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(MIS)UNDERSTANDING HINDUISM:

REPRESENTATIONS OF HINDUISM IN JAINA *PURĀṆA*S

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SEEMA KIREN CHAUHAN

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Representations of Hinduism in Jaina *Purāṇa*s

Abstract

(Mis)Understanding Hinduism reconstructs a history of representations of Hindu religion from narratives composed by Digambara Jainas between the seventh and ninth century of the Common Era. I centralize the earliest extant Jaina Sanskrit *purāṇas* composed in Sanskrit, which include Raviṣeṇa's *Padmacarita*, Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*, Jinasena II's *Ādipurāṇa*, and Guṇabhadra's *Uttarapurāṇa*. These texts were composed during an era in which literary and philosophical production flourished through the medium of Sanskrit. As such, Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s narrate tales of the origin of Hindu religion, seeking to understand the ways in which Hindu texts construct religion through Sanskrit textual practices of representation. I undertake close readings of Jaina narratives about religious others, and ask: What do Jaina narratives tell us about the construction of Hindu religion? And how do Jainas use narrative mediums to construct religious identities? In the first case, Jaina narratives express a stable understanding of what constitutes religion. However, the contents of discourses, practices, communities, and institutions identified with the religious other shift according to the representations that were being produced contemporaneously by Hindu texts, as well as the Jaina author's own understanding of the relation between Jainism, Brahmanism, and Hinduism. As a result, Jaina narratives represent Hindu religion as that which is constructed relationally through historically embedded dialogues. In the second case, origin tales from the earliest Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s consolidate a method for representing the religious other that distinguishes them from methods used by earlier Prakrit Jaina texts and contemporaneous Sanskrit Hindu texts. They use narrative devices as sites for

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unifying Hindu self-representations—especially from narrative and philosophical texts—as well as their attendant practices of representation into a single religion. The findings of this dissertation thus cast Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s from the first millennium as a critically important site through which we can understand the construction of Hindu religion before the formal rise of South Asian doxography in the second millennium. In doing so, this study augments the study of Hinduism with the study of Jainism, and the study of religion with the study of narratives.

me to carve out a life on my own terms—for making my dreams your dreams. Thank you for always being there for me even though I consistently forget to say thank you. May I be yours in every future rebirth.

Chapter 1

Introduction:
Into the Looking Glass of Hinduism

In another moment Alice was through the glass and had jumped lightly down into the Looking-glass room. The very first thing she did was to look whether there was a fire in the fireplace, and she was quite pleased to find that there was a real one, blazing brightly as the one she had left behind. […]

Then she began looking about, and noticed that what could be seen from the old room was quite common and uninteresting, but that all the rest was as different as possible. For instance, the pictures on the wall next to the fire seemed to be all alive, and the very clock on the chimney-piece (you know you can only see the back of it in the Looking-glass) had got the face of a little old man, and grinned at her.

Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking Glass*[1]

1. Introduction

Just as Alice's mirror opens up a new world in which Alice finds her reality inverted, Jaina *purāṇa*s open up a world that resembles yet inverts the world of Hinduism. Take for instance the tale of Kṛṣṇa. The Hindu epic, Vyāsa's *Mahābhārata*, presents Kṛṣṇa as the incarnation of Viṣṇu. The *Mahābhārata* indulges in Kṛṣṇa's questionable morals and problematic actions that instigate the cosmic war, while simultaneously glorifying Kṛṣṇa as the creator of the world and the ultimate object of devotion. In Kṛṣṇa's own often-quoted words: "I come into being age after

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[1] Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There*, ed. Peter Hunt and John Tenniel, New ed., Oxford World's Classics (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 128–29. My thanks to Phillip Lutgendorf whose opening remarks to his response to the AAR Panel, "Padma Padma," inspired my use of *Alice Through the Looking Glass*. ("Padma Padma: New Studies in the Jain Rāma Tradition," American Academy of Religion, San Diego CA, 2019. Organized by John Cort. Presenters: Eva De Clercq, Seema Chauhan, Gregory Clines and Adrian Plau.)

age, to protect the virtuous and to destroy evil-doers, in order to establish the foundations of true law (*dharma*). Whoever knows my divine birth and action as they really are is not born again after leaving the body. He comes to me."[2] Crossing from the world of Vyāsa's *Mahābhārata* into the world of Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*, the first Sanskrit Jaina retelling of Kṛṣṇa's story, feels like walking through Alice's Looking Glass. Structurally, Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* looks similar to Vyāsa's *Mahābhārata*. Kṛṣṇa continues to participate in battles that are necessary for maintaining the cosmic order and he continues to indulge in activities that are morally questionable. But a closer look at Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* reveals a Kṛṣṇa who is as different as possible from Vyāsa's Kṛṣṇa. The battles of Jinasena's Kṛṣṇa are explicitly decried as ethically problematic because the violence he indulges in contradicts the Jaina commitment to non-violence. Kṛṣṇa is no longer a creator, an incarnation of a deity, or an object of religious devotion. Instead, he is presented in the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* as a jealous human who is threatened by the superior ethical status of his cousin, the twenty-second Jina Neminātha, the paragon of religious excellence. Kṛṣṇa's desire to be seen as superior to all beings, especially his cousin, is well expressed through his last dying wishes to his brother: "Showcase our superiority, together with that of our sons, to others in the land of Bharata so that their hearts will be filled with awe. Cover the land of Bharata with temples housing images of me with a conch, a discus, and a mace in my hands in order to increase my fame throughout the land."[3] These verses describe the origin of a religious community that believes in the transcendent authority of Kṛṣṇa and that worships his images in accordance with this belief. With such representations, Jinasena's

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[2] *BhG* 4.8-9
[3] *Āvāṃ putrasaṃyuktau mahāvibhavasaṃgatau /*
Bhārate darśayānyeṣāṃ vismayavyāptacetasāṃ // HvP 65.22
Śaṅkacakragadāpāṇirmadīyapratimāgṛhaiḥ /
Bhārataṃ vyāpaya kṣetraṃ matkīrtiparivṛddhaye // HvP 65.23

Harivaṃśapurāṇa creates a world out of Hindu texts that is at once familiar and alien. It is familiar because it articulates representations found in Hindu texts. But it is alien because it transforms Hinduism into a religious other in a world in which the teachings (*dharma*) of the Jina are proclaimed as true, and teachings (*dharma*) of Hindus are proclaimed as false.

Perhaps it is because such Jaina narratives seemingly misunderstand Hinduism that they have not been adequately accounted for in the study of Hinduism. Why study a warped reflection of a Hindu world when we can access its self-presentation from Hindu texts themselves? But it is because Jaina narratives reflect deeply on the identity of the religious other that they should be studied. Jainas, as we will see on multiple occasions throughout this dissertation, define themselves as followers of the Jina who believe that twenty-four Jinas revealed to the world eternal teachings regarding the nature of the universe governed by laws of karma. For our purposes, Jainism is a religious tradition that originated sometime in the fifth century BCE. As a religious community that co-exists alongside Hindu communities in South Asia, Jainas exert a considerable effort towards understanding this religious other in relation to themselves. This is especially evident in their narratives. There, Jainas examine the diverse discourses, practices, communities, and institutions that are represented by contemporaneous Hindu texts, with an aim to understanding what makes the religious other a religious other. In this way, far from expressing misunderstandings of Hinduism, Jaina narratives seek to understand this religious other. By extension, they are an important site in which we can understand the construction of Hindu religion in the premodern period.

In this dissertation, we will step through the Looking Glass represented by Jaina narrative texts and ask, what do Jaina narratives tell us about Hindu and Jaina identity? And by extension, how are narratives used to construct the identity of this religious other? I argue that narratives

from Jaina *purāṇa*s constitute a significant site in which the contours of religious identity are examined and drawn. This overarching claim is subdivided into two interrelated claims that are demonstrated concurrently throughout each chapter of this dissertation.

First, I argue that Jaina narratives present Hinduism and Jainism as fluid religious identities that are defined in relation to one another. Jaina narratives are consistent in that they present Hinduism as a religion on the grounds that it espouses transcendent discourses, practices, communities, and institutions. However, each representation diverges. Jaina narratives express a different understanding of which discourses, practices, communities, and institutions make up Hinduism because they reflect on Hindu self-representations and their practices of representation that were relevant during the era in which the narrative is composed. In addition, each narrative expresses a different understanding of the relation between Hinduism and Jainism. Some present Hinduism as a religious other that bears nothing in common with Jainism, while others present Hinduism as sharing texts and social practices with Jainism.

Second, I argue that in the first millennium of the Common Era, Jaina *narratives* were a primary medium through which Jainas constructed religious identity. Narratives—the representation of causally related events—combined with the narrative devices used to convey said events, examine and unify representations expressed by diverse Hindu texts into a single religion. The consistency in the ways in which Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa* use narratives to construct religious identity further shows us that these texts were consolidating interpretive methods for representing religious identities that would differentiate them from methods used by earlier Prakrit narratives and contemporaneous Sanskrit texts.

In reading Jaina narratives composed between the seventh and ninth century, I reconstruct a history of Jaina representations of religion as well as a history of practices used by

these Jaina narratives to represent the religious other. This dissertation therefore sits at the intersection of fields that are typically treated as distinct. It seeks to augment the study of Hinduism with the study of Jainism, and the study of religion with the study of narrative, by placing these fields into direct conversation with one another. In doing so, it recovers a picture of South Asian religious history that challenges the picture constructed by Hindu texts alone.

2. Constructing Religious Identity: Brahmanism, Hinduism, and Jainism

At the heart of this dissertation is the claim that Brahmanical, Hindu, and Jaina religious identities are co-constructed through dialogues between what Jainas perceive as the self and the religious other. The idea that religious identities are constructed relationally rather than in isolation of one another is not a novel claim. In the study of religion, J.Z. Smith explains that "the most common form of classifying religions, found both in native categories and in scholarly literature, is dualistic and can be reduced, regardless of what differentium is employed, to 'theirs' and 'ours'."[4] Religious identities emerge through dialogical engagement. Consequently, to study the construction of religious identity is to study representations of the self vis-à-vis the other.

The study of Brahmanical and Hindu religious identity poses a unique problem in the study of religion. Religious others are rarely included in Brahmanical self-representations. Brahmanical texts present Brahmanism as an eternal religion that appeals to the similarly eternal scripture known as the *Veda*. They conceal the existence of interreligious dialogues with the

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[4] Jonathan Z. Smith, "Religion, Religions, Religious," in *Critical Terms for Religious Studies*, ed. Mark Taylor (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 280. See also, Jonathan Z. Smith, "Differential Equations: On Constructing the Other," in *Related Religion: Essays in the Study of Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

effect of portraying Brahmanism as a universal religion that is impervious to dialogue and contestation. When religious others are represented, they are presented as aberrations from the Brahmanical norm. In fact, their representation is more of a vague caricature of composite religious traditions. This is especially the case in Brahmanical representations of Jainas. Jainas are equated with Buddhists or caricatured as naked monks. In either case, the distinctions between individual Jaina discourses and practices are effaced by Brahmanical representations.

Given that Brahmanical texts do not typically present their religious identity through dialogues with religious others, it is not surprising that ever since the inception of the religious identification of "Brahmanism" in the western academy of religion, the study of Brahmanical identity has proceeded through the study of dialogues internal to Brahmanical texts themselves. In 1883, Monier-Williams published, *Religious Thought and Life in India*, in which he argued that there are three distinct phases of the religion. The first phase, located before the Common Era, he defines as "Vedic religion." This is a religion that appealed to the authority of the *Veda*, worshipped deified forces of nature, and enjoined rituals that were practiced by Aryan people in the north-west.[5] In the second phase, "Brahmanism" emerged as an outgrowth of Vedic religion, giving a philosophical basis to Vedic religion. At odds to explain the proliferation of discourses and self-representations that Brahmanical texts produced in the Common Era, Monier-Williams suggests that Brahmanism aggregated ritual, mythology, and law codes alongside its philosophical core, and that this aggregation of discourses and practices is what caused the transition from Brahmanism to Hinduism. For Monier-Williams, and the many scholars who

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[5] Monier Monier-Williams, *Religious Thought and Life in India*, Princeton Theological Seminary Library (London: John Murray, 1883), 7–19.

succeeded him, the construction of Brahmanical identity in the first millennium can be understood with reference to Vedic, Brahmanical, and Hindu texts alone.

Recent studies have broadened the scope of sources to account for Buddhist texts, and to a lesser extent Jaina texts, in the historical construction of Brahmanical identity. In *Greater Magadha* and *How the Brahmins Won*, Johannes Bronkhorst argues that new formulations of Brahmanism came about in the Common Era because Brāhmaṇas were faced with the growing influence of Buddhist and Jaina discourses, but lacked the same institutional support as these rival traditions.[6] This particular historical circumstance explains, for Bronkhorst, why Brāhmaṇas in the early Common Era began to produce self-representations that were inward-looking. Brāhmaṇas became preoccupied with proliferating representations of themselves without much reference to religious others because they were dealing with a historical circumstance in which their identity was threatened by religious others.[7]

For Bronkhorst, the self-centeredness of Brahmanical representations in the first millennium is a conclusion to a study that seeks to reconstruct the origins of Brahmanical self-representations. The present study leaves aside questions of the historical origins of Brahmanism and takes the self-centredness of Brahmanical sources as a starting point. How do Brahmanical authors in the common era represent themselves? And how do they navigate the diverse self-

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[6] Johannes Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha: Studies in the Culture of Early India*, vol. 19, Handbook of Oriental Studies (Leiden: Brill, 2007); Johannes Bronkhorst, *How the Brahmins Won: From Alexander to the Guptas*, vol. 30, Handbook of Oriental Studies (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

[7] "Brahmanism, then, should be thought of as a homogeneous vision of Brāhmaṇas and their position in the world, and primarily the result of the self-centered preoccupation of Brāhmaṇas during a difficult period in which their traditional position in the world was under threat." Bronkhorst, *How the Brahmins Won*, 6. See Sheldon Pollock on the lack of historical referentiality in Brahmanical sources from the first millennium of the Common Era. Sheldon Pollock, "Mīmāṃsā and the Problem of History in Traditional India," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 109, no. 4 (1989): 603–10.

representations that were being produced contemporaneously? My point is not to disagree with Bronkhorst's observation that Brahmanical texts become inward-looking since this is attested by the textual record. Rather my point is to follow through with the theoretical claim that has long been accepted in the academy—namely, that religious identity is defined in, against, and through the construction of the other. We cannot prioritize Brahmanical texts when we seek to understand constructions of Brahmanical identity since these very texts obscure the differences between Brahmanical self-representations and deny the existence of interreligious dialogues. Such differences and dialogues are necessary constituents of religious identity. If we privilege sources that present Brahmanism as an eternal religion devoid of dialogical relations, at best we risk reinscribing Brahmanism as a static religious identity that was produced in a vacuum of introspective contemplation. At worst, we risk mapping the structures of power that Brahmanical texts use to minimize the voice of religious others, especially Jainas, onto the history of South Asian religions and even onto the organization of fields in the academic study of religion. But when we accept the theoretical premise that Brahmanical identity is constructed in relation to another religion, we can reconstruct the history of interreligious dialogues that co-constituted religious identities.

