises his error and returns to his former state of mind. At this point, he regains

revolves around the consumption of pleasure-producing-*karma*, rather than Nandiṣeṇa's sensual desires. Nandiṣeṇa tries but fails to avoid the unavoidable. His failure is described as less of a personal failure than Sāmāyika because of the power of one's *karma*.

Different elements are emphasised in the story of Ādrakakumāra (Mc, 183-87), though he too breaks his vow because of pleasure-producing-*karma*. Ādrakakumāra is the only ascetic in the body of stories contained in the *Pārśvanāthacaritra* and the *Mahāvīracaritra* who renounces spontaneously, early in life, only to give up his vows and renounce again in later life. Indeed, this aspect of the story is reminiscent of the *āśrama* system. As mentioned earlier, Ādrakakumāra renounces after remembering his past lives. The *Ācāraṅga Sūtra* 1-27 (cited in Granoff 1994, 16) teaches that one who remembers his past lives, either independently or with prompting, is ready for the religious life. However, this does not seem to fit Ādrakakumāra's story, as it is clearly not yet time for him to renounce. As he is renouncing, a deity warns Ādrakakumāra that he still has pleasure-producing-*karma* that must be consumed. She says:

Even if you are noble in character, nevertheless do not take initiation. You still have karma with the fruit of pleasure. So be patient. When you have consumed the karma with the fruit of pleasure, take the vow at the proper time. Most certainly that which is to be enjoyed must be enjoyed even by the Tīrthankṛts. Noble sir, enough of the vow, since it will be abandoned, if taken. (Mc, 183)

Ādrakakumāra ignores the warning and proceeds to take the vow of a mendicant. As in the story of Nandiṣeṇa, this story conveys a notion of a proper

his ascetic powers. Another example of this is the story of a Digambara monk, Madanakīrti, (*Forest of Thieves*, 249-55), who also breaks his vows because of a woman.

time for renouncing, which is removed from the occasion that initially stimulates the desire to renounce.

Later in his wanderings, a young girl named Śrīmatī selects Ādrakakumāra to be her husband, as part of a game. A goddess validates her choice by producing a shower of gems. Although Ādrakakumāra attempts to avoid Śrīmatī by wandering elsewhere, he eventually returns to the area. Twelve years after the incident of the game, Ādrakakumāra marries Śrīmatī. Like Nandiṣeṇa, Ādrakakumāra is conscious of the need to rid himself of his pleasure-*karma* when he breaks his vows. This *karma* with pleasure as its fruit is a strong and inescapable deterrent to a successful life of mendicancy.²⁵ Ādrakakumāra and Śrīmatī produce a son, which is “the glory of householdership” (Mc, 185).²⁶ When the son is old enough to speak, Ādrakakumāra desires to renounce again but, out of affection for his son, he promises to remain a householder for another twelve years.²⁷ Ādrakakumāra renounces for the second time with his wife’s permission and when his son is more able to take on adult responsibilities. Of the two stories containing a double

²⁵ We also see evidence of this *karma* as the reason given for the *tīrthaṅkaras*’ marriages (Appendix E). It also appears in this text as the reason that Nandiṣeṇa breaks his vow. *Karma* with pleasure as its fruit appears elsewhere in Jain literature as a reason for individuals not to renounce. For example this is the case for Rāyasirī found in the story of Devadhara (*Forest of Thieves*, 299). It also is alluded to in as the reason that Dhanagiri has sex with his wife despite his intentions to remain celibate. The text explains his action in terms of the unavoidable nature of *karma* (“The Childhood of Vajrasvāmin” in *Forest of Thieves*, 39). However, I am not familiar with the use of pleasure-*karma* as an explicit reason for breaking one’s vows or experiencing desire in Buddhist story literature. Indeed, such examples are unlikely to exist, as Buddhists do not have such a specified idea of *karma*.

²⁶ The birth of his son marks Ādrakakumāra’s full participation in the householder life.

²⁷ In the *Jain Elders* 5:93 it says, “Affection for a son is indeed hard to abandon.”

renunciation, this story conforms particularly closely to the *āśrama* model of renunciation, in which one renounces after fulfilling one's family obligations.

The stories of individuals who break their vows confirm that the ascetic life of a Jain renunciant is difficult. They also show the power of *karma*. In the four stories with princes as the protagonist, some form of *karma* causes each prince to abandon his vows. In stories of Nandiṣeṇa and Ādrakakumāra, the text is clear that everyone is subject to the workings of *karma*, including even *tīrthaṅkaras*. Both Nandiṣeṇa and Ādrakakumāra are warned of the problems that their *karma* will cause if they renounce before it has been consumed. It is interesting that divinities interfere on behalf of these men in an attempt to prevent them from creating a situation that will lead to the breaking of their vows. The goddess forms an intermediary level between the individual and the *tīrthaṅkara*. The *tīrthaṅkaras* do not act to keep the individuals from breaking their vows in these stories. As I note in the discussion of Meghakumāra (section 3.2.3), Buddhist *jātakas* describe the Buddha intervening to prevent members of his following from breaking their vows (see note 19).

The way in which the princes consume their pleasure-*karma* is different. Only Ādrakakumāra takes the householder life. Marīci and Kaṇḍarīka both give up their vows because of good-conduct-obscuring-*karma*. Only Sāmāyika had no reason but himself for breaking his vow. However, the case of Sāmāyika is interesting because the story implies that even breaking one's vow mentally carries significant consequences, which makes it all the more interesting that

Nandiṣeṇa and Ādrakakumāra do not suffer any consequences for their actions.²⁸

The stories of Kaṇḍarīka, Nandiṣeṇa, and Ādrakakumāra clearly indicate that a proper time for renunciation exists. This is not the same understanding as exists in the *āśrama* system, though age is a factor in one story. Puṇḍarīka explains that Kaṇḍarīka renounced as a boy. Puṇḍarīka links the zeal with which Kaṇḍarīka renounces to his youth. The implication is that Kaṇḍarīka is not mature enough to make the decision to renounce. It is interesting to note that although Puṇḍarīka believes that Kaṇḍarīka is too young to renounce, Kaṇḍarīka is, nevertheless, old enough to manage the kingdom. Nandiṣeṇa and Ādrakakumāra also renounce too early in their lives, but this has nothing to do with their age. Nandiṣeṇa re-takes his vows shortly after giving them up. Indeed, Ādrakakumāra's story is the only one of the five stories of monks breaking their vows to fit the *āśrama* system model of renunciation. Ādrakakumāra renounces after leading a full householder life.

