

Colette Caillat (15 January 1921–15 January 2007)

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One of the editors of the Indo-Iranian Journal, a member of l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, and Professor emeritus of the Université de Paris, Colette Caillat passed away on 15 January 2007. Her demise was reported all over the world by her friends and pupils, and on Thursday 26 January an obituary appeared in the newspaper *Le Monde* by her two successors, N. Balbir in Indian Studies and Georges-Jean Pinault in Historical Linguistics. Born in Saint-Leu-la Foret, the centre of the Ile-de-France on 15 January 1921, she completed in Paris her full life of eighty-six years on her birthday. Her death was deeply regretted both inside and outside France by her colleagues and pupils. Needless to say, in France she was the leading figure in Indo-logical Studies, but she also had an international reputation as a first-class scholar in the field of Indo-Aryan linguistics and as a lucid exploitor of Indian civilization. As one of her admirers and in the capacity of a junior colleague in the editorial board of the Indo-Iranian Journal since 1975, I shall write below a modest obituary of Colette Caillat as research scholar and stimulating teacher.

(1) Though primarily trained in Classics and in historical linguistics, her encounter with Jules Bloch (1880–1953) and Louis Renou (1896–1966) was decisive in her academic career, being conducive to the exposition of the linguistic problems of the Indo-Aryan languages and ancient Indian civilization. However, a second decisive encounter took place in Hamburg, namely her meeting with W. Schubring. At the suggestion of L. Renou, she visited Hamburg where she was introduced by this leading scholar in Jinology at that time to Jainism in general and to the text-critical studies of the Jaina monastic order and discipline. Her brilliant achievement in this field is crystalized in her three monumental books, *Les expiations dans le rituel ancien des religieux jaina* (Paris 1965), a joint-publication with W. Schubring,

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Drei Chedasūtras des Jaina Kanons, Āyāradasāo, Vavahāra, Nisīha (Hamburg 1966), and *Candāvejjhaya*. La Prunelle-Cible (Paris 1971). Below, we shall give a brief survey of her first publication in book-form.

Preceded by an Introduction, the book consists of two parts, “l’organisation monastique” and “les expiations.” These two parts, however, are inseparably related to each other, for the expiation, which is composed of ten stages, starting from confession (*āloyañā*) and ending with exclusion (*pārañciya*), becomes effective only in the presence of the monastic organisation (*saṃgha, gaṇa, kula, parivāra, sambhoga*) with its own hierarchic structure from novice (*nava*) to senior (*thera*). Here the Jaina monastic organization and atonement theory are lucidly analysed as they are reflected in the Sanskrit *Ṭīkā* stratum of the Cheda-literature (her principal source being Malayagiri’s *ṭīkā* of the 13th century). On the basis of this principal source-material, she tried to reconstruct its more ancient strata, which are referred to rather vaguely and unsystematically in the *sutta* and *bhāṣya*-literature, with a comparative evaluation of early Buddhist Vinaya-texts and Hindu Dharma-sūtras and Dharma-śāstras. After careful reconstruction, she concluded that the atonement-theory as revealed in the Jaina monastic order is not intended simply for the punishment of faults, but rather is led by constant encouraging efforts to reform, guided, so to speak, by a genuine and human empathy with their common religious ideal. Yet, in this concluding passage, we notice also a sympathy of her own for understanding Jainism so warmly in a humanistic way.

Her second publication *Drei Chedasūtras des Jaina-Kanons, Āyāradasāo, Vavahāra, Nisīha* (Hamburg 1966), was a joint work with W. Schubring. Here she contributed the French translation of Uddesa-s 1-3 of Vavahāra with constant reference to her *Expiations* (pp. 48–69) in the note-section.

Her third publication in Europe was *Candāvejjhaya, introduction, édition critique, traduction, commentaire* (Paris 1971). The book is one of the *Painṇa(ya)*, *Prakīrṇaka*, which in 175 strophes discusses such problems as the relationship between teacher and pupil, asceticism, and so forth. Here is also discussed the problem of the fast-ing unto death (*paṇḍita-maraṇa* the wise man’s death) which becomes effective only with the assistance of one’s guru (*guru-sagāse*). The author’s introduction and commentary occupy two third of this book, where text-critical and linguistic problems are fully discussed.

Though not quite without precedent since Guerinot published *La religion djaina; histoire, doctrine, culte, coutumes, institutions* (Paris 1926), this branch of Indian Studies, namely Jainism, was by way of being the monopoly of German scholars until that time (A. Weber, R. Pischell, E. Leumann, H. Jacobi and W. Schubring). With these text-critical achievements of Colette Caillat, Jaina scholarship now had a solid foundation in France.

Her linguistic command over the Ardhmāgadhī and Māhārāṣṭrī in which the ancient Jaina treatises are transmitted naturally led Colette Caillat to Pali and Buddhist studies. She participated in the Danish project of the Critical Pali Dictionary, which had been begun by V. Trenckner and continued by L. Alsdorf as editor in chief. She wrote articles in Volume Two from 1971 (*is*): Fascicule 7) to 1988 (*edisaka* Fasci-

cule 15).¹ Prior to this, she gave lecture in Torino entitled “Pour une nouvelle grammaire du pali” which was later published in the form of a booklet in Torino in 1970. There she pointed out several problems, phonetic as well as morphological, in the Pali nominal system, which had been left out from Geiger’s Grammatik, making use of the newly published works by H. Smith, L. Alsdorf and O. von Hinüber.