A similar vision that was brought to bear by the 1998 edited volume entitled *Open Boundaries.*[8] This volume argues that we should better account for the contributions of Jainas in the history of South Asia, and indeed, the history of Hindu traditions rather than relegating their contributions to the marginalized field of Jaina Studies. When we do so, "the resultant portrait of the Jains is strikingly different from the received portrait, and equally the resultant portrait of

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[8] John E. Cort, "Introduction: Contested Jain Identities of Self and Other," in *Open Boundaries: Jain Communities and Culture in Indian History*, ed. John E. Cort, SUNY Series in Hindu Studies (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998).

South Asia is strikingly different."[9] Collectively, the individual chapters of the volume show that Jainas actively participated in socio-religious debates that are particular to the physical and discursive context in which they inhabited; they produce as diverse representations of Hindu religious others as they do of the Jaina self; and they develop multiple stratagems for engaging in these dialogues. Jainas are a dynamic group who cannot be reduced to mere passive receptacles of Hindu influences.[10]

Other recent studies have begun to read Brahmanical sources in tandem with texts from contemporaneous religions. Nathan McGovern rejects the privileging of Brahmanical sources and centers Buddhist sources with some reference to Jaina sources.[11] Through this re-reading, he reveals that Brahminhood was not always a marker of Brahmanical religiosity as previous scholarship supposed. Rather, Brahminhood was an identification of religious ideals of Buddhist, Jaina and Brahmanical religions before it was aggregated to Brahmanism in the Common Era. Audrey Truschke also problematizes the prioritization of Brahmanical sources in historical reconstructions of early modern South Asia. She brings to light the dialogues among Mughals, Brāhmaṇas and Jainas in courtly contexts that resulted in the production of a distinct literary culture.[12]

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[9] Quoted from an initial statement of purpose drafted by John Cort and Richard Davis for the conference panel that preceded *Open Boundaries*. Cort, "Introduction: Contested Jain Identities of Self and Other," 2.

[10] Cort, "Introduction: Contested Jain Identities of Self and Other," 3.

[11] Nathan McGovern, *The Snake and the Mongoose: The Emergence of Identity in Early Indian Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019).

[12] Audrey Truschke, *Culture of Encounters: Sanskrit at the Mughal Court*, South Asia across the Disciplines (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016). McGovern and Truschke are certainly not the only scholars to include sources from other religious traditions. I cite them as examples of scholars who forefront their critique of Brahmanical self-representations.

While previous studies recognize the value of Jaina sources, we are yet to see a study that centralizes the perspective of Jainas in the construction of Hindu identity in a way that takes the perspective of Jainas in their particular historical contexts. In this dissertation, I recover and centralize the voices of Jainas who reflect on the construction of Brahmanical and Hindu identity in the first millennium of the common era. Brāhmaṇas, as I have mentioned, downplay the dialogical engagement with religious others and homogenize the diversity of representations among Brahmanical texts themselves. But their contemporaries in the Jaina tradition went in the opposite direction. From the fifth century onwards, Jainas began to compose entire narrative texts that were geared towards understanding the religious other. In these narratives, Jainas situate the construction of Brahmanical identity in a network of dialogues with characters who subscribe to the authority of the Jina. These narratives discuss the intricacies of discourses expressed by Brahmanical texts; they explore the relations between Brahmanical self-representations; and they account for the breadth and diversity of Brahmanical self-representations as they were being produced. This depth and breadth of engagement makes Jaina narratives an invaluable yet relatively unknown site for understanding the construction of Brahmanism. In this dissertation, we will investigate how Jaina narratives in the first millennium of the Common Era unified Brahmanical and Hindu religious discourses into distinct religious identities through the simultaneous construction of Jaina identity.

The Jaina narratives that I examine are origin tales that describe the creation of a new religion. A narrative (a term that I use interchangeably with "story" and "tale") is defined as the representation of a series of causally related events. I follow Bruce Lincoln in defining religion as 1) a discourse that is constructed in particular circumstances, but that speaks of things eternal and that claims for itself a similarly transcendent status, 2) a set of practices defined by said

discourse, 3) a community whose members construct their identity with reference to the discourses and its attendant practices, and 4) an institution that regulates all of the above.[13] Keeping this definition of religion in mind, I understand "origin tale" to be a subcategory of narratives that represents a series of causally related events which explain the consolidation of religion. They describe how characters, embedded in particular and dialogical situations, came to create discourses that appeal to a transcendent authority, practices that are authorized by said discourses, a community that defines itself in relation to the discourses and practices and, in some cases, an institution that regulates all of the above.

The basic framework for Jaina origin tales that describe the origin of Brahmanism goes as follows. There was once a boy called Parvata who became traumatized and angered when his father renounced his family to take up the life of a wandering Jaina ascetic. This backstory is presented as an implicit explanation for why Parvata rejects the Jina's teaching as an adult. Parvata proclaims discourses that are antithetical to those of the Jina and he consistently fails to convince other characters of the veracity of his thought. Tired of being humiliated by other characters for his beliefs, Parvata authors a new scripture, the *Veda.* He declares that this scripture is, in fact, an eternal authority that enjoins the performance of animal sacrifices for the attainment of beneficial results, such as prosperity and heaven. Parvata wins a host of followers who become the first community to identify themselves in relation to his *Veda* and its practices. In many of the retellings, Parvata wins the favor of royal courts who agree to patronize the performance of Vedic sacrifices throughout their kingdom. The fact that Parvata's religion is never given a particular name (such as "*vaidika*") nor is signified with a Sanskrit equivalent for

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[13] Bruce Lincoln, *Holy Terrors: Thinking about Religion after September 11*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 5–7.

"religion" does not detract from the point that the origin tale can construct what we theoretically term "religion" because it describes in an unambiguous fashion the consolidation of transcendent discourses, practices, communities, and institutions.

The tale of Parvata locates Brahmanism in dialogical relations. It describes how Brahmanical religion was created through Parvata's interactions and conversations with characters with diverging opinions. Jaina authors use the tale to engage in dialogue with the multiplicity of representations of Brahmanism from Brahmanical and Jaina texts that were being produced in the first millennium of the Common Era. Each retelling reflects on how these Brahmanical self-representations relate to one another: why do certain Brahmanical philosophical treatises present the *Veda* as authorless, while Brahmanical narratives present the *Veda* as authored? Why do Brahmanical texts derive different interpretations of Vedic injunctions? Why are there distinct explanations for the validity of Brāhmaṇas, those practitioners who define themselves in relation to the *Veda* and its attendant practices? Rather than homogenizing the diversity of Brahmanical self-representations, each origin tale examines representations of Brahmanical discourses, practices and communities from across a variety of earlier Brahmanical texts. They bring to light what they see are similarities and differences among these representations in order to delineate the contours of Brahmanical religious identity. This dissertation focuses on the distinct ways in which Jainas use narrative mediums to construct Brahmanical identity during an era in which Brahmanical self-presentations diversify.

It will become apparent in this dissertation that no two Jaina representation of Brahmanism are ever the same. The fact that Brahmanism is a religion—because it is represented as a set of transcendent discourses, attendant practices, communities and institutions—is consistent throughout all versions of the tale of Parvata. But the discourses, practices, and

identities associated with this religious other, and the relation between Brahmanical self-representations differs in each Jaina retelling. Put another way, retellings of the tale of Parvata across multiple Jaina texts reveal how the morphology of Brahmanical religion is reimagined across Jaina authors in consecutive eras. In reconstructing a history of Jaina retellings, we can reconstruct the ways in which Brahmanism is expressed in distinct ways according to particular location of the narrative in time and place.

In particular, we find that each retelling's construction of Brahmanism is relative to contemporaneous trends in Brahmanical self-presentations. This is especially true with respect to Brahmanical philosophy. Retellings of the tale of Parvata from the seventh and eighth century present Brahmanism as rooted in the atheistic philosophy of the contemporaneous Brahmanical school of thought, Mīmāṃsā. In these retellings, Parvata grounds his discourses in an authorless, eternal *Veda* and justifies his understanding of this *Veda* with recourse to arguments made by contemporaneous Mīmāṃsā writers. By contrast, tales of Parvata in the ninth century present Brahmanism as rooted in creationism. Here, Parvata defers to the existence of an eternal, creator deity to justify Vedic discourses and practices. This shift in literary representation reflects contemporaneous trends in Brahmanical philosophy which similarly begin to predicate arguments on the existence of a creator deity. Jaina retellings therefore reveal that Brahmanical religious identity is a fluid construction that is historically embedded in the networks of discourses and practices that Brahmanical self-representations were expressing.

As narratives about the religious other, Jaina origin tales inevitably reveal the identity of the self. That is, they tell us about the identity of Jainism. All of the retellings present Brahmanism as the other to Jainism insomuch as Parvata founds a new religion after rejecting the authority of the Jina. However, the boundaries of difference and unity between Parvata's

religion and the Jina's religion are redrawn in each retelling. Our earliest Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*, Raviṣeṇa's *Padmacarita,* presents Parvata's religion as having nothing in common with the Jina's religion: they do not share texts, discourses, practices, social markers, clothing, or even physical spaces. The eighth century, *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*, by contrast, emphasizes the assertation that Parvata's religion shares a conceptual vocabulary with the Jina's religion. Jinasena II's *Ādipurāṇa* from the ninth century continues to present Parvata's religion as the other. Yet, unlike earlier retellings, the *Ādipurāṇa* presents Brahmanism as socially proximate to Jainism because they inhabit the same social and institutional space. Shifts of this sort in narrative representation betray the distinct and diverse ways in which each Jaina author understands the relation between his religion and that of the religious other. They show us that we cannot homogenize Brahmanical-Jaina dialogical relations or their representation by Jainas.

We cannot talk about the ways that Brahmanism is represented by Jaina narratives without talking about the ways that Hinduism is represented. There has been much ink spilled on the construction of "Hinduism." Is "Hinduism" a shared identity that was fabricated through the colonial interaction with South Asian subjects? Does "Hinduism" exist in pre-colonial periods? I will not detail the history of this debate here, suffice to say that over the last decade, scholars have demonstrated that a shared religious identity, that we might call "Hinduism," is in fact articulated in precolonial eras.

Andrew Nicholson's book, *Unifying Hinduism* makes a significant contribution to this debate. Nicholson explores the intellectual endeavors undertaken by Hindu writers between the twelfth to sixteenth centuries to articulate Hinduism as a unified religion.[14] Primary in this

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[14] Andrew Nicholson, *Unifying Hinduism: Philosophy and Identity in Indian Intellectual History*, South Asia across the Disciplines (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

constructive effort, he argues, is the emergence of doxography. Doxography is defined by

Nicholson as a genre of texts that summarize and classify systems of thought without

philosophical dialectics or storylines.[15] The earliest extant Sanskrit text to fit this definition of

doxography is the *Ṣaḍdarśanasamuccaya* composed by the Jaina author Haribhadra in the eighth

century.[16] But doxographies of this sort only came into vogue only from the fourteenth century

onwards.[17] Nicholson argues that doxography in this strict definition provides an example of the

ways in which writers in premodern South Asia created shared religious identities.

However, doxography is certainly not the only example much less a prevalent medium

through which Hinduism could be unified in premodern South Asia. This dissertation brings to

light the ways in which Jainas use narrative mediums to construct a shared religious identity.

Narratives employ dialogues between characters to connect various discourses and practices, and

it uses literary devices and the causal relations between the events told as sites for connecting

Hindu self-representations. In centering Jaina narratives, I explain the ways in which narratives

from the seventh to ninth century accomplish similar effects as doxography prior to the formal

rise of doxographical texts from the fourteenth century onwards. We should not relegate

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[15] Nicholson, *Unifying Hinduism*, 148. Nicholson does not accept narrative and philosophical dialectics to be classified as doxographies. However, that Olle Qvarnström, to whom Nicholson responds, does argue that doxographies in premodern South Asia include the narrative and philosophical texts. Olle Qvarnström, "Haribhadra and the Beginnings of Doxography in India," in *Approaches to Jaina Studies: Philosophy, Logic, Rituals and Symbols*, ed. N. K. Wagle and Olle Qvarnström (Toronto: University of Toronto Centre for South Asian Studies, 1999), 169–210.

[16] Nicholson, *Unifying Hinduism*, 154-58. Haribhadra belongs to the Śvetāmbara tradition of Jainism. In this dissertation, I focus on Digambara writers and their use of narrative texts. It remains unclear to me to what extant Digambara representations of religious others relate to Śvetāmbara representations of religious others. This is a pertinent question, but one that remains outside the purview of this dissertation. See Qvarnström, "Haribhadra and the Beginnings of Doxography in India" for further discussion of doxography within the Jaina tradition.

[17] Nicholson, *Unifying Hinduism*, 158-59.

narratives to texts that are devoid of storylines and even dialectical examinations when we are seeking to understand the premodern construction of Hindu identity. Narratives were a compelling and enduring medium through which premodern South Asian writers unify Hindu identity. By attending to the ways in which Jaina origin tales construct religious identities, I recast narratives as indispensable sites in which we can see the construction of a shared Hindu identity.

With respect to the content of their representation, Jaina origin tales present a shared Hindu identity inflected by autonomous religious communities that have different systems of meaning-making.[18] Jaina narrative texts, such as the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*, do not present a single Hindu religious community that is subdivided into "Hindu sectarian traditions"—distinct subgroups that interpret a core set of discourses and practices differently. Instead, they narrate the origins of Brahmanism, Śāktism, and Vaiṣṇavism as distinct religions on the grounds that each appeals to a distinct set of transcendent discourses, practices, communities, and institutions. The origin of each religion is given a distinct subtale; the literary boundary between subtales marks boundaries of difference between Hindu religious communities. Nevertheless, the Jaina text connects individual religions and presents them as a common religious other. At a literary level, it uses the causal relations between the events told to connect all individual origin tales. At a conceptual level, the text fashions overlaps among the systems of meaning-making that are used by different religious communities. I demonstrate how these literary and conceptual relations are forged in Jaina narrative texts, taking the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* as my case study. I explain how the

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[18] Fisher refers to these as "sectarian traditions," however I do not see any reason to not refer to them as "religion" since they fit the definition of religion as provided by Lincoln.

Harivaṃśapurāṇa's tale of the origin of Goddess traditions conveys the creation of a shared

Hindu identity as inflected by the concomitant production of bounded religious communities.