The stories of princely renunciation are unique in their emphasis of the need to seek parental consent, as well as in the ensuing discussions that reveal parental concern for their son's comfort in the ascetic life. Parental consent is not emphasised in the stories of ordinary individuals. The ten stories of princely renunciation in the *Pārśvanāthacaritra* and the *Mahāvīracaritra* include the majority of interesting and curious stories that appear throughout our text. The

²⁸ Further study of stories in which Jain monks break their vows, focussing on the

three stories of princes who break their vows because of renouncing too soon, and the story of Abhayakumāra, the only example of a prince renouncing late in life, reveal that there is a certain degree of ambiguity surrounding the role of renunciation in the life of a prince, particularly in terms of the proper time to renounce. As we have seen, these stories of princely renunciation do not reveal a homogeneous model of spontaneous renunciation early in life that corresponds to the heterodox ideal of renunciation.

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I have discussed forty-nine renunciation stories from the *Pārśvanāthacaritra* and the *Mahāvīracaritra* using a tripartite typology. The first criterion, occurring at the level of the renunciants' social position, forms the basis of the chapter divisions. These three groups of stories are the renunciations of ordinary individuals, kings, and princes (the stories of the two *tīrthaṅkaras* are discussed in Appendix E). In each chapter, I discuss the stories of that group based on the time of renunciation and the catalyst causing the renunciation. The first two major groups, ordinary individuals and kings, reveal two distinct models of what is to be considered the proper time for renunciation. The stories of ordinary individuals present the expected model for a heterodox tradition - spontaneous renunciation early in life. As such, the time of renunciation in the stories of ordinary individuals is not surprising. However, these accounts do reveal other interesting aspects of medieval Jain attitudes toward renunciation, such as the notion that an ascetic life can expiate sin. The stories of kings reveal a different model. The renunciations of kings are predominantly late in life, being based on a particular stage. This is somewhat surprising, as this type of renunciation corresponds more to the orthodox model found in the *asrama* system than it does to the heterodox model. These two models, of early and late

renunciation, co-exist within our text as they do in the broader context of the religious and philosophical tradition of India.

Within the body of kingly renunciation stories found in our text, the model of late, stage of life based renunciation, congruent with the model of the *asrama* system, is not as homogeneously portrayed in our text as the model of spontaneous, early renunciation is in the stories of ordinary individuals. In the stories of ordinary individuals, fifteen of the sixteen stories support the model of spontaneous, early renunciation, while in the stories of kings, five accounts do not support the model of kings renouncing late in life as a particular stage. These five stories of kings who do not renounce late in life create tension around the proper time for renunciation within the group of kingly renunciation stories. The story of King Prasannacandra (section 2.4) clearly reveals this tension. Prasannacandra's decision to renounce early in life is criticized by another character in the story. The text, however, overtly supports his decision. Nonetheless, the narrative describes Prasannacandra mentally straying from his vows when he overhears that his son might lose the kingdom because of his youth. The story of Sāmāyika (section 1.2.1) shows that mentally straying from one's vows can be deemed as a breach of vows. Thus, despite the text's overt support of Prasannacandra's early renunciation, he is not portrayed as a wholly good ascetic, because he breaks his vows (at least momentarily).

The juxtaposition of the models for renunciation found in the stories of ordinary individuals and in the stories of kings suggests not only tension between

the models, but also that the appropriate time to renounce may differ between individuals. Three of the five stories of monks who break their vows (section 3.3) further corroborate this point. The reason that three monks, Kaṇḍarīka, Ādrakakumāra, and Nandiṣeṇa break their vows relates to their having renounced too early in life. Ādrakakumāra does not renew his vow until after he has completed the householder stage, which implies that the proper time for him to renounce is much later in life, rather than as a young man. This story's message is congruent with the *āśrama* model of renunciation.

The group of stories describing the renunciation of princes forms an intermediate group between ordinary individuals and kings. Indeed, princes are not yet kings, and there is no guarantee that they will ever become kings. But, neither are they ordinary individuals. The majority of problematic stories have a prince as the protagonist. Initially, when we examine the stories of princes, it would appear that these accounts predominantly portray spontaneous, early renunciations (section 3.2), in much the same way that the stories of ordinary individuals do. Nine of the ten princes who renounce do so spontaneously, early in life. However, when we consider that four of these nine princes subsequently break their vows, the impact of this initial ratio diminishes, particularly because three of the four princes break their vows because they renounced too early. In addition, the fact that four of the ten princes break their vows, while only one of the other thirty-seven protagonists breaks his vow, raises questions about the princes' dedication to their vows.

Although we may assume that breaking one's vows would be detrimental to the character in his subsequently lives, this is not necessarily the case. The only case of an individual suffering a poor rebirth explicitly because he broke his vows occurs in the story of Sāmāyika (section 1.2.1). Kaṇḍarīka also suffers a bad rebirth, but it is unclear as to whether this relates to breaking his vows or to the fact that he dies harboring hostile thoughts toward others. Marīci gains a vast number of additional lives because of teaching false *dharma* specifically, but this also relates to his having drastically decreased the severity of his ascetic practice. Ādrakakumāra and Nandiṣeṇa are the only two to retake their vows later in life; neither one suffers negative consequences for having broken his vows. Although Prasannacandra does not break his vows, his story also corroborates this point. Prasannacandra strays from his vows, and the text describes him at this point as fit for the worst hell. Nevertheless, when he remembers his vows moments later, he achieves enlightenment shortly thereafter. Thus, it would seem that if one reconfirms his vows, he is not likely to suffer negative consequences resulting from his action. This connects with another idea revealed in the renunciation stories in our text: renunciation expiates sin. I discuss this idea in the context of the three stories of thieves (section 1.2.1) and in the story of Halla and Vihalla (section 3.2). When we examine these stories in conjunction with other stories from the Buddhist and Jain traditions, the notion of renunciation expiating sin becomes apparent. It also further elucidates the reasons why Ādrakakumāra and Nandiṣeṇa do not suffer because of

breaking their vows; they renounce again and thus expiate the sin of their actions.

Part of the reason that the stories of princes are so problematic, I argue, relates to their uncertain social position. Princes have the potential of becoming king, but it is never a certainty until they are actually installed. The story of Abhayakumāra (section 3.1) reveals that if a prince intends to become king, he may put off his renunciation until after he has reigned, and thus follow the kingly model of renunciation. However, this story also clearly shows us that regardless of how sure a prince is that he will be king, there are no guarantees.