Turning our eyes from Germany to outside Europe, her first visit to India occurred as early as 1963. From that time onward she repeated her journeys to India until 2005. During these forty years, she established a close friendship with a number of Indian Jinologists, Śvetāmbara as well as Digāmbara. Among them we can mention such academics as A.N. Upadhye, Muni Punyavijaya, H.C. Bhayani (1917–2000), and D.D. Malvania (1910–2000) in Ahmedabad, the last two of whom she cherished a happy memory as revealed in her obituary published in *Bulletin d’Études Indiennes* 17–18 (1999–2000) pp. 7–18. In 1974 she published a booklet in Bombay entitled *Jainism* together with A.N. Upadhye and B. Patil. In 1981, she wrote a lucid explanation to various illustrations which Ravi Kumar had been collecting up to that time. A splendid volume “La cosmologie jaina” (Paris 1981) was published under the names of Caillat and Kumar, and it was translated into English by K.R. Norman. Further to the East, our country also had the honour of her first visit in 1972 as a guest of Y. Ojihara, a co-disciple of L. Renou. She repeated her journey to the Far-East even after Ojihara’s death in 1991, at the invitation of his disciples who studied under her in Paris.

Beside these books, she published specific studies in the grammar, vocabulary, phraseology and metrics of the Indo-Aryan languages in various Journals and Festschriften. Furthermore she contributed to Jinology through a number of articles, dealing with such cultural and social problems as violence, fasting to death, the concept of speech, and mysticism, with a constant evaluation of Brahmanism and Buddhism. According to the list of publications which has been carefully compiled by Nalini Balbir, she had published nine books, eight editions and nearly two hundred articles and reviews since 1960.

(2) Her teaching career commenced in Lyon in 1960–1965 and she joined the University of the Sorbonne (Université Paris III) in 1967 after the sudden death of L. Renou in 1966. She taught there until her retirement in 1989. As is evident from the enormous number of her reviews, she had been ever watchful over and aware of what was going on in various fields of Indology throughout the world. They were not limited to textual and linguistic studies, but also extended to various fields of Indian civilization, viz., literature, drama, religion and philosophy. All these reviews testified to the fact that she was an excellent teacher, guiding properly and stimulatingly young students according to their different interests. Her friendship with Y. Ojihara also resulted in training his pupils in Paris. Among them, we can mention such scholars as Katsumi Mimaki, Junko Sakamoto-Goto, Toru Yagi, Hideaki Nakatani and Akihiko Akamatsu, who are now active as the leading Indianists in Japan.

At the same time, we should not forget the fact that she was not only an attractive teacher, but was herself deeply grateful to her teachers. She undertook the posthu-

¹ *is-issayitatta, uddha-unnītaka, upatāpeti-upananda-sakyaputta, ekato-ekāvasa, etāḍi-etāva(ta), ettaka-ettāvātā, eḍi-edisaka.*

mous publication of her predecessor Renou's *Études védiques et pāṇinéennes* Tome XVII (Paris 1969). Her warm memory and respectful regard for Jules Bloch brought about not only the posthumous publication of his *Application de la cartographie à l'histoire de l'indo-aryen* (Paris 1963) in collaboration with Pierre Meile, but also that of the voluminous book of 557 pages *Recueil d'articles de Jules Bloch 1906–1955* (Paris 1985). In 1996 she organized in Paris a three-days colloque international (25–27 January) on the occasion of Renou's birth-centenary, which was published later in a book entitled *Langue, style et structure dans le monde indien* (Paris 1996). It is to be noted that prior to this she published *Dialectes dans les littératures indo-aryennes* (Paris 1989), the proceedings of a conference in 16–18 September 1986 in Paris, where 17 scholars from Vedic studies to Modern Indo-Aryan, including its extension to old Khmer contributed.

(3) It is natural that these eminent contributions led to her election to l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres in 1987. A number of honours followed not only in France, but also outside. She was elected a member of the Academy of Sciences de Turin, the Royal Danish Academy and the Royal Swedish Academy. In India she was honoured in various academic Institutions, beginning with "Distinguished Member of Akhila Bharatiya Sanskrit Parishad Lucknow." She also served as treasurer to the International Association for Sanskrit Studies (1977–2000) and was elected to the Presidency of the International Association of Buddhist Studies (1999–2002). In learned Journals, beside this Indo-Iranian Journal, she was a consulting member of *Bulletin d'Études Indiennes* (Paris), and *Indologica Taurinensia* (Turin). Until her last day, she was closely associated with O. Botto and S. Lienhard in general and with K.R. Norman and O. von Hinüber in Pali-Prakrit in particular.

Having surveyed once again Colette Caillat's academical achievements on the occasion of writing this obituary,² the present writer's admiration for her scholarship was reinforced. Remembering her academic contributions and her benevolent attitude to everybody, her death is indeed regretted as a great loss to international Indological scholarship. Yet, it is a comfort for those who have survived her to see her life being embellished by the presence of the many good scholars she has left behind in her native country as well as outside France.

²I owe much to Professor Nalini Balbir who kindly supplied me with much valuable information, including her obituary published in *Bulletin d'Études Indiennes* No. 22–23 (2004–5) pp. 23–79. Without her help, it would have been impossible for me to write this. Herewith, I would like to express my deepest thanks to her for her help.