This brings my study in line with the conclusions reached by Valerie Stoker and Elaine

Fisher. Both scholars demonstrate that the production of a shared Hindu identity occurs through

the simultaneous production of individual religious systems of meaning-making. Stoker argues

that the Vijayanagara empire (1346 CE–1565 CE) forged relations between different religious

institutions while simultaneously articulating distinct religious identities by being selective in its

patronage of them.[19] Her study reveals that the production of a shared religious identity occurred

through the production of distinct religious (or, as she calls them, sectarian) communities. Fisher

builds on these ideas in her study of early modern South India.[20] There, she argues that closed

sets of social institutions, which functioned autonomously from one another as bounded systems

of meaning, inhabited an overlapping public space without physical conflicts transpiring among

them. Fisher argues that "sectarian" refers less to traditions that broke off from a single

Brahmanical "church," and more to a self-constituting religious tradition that generates its own

systems of meaning-making.[21] Early Modern South India presents us with a case study of "Hindu

Pluralism," defined as a shared performance of plural religiosities.

I follow Stoker and Fisher in seeking to demonstrate the contours of Hindu religious unity

and difference, and the ways in which Hindu identities are constitutive of one another. I build on their

studies, viewing the construction of Hindu identity through the lens of Jaina narratives written in the

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[19] Valerie Stoker, *Polemics and Patronage in the City of Victory: Vyāsatīrtha, Hindu Sectarianism, and the Sixteenth-Century Vijayanagara Court*, South Asia across the Disciplines (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2016).
[20] Elaine Fisher, *Hindu Pluralism: Religion and the Public Sphere in Early Modern South India*, South Asia across the Disciplines (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2017).
[21] Fisher, *Hindu Pluralism*, 13.

seventh to ninth century. I am not suggesting that a line of continuity can be drawn from Jaina narratives from the first millennium to constructions of Hinduism by Hindus in the second millennium. Rather, I argue that the process through which a shared Hindu identity is articulated is not confined to the second millennium. By looking at Jaina narratives from the first millennium, we see that this process occurs in periods earlier than Nicholson, Stoker, and Fisher describe.

In taking as my object of study Jaina sources, I am able to take a step further and explore the unification of a shared Jaina identity through the unification of a shared Hindu identity. The narrative texts that are centered in this dissertation were composed after the schism occurred between Digambara Jainas and Śvetāmbara Jainas in the fifth century. Yet such texts remain silent about this division. They neither narrate the origin of this schism nor describe the different monastic practices, scriptural canons, and perceptions of women that divide Śvetāmbaras from Digambaras.[22] Jaina narrative texts composed between the fifth and tenth century present a single religion that subscribes to the authority of the Jina. We can see this clearly in the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*'s tale of the origins of Hindu Goddess traditions. On the one hand, this is a tale that describes the origins of a bounded religious community and its relation to a shared Hindu identity. On the other hand, the same tale narrates the trajectory of a laywoman who renounces to become a Jaina nun (and is later deified as a Goddess). This narrative of female renunciation, I argue, obfuscates the differences in the Śvetāmbara and Digambara understanding of monastic practice and female liberation. By evading any discussion of these differences, which led to a historic division between Śvetāmbaras and Digambaras, the tale casts Jainism as a

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[22] At least, to my knowledge, I have not come across a narrative in Jaina *purāṇa*s that narrates this divide.

shared identity defined by a single, consistent system of meaning, in contradistinction to

Hinduism which is presented in the very same tale as a shared identity defined by plural,

contradictory systems of meaning.

3. Jaina *Purāṇa*s: Genre and Texts

The origin tales that I discuss in this dissertation come from a group of narrative texts called,

"*purāṇa*s," that Jainas began to compose from the fifth century onwards. These Jaina texts share

the title of "*purāṇa*" with a group of Hindu narrative texts, though they have been far less studied

than their Hindu namesakes. This dissertation lays down the theoretical and methodological

groundwork for studying narratives about Hinduism in Jaina *purāṇa*s.

I begin with the theoretical claim that was first made in South Asian Studies by Ronald

Inden, with reference to the study of Hindu *purāṇa*s.[23] All texts, Inden explains, are dialogical.

All texts engage in dialogue insomuch as they articulate and transform discourses from earlier

and contemporaneous texts. Even if the author(s) remains anonymous, proclaims his text to be

eternal, and/or obscures the text's dialogical relations, as all Hindu p*urāṇa*s do, it is still a

historically embedded composition that responds to other texts. No text is ever produced outside

of a historically embedded network of dialogues.

If all texts are dialogical, then they cannot be essentialized. This insight targets *purāṇic*

studies, which, Inden argues, tends to essentialize *purāṇa*s through approaches that are informed

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[23] Ronald Inden, "Introduction: From Philological to Dialogical Texts," in *Querying the Medieval: Texts and the History of Practices in South Asia*, ed. Ronald Inden, Daud Ali, and Jonathan Walters (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 1–28.

by structuralism. *Purāṇa*s are often presented as embodiments of entire religions, cultures, and time periods.[24] An example of this is when *purāṇa*s are equated to "classical Hinduism" in the era following the fifth century of the common era, in contrast to the *Veda* which is equated with "Vedic religion" in the period prior to the fifth century before the common era. Such structuralist methodologies displace the agency of each historically-embedded author(s) and equally, the network of historically-embedded audiences that the *purāṇa* in question speaks to.[25] Inden argues that even the types of philological methods that seek to recover an *Ur*-text are informed by structuralist tendencies. They essentialize a *purāṇa* to an objective linguistic structure that can be mapped onto distinct time periods, authors, and cultures.[26] In recent years, *purāṇa*s are distinguished from other genres of texts because of their supposed "intertextual," "eclectic," or "encyclopedic" nature. But this too ignores the fact that all texts engage in dialogical relation; *purāṇa*s are not distinct in type in this regard.

Inden explains that *purāṇa*s cannot be distinguished in *type* from other texts because all texts are dialogical. Each *purāna* differs from other *purāṇa*s, and from other texts, in the *degree* to which it re-states a particular set of discourses, and the *degree* to which it reimagines the discursive world in which the text is composed and circulated.[27] By "degree," I understand Inden to be referring to the scope and depth to which the text in question articulates and transforms discourses from other texts.

Let's take an example that is relevant to our discussion of religious identities. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* is a fifth century Hindu *purāṇa* that dedicates just one narrative to discussing religious

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[24] Inden, "Introduction: From Philological to Dialogical Texts," 5-6.
[25] Inden, "Introduction: From Philological to Dialogical Texts," 11.
[26] Inden, "Introduction: From Philological to Dialogical Texts," 8-9.
[27] Inden, "Introduction: From Philological to Dialogical Texts," 13-14.

others.[28] There, the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* describes how the deity, Viṣṇu incarnates on earth as a mendicant in order persuade the demons to abandon their adherence to the *Veda* and Vedic sacrifice. Viṣṇu's incarnation propagates a new religion based on non-violence and renunciation. He succeeds in converting the demons to his false religion, rendering the demons vulnerable to the gods' attack. When the Gods defeat the demons, Viṣṇu's heretical religion continues to be propagated throughout the world. This narrative is read as a dialogical engagement with Buddhist and/or Jaina self-representations. But note the superficial nature of this engagement. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* re-presents Buddhist and Jaina prescriptions for mendicants through the character portrayal of Viṣṇu's incarnation, yet the description is so vague that the character can be interpreted as either the Jina or the Buddha. Moreover, the discourses cited by the character are terse and generalized. By contrast, the *Vasudevahiṇḍī*, a fifth century Jaina text contemporaneous with the *Viṣṇupurāṇa*, dedicates most of its space to narrating the origin of religious others. Each narrative about religious others articulates and transforms: narratives from the now-lost Hindu text, *Bṛhatkathā*; portrayals of characters from Vyāsa's *Mahābhārata*; discourses from the Jaina *sutta*s; and even philosophical discourses from aphoristic texts (*sūtra*/*kārikā*). Both the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* and the *Vasudevahiṇḍī* are dialogical texts. They are not, in Inden's words, different in type because they both engage in dialogue with earlier and contemporaneous texts. They simply differ in their degree of dialogical engagement. The *Vasudevahiṇḍī* exhibits a greater scope, depth and specificity of dialogical engagement with contemporaneous and earlier texts than the *Viṣṇupurāṇa*. When we extrapolate these differences in degree of dialogical engagement, we can reconstruct the types of engagements and interventions that each text makes within a particular network of texts and contexts.

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[28] *ViP* 3.17-18

Inden does not target the study of Jaina *purāṇa*s. Yet his recognition that all texts are dialogical helps us to identify the theoretical and methodological premises on which the study of Jaina purāṇic representations of Hinduism has so far been based. The study of Jaina purāṇic representations of Hinduism has proceeded on the basis of essentializations of the genre. In the first case, there is an attempt to understand Jaina *purāṇa*s as a genre that is distinct in type from Hindu *purāṇa*s. In an article that became a touchstone of authority for the study of Jaina *purāṇa*s, Padmanabh Jaini characterized Jaina *purāṇa*s as a "counter tradition" to Hindu *purāṇa*s.[29] Jaina *purāṇa*s, he argues, appropriate characters and narratives from Hindu *purāṇa*s in order to reject them. Reducing Jaina *purāṇa*s to this single and arguably passive relation to Hindu *purāṇa*s leads to methodologies that confine the study of Jaina *purāṇa*s to a singular comparison with a Hindu text. It does not account for the historical development of Jaina narratives, the historical development of Hindu narratives, and the multiple dialogues that Jaina *purāṇa*s have with non-narrative texts such as philosophical and commentarial texts.

The problem of essentializing Jaina p*urāṇa*s was already suggested in John Cort's, "An Overview of Jaina *Purāṇa*s" which was published alongside Jaini's article in *Purāṇa Perennis*.[30] Cort notes that Jaina *purāṇa*s engage with a diverse range of texts—which include, *āgama*, *kāvya*, Hindu *purāṇa*s, *carita* and *kathā*—and they do not subscribe to a stable, emic definition of "*purāṇa*." These points clearly imply that such Jaina *purāṇa*s cannot be essentialized as a distinct genre. They imply that close examinations of each *purāṇa* in the historically-embedded

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[29] Elsewhere, Jaini notes that Jaina *purāṇa*s such as Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*, constitute "a Jaina encyclopedia, as it were, in the manner of Brahmanic Purāṇas." Padmanabh S Jaini, "Jaina Purāṇas: A Purāṇic Counter Tradition," in *Purāṇa Perennis: Reciprocity and Transformation in Hindu and Jaina Texts* (Albany, 1993), 220.
[30] John E Cort, "An Overview of the Jaina Purāṇas," in *Purāṇa Perennis: Reciprocity and Transformation in Hindu and Jaina Texts* (Albany, 1993), 185–206.

networks of dialogues in which it participates will tell us far more about the commitments of their author(s) and their discursive context than abstractions of Jaina *purāṇa*s to universal structures of genre, religion, culture and so forth could.

Just as we cannot essentialize Jaina *purāṇa*s to "counter-traditions" of Hinduism or Hindu *purāṇa*s, we cannot homogenize the methods that such narratives employ to represent religious others. In particular, the term "jainization" is frequently used in secondary scholarship to describe the methods of representation that Jaina narratives use to re-present Hindu texts. "Jainization" implies that all writers who subscribe to the transcendent authority of the Jina employ the same methods for interpretating Hindu texts and that these methods are grounded in stable religious commitments. This dissertation rejects such essentializations of Jaina narrative strategies and instead reconstructs a history of Jaina narrative strategies that were used in representations of religious others.

A number of scholars defer to emic classifications that Jaina texts use to represent Jaina *purāṇa*s. This often involves assigning the Jaina *purāṇa*s to the "*dharmakathā*" class of texts of the Śvetāmbaras and the "*prathamānuyoga*" class of texts of the Digambaras.[31] However, we currently lack primary source evidence for the historical development of such emic classifications.[32] We should take this classification with a grain of salt for it might not have

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[31] For a summary of this scholarship, see Cort, "An Overview of Jaina Purāṇas," 186. The scholars who assert that Jaina *purāṇa*s belong to a Jaina classification of genre include: Hiralal Kapadia, *A History of Canonical Literature by the Jains*, 1st edition (reprint, 2000), vol. 17, Shree Shwetambara Murtipujak Jaina Boarding Series (Ahmedabad: Sharadaben Chimanbhai Educational Research Centre, 1941), 57; Padmanabh S. Jaini, *The Jaina Path of Purification* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 207.

[32] Of the sources that I have been able to access, none provide references to primary sources. The only source I could not get hold of is Hīrālāl Jain's discussion, which is quoted by Cort (Cort, "An Overview of Jaina Purāṇas," 186.): Hīrālāl Jain, *Bhāratīya Saṃskṛti meṃ Jain Dharm kā Yogadān*. (Bhopal: Madhyapradeś Sāhitya Pariṣad), 127.

existed or been employed during the era in which the earliest Jaina *purāṇa*s were composed. Indeed, recent scholarship on Jaina *purāṇa*s has revealed how individual Jaina *purāṇa*s initiated a host of retellings. For instance, Jinasena II's *Ādipurāṇa* initiates retellings in Kannada and Sanskrit that form a sub-genre, while Jaina tales of Rāma are more often than not in conversation with earlier Jaina tales of Rāma than with Vālmīki's *Rāmāyāṇa*.[33] Such studies yield more substantial contributions about the narrative traditions that each text was consolidating because they begin with the contents of the texts themselves.

In other instances, Jaina *purāṇa*s are distinguished from other Jaina narrative texts on account that they narrate the biographies of the sixty-three eminent men (*śalākāpuruṣa*/*mahāpuruṣa*) in Jaina universal history. These eminent men include: twenty-four

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I suspect that attribution of Digambara Jaina *purāṇa*s to an emic genre of "*dharmakathā*" might be partially based on the *Ādipurāṇa*'s discussion of genre (See *ĀP* 1.108-16 on the attribution of the *purāṇa* to "*dharmakathā*") However, the *Ādipurāṇa* also refers to itself as a "*dharmaśāstra*" and a "*mahākāvya*." More importantly, the *Ādipurāṇa* is consolidating understandings of the Jaina *purāṇa* genre, which are only undertaken briefly (and in different ways) by earlier Jaina *purāṇa*s. See chapter 4 of this dissertation for a fuller discussion of the way in which the *Ādipurāṇa* understands the nature of "*purāṇa*."

[33] Sarah Peirce Taylor reads Sanskrit and Kannada retellings of the *Ādipurāṇa* together; Greg Clines reads Raviṣeṇa's *Padmacarita* together with its vernacular retelling by Jinadāsa in the fifteenth century; and Adrian Plau reads the Brajbhāṣā *Sītācarit* together with tales of Jaina Satī figures. Sarah Pierce Taylor, "Aesthetics of Sovereignty: The Poetic and Material Worlds of Medieval Jainism" (Doctoral dissertation, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania, 2016); Gregory Clines, "The Lotus' New Bloom: Literary Innovation in Early Modern North India" (Doctoral dissertation, Cambridge MA, Harvard University, 2018); Adrian Plau, "'There Was a City Called Mithilā': Are Jaina Rāmāyaṇas Really Purāṇas?," in *Puṣpikā: Tracing Ancient India through Texts and Traditions: Contributions to Current Research in Indology*, ed. Heleen De Jonckheere, Marie-Hélène Gorisse, and Agnieszka Rostalska, vol. 5 (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2020), 15–31; Adrian Plau, "The Deeds of Sītā: A Critical Edition and Literary Contextual Analysis of the Sītācarit by Rāmacand Bālak" (Doctoral dissertation, London, School of Oriental and African Studies, 2018). See also: De Clercq, Eva, "The Paümacariya, Padmacarita and Paümacariü: The Jaina Rāmāyaṇa Purāṇa," in *Papers of the 12th World Sanskrit Conference, Held in Helsinki, Finland, 13-18 July, 2003*, ed. Petteri Koskikallio and Asko Parpola (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2004); Eva De Clercq, "The Jaina Harivaṃśa and Mahābhārata Tradition - A Preliminary Survey," in *Parallels and Comparisons in the Sanskrit Epics and Puranas* (Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 2008), 399–421.