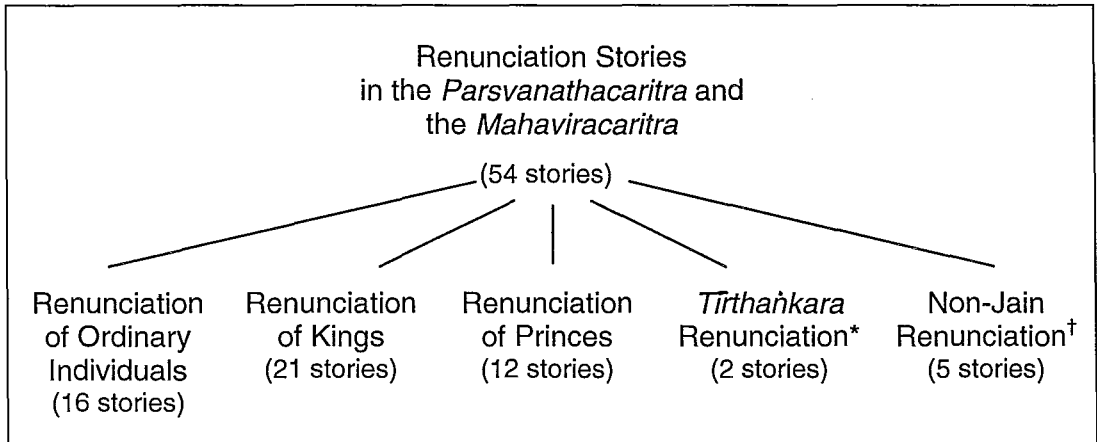
Finally, I want to remind readers of two additional points that I develop throughout the thesis. First, there is the idea that a personally related experience has a greater impact on an individual's decision to renounce than an abstract teaching on Jain *dharma* does. In the stories of princes and ordinary individuals, delays occur only in cases where the protagonist is renouncing because of a teaching, with the exception of Ādrakakumāra's story. This is not the case in the stories of kings where the delay relates to the need to install someone on the throne before renouncing. The stories of the five monks who break their vows further supports the idea that a teaching is less effective in developing a firm resolve to the ascetic life: four of the five individuals who break their vows renounced because of hearing a sermon.

The second point is comparative. The Jain narratives in our text reveal less distress over an individual's decision to renounce on the part of family and

friends than Buddhist narratives do. This is not to say that families are immediately supportive of an individual's decision to renounce, but rather that they eventually come to accept it. The vast descriptions of grief and the need for individuals to sneak away in order to renounce found in Buddhist stories are not found in the text. This may imply a greater acceptance of renunciation in the communities depicted in Jain narrative literature.

In conclusion, I would like to suggest that renunciation in the Jain tradition is not a monolithic event. The stories indicate that its causes are many, and its proper time, as well as its success and failure, are differently determined for each individual. In these stories, we get a glimpse of the flexibility of Jain teaching on renunciation: there are no hard and fast rules as to when one should renounce, why one should renounce, or what will ensure success. We are left with a sense that the storyteller knew very well that such an emotional moment was a highly complex and variable event.

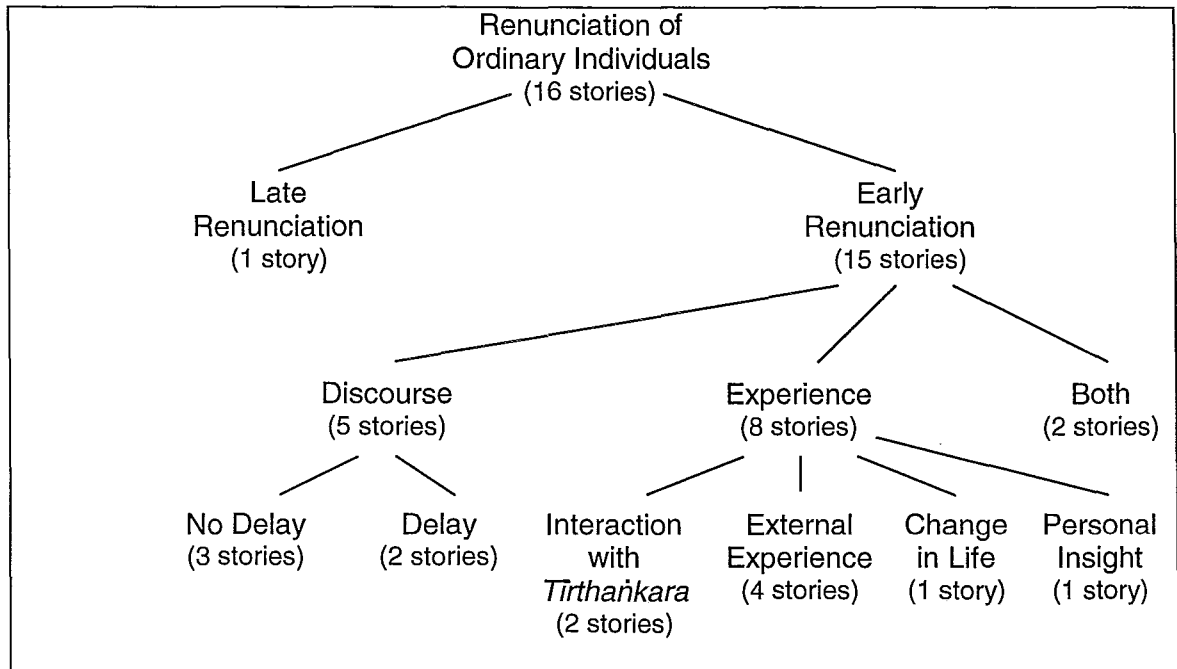
APPENDIX A



* I discuss the stories of *tīrthaṅkara* renunciation in Appendix E.

† I do not discuss this group of stories in the present work. However, as they do exist in the text, I have noted their presence here.

APPENDIX B



List of Stories and Page References:

Late Renunciation (section 1.1)

- Gobhadra (*Mc*, 256)

Early Renunciation (section 1.2)

- Discourse (section 1.2.1)

- Sāmāyika (*Mc*, 181-82)
- 500 Thieves (Kapila) (*Mc*, 299)
- 500 Thieves (Ādrakakumāra) (*Mc*, 187)
- Rauhiṇeya (*Mc*, 266-70)
- Sāgaradatta (*Pc*, 407)

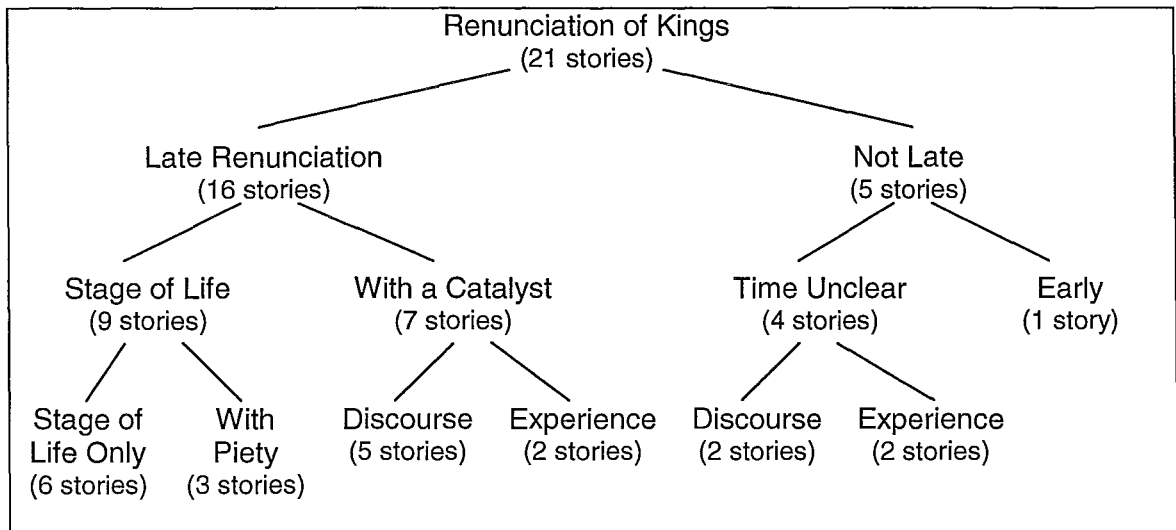
- Experience (section 1.2.2)

- Bandhudatta (*Pc*, 422)
- Puṇyapāla (*Mc*, 339)
- Gāndhāra (*Mc*, 294)
- Future life of goldsmith (*Mc*, 204-206)
- Past life Sāgaradatta (*Pc*, 404)
- Nagila (*Mc*, 287)
- Dhanya (*Mc*, 259-260)
- Kapila (*Mc*, 298)

- Both (section 1.2.3)

- R̥ṣabhadatta (*Mc*, 192)
- Śalibhadra (*Mc*, 256-260)

APPENDIX C



List of Stories and Page References:

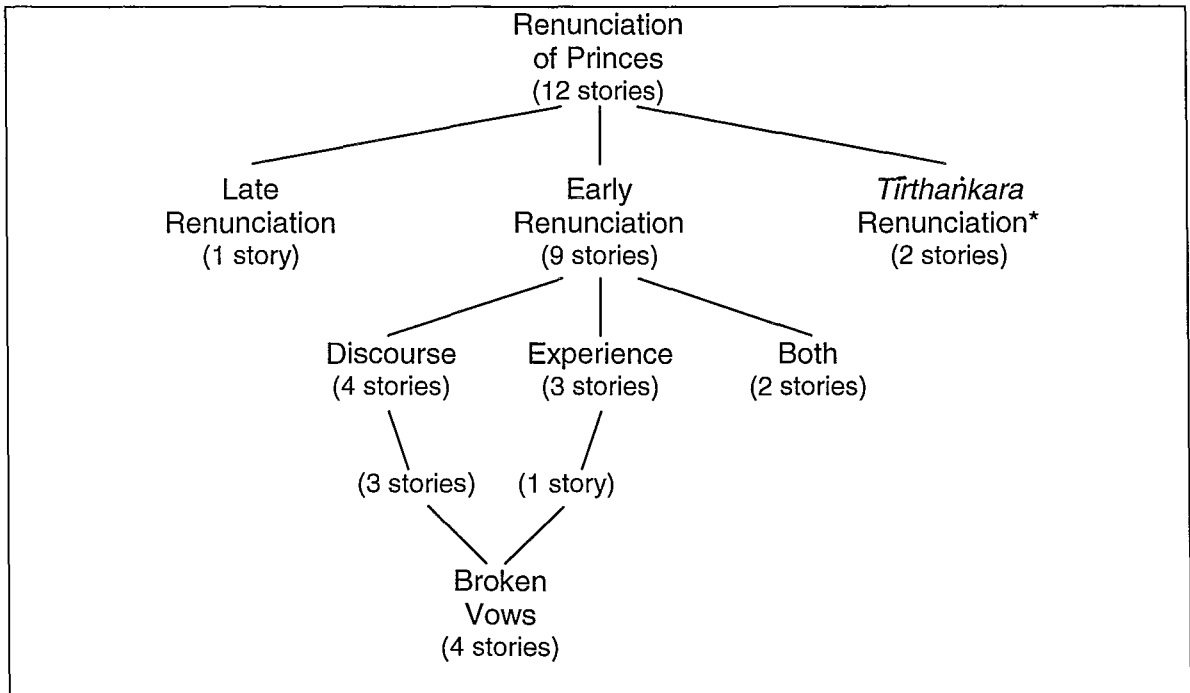
Late Renunciation

- Stage of Life (section 2.1)
 - Stage of Life Only
 - Kuśilabāhu (*Pc*, 370)
 - Dhanañjaya (*Mc*, 15)
 - Jitaśatru (*Mc*, 17)
 - Vidyudgati (*Pc*, 364)
 - Vajravīrya (*Pc*, 367)
 - Nandana (*Mc*, 17-19)
 - With Piety
 - Vajranābha (*Pc*, 366-368)
 - Naravarman (*Pc*, 382-383)
 - Udāyana (*Mc*, 304-305)
- With Catalyst (section 2.2)
 - Discourse
 - Kiraṇavega (*Pc*, 364-365)
 - Mahāpadma (*Mc*, 242)
 - Aśvasena (*Pc*, 402)
 - Gāgali (*Mc*, 240)
 - Priyamitra (*Mc*, 15-17)
 - Experience
 - Aravinda (*Pc*, 360)
 - Suvarṇabāhu (*Pc*, 375-376)

Not Late

- Time Unclear (section 2.3)
 - Discourse
 - Puṇḍarīka (*Mc*, 242-244)
 - Sāla (*Mc*, 240-242)
 - Experience
 - unnamed king (*Pc*, 423)
 - Daśarṇabhadra (*Mc*, 254)
- Early (section 2.4)
 - Prasannacandra (*Mc*, 230-231)

APPENDIX D



* I discuss the stories of *tīrthaṅkara* renunciation in Appendix E, however, I have noted them here as they are also princes.

List of Stories and Page References:

Late Renunciation (section 3.1)

- Abhayakumāra (*Mc*, 312)

Early Renunciation (section 3.2)

- Discourse (section 3.2.1)

- Maṛīci (*Mc*, 3)
- Kaṇḍarīka (*Mc*, 242-244)
- Jamāli (*Mc*, 193)
- Nandiṣeṇa (*Mc*, 164-166)

- Experience (section 3.2.2)

- Viśvabhūti (*Mc*, 8-9)
- Halla and Vihalla (*Mc*, 325)
- Ādrakakumāra (*Mc*, 183-187)

- Both (section 3.2.3)

- Acala (*Mc*, 14)
- Meghakumāra (*Mc*, 162-164)

- Monks who break their vows (section 3.3)

- Maṛīci (*Mc*, 3)
- Sāmāyika (an ordinary individual) (*Mc*, 181-182)
- Kaṇḍarīka (*Mc*, 242-244)
- Nandiṣeṇa (*Mc*, 164-166)
- Ādrakakumāra (*Mc*, 183-187)

APPENDIX E:

Tīrthaṅkara Renunciation – The Stories of Pārśva and Mahāvīra

The two *tīrthaṅkaras*, Pārśva and Mahāvīra, are exceptional beings. The terms *tīrthaṅkara* and *jina* are used to describe the “founders”¹ or initiators of the Jain religion. Effectively, the *tīrthaṅkaras* are the ones who have found the way to escape the cycle of rebirth, which they then teach to all who will listen. The stories of the renunciations of Pārśva and Mahāvīra do not fit clearly into either of the categories I have discussed in this thesis: they are neither stories of spontaneous, early renunciation, nor are they stories of renunciation as the final stage of life. Both Pārśva and Mahāvīra renounce early in their lives, although neither has ever been interested in worldly life. Indeed, they are repeatedly described as completely uninterested in worldly life throughout their childhood and youth. Hence, their renunciations cannot be deemed spontaneous. Through an investigation of the stories of Pārśva and Mahāvīra, focussing on their renunciations and their attitudes toward the householder life, I will show that they exemplify an intermediate place in terms of the time of renunciation. For this reason, I have chosen to discuss the renunciations of Pārśva and Mahāvīra in a

¹ It is common to refer to the *tīrthaṅkaras* as founders of the tradition, but this lacks accuracy. Though *tīrthaṅkaras* are teachers of the doctrine and arrive at their knowledge independently of a teacher, they have not founded a tradition because, according to the Jain view, the tradition has in fact always existed. Padmanabh Jaini makes this clear when he writes, “a Jina or Tīrthaṅkara is not the founder of the religion; he is rather the propagator of a truth and a path which have been taught in the same manner by all teachers of this everpresent,

separate category, although both men are princes. Their unique nature and status within the Jain tradition supersedes their position as princes. Where applicable, I refer to Aśvaghoṣa's *Buddhacarita* as an example of the Buddha biography and Bhadrabāhu's *Kalpa Sūtra* as another version of the story of Mahāvīra.²

First, we must recall that the cases of neither Pārśva nor Mahāvīra should be viewed as practical models for renunciation. This differs from the stories I discuss in the main body of this thesis, which can be understood as some sort of practical model for renunciation. The portrayal of Pārśva and Mahāvīra in the *Triṣaṣṭi* does not present their lives as ones that may be emulated easily, if at all. Rather, Pārśva and Mahāvīra are set apart from ordinary individuals in the texts. This is achieved in two ways: the first relates to the nature of what it is to be a *tīrthaṅkara*, and the second relates directly to the portrayal of the lives of Pārśva and Mahāvīra in the text.

First, Pārśva and Mahāvīra do not function as ideal models for the lives of Jain renunciants in terms of the goal of their renunciations. The goal of the ordinary renunciant is liberation from *saṃsāra*, not to become a *tīrthaṅkara*. Even so, by the medieval period in which the *Triṣaṣṭi* was written, liberation is no longer possible and the goal of renunciation therefore became the acquisition of propitious rebirths, either human or divine (Dundas 1992, 129). By comparison,

imperishable tradition. Each Jina reanimates this tradition for the benefit of succeeding generations" (Jaini 1979, 2).

Pārśva and Mahāvīra renounce in order to achieve liberation and to become *tīrthaṅkaras*. Being a *tīrthaṅkara* is not identical to having achieved liberation. Although a *tīrthaṅkara* achieves liberation, he does much more than this; he teaches the true path to liberation, which is known to him in the absence of a teacher. The unique nature of a *tīrthaṅkara* is elucidated by the existence of a particular type of *karma* that, once bound, causes that soul to later become a *tīrthaṅkara*. The specificity of this type of *karma* implies the unique nature of its result. Both the *Pārśvanāthacaritra* and the *Mahāvīracaritra* clearly state, in the narration of their past lives, the time at which Pārśva and Mahāvīra bind this particular type of *karma*.³ The nature of Pārśva and Mahāvīra as *tīrthaṅkaras* places them in a different category from ordinary renunciants who are seeking liberation or a good rebirth, when liberation is not possible.

The description of the lives and characters of Pārśva and Mahāvīra in the *Triṣaṣṭi* also set them apart from ordinary individuals. Right from the moment of conception, Pārśva and Mahāvīra are presented as exceptional individuals. The conceptions of Pārśva and Mahāvīra are announced to their mothers through fourteen auspicious dreams (*Pc*, 379, *Mc*, 26).⁴ Both texts describe the dreams specifically as “indicating a Tīrthaṅkara’s birth” (*Pc*, 379, *Mc*, 27).⁵

² The translation I use for the stories in the *Kalpa Sūtra* (by J. Stevenson) only gives a complete translation of Mahāvīra’s biography. Hence, I will only refer to this text in my discussion of Mahāvīra.

³ Mahāvīra binds this *karma* in his birth as Nandana (*Mc*, 19). Pārśva binds this *karma* in his birth as Suvarṇabāhu (*Pc*, 376).

⁴ The fourteen dreams are listed in the *Triṣaṣṭi*, as follows: a white tusked elephant, a bull the colour of jasmine, a lion with its mouth wide open, Lakṣmi – beautiful from being sprinkled, a wreath of five coloured flowers, a full moon, a shining sun, a banner garlanded with bells, a full golden pitcher, a large pool covered with lotuses, an ocean with high waves, a beautiful palace, a

Two other events mark Mahāvīra as unique before his birth. Although *tīrthaṅkaras* are always born into a royal family of the warrior caste, Mahāvīra's soul initially falls into the womb of Brahman woman named Devānandā because of bad *karma* that he had acquired in a previous birth stemming from pride in his family (*Mc*, 25). When the god Śakra becomes aware that Mahāvīra will be born into a Brahman family, he intervenes and switches Mahāvīra, in embryonic form, with the foetus contained in the womb of Queen Trīśālā (*Mc*, 26-27).⁶ Mahāvīra can now be born into a family appropriate to his future. Both Devānandā and Trīśālā receive the auspicious dreams when Mahāvīra's soul enters their wombs. In addition, while in Trīśālā's womb, Mahāvīra is fully conscious and compassionate. Here he decides not to move so as not to disturb his mother. Also at this time, he vows not to renounce worldly life until after his parents die so that they will not acquire bad *karma* from grieving over him (*Mc*, 27-28).⁷ Both the intervention by Śakra and Mahāvīra's consciousness while in the womb are additional aspects of the portrayal of Mahāvīra that accentuate his extraordinary nature.

Not only are the gods active in the case of Mahāvīra's embryonic transfer, but they also act throughout the lives of both Pārśva and Mahāvīra, appearing at

glistening heap of jewels, and a smokeless fire (*Abhinandanacaritra* Book III of Hemacandra's *Trīṣaṣṭi*, Johnson translation volume 2, 258).

⁵ Much is made of these dreams in the *Kalpa Sūtra* (25-71). Siddhārtha's conception is also marked by an auspicious dream that serves the same purpose as the dreams the *tīrthaṅkaras'* mothers receive, see *Buddhacarita* 1:4.

⁶ The *Kalpa Sūtra* also describes this event (37-39).