Jinas, twelve world rulers (*cakravartin*) and twenty-seven heroes, which include nine *vāsudeva*s,

nine *baladeva*s, and nine *prativāsudeva*s.[34] This representation is based on an understanding of

*purāṇa*s that coalesces in the earliest extant Jaina *purāṇa*s. In fact, from the thirteenth century

onwards, a corpus Jaina narrative texts called *prabandha*s proclaim themselves to be distinct

from Jaina *purāṇa*s on account that they narrate the localized history of individuals who were

born after the Mahāvīra, the final Jina and the last of the cosmological heroes, in contrast to Jaina

*purāṇa*s which narrate the eminent men who belong to the distant past.[35] Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s

do concentrate on the lives of the sixty-three eminent men. But I resist universalizing this emic

essentialization because it can encourage us to view Jaina *purāṇa*s independent of the particular

historical contexts in which they were composed and circulated. In this dissertation, I read Jaina

stories of the distant past as sites in which their authors examine their *localized* history.

In short, this dissertation applies to the study of Jaina *purāṇa*s Inden's theoretical claim

that all texts are dialogical and the methodology that follows from it. I situate Jaina *purāṇa*s in

their particular historical contexts and reconstruct the distinct contributions that these texts make,

individually and collectively, to contemporaneous constructions of religious identity.

This dissertation focuses on the earliest extant Jaina *purāṇa*s to be composed in Sanskrit.

The earliest of these texts is Raviṣeṇa's *Padmacarita* (677 CE). Raviṣeṇa does not mention any

particular Digambara monastic community to which he belonged or the geographical region in

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[34] For further discussion, see Anna Aurelia Esposito, "Jain Universal History," in *Brill's Encyclopedia of Jainism Online*, ed. John E. Cort et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2019).
[35] John E. Cort, "Genres of Jain History," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 23, no. 4 (1995): 480–90; Steven Vose, "The Making of a Medieval Jain Monk: Language, Power, and Authority in the Works of Jinaprabhasūri (c. 1261-1333)" (Doctoral dissertation, Pennsylvania, University of Pennsylvania, 2013), 324–33. (See especially pp.324-27 for the citation from the *Prabandhacintāmaṇi* and Vose's explanation of this text's representation of *prabandha* literature vis-à-vis the Jaina *purāṇa*s.)

which he composed his text.[36] The *Padmacarita* is Raviṣeṇa's only extant composition though later authors attribute other texts to him.[37]

The next surviving Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa* is Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* (783 CE). Just as in the case of Raviṣeṇa, we know little about Jinasena. Some identify Jinasena as the oldest leader of the Punnāta lineage of Digambara Jainism, but the history of this lineage remains obscure and I have not found primary source corroboration for this attribution.[38] In the final chapter of his composition, Jinasena states that he composed his *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* in different places and temples that have not been historically identified.[39] Similarly, Jinasena cites rulers of distinct geographical regions,[40] but he does not identify any of these courts as his patrons and as far as I am aware, Jinasena is not cited in any royal inscriptions. Some scholars have argued that Jinasena was based in North-West India,[41] but this claim is complicated by the ascription of the origin of the Punnāta lineage to Karnataka, South India.

We know a great deal more about the two authors of our next *purāṇa*, the *Mahāpurāṇa*. Since the *Mahāpurāṇa* is divided into two parts, this dissertation treats these two parts as two

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[36] For an extensive overview of Raviṣeṇa's context (or lack of historical evidence thereof) , see Clines, "The Lotus' New Bloom: Literary Innovation in Early Modern North India," 6–9. For further reading on the *Padmacarita*, see V.N Kulkarni, *The Story of Rama in Jain Literature as Presented by the Śvetāmbara and Digambara Poets in the Prakrit, Sanskrit, and Apabhraṁśa Languages* (Ahmedabad: Saraswati Pustak Bhandar, 1990); De Clercq, Eva, "The Paümacariya, Padmacarita and Paümacariü: The Jaina Rāmāyaṇa Purāṇa."

[37] Clines, "The Lotus' New Bloom: Literary Innovation in Early Modern North India," 8.

[38] Uttam Kamal Jain, *Jaina Sects and Schools* (Delhi: Concept Pub. Co., 1975), 118–20. This is based on V. P. Johrapurkar, *Bhaṭṭāraka saṁpradāya (a history of the Bhattaraka pīthas especially of western India, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh)*, [1st ed.] (Scholpur: Jaina Samskriti Samrakshaka Sangha, 1958), 257–60.

[39] *HvP* 66.52-53

[40] *HvP* 66.52

[41] Devendra Kumar, "Socio-Economic Forces as Depicted in the Harivaṃśapurāṇa," *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 52 (1991): 145–49.

distinct texts. The first half, the *Ādipurāṇa,* was composed by Jinasena II in 860 CE.[42] The second half, the *Uttarapurāṇa*, was composed by Jinasena II's student, Guṇabhadra, in 897 CE because of his teacher's untimely demise.[43] Jinasena II was based in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa court of Amoghavarṣa (814 CE-878 CE) and Guṇabhadra completed the final section of the *Mahāpurāṇa* during the reign of Kṛṣṇa II (878 CE-914 CE). As a result of the extensive research undertaken by Sarah Peirce Taylor, we now know that Jinasena II and Guṇabhadra helped to consolidate a Jaina literary culture through the Rāṣṭrakūṭa court in Karnataka.[44]

All four authors self-identify as "Jaina" insofar as they proclaim in their texts that they are followers of the Jina. Moreover, all four authors are identified as belonging to the Digambara sect of Jainism, though this particular affiliation is not always brought to bear within their narratives. A key outcome of this dissertation is to demonstrate that even four Digambara Jainas who lived within two centuries of one another express distinct understandings of what it means to be Jaina vis-à-vis Hindu, and as such their representations of Jaina and Hindu identity cannot be homogenized.

4. Language and Textual Practices: The Making of Classical Indian Culture

While we do not currently know the specific courts or regions in which half of our authors operated, the fact that all of the Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s discussed in this dissertation provide a date of composition allows us to contextualize them within the broader landscape of South Asian

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[42] For further discussion, see Taylor, "Aesthetics of Sovereignty: The Poetic and Materials Worlds of Medieval Jainism," 126-36.
[43] Taylor, "Aesthetics of Sovereignty: The Poetic and Materials Worlds of Medieval Jainism," 136-7.
[44] Taylor, "Aesthetics of Sovereignty: The Poetic and Material Worlds of Medieval Jainism."

literature. These Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s, composed between the seventh and ninth century of the common era, arise during a period that we will term "classical Indian culture." Classical Indian culture refers to a set of textualized practices that arose the turn of the common era, and that thrived in the second half of the first millennium. The work of Sheldon Pollock has shown that one of the most significant features of this culture is its use of Sanskrit.[45] Whereas prior to the first millennium, Sanskrit was largely a religious language that was used to convey transcendent discourses and practices pertaining to the *Veda*, from the turn of the common era onwards Sanskrit became a primary medium through which authors belonging to intellectual and political elite articulated political and aesthetic ideals.

Andrew Ollett has added multiple dimensions to Pollock's thesis. Ollett demonstrates that the language known as Prakrit was as significant for the construction of this classical culture as Sanskrit was, albeit for different reasons.[46] Pertinent to this dissertation is Ollett's discussion of the relation of Prakrit to Jainas as well as to the historical development of Sanskrit literature.[47] While Jainas before the fourth century certainly composed most of their religious literature in Prakrit, we cannot reduce Prakrit to the language of the Jainas. Ollett's study showcases the proliferation of Prakrit texts from the fourth century onwards that are not tied to expressions of Jaina, or indeed any single, religious identity. Together, Ollett's and Pollock's studies demonstrate that we cannot reduce individual languages to individual religious identities.

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[45] Sheldon Pollock, *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India*, ACLS Fellows' Publications (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

[46] Andrew Ollett, *Language of the Snakes: Prakrit, Sanskrit, and the Language Order of Premodern India*, South Asia across the Disciplines (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2017).

[47] See in particular, chapter 3, "Inventing Prakrit: The Languages of Literature" and chapter 5, "Figuring Prakrit." Ollett, *Language of the Snakes*, 50-84; 111-140.

Sanskrit is not equated with Vedic, Brahmanical, or Hindu religious identity. Similarly, Prakrit is not equated with Jaina identity.

In addition, earlier scholarship tended to identify Prakrit as a language that was "refined" and entirely displaced by Sanskrit in the second half of the first millennium. Ollett, by contrast, shows that Prakrit and Sanskrit were mutually constitutive of the textualized practices produced in the first millennium.[48] Prakrit was not the lesser language that was confined to "popular" audiences nor was it purely a spoken language. It was a language that was used as much as Sanskrit by the intellectual and courtly elite especially in the first half of the first millennium. This does not imply that Prakrit and Sanskrit were used interchangeably for any discourse. What we find is that Prakrit was used more so for literary texts than for philosophical discussions because the latter demands a precision, which Sanskrit offers, for its articulation.[49]

Classical Indian culture more precisely defined as a set of Prakrit and Sanskrit textualized practices from the first millennium is the culture in which the earliest extant Jaina Sanskrit *purāṇa*s arose. The Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s retell tales from Prakrit Jaina narratives that are written in earlier centuries. Raviṣena's *Padmacarita* retells the story of Rāma as outlined by Vimalasūri's *Paümacariya* (fifth century), the earliest extant Jaina text to tell the tale of Rāma. The first third of Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*, which relates the sojourns of Kṛṣṇa's father, retells the same tales found in Saṅghadāsa's *Vasudevahiṇḍī* (fifth century). The *Mahāpurāṇa*, co-written by Jinasena II and Guṇabhadra, retells tales from a variety of Prakrit Jaina texts from the fifth-sixth centuries, including Vimalasūri's *Paümacariya* and Saṅghadāsa's *Vasudevahiṇḍī*.

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[48] Ollett, *Language of the Snakes*, 111-40.
[49] Ollett, *Language of the Snakes*, 8.

The fact that Raviṣeṇa, Jinasena I, Jinasena II and Guṇabhadra retell Prakrit tales in

Sanskrit must be intentional for many other Jainas continued to compose *purāṇa*s in Prakrit the

second millennium, albeit with less vigor than they did in earlier centuries. I follow Pollock and

Ollett in not consigning languages to particular religions. The fact Jaina authors compose

*purāṇa*s in Sanskrit does not imply that they were trying to align themselves with, or speak

exclusively to, Brahmanical or courtly writers. As previously mentioned, Sanskrit is not

equivalent with Brahmanical or courtly speakers. But Sanskrit was the primary medium through

which Brahmanical writers in the second half of the first millennium began to produce new self-

representations and practices of representation. In this sense, while Sanskrit is not represented by

Brahmanical texts alone, Brahmanism does represent its religious identity through Sanskrit

interpretative practices.[50] It is my contention that the aforementioned Jaina authors began to retell

Prakrit narratives about religious others through Sanskrit *purāṇa*s in order to participate in the

contemporaneous culture of Sanskrit interpretative practices that were being yoked by

Brāhmaṇas in their construction of Hindu and Brahmanical religious identity.

We can see this in the innovations that Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s make to origin tales from

earlier Prakrit texts. Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s broaden the scope and density of dialogical relations.

In the first case, Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s begin to include near verbatim citations from texts that

are presented as root scriptures of the Brahmanical tradition. These texts include: the *Veda*, the

*Brāhmaṇa*s, the *Upaniṣad*s, and the root text of the school of Vedic hermeneutics, the

*Mīmāṃsāsūtra*s.[51] In the second case, Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s update their Prakrit predecessors by

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[50] My thanks to Whitney Cox for supplying his paper that helped me to think through these ideas. Whitney Cox, "What Is Brahmanism?" (Delhi Center, n.d.).
[51] The citation usually occurs in dialogue either when a character is attempting to demonstrate the validity of the *Veda*, or when other characters are trying to expose contradictions in the opponent's views. In some cases, the citation re-presents verses from Hindu root texts verbatim,

examining representations of religion expressed by Sanskrit epics (Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* and Vyāsa's *Mahābhārata* and *Harivaṃśa*) that were composed in the early common era, in addition to the Sanskrit Hindu *purāṇa*s and *belle lettres* (*kāvya*) that proliferated from the fifth century on. Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s examine the contents and methods of religious representation used by these texts that bear a narrative form in Sanskrit. In a handful of instances, Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s include reflections on legal treatises (*dharmaśāstra*) through which Brāhmaṇas consolidated social and ritual practices through the medium of systematic Sanskrit texts.

By far the most substantial, and the most surprising, innovation that Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s make to Prakrit origin tales is the inclusion of philosophical debates. This shift coincides with the rise of systematic philosophy in South Asia.[52] Prior to the fifth century, philosophy was expressed through intramural debates that depended on the reader already accepting the religious commitments discussed therein. To be more colloquial, such texts are preaching to the choir. They do not aim to convince readers from other religions of the validity of their claims. Furthermore, philosophical discussions in this period are staged as dialogues among two or more characters embedded in a larger storyline. But from the fifth century onwards, philosophers began to develop conceptual tools and a vocabulary that made it possible to show what is entailed by any philosophical position. These new textual practices allowed philosophical writers to speak across religious traditions. However, the refinement of these tools put increasing demand on the use of systematic mediums. The validity of the discourse was no longer conveyed through the literary portrayal of the speaker, such as how he speaks, what

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while in other cases, the citation is paraphrased to fit the poetic meter of the text in the Jaina *purāṇa*. In no case does the character or narrator identify the source text from which the citation is taken.

[52] The following is based on Daniel Arnold, *Buddhists, Brāhmaṇas, and Belief: Epistemology in South Asian Philosophy of Religion* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

events happened in his life that led him to this debate, his appearance, his tone of voice, and so forth. From the fifth century onwards, the validity of a philosophical discourses was demonstrated through the logical relations made between claims. In this sense, philosophical debates from the fifth century onwards proceed as systematic investigations. Given the specificity that was required for such discussions, it comes as no surprise that Sanskrit became the dominant medium for philosophical discourse. As Paul Dundas describes, even Jaina philosophers turn from Prakrit to Sanskrit so that they could be full participants in dialogues with Brahmans and Buddhists who evinced no interest in accepting Prakrit as a medium of systematic discourse.[53]

For Brahmanical philosophers, Sanskrit was not only a significant medium of philosophical discourses. It was textual practice on which the validity of Brahmanical religious discourses could be predicated. Most notable in this regard is the tradition of Mīmāṃsā, whose earliest commentator can be dated to the fifth century. Authors belonging to the Mīmāṃsā tradition predicate the eternality of the Sanskrit *Veda*, and by extension its epistemological status as the only valid means of knowing religious truths, through the correct interpretation of the Sanskrit language.