⁷ The *Kalpa Sūtra* describes a similar revelation but it differs in the degree of specificity. In this version of the account Mahāvīra thinks that no one should renounce until their parents have died (*Kalpa Sūtra*, 73).

the major events in their lives. The gods come to celebrate the births of Pārśva and Mahāvīra. At this time, they worship the infants and perform their bath ceremonies (*Pc*, 380, *Mc*, 28-29). The gods also shower Mahāvīra's family and their kingdom with gifts and prosperity while he is in the womb (*Mc*, 27), prompting his family to name him, Vardhamāna, "Increase" (*Mc*, 31).⁸ The gods also appear at the initiations, omnisciences, and deaths of Pārśva and Mahāvīra (*Pc*, 393, 397-398, 424, *Mc*, 36-37, 124-26, 351-352).⁹ The role of the gods in the stories of Pārśva and Mahāvīra is to further glorify the men,¹⁰ which in turn further separates them from the experiences of ordinary individuals.

Hemacandra clearly portrays Pārśva and Mahāvīra as extraordinary individuals. The respect the gods pay to Pārśva and Mahāvīra raises them above ordinary individuals, while the auspicious dreams their mothers receive clearly identify their destiny. When these events are viewed in conjunction with the notion that they have both acquired the *tīrthaṅkara*-making *karma*; Pārśva and Mahāvīra indeed appear extraordinary.

When we examine the stories of the renunciations of Pārśva and Mahāvīra, it is clear that neither man waits until he has completed the

⁸ In the *Kalpa Sūtra*, Mahavira's father gives him three other names: Śramaṇa, Bhagavan, and Mahāvīra (*Kalpa Sūtra*, 79). In the *Mahāvīracaritra*, the name Mahāvīra is given by the gods.

⁹ In addition, Śakra intervenes in Mahāvīra's life a second time when Mahāvīra is supposed to begin his formal learning. Śakra is appalled by the "very idea of the Omniscient being a pupil" and places Mahāvīra in the teacher's position, where he excels (*Mc*, 33). This elevates Mahāvīra in two ways: it both indicates Śakra's continued interest in the events of Mahāvīra's life and points to Mahāvīra's superior intelligence. The *Kalpa Sūtra* also uses the presence of divinities in this way (*Kalpa Sūtra*, 75ff, 81ff).

¹⁰ The *Buddhacarita* also uses the presence of gods in this way to elevate the status of the Buddha. For examples, see *Buddhacarita* 1:18-20, 6:58-62, 14:91.

householder stage before he renounces - both men are 30 years old when they renounce. Both men postpone their renunciations until after they marry (below)¹¹ despite already being disinterested in worldly existence. By comparison, the Buddha biography portrays Siddhārtha as willingly participating in the sensual aspects of life until he sees the first of the four signs that will lead to his renunciation (*Buddhacarita*, 3:27ff).¹² The delay of renunciation in the stories of Pārśva and Mahāvīra is interesting in terms of our discussion of the tension between spontaneous, early renunciation and renunciation in the final stage of life, because the stories of these two key figures, both so central to the tradition, do not seem to support the heterodox view of renouncing immediately upon feeling the urge to do so. Through a discussion of the stories of the marriages and renunciations of Pārśva and Mahāvīra, I show that the stories of these two men nonetheless make a strong case against the householder stage of life and in favour of its rejection. In addition, when we compare the accounts of the two *tirthankaras* to the Buddha biography, we learn that the Buddha and Pārśva experience a personal event as a catalyst for renunciation, although Mahāvīra does not. The text describes Mahāvīra's desire to renounce more frequently and more strongly than it describes Pārśva's desire to do so. The Buddha biography portrays much distress on the part of Siddhārtha's family, which does not appear

¹¹ There is an interesting passage in the *Vāsupūjyacaritra* that lists Pārśva as one of the three *tirthankaras* who renounce without marrying and without ruling (*Triṣaṣṭi*, Johnson translation, volume 3, 71) However, Pārśva's marriage in the *Pārśvanāthacaritra* directly contradicts this (*Pc*, 391).

¹² The four signs that the gods show Siddhārtha (old age, disease, death and an ascetic) mark the beginning of his disgust with worldly life.

in either of the biographies of these two *tirthankaras*. I now begin with a discussion of Pārśva.

The account of Pārśva's marriage confirms that he is uninterested in the householder life long before he renounces. Pārśva's father, Aśvasena, orders Pārśva to marry against his wishes. Interestingly, Aśvasena promotes aspects of the *āśrama* model for renunciation in his effort to convince Pārśva to marry, indicating that Pārśva should not renounce until after he has married and produced a son (*Pc*, 391).¹³ Before Aśvasena enters the discussion, Pārśva has already rejected King Prasenajit's offer of his daughter, Prabhāvatī (*Pc*, 390). Prasenajit interprets this as Pārśva being disinterested in worldly existence. When we learn of Prasenajit's analysis of Pārśva's response, we already know that Pārśva is destined to be a *tīrthāṅkara*. Thus, we can assume that Prasenajit is correct in his analysis - Pārśva is not interested in marriage and householding. Indeed, Aśvasena explains to the would-be father-in-law that "Pārśva has always been disgusted with worldly existence" (*Pc*, 391).

When Aśvasena orders Pārśva to marry, Pārśva clearly explains his problem with marriage; he is not interested in taking a step that will set him on

¹³ He says, "The ocean of existence must certainly be crossed by you who have such an intention. You should act for your own advantage at the right time, after marrying and having a son" (*Pc*, 391). However, this is not purely the model of kingly renunciation, as Aśvasena does not go so far as to argue that Pārśva should become king. Aśvasena's argument that Pārśva should have a son before renouncing could relate to the importance of succession. It could also be an attempt to keep Pārśva in the householder stage. As we saw earlier, there is a clear idea that a son is difficult to abandon, see the story of Ādrakakumāra in section 3.3. In addition, *Jātaka* 529 describes a prince who wants to follow his father into the ascetic life, but when he realises the pleasure and glory of kingship and familial life, he chooses to remain in the palace (*Jātaka* 529, 133). Hence, entering on the path of householding may distract an individual from his religious intentions.

the path of a householder because his intentions are different. He says, "Father, the possession of wives, et cetera is a life-saver of the tree of worldly existence even when almost destroyed. How can I marry his daughter for undertaking worldly existence? I intend to cross the ocean of worldly existence, completely free of possessions" (*Pc*, 391). Pārśva sees marriage and householding as impediments to liberation. Having married Prabhāvatī, Pārśva engages in sexual activity with her,¹⁴ but the text is clear this is due to "the people's insistence" (*Pc*, 391), not his own desire. This further maintains the image of Parsva as disinterested in worldly pleasures.

It would seem that although Pārśva understands the implications of the householder life, he capitulates to his father's wishes. Nevertheless, Pārśva's time as a married man does not prevent him from renouncing, although he does seem to require a catalyst.¹⁵ The story that immediately precedes the story of Pārśva's renunciation in the text is instrumental in Pārśva's decision to renounce at that time.

In the case of Pārśva, the catalyst to his renunciation involves the actions of a non-Jain ascetic named Katha,¹⁶ who is performing a fire penance outside

¹⁴ There is no indication in the text that Pārśva produces a child.