The fact that Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s between the seventh and ninth century reflect on contemporaneous Brahmanical systematic texts is no longer surprising when they are viewed as embedded in this intellectual context. Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s insert a lengthy dialogue in which two characters examine the validity of representations and practices of representation that were

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[53] Paul Dundas, "Jainism and Language Use," in *Brill's Encyclopedia of Jainism Online*, ed. John E. Cort et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 745.

being produced by contemporaneous Brahmanical treatises.[54] Through these dialogues, Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s reflect on the ways in which contemporaneous Brahmanical philosophers consolidate representations of Brahmanism through their appeals to Sanskrit language and texts.

Collectively the inclusion of these new dialogical relations in Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s expand and deepen the network of dialogical relations constructed by their Prakrit predecessors. Unlike authors of their Prakrit predecessors, who lived during or before the fifth century, authors of the earliest extant Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s lived in the seventh to ninth century. They inhabited a highly textualized culture in which Sanskrit literary and philosophical production flourished. Jaina authors of Sanskrit *purāṇa*s therefore retold Prakrit narratives in Sanskrit because this language allows them to participate in the contemporaneous culture of highly textualized Sanskrit practices. Origin tales from the earliest Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s seek to understand the ways in which contemporaneous Brāhmaṇas deployed Sanskrit textualized practices as a method of consolidating their religious identity. They examine the way in which Brāhmaṇas understand the diverse self-representations from an equally diverse range of Sanskrit Brahmanical texts. Furthermore, they examine the diverse Sanskrit *practices* of representation that were employed by these Sanskrit texts. For instance, one origin tale compares Mīmāṃsā practices of Vedic hermeneutics with the practices of Vedic interpretation espoused in the *Mahābhārata*'s tale of Vasu. Another origin tale connects philosophical presentations of creationism together with the portrayal of creationism as both a religious discourse and as a genre marker in Sanskrit Hindu *purāṇa*s. Each *purāṇa* examines the relation between diverse representations and practices of

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[54] Such discourses are never explicitly attributed to historically existing authors and philosophical traditions. The elision makes sense because first, in the literary context, the narrative is staged in the distant past, and second, in the historical context of the text, it is embedded in the particular contest at the height of Sanskrit philosophical production.

representation that were produced by Brahmanical texts relative to the era in which the *purāṇa* is composed. Individually, they each represent Brahmanism as a religion that is constituted by a set of highly textualized Sanskrit practices of interpretation that were presented by Brāhmaṇas themselves as distinct. When tales from multiple Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s are read together, they represent a history of Brahmanical interpretative practices that are revised across time and place.

As narratives about religious others, Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s challenge these practices that Brāhmaṇas use. Their most consistent critique is that Brahmanical texts divorce the contents and methods of representation used by Sanskrit systematic texts from the contents and methods of representation used by Sanskrit narrative texts. According to Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s, these textual practices of religious representation should be read together because they are constitutive of the shared identity of the religious other.

In examining the methods used by the religious other, Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s reveal their own (Jaina) practices for representing religious identity. They read across Sanskrit texts and their practices of representation. They connect narrative discourses with philosophical and legal discourses. They employ systematic mediums of expression inside narrative dialogues, and they skew the interpretation of philosophical discourses through the narrative form of the text. They explicitly blur the line between poets who write *belle lettre*s, philosophers who composed treatises, and mythological writers to whom the Hindu Epics are ascribed. Each chapter of this dissertation undertakes close readings of origin tales to explain how each *purāṇa* reads across Sanskrit textual practices that are constitutive of Sanskrit literature. The fact that these methods of interpretation are consistently used by earliest extant Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s shows us that these *purāṇa*s were consolidating their own textualized practices for representing religious others—methods that would distinguish them from those used by their Prakrit predecessors on

the one hand, and from those used by Sanskrit texts written by earlier and contemporaneous Brāhmaṇas on the other hand.

5. Methods for Reading Narratives

This dissertation demonstrates the importance of narrative as a medium of religious representation. I understand narratives to be representations of a series of causally related events. Narratives in Jaina *purāṇa*s employ different methods for representing the events they describe. I refer to these methods as "narrative devices," and they include: setting, plot, perspective, style, theme, character, dialogue, and language.[55] To this list, we can add a method that is specific to premodern South Asian literature: aesthetic sentiments (*rasa*). I read narratives and narrative devices as sites through which Jaina *purāṇa*s articulate and transform representations of religion from earlier texts.

    I examine the representation of causally related events, and the individual literary devices used to convey them in the text. This first level of reading aims to explain the text's own linguistic and literary cues. My aim is not to sever the text from its historical context in the way that New Critics such as Wayne Booth propose.[56] Equally, I do not presume that a narrative can generate meanings independent of readers and the historical context in which it is read. Rather, I examine the text on its own terms purely for analytical purposes insofar as I extrapolate the

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[55] I do not rely on any one literary theorist for this list. I have abstracted these devices from the Jaina narratives themselves and have chosen to use terms that I think would be most accessible to an audience who is unfamiliar with narrative theory. A longer discussion of each of these terms and the history of their scholarly discussion can be found in Peter Hühn, John Pier Wolf Schmid, and Jorg Schonert, eds., *Handbook of Narratology*, 2nd ed., 2 vols., De Gruyter Reference (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014).

[56] Wayne Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).

formal markers of the narrative before explaining how they articulate and transform representations of religion from earlier texts.

An example will prove edifying here. In just one verse, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* narrates an event in which the Śabaras, a group of uncouth hunters, mistake Kṛṣṇa's sister for a goddess and proclaim themselves the first devotees of the goddess. The plot and the characterization reveal that the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* is in dialogue with other Hindu texts. The *plot*, in which the Śabaras identify Kṛṣṇa's sister as a goddess, re-articulates the perception of Hindu texts, which similarly identify Kṛṣṇa's sister with the goddess. The *characterization* of them as Śabaras does something else. The mere mention of Śabaras in a text of this period references an understanding that the Śabaras are forest-dwellers who stand outside of sophisticated, urbane culture; and so goddess worship is quickly understood to be a primitive, uncivilized religious activity. The story transforms the aforementioned representations of earlier texts. It clarifies that the Śabaras' perception is wrong because it has narrated at length the events in which Kṛṣṇa's sister renounces to become a Jaina nun who performs asceticism. The story transforms earlier representations because it casts the Śabaras' perception, beliefs and practices as incorrect. Thus, taken together, the story, plot, and characterization construct a representation of Śākta religion by articulating and transforming representations from earlier texts.

Dialogue is a particularly significant literary device through which Jaina origin tales examine representations from other texts. Dialogue, as a literary device, refers to the direct speech of a character who speaks to or with other characters. As will become clear in this dissertation, Jaina *purāṇa*s use dialogues so that characters can express the philosophical grounds of their beliefs and practices. This is not unlike the use of dialogues in Hindu and

Buddhist narratives as Brian Black's studies have shown.[57] The difference between dialogues in Jaina *purāṇa*s and those used by other South Asian narratives, such as the *Mahābhārata* and the *Upaniṣad*s is that Jaina *purāṇa*s are composing their dialogues within a historical context in which philosophical debates flourished through the medium of systematic texts. In this sense, the dialogues in Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s articulate the form of contemporaneous philosophical treatises (*śāstra*) because they advance arguments through a dialectical examination of the justifications and implications of every claim. One character is named by the text as holding correct position (*siddhānta*) and the other is named as holding the antithetical position (*pūrvapakṣa*). Each participant examines the epistemological foundations on which religious discourses are based. Jaina *purāṇa*s, however, continue to articulate the form of earlier narratives insomuch as they embed their philosophical dialogues into stories that narrate the identity of the interlocutors and their interactions.

When analyzing dialogues that engage in philosophical debate, I first undertake a close reading of each claim voiced by each dialogical participant. I explain the justifications and implications that the character cites relative to the context of the character's claim(s) alone. This, again, preserves the integrity of the text insomuch as I demonstrate how it conveys a character's position through the conceptual relations that are forged between his claims. I then proceed to contextualize these claims within the network of intertextual dialogues in which they participate. I demonstrate the ways in which the character's claims and interpretative practices articulate

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[57] For a longer discussion of dialogue in South Asian narratives, see Brian Black, *The Character of the Self in Ancient India: Priests, Kings, and Women in the Early Upaniṣads* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007); Brian Black, *In Dialogue with the Mahābhārata*, Dialogues in South Asian Traditions: Religion, Philosophy, Literature and History (Oxford; New York: Routledge, 2020). My thanks to Brian for supplying me with the proofs for *In Dialogue with the Mahābhārata*.

those that are expressed by contemporaneous texts, especially philosophical treatises. The *purāṇa* consolidates a particular set of historically existing discourses and practices into a unified position through the logical connections made by the character himself. Finally, I contextualize the character's dialogue within the context of the story. Jaina origin tales narrate how the character who voices the antithetical position goes on to consolidate his beliefs through a new scripture and religion. I explain how the contents and form of the discourses expressed through dialogues relate to the representation of causally related events in which the dialogue is embedded.

In essence, this dissertation takes seriously the medium of narratives. In reading these representations closely, paying attention to the ways in which they articulate, transform and connect representations of religion from earlier texts, we will not only be able to see how the narrative constructs the identity of the religious other, but we will be able to extract the methods that Jaina *purāṇa* themselves use to co-construct religious identity. In doing so, we will view the ways in which the form of a narrative text can be constitutive of the construction of religious identity.

6. Chapter Outline

Each chapter of this dissertation demonstrates the way in which an origin tale constructs Hindu and Jaina religious identities through dialogical reflections on representations and practices of representation that were contemporaneous to the tale. Together, the four chapters will reconstruct a history of Jaina representations of religion as well as a history of Jaina practices used to construct religious identity.

Chapter 2 begins with an origin tale from the earliest extant Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*, Raviṣena's *Padmacarita* (seventh century CE). According to the *Padmacarita*, Parvata and his fellow classmate, Nārada, grew up under the same teacher. The *Padmacarita*, however, focuses on Parvata's rebirth as a demon. The demon proclaims himself to be Brahmā, the creator of the universe. He authors a new religious scripture, the *Veda*, and propagates the performance of Vedic sacrifice. In this tale, the *Padmacarita* redeploys representations of Brahmā, the *Veda* and Vedic sacrifice that can be found in Brahmanical narrative texts, highlighting the contradictions among these Brahmanical presentations. After the tale is told, the *Padmacarita* describes Nārada's encounter with a Brāhmaṇa who accepts the authority of Parvata's/Brahmā's *Veda*. Nārada's rejection of the Brāhmaṇa's arguments double, I argue, as a rejoinder to the arguments of Kumārila, a contemporaneous Brahmanical philosopher from the Mīmāṃsā school. Nārada draws on Brahmanical texts and the tale of Parvata-Brahmā as a way of exposing the contradictions in Kumārila's epistemology. Chapter 2 explains how epistemological discourses are a site in which the *Padmacarita* unifies Hindu philosophical defenses of the *Veda* with Hindu narrative depictions of the *Veda* to form a single religion. For the *Padmacarita*, Brahmanism is presented at the ultimate religious other that bears nothing in common with Jainism, and that is characterized by inherent contradictions. The methods used by the *Padmacarita* to present Brahmanism become a touchstone of authority for subsequent Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s.

Chapter 3 examines the representation of Brahmanism in the retelling of Parvata's tale in Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* (eighth century CE). The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* adapts the methods used by the *Padmacarita* to its own representation of Brahmanism. In particular, it continues to insert a lengthy dialogue with contemporaneous philosophy and it continues to examine Brahmanical self-representations across genre boundaries. But for the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa,* the

relation between a word and its referent—a question that is discussed in this era by philosophical texts—is the primary site in which religious identities are co-constructed. During a dialogue, Parvata and Nārada examine contemporaneous philosophical arguments regarding the nature of language and scriptural interpretation. Parvata's dialogue unifies Brahmanical discourses on the grounds that they subscribe to the same terminology. Through the dialogue, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* presents Brahmanism as a tradition that expresses inconsistent interpretations of the same words, contrary to the religion's own understanding that words have just one meaning. The origin story continues to explore questions of scriptural interpretation through the plot and the language. The plot recasts Brahmanism as a sectarian tradition of Jainism insofar as it was created by Parvata through his reinterpretations of the Jina's words. At the same time, the plot recasts "Vedic" religion as a signifier primarily of Jainism.

Chapter 4 takes up the *Ādipurāṇa* of Jinasena II (ninth century CE). The *Ādipuraṇa*'s tale of the creation of Brahmanism diverges drastically from earlier retellings. In terms of the content of representation, the *Ādipurāṇa* presents Brahmanism as a socially proximate, religious other. It is a religious other because it defers to the authority of a transcendent creator deity, but it is socially proximate because it belongs to the same society and institution as Jainism. In terms of form, the *Ādipurāṇa* continues a trend of interpretative practices established by its purāṇic predecessors insofar as it includes a philosophical refutation of the discourse that hallmarks the religious other. However, it does not engage in the same depth and specificity of examination as earlier Jaina *purāṇa*s. The *Uttarapurāṇa*'s elaboration of the tale de-centers philosophical dialogues entirely. These shifts in engagement indicate a shift in Jaina purāṇic interpretative practices: lengthy philosophical dialogues were no longer seen as a necessary device for understanding the religious other.

Chapter 5 takes a detour from tales that describe the origins of Brahmanism. In this chapter, I examine the tale of Ekanāsā in Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*. The tale describes how the Jaina nun, Ekanāsā, is mistaken for the Hindu Goddess, Durgā—a perceptual error from which, according to this text, Hindu Goddess traditions originate. The tale equates the hunters' perceptual error with the epistemological error of Brahmanical philosophers in the court. Similarly, the tale equates that the hunters' veneration of the Goddess, which includes blood offerings, aniconic worship, and self-mutilation, with the practices undertaken by Brahmanical chaplains who worship the Goddess through image veneration and vegetarian offerings. Though this tale, I make three arguments. I highlight the ways in which this tale unifies discourses, practices and communities that pertain to Durgā worship into a single religion that we might call Śākta religion. At a second level, the construction of individual religious communities is concomitant with the construction of shared Hindu identity. I highlight the ways in which the tale of Ekanāsā constructs this shared identity while simultaneously presenting the origins of a bounded tradition. Finally, the I demonstrate how the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* presents Ekanāsā as the literal embodiment of the Jaina self. Here, the tale plays down sectarian differences in the perception of Jaina women and ascetic practices which divide Śvetāmbara Jainas from Digambara Jainas in order to present Jainism as a shared identity marked by a single consistent system of meaning.

Chapter 2

Parvata and Nārada on Truth, Omniscience, and Killing: Representations of Brahmanism in Raviṣeṇa's *Padmacarita*

1. Introduction

Book 7 of Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* narrates the backstory of the demon Rāvaṇa describing how he tormented various kings and Brāhmaṇas long before he abducted Sītā. One such story is the story of King Marutta.[1] King Marutta patronizes a non-violent sacrifice that is officiated by the Brāhmaṇa, Saṃvarta, and is attended by all of the gods. Rāvaṇa interrupts Marutta's sacrifice and demands that the king either fight him or acknowledge his defeat. Saṃvarta restrains his King: "If you want my advice, battle is not appropriate for you. If left incomplete, this sacrifice dedicated to Maheśvara would consume your dynasty. And how can one who is consecrated for sacrifice engage in battle? How can there be violence on the part of one so consecrated?"[2] According to Vedic injunctions, a person consecrated for the sacrifice is no longer fit to complete the sacrifice when he engages in battle. Marutta cannot fight Rāvana lest he violate the consecration that he has been given to perform the sacrifice. And as Saṃvarta points out, the completion of the sacrifice is needed to preserve the order of his lineage and kingdom.

With this in mind, the King follows his priest's counsel and presses ahead with the sacrifice while the gods hide in the wombs of various animals, terrified of being killed by

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[1] *Rām* 7.18-19

[2] *Rām* 7.18.14ab-15. Translation cited from Vālmīki, *The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki Volume VII: Uttarakāṇḍa*, trans. Robert Goldman and Sally Sutherland Goldman, Princeton Library of Asian Translations (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2017), 270.

Rāvaṇa.[3] Rāvaṇa devours all of the Brāhmaṇas who assembled for the sacrifice. Nevertheless, the sacrifice is completed. The rewards gained by the King parallel the effects of the Vedic sacrifice as described by the Vedas themselves. The sacrifice maintains the stability of the cosmos, sustain the gods themselves, and grants material results. In this way, despite the carnage that Rāvaṇa leaves behind, Marutta is upheld as an ideal patron of Vedic sacrifice because he follows through with practices that the *Rāmāyaṇa* holds as authoritative.

While the concern of the *Rāmāyaṇa*'s subtale is whether or not the sacrificer can engage in violence, other Brahmanical tales question whether animal sacrifice is a necessary contingent of Vedic ritual. The *Veda* itself prescribes the sacrifice of animals. But by the turn of the common era, many Brahmanical narratives begin to contest the performance of animal sacrifice. For instance, in Vyāsa's *Mahābhārata*, the tale of King Vasu reinterprets the meaning of a Vedic injunction in order to justify the practice of vegetarian offerings over and above the practice of offering animals.[4] Brahmanical narratives thus evidence a number of different presentations of Vedic sacrifice, and such diversity is only amplified by justifications of Vedic sacrifice that came from Brahmanical philosophers in the Common Era. Most notable in this regard is the Brahmanical philosopher, Kumārila, who defended the practice of animal sacrifice on epistemological grounds.

But for all the multivalent self-presentations that Brahmanical texts express from the first centuries of the Common Era onwards, Jaina narratives composed before the sixth century typically reduce Brahmanical practitioners to violent sacrificers who reject the non-violent prescriptions of the Jina. Take, for instance, Vimalasūri's *Paümacariya* (fifth century CE), the

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[3] *Rām* 7.18.4; 19
[4] *Mbh* 14.94; 12.323-34

earliest extant Jaina retelling of Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa*. In this Prakrit text's retelling of the tale of

Marutta's sacrifice, the king and his priest undertake a Vedic sacrifice that involves the slaughter

of animals.[5] The Jaina sage Nārada arrives at the scene and, distraught at seeing so many animals

being killed, he interrupts the sacrifice, rebukes the violence that Marutta and Saṃvarta inflict

onto living beings, and reinterprets the sacrifice as a metaphor for Jaina asceticism. Nārada fails

to convince the Brāhmaṇas of their wrongdoing. They leave the sacrifice and beat Nārada within

an inch of his life. News of Nārada's plight reaches Rāvana, who rushes to the sacrifice, saves

Nārada and frees the animals.

The *Paümacariya*'s retelling inverts that of Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa*. In Vālmīki's

Rāmāyaṇa, Marutta maintains the stability of his lineage and the cosmos because he refrains

from violence in order to complete his Vedic sacrifice, while Rāvaṇa's rampage aims to annex

Saṃvarta's kingdom and disrupt the cosmic order. In Vimalasūri's *Paümacariya*, Marutta's

animal sacrifice, and the violence that ensues, disrupts the Jaina order of the kingdom, while

Rāvaṇa saves the animals and Nārada as a way of restoring order to the Jaina kingdom. The

Paümacariya does not address the diversity of Brahmanical ideologies pertaining to the sacrifice.

In fact, the *Paümacariya*'s version of the tale seems to draw from earlier Jaina *sutta*s which

similarly homogenize Vedic practitioners.[6] Put simply, the representation of Brāhmaṇas as

violent people who believe in the efficacy of animal sacrifice is repeated so frequently across

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[5] *PCV* 11

[6] In *Uttarādhyayanasūtra* 12, the Jaina ascetic, Harikeśa, interrupts a Vedic sacrifice. Like Nārada, Harikeśa criticizes the sacrifice of animals, reinterprets the sacrifice as a metaphor for Jaina renunciation, and is beaten by the Brāhmaṇa officiants as a result. The structural similarities between the *Paümacariya's* retelling of the tale of Marutta and Nārada and the *Uttarādhyayanasūtra*'s tale of Harikeśa suggest that the former is based on the latter. For the translation of *Uttarādhyayanasūtra* 12, see Hermann Jacobi, trans., *Jaina Sutras*, vol. 22 and 23, 2 vols., The Sacred Books of the East (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1884).

narratives in the earliest extant Jaina texts that it reads more as a literary trope than a serious engagement with Brahmanical accounts. These Jaina representations account for neither the depth of engagement that Brāhmaṇas had with Vedic discourses nor the diversity of interpretations that contemporaneous Brahmanical authors express.

All of this changes in the seventh century with Raviṣena's composition of the *Padmacarita*, a Sanskrit retelling of Vimalasūri's Prakrit *Paümacariya*. The *Padmacarita* elaborates the *Paümacariya*'s tales, embellishes its literary descriptions and updates its discourses.[7] In this chapter, I undertake a close reading of the *Padmacarita*'s retelling of the tale of Vasu and the tale of Marutta's sacrifice. These two tales, narrated back-to-back, explain the origin of Brahmanism as the religious other.

For the *Padmacarita*, the tale of Vasu and the tale of Marutta are backdrops that introduce us to two characters whose trajectories we will follow: Parvata and Nārada. Parvata and Nārada grow up together under the guidance of their common teacher. Yet, despite having the same instruction in Jaina scriptures, they express very different religious discourses, which are brought to bear in the tale of Vasu and the tale of Marutta's sacrifice. In the tale of Vasu, Parvata and Nārada debate the meaning of the Jina's words. Parvata argues that the Jina enjoins offerings of animals whereas Nārada argues that the Jina enjoins vegetarian offerings. The debate itself is simply a prelude, and therefore, I will not discuss it. The events that follow the debate constitute the *Padmacarita*'s innovation. After losing the debate and being exiled from the kingdom, Parvata is reborn as a demon who declares himself to be the god, Brahmā. He authors

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[7] On this textual relation, see Kulkarni, *The Story of Rama in Jain Literature as Presented by the Śvetāmbara and Digambara Poets in the Prakrit, Sanskrit, and Apabhraṃśa Languages*, 91–103.

the *Veda* and propagates animal sacrifices as a means of attaining heaven. As for Nārada, who wins the debate, he later encounters King Marutta who is undertaking a Vedic sacrifice with his priest, Saṃvarta. Nārada proceeds to have a dialogue with Saṃvarta in which they debate the validity of the *Veda* and animal sacrifice.

These two subtales—the afterlife of Parvata and the later activities of Nārada, which are narrated back-to-back in the *Padmacarita*—will be the focus of this chapter for they together describe the origins of Brahmanism. For the *Padmacarita*, the aim is not to replay stereotypes about Brahmanical sacrifices, but to critically examine the variety of discourses that Brahmanical writers employ to justify the *Veda* and Vedic injunctions as the exclusive means of knowing religious truths. In this chapter, I argue that the *Padmacarita's* two subtales construct this multi-dimensional account, and refutation, of the *Veda* and Vedic sacrifices by incorporating representations of the *Veda* and Vedic sacrifice from the Vedic corpus, *Mahābhārata*, the *Purāṇas*, and perhaps most surprisingly, discourses from the contemporaneous philosopher, Kumārila. The first subtale, the tale of Parvata's rebirth as a demon, takes up Brahmanical discourses that justify the validity of the *Veda* through recourse to its omniscient author. The second subtale, the tale of Nārada's dialogue with Saṃvarta, takes up Kumārila's arguments that, on the contrary, justify the validity of the *Veda* and animal sacrifice through recourse to the claim that the *Veda* is author*less*. I demonstrate how the *Padmacarita* puts diverse Brahmanical accounts into direct conversation with another and highlights the contradictions among them. This method of representation and critique operates in each subtale individually, as well as through the relation between the two subtales when read together. In essence, the *Padmacarita* constructs Brahmanism as a unified religion that includes the breadth and depth of discourses, texts, rituals and communities that were being produced by Brāhmaṇas in this era, but it

leverages this diversity as a way of re-presenting Brahmanism as a religion that is rife with contradictions.

2. The Tale of Parvata

The *Padmacarita* introduces us to Nārada and Parvata through the tale of Vasu and his *aja* debate.[8] Vasu is raised in the house of his teacher alongside his teacher's son, Parvata, and an additional student, Nārada. The teacher is a Jaina sage from whom all three students learn the meaning of the Jina's words. After the teacher renounces, Parvata becomes especially sad because he has lost his father and his teacher. Parvata's grief, and the anger that arises from it, blurs his understanding of right and wrong. The text implies that Parvata's anger and sadness are the reason why he deviates from the Jina's teaching.

We rejoin Nārada and Parvata as adults arguing over the correct meaning of the term "*aja*" in the Jina's injunction. The term can mean either "seeds" or "animal," and at stake in determining the referent of "*aja*" is determining the correct substance to be offered. Parvata argues that the Jina enjoins the sacrifice of animals whereas Nārada follows their teacher in arguing that the Jina enjoins the offering of seeds. In the *Paümacariya* and *Padmacarita*, the debate plays out in the same way as it does in Brahmanical versions: Vasu adjudicates the debate and proclaims Parvata's interpretation to be correct, although he knows that it is wrong. The

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[8] *PC* 11.10-74

gods cause Vasu to fall to the earth, which indicates to the kingdom the false nature of Vasu's and Parvata's words.

The *aja* debate is simply a prelude to the following two subtales, which narrate Parvata's and Nārada's trajectories. After the *aja* debate has revealed Nārada to be correct and Parvata, incorrect, the kingdom praises Nārada and thrashes the sinner, Parvata, with sticks over and over again. Parvata, enraged, leaves the kingdom and undertakes severe asceticism, whereafter he dies and is reborn as a demon (*rākṣasa*). The *Paümacariya,* the Prakrit text on which the *Padmacarita* is based, briefly narrates the afterlife of Parvata in the following six verses.

> After Parvata recalled his previous birth [and] the unbearable, scornful words of the community, he took on the form of a Brāhmaṇa (*baṃbhaṇarūva*) in order to take revenge out of his hatred [for them] [38]. He put on many threads around his neck [and] held umbrella, waterpot, and rosary in his hand. He reflected (*cintei*) on the false scripture (*aliyasattha*) that contained violent dharma. [39] Wise men, ascetics and sages listened to this false scripture, and because of his words, they performed sacrifices that involved killing many animals. [40] [The demon said] "In the sacrifice called, *gomedha*, wine should be consumed. Having sex with the teacher's wife does not incur any fault. The living beings that are cited in the names of these sacrifices—"*Pitṛmedha*," "*Mātṛmedha*," "*Rājasūya*," "*aśvamedha*," and "*paśumedha*"— [i.e [father (*pitṛ*), mother (*mātṛ*), king (*raja*), horse (*aśva*) and animals (*paśu*) respectively] should be killed. Living beings should be killed, wine should be consumed, and meat should be eaten. These are the sacrificial injunctions." [41-43] The incredibly sinful demon spoke in this way, deluding people. His teaching was embraced in three ways (in mind, speech and actions) by the *abhavya* souls (who cannot attain liberation.) [44][9]

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[9] *Samiūṇa puvvajamma jaṇavayadhikkāradūsahavayaṇa /*
Verapaḍiuñcanatthe baṃbhaṇarūva tao kuṇai // PCV 11.38
Bahukaṇṭhasuttadhārī chatta-kamaṇḍalugaṇittiyāhattho /
Cintei aliyasattha hiṃsadhammeṇa sajuttam // PCV 11.39
Souṇa ca kusattha paḍibuddhā tāvasā ya vippā ya /
Tassa vayaṇeṇa jannaṃ, karenti bahujantusaṃvāham // PCV 11.40
Gomehanāmadhee, janne pāyāviyā surā havai /
Bhaṇai agammāgamaṇa kāyavva natthi doso ttha // PCV 11.41
Paimehamaimehe rāyasue āsamehapausmehe /
Eesu māriyavvā saesu nāmesu je jivā //1 PCV 11.42
Jīvā māreyavvā āsavapāṇa ca hoi kāyavva /
Masa ca khāiyavva jannassa vihī havai esā // PCV 11.43

The *Paümacariya* attributes to Parvata the origin of Brahmanical religion. Parvata is reborn a demon who masquerades as a Brāhmaṇa, propagates false scriptures, enjoins violent practices, and instantiates a community that subscribes to the authority of the aforementioned discourses and practices. Nevertheless, the *Paümacariya*'s representation of Brahmanism remains vague. It is unclear whether the *Paümacariya* presents demon-Parvata as the author of the *Veda* and Vedic rituals or whether it presents the demon propagating a pre-existing *Veda*. Furthermore, Parvata's interpretation of Vedic rituals is one that is replayed across Jaina narratives about the *Veda*.[10]

The *Padmacarita's* retelling of Parvata's afterlife expands the tale and revises the plotline of the *Paümacariya*'s version. According to the *Padmacarita*,[11] after Parvata is reborn as a demon intent on taking revenge on the kingdom, he composes a false scripture that enjoins the sacrifice of animals and he begins to teach this false scripture to humans. From here on, the *Padmacarita* diverges drastically from the *Paümacariya*. Demon Parvata declares himself to be Brahmā, the creator of the universe and the authoritative teacher of the *Veda*. He elaborates the contents of sacrificial rites and argues that no fault arises from killing living beings in the context of sacrifice. He proclaims that anyone who follows his scripture will attain prosperity and heaven. The humans are infatuated by his new religious discourses. But, as soon as they flock to demon Parvata out of their reverence for him, the demon whisks them up and ties them together

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Eva vimohayanto bhanai jaṇa rakkhaso mahāpāvo /
Tiviha ca pariggahio tassuvadeso abhaviehi // PCV 11.44

[10] Parvata plays on the meaning of these names in order to argue that these sacrifices enjoin the slaughter of the subject named in each compound. The examples of "*aśvamedha*" and "*paśumedha*" are less controversial since the Vedic corpus does enjoin the slaughter of horses and animals in these particular sacrifices, but Parvata's explanation of ancestors' rituals (*pitṛmedha*, *mātṛmedha*) and the ritual performed for the King's sovereignty (*rājasūya*) interprets the name of these sacrifices in the same way that he interprets "*aśvamedha*" and "*paśumedha*": "*pitṛmedha*" no longer enjoins a sacrifice *for* the forefathers (*pitṛ*), but a sacrifice *of* the father (*pitṛ*) himself.