¹⁵ The Buddha also requires a catalyst to bring about his renunciation. In the Buddha's story (see note 10 of this appendix), the gods cause him to see the distressing aspects of life that his father has thus far kept hidden. They show him old age, disease, death, and a mendicant. The gods show Siddhārtha a mendicant so that Siddhārtha may discover the alternative and solution to worldly life. These events must occur because Siddhārtha has not been inclined to view worldly life as distressing until this point.

¹⁶ This story occurs in the *Pārśvanāthacaritra* (392). Katha is the incarnation of Parsva's archenemy. The souls of Katha and Pārśva travel through their previous births together. This is a common phenomenon in Jain literature. One way of clearly showing the effects of *karma* is through the use of a second, antagonistic soul whose past lives are intertwined with previous

the city. Many people attend in order to observe and worship him. Pārśva also goes to witness this event. Pārśva immediately perceives that there is a serpent trapped in one of the logs fuelling the fire for Katha's penance. Pārśva has the log removed and reveals the serpent, whose presence Katha has denied. The serpent subsequently dies and is reborn as the Naga king, Dharaṇa. Having witnessed the violence of Katha's penance, Pārśva returns home with a desire to renounce. This story both propels Pārśva to renounce and discredits the ritual of another religious group.

Now the standard *tīrthaṅkara* renunciation occurs (*Pc*, 393). The Lokāntika gods¹⁷ request that Pārśva found a congregation. This is not the same as the type of action taken by the gods in the *Buddhacarita*, as Pārśva already wants to renounce and has intended to do so for some time already. Pārśva then gives gifts for one year¹⁸ before having his initiation ceremony. These two elements,

lives of a soul who is to be a *tīrthaṅkara*. While the soul bound for liberation evolves toward that goal, the soul of the antagonist experiences a number of hell and animal births. Not all twinned souls are antagonistic; however, even those that are bound together through affection show the workings of *karma* and the dangers of attachment (Cort 1995, 477 and Bloomfield 1985, 13).

¹⁷ These gods are in their penultimate lives and will achieve *mokṣa* in their next births (Jaini 1979, 11).

¹⁸ The practice of gift giving, or *dāna*, is understood throughout the Indian tradition as being highly meritorious. For more information on *dāna*, see Jonathon Parry "The Gift, the Indian Gift and 'The Indian Gift'" and Vijay Nath, *Dāna: Gift System in Ancient India*. The Jain tradition is no different from other Indian traditions in its understanding of *dāna*. In the Jain tradition, *dāna* is primarily understood as the giving of alms to ascetics by lay people (Dundas 1992, 150-52). Padmanabh Jaini lists *dāna* as one of the three actions "considered especially significant in fostering *tīrthaṅkara*-nature" (Jaini 1979, 260). There are sixteen such actions in total. Thus, it is clear that gift giving brings about merit and helps to refine the soul. However, as Pārśva has already bound the *karma* that leads to becoming a *tīrthaṅkara*, and as there is no mention in the text of his need for or acquisition of any additional merit, it seems unlikely that these are his reasons for giving gifts. In addition, when we consider that Mahāvīra and all of the other *tīrthaṅkaras* in the *Triṣaṣṭi* give gifts for one year before renouncing, the practice seems to have been regarded as a necessary part of the ritual of renunciation for *tīrthaṅkaras*. The fact that the funds for this gift giving are supplied by divinities supports this analysis. Very few other stories in these two texts tell of the renunciant giving gifts before renouncing. The only other evidence of

the request by deities and a year-long period of gift-giving, exist in all twenty-four biographies of the *tīrthaṅkaras* in the *Triṣaṣṭi*. I do not deem the gift-giving in the stories of Pārśva and Mahāvīra as a delay because it appears to be the expected process for *tīrthaṅkara* renunciation. Through his renunciation, Pārśva clearly rejects both his father's wishes and the householder life.

There is an interesting statement in the text after Pārśva's experience with Katha, explaining that, at this time, Pārśva realises that his pleasure-producing-*karma* has been consumed (*Pc*, 393). Unlike the case in the story of Mahāvīra, pleasure-*karma* is not explicitly associated with Pārśva's decision to marry; however, it now appears in the story as the cause of his delay in renouncing. The text is clear about this in the context of another story, stating that "even the Jinas are not able to get rid of *karma* that has pleasure as its fruit without consuming it" (*Mc*, 165). As we saw in the discussion of the stories of monks who break their vows (section 3.3), individuals who renounce before this *karma* has come to fruition end up breaking their vows to engage in on-going sexual relationships. Pleasure-*karma* therefore provides a reason why neither Pārśva nor Mahāvīra renounces immediately upon experiencing the desire to do so. In terms of the narrative structure of these two stories, pleasure-*karma* explains the delay in

this appears in the story of Ādrakakumāra in section 3.2 and the story of Dhanya in section 1.1. Neither man is performing exactly the same action as the *tīrthaṅkaras*, because the period of gift giving is not one year and gods do not supply the gifts.

renouncing, since it would be futile for either Pārśva or Mahāvīra to renounce before this *karma* has been consumed.¹⁹

In its main features, the story of Pārśva's renunciation appears to conform to what we have observed in most ordinary renunciations in the text. The protagonist experiences a catalyst and renounces. The major difference, however, is that ordinary protagonists lead normal lives and experience a range of sensual pleasures, before experiencing the catalyst. Such desires are inaccessible to *tīrthaṅkaras*, who are born with the disgust for worldly life that for other individuals is the immediate cause of renunciation. Whether it is compassion for one's parents or pleasure-producing-*karma* that is the reason given for the *tīrthaṅkaras'* leading worldly lives and marrying, it is clear that the stories of the *tīrthaṅkaras'* renunciations are not just ordinary renunciations.

The text clearly depicts Mahāvīra as desiring renunciation much earlier in his life than does the account of Pārśva. Mahāvīra experiences his initial desire to renounce while still in the womb, but delays his renunciation three times. In his seventh month *in utero*, Mahāvīra resolves not to become a mendicant while his parents are alive because "if I should become a mendicant while they are alive,

¹⁹ The use of this pleasure *karma* to explain the delays in the renunciations of Pārśva and Mahāvīra may also suggest some discomfort on the part of the storyteller with these delays. It seems to imply that the delay is in some way wrong or unnatural and thus requires an explanation. (As we saw in section 3.3, pleasure-producing-*karma* is given as a reason for monks breaking their vows, which is certainly an improper course of action.) It might imply that by this time immediate renunciation was understood to be the proper course of action. However, as the stories of the *tīrthaṅkaras* were inherited, the storyteller might have needed to explain why they did not conform to the current norm. I must leave for future study a consideration of the historical development of the *tīrthaṅkara* biographies. It would be useful to know when an awareness of the problems in the stories surrounding delayed renunciation first lead the storytellers to supply explanations that indicate that the ideal of instantaneous renunciation came to dominate.

they would certainly acquire much bad *karma* by indulging in painful meditation because of the delusion of affection” (*Mc*, 28). This implies that Mahāvīra’s preference would be to renounce as soon as possible. The text returns to this point several times, making it clear that Mahāvīra would prefer to be a mendicant. When, on behalf of his parents, Mahāvīra’s friends request that he marry, Mahāvīra responds by saying, “I am not a mendicant at this very moment, though eager to be, because of my resolution” (*Mc*, 35). It is clear that Triśalā, Mahāvīra’s mother, knows of her son’s desire to renounce. She says, “We have always known this: It is from compassion for us that you remain here as a householder, though you are disgusted with worldly existence” (*Mc*, 35). She then continues by asking him to do something else for her - to marry. Thus, Mahāvīra’s resolution, made out of compassion for his parents, prevents him from renouncing as soon as he wishes to and in fact leads him into marriage.