[11] *PC* 11.74-105

like sticks of firewood. He begins to torture the humans, pulling their bodies into contorted positions, hurling them into the ocean, and slapping them against rocks. Despite their cries, demon Parvata boldly asserts that he is, in fact, sacrificing them in order to send them to heaven. Of course, the sacrifice does not produce this result. The humans eventually die from the torture. They are reborn in hell, on account of their own violent sacrifices, where they experience even more suffering than before.

The *Padmacarita* makes numerous innovations to *Paümacariya*'s tale. In this section, I demonstrate how the *Padmacarita*'s retelling draws on, and inverts representations of Brahmā from the Vedic corpus itself as well as from the Brahmanical Epics and *Purāṇas*. I argue that the *Padmacarita* synthesizes these various depictions into a single story as a way of exposing contradictions in the Brahmanical narrative portrayal of Brahmā and the *Veda*. In doing this, the *Padmacarita* rejects the possibility that Brahmā, the *Veda* or Brahmanical narratives constitute a valid means of knowing religious truths.

Let's begin with the characterization of Parvata as a demon who calls himself, Brahmā. In the *Paümacariya,* Parvata is presented as an unreliable speaker who is ignorant of the Jina's words. He deviates from the interpretation of "*aja*" which was handed down by his father/teacher through an uninterrupted lineage that extends back to the Jina. Even when Parvata's interpretation is declared to be false, he does not accept the Jina's teaching. Instead, he desires to take revenge on the kingdom that declared him to be wrong. Thus, in contrast to the Jina, who is upheld as a reliable speaker because he is omniscient, unattached and benevolent, Parvata is hallmarked as the utmost unreliable speaker because he is ignorant, attached and malevolent.

Indeed, Brāhmaṇa teachers who subscribe to the authority of the *Veda* are similarly presented as unreliable speakers on the grounds that they follow the wrong scripture.[12]

In retaining Parvata's backstory in the *aja* debate and his endeavors to teach Brāhmaṇas the wrong doctrine, the *Padmacarita* retains the *Paümacariya*'s general critique regarding the impossibility of Parvata and Brāhmaṇas being reliable speakers. However, the *Padmacarita* makes two key innovations in the opening of the tale (vv.75-84): the demon declares himself to be the Brahmanical creator deity "Brahmā," and he authors a false scripture.

> The sinner, Parvata, was beaten with sticks time and time again (by those in the kingdom). He who had suffered (in this way), began to perform a severe form of asceticism with what was left of his body. [75] After he died, he was reborn as a cruel demon with incredible strength. He recalled the insults and the excruciating beatings [from his previous life] and thought, "Those people humiliated me. Therefore, I will take revenge, inflicting suffering on them. I will author a scripture that is filled with deceit. I'll do this so that people who follow [my scripture] will be reborn as animals and hellish beings." [76-78]
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> Thus, he took on the appearance of a human, wearing a thread over his left shoulder, and carrying various ritual paraphernalia such as a water pot and rosary. [79] That being, whose self was entirely evil, learnt a terrible scripture that centralizes violent dharma and is pleasing to cruel humans [while] continuously muttering inauspicious words. As a result, that pitiless one was able to delude the false ascetics and Brāhmaṇas with the dharma of violence. [80-1] Thus, stupid beings flocked to his side, just as fireflies will endure an excessive amount of pain when they fly into a fire. [82] He told them, "I myself am Brahmā! I have arrived here in this world for the sake of creating the sacrifice! The movable and immovable beings were created by me. [83] I myself have carefully created animals for the sake of the sacrifice […] [84ab][13]

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[12] For further discussion of the representation of Brahminhood in the *Paümacariya* and *Padmacarita*, see chapter 4 of this dissertation.

[13]*pāpaḥ parvatako loke dhigdhigdaṇḍasamāhataḥ /*
duḥkhitaḥ śeṣayan deham akarot kutsitaṃ tapaḥ // PC 11.75
kālaṃ kṛtvābhavat krūro rākṣasaḥ puruvikramaḥ /
apamānaṃ ca sasmāra dhigdaṇḍādhikam ātmanaḥ // PC 11.76
acintayacca lokena mamānena parābhavaḥ /
kṛtastataḥ kariṣyāmi pratikarmāsya duḥkhadam // PC 11.77
vitānaṃ dambharacitaṃ kṛtvā karma karomi tat /
yatrāśakto jano yāti tiryanarakadurgatīḥ // PC 11.78

Whereas the *Paümacariya* states that Parvata assumes the appearance of a Brāhmaṇa (*bambaṇaruva*), the *Padmacarita* presents Parvata as a demon who explicitly identifies himself as the deity, "Brahmā." This single identification in verse 83 combined with the declaration that Parvata authors the false scripture[14] *(vitānaṃ dambharacitaṃ kṛtvā)* extends the critique against Brahmanical speakers from Brāhmaṇas, mortals who subscribe to the *Veda*, to the very divinity who supposedly authored the *Veda* itself: Brahmā. Brahmanical texts prior to the *Padmacarita* record a number of narratives that describe Brahmā's creation of the *Veda*. For instance, Vyāsa's *Mahābhārata* frequently refers to Brahmā as the author of the *Veda*.[15] Indeed, just as in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, Brahmā authors the *Veda* after performing severe asceticism,[16] so too does the demon Brahmā in the *Padmacarita*. The *Padmacarita* deploys tropes from Brahmanical narratives about Brahmā, recasting the deity as a demon who misinterpreted the Jina's words in a

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tato mānuṣaveṣastho vāmaskandhasthasūtrakaḥ /
 kamaṇḍalvakṣamālādinānopakaraṇāvṛtaḥ // PC 11.79
hiṃsākarmaparaṃ śāstraṃ ghoraṃ krūrajanapriyam /
adhīyānaḥ suduṣṭātmā nitāntāmaṅgalasvaram // PC 11.80
tāpasān durvidhān buddhayā sūtrakaṇṭhādikāṃs tathā /
vyāmohayitum udyukto hiṃsādharmeṇa nirdayaḥ // PC 11.81
tasya pakṣe tataḥ petuḥ prāṇino mūḍhamānasāḥ /
bhaviṣyaduḥkhasaṃbhārāḥ śalabhā iva pāvake // PC 11.82
tebhyo jagāda yajñasya vidhānārtham ahaṃ svayam /
brahmā lokamimaṃ prāpto yena sṛṣṭaṃ carācaram // PC 11.83
Yajñārthaṃ paśavaḥ sṛṣṭāḥ svayameva mayādarāt / PC 11.84ab

[14] It is possible that this verse is purely referring to the creation of the sacrifice, which can be referred to as "*vitāna*." (See *PC* 11.170 for an explicit use of "*vitāna*" for "sacrifice.") However, Nārada's description later in chapter *PC* 11.191-3 deals with the authorship of the *Veda*. There, he states "it is not possible to shrug off the belief that Brahmā created the *Veda*." (*brahmaprajāpatiprāyaḥ-puruṣebhyaśca saṃbhavaḥ / śrūyate vedaśāstrasya nāpanetuṃ sa śakyate //*) Moreover, in *PC* 11. 233, Nārada concludes that some evil being authored a false scripture and initiated the practice of Vedic sacrifice (*kugrantharacanāṃ kṛtvā yajñakarma pravartitam*) For these reasons, I think *PC* 11.83 (*vitānaṃ dambharacitaṃ kṛtvā*) should be interpreted as a description of Parvata creating the *Veda* under the impersonation of Brahmā.
[15] See for instance: *Mbh* 12.327.30-2; *Mbh* 181.1-5. See also Bruce M. Sullivan, "The Seer of the Fifth Veda: Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa in the Mahābhārata" (1984), 85–86.
[16] *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 6.1.1.8-10

previous life and who authors the *Veda* as a way of deluding humanity. In re-presenting Brahmā in this manner, the *Padmacarita* undermines the possibility that he is a reliable speaker of religious truths.

Building on this, we could say that the *Padmacarita* literally and literarily demonizes Brahmā as a way of casting the Brahmanical deity as the unambiguous "Other" to the Jina. In the Jaina understanding, the Jina is the ultimate reliable speaker because he has no desires and is omniscient. Demon Brahmā is the complete opposite to the Jina. He is the ultimate unreliable speaker because he rejects the Jina's teaching and is reborn as a malevolent demon who lives on the outskirts of society, propagating violence, harming humans, and proclaiming himself to be divine. The now demonic characterization of Brahmā conveys Brahmā's literal embodiment of his otherness vis-á-vis the Jina.

The *Padmacarita's* demonization of Brahmā is especially ironic in the context of Hindu narratives. In Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa,* Brahmā is the deity who rewards the demon, Rāvaṇa, for his asceticism.[17] The *Padmacarita* inverts Brahmā's structural relation with demons. Instead of Brahmā rewarding Rāvaṇa for his asceticism, the *Padmacarita* presents Brahmā as himself a demon who performs asceticism. And, on the other hand, Ravana, who is, in Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa*, a demon who disrupts Vedic sacrifices and harms animals, in the *Padmacarita*, is a human who has attained magical powers through asceticism (*vidyādhara*) who saves animals from being slaughtered in the Vedic sacrifices that demon Brahmā propagates. This inversion is poignant when read in the context of Brahmā's role in Brahmanical mythology overall. Brahmanical *Purāṇa*s present Brahmā as a deity who, on the one hand, is omniscient and who

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[17] *Rām* 7.4

desires to help the world, and who, on the other hand, grants magical powers to demons who inevitably use their newfound abilities to harm living beings and throw the cosmos into disarray.[18] But, the *Padmacarita*'s presentation of Brahmā as a demon suggests that the ontological and hierarchical distinction that Brahmanical narratives make between demons and Brahmā in Brahmanical narratives is unwarranted. The *Padmacarita* compresses the demon and the deity into the single character of the reborn Parvata as a way of suggesting that the Brahmanical presentation of Brahmā, is no different from the Brahmanical presentation of demons, such as Rāvaṇa. Brahmā is as responsible for inflicting suffering on the universe as the demons who rise to power as a result of Brahmā's boons.

This brings us to a much broader critique that the verses 75-84 express. So far, we have examined how verses 75-84 undermine the possibility of viewing Brahmā as an authoritative speaker and a benevolent deity. But the characterization of Brahmā as a demon in disguise additionally targets the validity of creationism because the demon proclaims himself to be the creator of all living beings.[19] Brahmanical narratives frequently present Brahmā as the creator of the universe,[20] but this presentation is at odds with Jaina cosmology, which presents the universe as eternal and governed by the laws of karma rather than by the will of any being. The *Padmacarita's* portrayal of Brahmā argues that the self-proclaimed creator is nothing but a demon who desires to harm living beings.

The *Padmacarita* develops its parody of Brahmā as the plotline moves away from the one that is expressed by the *Paümacariya*. After the demon proclaims himself to be Brahmā and has

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[18] Greg M Bailey, *The Mythology of Brahmā* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983), 228–40.
[19] *PC* 11.83-84
[20] Bailey, *The Mythology of Brahmā*, 85-107

detailed the contents of the *Veda* (to which we will soon turn), he attracts a host of devotees

whom he begins to torture.

> Thus, those living beings became believers [of Parvata's doctrines]. Out of their desire for pleasurable things, they entered the sacrificial grounds after they had been consecrated. [94] [The demon] tightly bound those [followers] together like a bundle of firewood and placed them in front. They began trembling vigorously out of fear; the pupils of their eyes darted about. [95] He placed their heads against their backs, their thighs up to their shoulders and their toes in their orifices. He lifted up those who suffered enormous pain from the streams blood that flowed out [from them]. [96] They shrieked in the pit of their despair and said, "Lord, what has made you so enraged that you are prepared to kill us? [97] Mighty Lord! Be calm! Let us innocent ones go! With our bodies bowed down to you (*praṇatamūrtaiḥ*), we will do everything that you command." [98]
>
> The demon said to them, "Just as sacrificial animals went to heaven when you killed them, so too will you all go to heaven having when I have killed you." [99][21]

In this passage, the *Padmacarita* does not tiptoe around the possibility that Brahmā is evil. His

malevolence is caricatured through his sadistic choice of tortures. He contorts the bodies of his

followers into unwieldy positions that cause streams of blood to shoot out. It is ironic that when

the devotees pledge allegiance to the demon as a way of bargaining their release, they describe

themselves as "*praṇatamūrtaiḥ*." On the one hand, they have "bowed down" to the demon out of

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[21] *śraddhānās tato bhūtvā jantavaḥ sukhavāñchayā /*
hiṃsāyajñasthalī bhūmi dīkṣitā praviśanti ye // PC 11.94
kāṣṭhabhāraṃ yathā sarvaṃ prādhvaṃkṛtya sa tān dṛḍham /
bhayodbhūtamahākampān calattārakalocanān // PC 11.95
pṛṣṭaskandhaśirojaṅghān pādāgrasthān vidhāya kham /
utpapāta patadraktadhārānikaraduḥkhitān // PC 11.96
tataste viśvarodāraṃ krośanto 'bhidadhuḥ svaram /
kimarthaṃ deva ruṣṭo'si yenāsmān hantumudyataḥ // PC 11.97
prasīda muñca nirdoṣān asmān deva mahābala /
bhavadājñāṃ vayaṃ sarvāṃ kurmaḥ praṇatamūrtayaḥ // PC 11.98
tato babhāṇa tān rakṣasaḥ yathaiva paśavo hatāḥ /
bhavadbhir iyūti svarga tathā yūyaṃ mayā hatāḥ // PC 11.99

their reverence for him, but on the other hand, their bodies (*mūrtaiḥ*) have been forcibly bent (*praṇata*) by the demon himself. Later, we are told that the demon hurls his devotees into the sea and onto deserted islands,[22] and in one evocative image, he "slap[s] each of them against the surface of rocks on the top of mountains, like a washerman washing clothes […]."[23]

To be clear, Brahmanical texts themselves do not present Hindu deities as benevolent. Wendy Doniger's *Origins of Evil in Hindu Mythology* brings to light the variety of ways in which Brahmanical *Purāṇa*s narrate the morally-ambiguous status of Hindu deities. Such narratives, she demonstrates, are an enduring site in which Hindu writers can think through the problem of evil.[24] With this in mind, the *Padmacarita* repurposes a representation that already exists in Brahmanical texts. Whereas Brahmanical texts describe the morally-ambiguous activities of deities in order to open up a space for thinking through the status of a deity vis-à-vis the existence of evil, the *Padmacarita* relates such activities, and exaggerates them, in order to shut down debate and instead, impose a normative evaluation of Hindu deities. Namely, that they are malevolent.