Like Pārśva, Mahāvīra marries in order to please his parents, not himself. In Mahāvīra’s case, however, the discussion about whether he will marry or not takes place with his mother. He describes his predicament as follows:

On the one hand, my mother is very persistent; on the other hand, fear of wandering through births. Even while in the womb, I kept my body motionless from fear of paining my mother. I shall stay in the condition of householder in opposition to (my own) wishes. There is *karma* which has pleasure as its fruit; my parents are to be honoured. (*Mc*, 35)

In this way, Mahāvīra agrees to be married. It is clear that he does not wish to do so, but he understands the need to rid himself of pleasure-*karma*²⁰ first, and like Parsva, he is acting in obedience to his parents' wishes.

Mahāvīra's parents, Siddhārtha and Trīśālā, die when he is twenty-eight years old, thereby freeing him to renounce (*Mc*, 36). At this time, Mahāvīra's brother, Nandivardhana, offers Mahāvīra the throne, but he refuses because he wants to renounce. Nandivardhana requests that Mahāvīra stay at home, explaining that Mahāvīra's renunciation would only compound the grief he already feels at the loss of his parents. Consequently, Mahāvīra remains a householder "from regard for his brother's grieving" (*Mc*, 36)²¹ for one year. The story of Mahāvīra introduces the idea that renunciation can cause one's family to experience grief. Mahāvīra delays his renunciation twice out of compassion, first for his parents and then for his brother.

When we compare this story to the account of the Buddha's renunciation, we see that the Buddha biography describes the impact of renunciation as much more intense. Indeed, an entire chapter of the *Buddhacarita* is devoted to the grief of Siddhārtha's parents, wives and family (*Buddhacarita*, 8). Although Nandivardhana claims that Mahāvīra's renunciation will cause him a great deal of grief, he participates fully in Mahāvīra's renunciation ceremony. Nandivardhana

²⁰ Marrying after deciding to renounce is not solely limited to the stories of Pārśva and Mahāvīra. The story of Jambu (*Jain Elders* 2:28-121) portrays Jambu deciding to renounce and then marrying. Like the *tīrthaṅkaras*, he too marries at his parents' command, but there is no mention of pleasure-*karma* in his story.

²¹ This second delay, out of compassion for his brother, does not occur in the *Kalpa Sūtra*. In this version, Mahāvīra renounces immediately after his parents die (*Kalpa Sūtra*, 81).

makes a palanquin and follows Mahavira to the woods to see him into this new life (*Mc*, 37). Effectively, Nandivardhana is supportive of Mahāvīra's choice, unlike Siddhārtha's family.²²

Mahāvīra's actual renunciation story follows Pārśva's exactly. The Lokāntika-gods²³ request that Mahāvīra "found a congregation" (*Mc*, 37), after which Mahāvīra gives gifts for a year and renounces. This is a clear indication to Mahavira that it is time for him to renounce. The Lokāntika-gods appear to both Pārśva and Mahāvīra, as they appear to all *tīrthaṅkaras* in the *Triṣaṣṭi*. In the case of Pārśva, he has already decided to renounce when the gods appear to him, while Mahāvīra is still waiting to renounce out of compassion for his brother when they appear to him. The fact that the gods tell the men to begin a congregation as opposed to telling them to renounce is interesting. It implies that Pārśva and Mahāvīra will reach the goal of liberation and be able to spread their knowledge to others. In the case of Mahāvīra, the message of the gods also makes it clear that the time has come for Mahāvīra to renounce. It is indeed curious that one who wishes to renounce so badly must ultimately be pushed to do so in the end; the need to conform to a pattern in which the gods request the

²² Both the *Mahāvīracaritra* and the *Pārśvanāthacaritra* depict a mass of people following Mahāvīra and Pārśva to the place where they renounce. The description in the text portrays this event as festive. This is corroborated by a long description in the *Kalpa Sūtra* (81-86). The *Buddhacarita*'s description of Siddhārtha's renunciation contrasts starkly with that of the *tīrthaṅkaras*. As previously mentioned, chapter 8 describes the tremendous lamentations of Siddhārtha friends and family. In addition, Siddhārtha's father sends his minister and the *purohita* after Siddhārtha in an attempt to bring him back to the palace (*Buddhacarita*, 7:87).

²³ The text reads "Lokāntika-gods", but this is likely a typographical error that should read "Lokāntika-gods".

tīrthaṅkara to teach seems to have resulted in this inconsistency.²⁴ As we have seen, the presence of the gods at the major life events of the *tīrthaṅkaras* serves to elevate these men and set them apart from ordinary individuals.

It is clear that Pārśva and Mahāvīra are not portrayed as models for renunciation. In the *Triṣaṣṭi*, they are glorified to such a degree that they appear to be super-human. The age at which Pārśva and Mahāvīra renounce negates the possibility that these stories support renunciation in later life. While it is true that their renunciations are not spontaneous, both occur shortly after the men marry. Both men categorically reject the householder life, both in the discussions that precede their marriages and by their renunciations.

Both Māhāvīra and Pārśva are future kings. As we saw in chapter two, kings are the one group among these stories who tend to follow the *āśrama* model of renouncing in later life. The *tīrthaṅkara* stories seem fall somewhere in between - they are not quite stories of spontaneous renunciation, but they also reject the *āśrama* model. Their unusual position in the typology may well imply their independent development. The life story of the *tīrthaṅkara*, with the potential influences from the Buddha biography, has a different pattern from the start. The storyteller is aware of the inconsistencies this creates and brings in karmic explanations to alleviate them.

It is clear from the stories that Mahāvīra and Pārśva follow an entirely different pattern of renunciation than is found in the stories of all other individuals

²⁴ Given the late date of the *tīrthaṅkara* biography, one might suspect the influence of a

in our text. Their unique position within the Jain tradition clearly explains many of these exceptions. The stories of Mahāvīra and Pārśva reveal an intermediate time of renunciation: it is not spontaneous and it is not late. When we compare these two stories to the accounts of the majority of *tīrthaṅkaras*, who renounce late in life, we begin to wonder whether early renunciation is part of the *tīrthaṅkara* model of renunciation. Further study in this area is definitely need.

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