In addition, the above verses draw on the sacrificial role that Brahmā has in Vedic texts and Hindu *purāṇa*s. The Vedic corpus identifies Prajāpati, an earlier depiction of Brahmā, with the primordial being who sacrificed himself as a way of initiating creation.[25] Prajāpati is both the object of the sacrifice and the paradigmatic officiant of Vedic sacrifice. The latter image is taken up in the epics and *purāṇa*s insomuch as Brahmā is enlisted as the officiant of Vedic sacrifices

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[22] *PC* 11.100
[23] *PC* 11.101
[24] Wendy Doniger, *The Origins of Evil in Hindu Mythology*, 1st ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).
[25] *RV* 10.90.

on behalf of gods and kings.[26] The *Padmacarita* retains Brahmā's imagery as an officiant of Vedic sacrifice when it describes demon-Brahmā as the officiant of his sacrifice and the paradigmatic sacrificer whom his followers should emulate. Except that far from performing a sacrifice in order to create the cosmos and maintain its stability, demon Brahmā officiates a sacrifice as a way of dividing and disrupting the normative order of the Jaina kingdom.

While the motive and outcome of the demon's sacrifice inverts those presented in the Vedic corpus, the actual violence involved in the demon's preparation of the sacrifice is not an exaggeration. Violent imagery that runs throughout the Vedic corpus, and as mentioned in the introduction, agonistic violence was, according to the Vedic corpus a necessary component of Vedic ritual.[27] Demon-Brahmā sacrifice of his followers recalls the way in which the cosmic man (*puruṣa*), who is identified in the *Brāhmaṇa*s as Brahmā-Prajāpati, is dismembered by the gods during a Vedic sacrifice by the gods. The idea that efficacy of the Vedic sacrifice depends on the sacrificer undergoing a violent death is rejected by the *Padmacarita*, which explicitly presents Parvata's human sacrifice as an unwarranted act of violence that bears no beneficial results.

Furthermore, the *Padmacarita* redeploys the images of human sacrifice and images of animal sacrifice from the *Veda.* While Vedic references to human sacrifice are rare, the myth of Śunaḥśepa in the *Brāhmaṇas* does describe a human sacrifice,[28] and animal sacrifices are implicitly modelled on the cosmic sacrifice of the primaeval being (*puruṣa*). References to animal sacrifice, by contrast, pervade the Vedic corpus. The *Padmacarita*'s plotline equates

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[26] For example, Dakṣa.

[27] J. C. Heesterman, *The Inner Conflict of Tradition: Essays in Indian Ritual, Kingship, and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985); J. C. Heesterman, *The Broken World of Sacrifice: An Essay in Ancient Indian Ritual* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

[28] *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* 7.13-18

human sacrifice with animal sacrifice. The demon himself points out that his actions are no different from those of his devotees. He prepares the sacrifice in the same manner that the Vedic texts enjoin the preparation of the sacrifice and he promises the devotees that they will attain the same beneficial results as the animals that they had previously sacrificed. As for the devotees, they react in the same manner as an animal that they stand in for. They tremble violently, their eyes darting from side to side out of panic. In equating animal sacrifices with human sacrifices, the *Padmacarita* shows that the violence done to animals in the context of the sacrifice is not qualitatively different, in any sense, from violence done to human beings.

The *Padmacarita*'s characterization of Brahmā extends the epistemological critique from the speaker of the *Veda* to the validity of the *Veda* itself. In re-casting Brahmā as an unreliable speaker who renounced the Jina's words and tortures humans, the *Padmacarita* jettisons the possibility that his scriptures, the *Veda*, are valid over and above the Jina's words. It agrees with the claim expressed by the Brahmanical Epics and *Purāṇa*s—namely, that the *Veda* is authored by Brahmā. While the *Veda* itself does not proclaim to be composed by anyone, Vyāsa's *Mahābhārata* and Brahmanical *Purāṇa*s frequently attribute to Brahmā the composition of the *Veda*.[29] Whereas such narratives present the *Veda* as a valid scripture on the grounds that it is authored by an omniscient creator, the *Padmacarita* re-presents the *Veda* as an invalid religious scripture because it is authored by a speaker who is neither omniscient nor desires what is beneficial for the world.

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[29] See, for instance, *Mbh* 12.327.30-32; 12.181.1-5; 12.335.18-25. See Bruce M. Sullivan, "The Religious Authority of the Mahābhārata: Vyāsa and Brahmā in the Hindu Scriptural Tradition," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 62, no. 2 (1994): 382–84.

Even if the *Padmacarita* did not characterize the author of the *Veda* as unreliable, its

presentation of the contents of the *Veda* conveys its invalidity. Demon Brahmā proclaims that his

Veda enjoins the sacrifice of animals, which contradicts the Jaina prohibition against non-

violence. More provocatively, the demon reinterprets ancestor rites (*mātṛmedha*, *pitṛmedha*) as

the sacrifice *of* mothers and fathers rather than a sacrifice performed for the sake of sustaining

ancestors in heaven.[30] The demon cites additional Vedic rituals such as the *Sautrāmaṇi* ritual,

which enjoins the consumption of wine, and the *Gosava* rite, which describes how a sacrificer

can have intercourse with any female member of his family.[31] Although the *Sautrāmaṇi* and

Gosava rites are cited in the Vedic corpus, they are not representative of all Vedic practices. The

consumption of wine is unique to the *Sautrāmaṇi* rite, and it is unclear to what extent the sexual

relations enjoined by the *Gosava* rite ought to be read literally. The *Padmacarita* reduces the

diversity of Vedic rituals to a handful of rituals that are explicitly antinomian as a way of

implying that all Vedic rites are unethical and result in harmful karma.

The content of some Vedic injunctions is thus presented as being in conflict with general

ethical principles regarding what should and should not be done. But one might say that the

benefit of the sacrifice to the sacrificer outweighs the violation of these principles. The

Padmacarita therefore has the sacrificers actually suffer for their performance of these taboo

rituals. The sacrifice of animals on the part of the devotees provides a justification for the demon

to sacrifice the devotees themselves: human sacrifice, he explains, will produce the same

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[30] *PC* 11.86.
[31] *PC* 11.85. See *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* 2.113; *Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa* 2.7.6.1 for Brahmanical Vedic
presentations of these rites.

beneficial results as the devotees' sacrifice of animals. More than this, the devotees are tortured

by the being that they worship.

> [The demon] threw some [of the devotees] onto deserted islands; some into the
> ocean and others to packs of violent animals. [100] Like a washerwoman washing
> clothes, he slapped some devotees against the surface of rocks on the top of the
> mountain while making various types of cries. [101] Because of the torture,
> [some] died with terror in their hearts; others died while remembering their
> ancestors, sons and brothers. [102] Those who escaped death, who were deluded
> by women and false scriptures, propagated the violent sacrifice that was taught by
> the demon. [103] Those people who did not perform this terrible, violent sacrifice
> will not go to hell, which inflicts greater suffering. [104]

The concatenation of multiple images describing the devotees' suffering underscores the claim

that Vedic sacrifices cause nothing but a string of inescapable torturous results in this life and the

next. We might say that such descriptions—especially the comparison of the demon to the

washerman and the devotees to sacrificial animals—combine the sentiment of disgust (*bībhatsā*)

with the sentiment of comedy (*hāsya*) in order to mock the belief that Vedic injunctions enjoin

violent rituals for the sake of attaining pleasurable results. Finally, notice that the final verse of

the tale (verse 104) uses a double negative construction as a way of communicating the need to

reject Vedic injunctions: "Those people who do not perform this terrible, violent sacrifice will

not go to hell, which inflicts greater suffering."[32] The double negative suggests that for the

Padmacarita, avoiding hell is of primary significance. The tale is less concerned with validating

the Jina's non-violent practices as leading to beneficial results than it is with demonstrating the

need to avoid all practices that pertain to the *Veda*. Taken together, verses 100-4 reject the claim

that Vedic rituals lead to beneficial results, while simultaneously forwarding an additional

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[32] *hiṃsāyajñamimaṃ ghoramācaranti na ye janāḥ /*
 durgati te na gacchanti mahāduḥkhavidhāyinīm // PC 11.104

justification for claiming that the *Veda* is invalid; the *Veda* cannot be a valid means of knowing truth because it enjoins practices that lead to harmful results.

To conclude, the *Padmacarita* elaborates and changes the tale of Parvata's afterlife in order to generate a multi-faceted critique of Brahmanical epistemologies that ground the authority of the *Veda* through recourse to its divine author (Brahmā). The *Padmacarita* repurposes tropes about Brahmā from Brahmanical narratives themselves in order to present Brahmā as an unreliable speaker on account of his ignorance, malevolence and deceit. By extension, the *Veda*, together with its sacrificial injunctions, is invalid because it is re-presented as the composition of this unreliable author. The *Padmacarita* emphasizes the invalidity of the *Veda* by presenting multiple negative results that arise from following Vedic injunctions. Scripture cannot be valid if it enjoins practices that lead to negative karmic consequences. Finally, the tale overturns creationist discourses by presenting Brahmā as a demon in disguise. In presenting these critiques, the *Padmacarita* synthesizes multiple Brahmanical presentations that can be found in the *Veda, Brāhmaṇas,* Epics *and Purāṇas,* as a way of critiquing the text in which it is expressed. It is not just that Brahmā and his *Veda* are invalid, but the Brahmanical texts are invalid because they narrate the wrong story.

3. Nārada's debate with Samvarta[33]

So far, the *Padmacarita*'s representation of Brahmanical religion is delimited to narrative representations found in the Brahmanical *Vedas*, Epics and *Purāṇas*, which justify the validity of

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[33] *PC* 11.161

I have followed Kei Kataoka's translation of Kumārila's *ŚV* 2.1-287: Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, *Kumārila on Truth, Omniscience, and Killing*, trans. Kei Kataoka, vol. 68, 2 vols., Beiträge Zur Kultur Und Geistesgeschichte Asiens (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2011).

the *Veda* through recourse to the reliability of its divine, omniscient author Brahmā. The present

section argues that this representation, expressed through the story of Parvata, is extended

through Nārada's dialogue to include, and counter, Brahmanical philosophers who instead justify

the validity of the *Veda* and sacrificial injunctions through recourse to claims about the *Veda's*

authorlessness.

After winning the *aja* debate, Nārada becomes a renowned Jaina teacher. One day, he

spots animals being prepared for a sacrifice that is being undertaken by King Marutta and his

Brāhmaṇa officiant, Saṃvarta. Nārada marches straight up to Saṃvarta and declares that the

omniscient Jinas have previously taught that these ritual practices are the cause of suffering.[34]

(The *Padmacarita* has already confirmed Nārada's argument to be true. In the *aja* debate,

Nārada's interpretation that the Jina enjoins the offering of seeds and not the sacrifice of animals,

was proclaimed as the correct interpretation.) The Brāhmaṇa Saṃvarta is enraged at Nārada's

remark. He rejects the possibility that the Jina's words, and indeed any authored scripture,

constitute a valid means of knowing truths (*pramāṇa*). For Saṃvarta, the *Veda* is authorless and

this authorlessness is the grounds for arguing that the *Veda* is the only valid scripture.

> Because of your complete stupidity, you are making a claim that is entirely
> incoherent; it has no logical grounds. (164bcd) You believe that there exists some
> omniscient person who has no desires. [But,] He cannot [be omniscient] if he is a
> speaker. The opposite would also apply. [He cannot be a speaker if he is
> omniscient]. (165) Words spoken by impure authors are full of impurities, and
> there is no proof for [the existence of] any author who is not imperfect. (166)
> Therefore, the *Veda*, being authorless, must be the valid means of knowing
> (*pramāṇa*) with respect [to objects] that are beyond sense faculties. Indeed, it
> enjoins the three social classes to perform rituals that pertain to the sacrifice.
> (167) The eternal dharma known as "*apūrva*," which manifests through the
> sacrifice, produces in heaven a result that arises from desirable sense objects.
> (168) Moreover, killing animals in sacrificial contexts does not lead to a negative
> effect since it is enjoined by scripture; [therefore,] one should perform religious

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[34] *PC* 161-63

acts such as sacrifice. (169) In another case, Svayambhū created animals for the sake of sacrifice. So, what fault is there in killing those (animals) who were created for this reason? (170)[35]

Saṃvarta's terse statements summarize three key arguments. He rejects the possibility of an omniscient speaker, argues that the *Veda* is the exclusive means of knowing religious truths on the grounds that it is authorless, and justifies the killing of animals in the context of Vedic sacrifice. In this section, I undertake a close reading of Saṃvarta's claims, as expanded and countered in Nārada's refutation, together with Nārada's own responses. I demonstrate how Saṃvarta's arguments align with the religious and philosophical commitments of Mīmāṃsā—a Brahmanical tradition of Vedic hermeneutics that arose in the early centuries of the Common Era. More specifically, I argue that Saṃvarta's arguments voice those which are expressed by Kumārila, a Mīmāṃsā philosopher who defended the authority of the authorless *Veda* in his *Ślokavārttika* during the same century that Raviṣena composed his *Padmacarita*.

  Before we begin to unpack Saṃvarta's and Nārada's arguments, some preliminary comments about Kumārila are necessary. Kumārila's composition of the *Ślokavārttika* is a

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[35] *saṃvartaḥ kupito 'vocad aho 'tyantavimūḍhatā /*
 yadatyantam asaṃbaddhaṃ bhāṣase hetuvarjitam // PC 11.164
bhavato yo mataḥ ko'pi sarvajño rāgavarjitaḥ /
vaktṛtvādyupapattibhyo nāsāv evaṃ tathetaraḥ // PC 11.165
aśuddhaiḥ kartṛbhiḥ proktaṃ vacanaṃ syān malīmasam |
anīdṛśaṃ ca no kaścid upapatter abhāvataḥ // PC 11.166
tasmād akartṛko vedaḥ pramāṇaṃ syād atīndriye /
varṇatrayasya yajñe ca karma tena prakīrtitam // PC 11.167
apūrvākhyo dhruvo dharmo yāgena prakaṭīkṛtaḥ /
prayacchati phalaṃ svarge manojñaviṣayotthitam // PC 11.168
antarvedi paśūnāṃ ca pratyavāyāya no vadhaḥ /
śāstreṇa codito yasmād yāyād yāgādisevanam // PC 11.169
paśūnāṃ ca vitānārthaṃ kṛtā sṛṣṭiḥ svayaṃbhuvā /
tasmāt tadarthasargāṇāṃ ko doṣo vinipātane // PC 11.170

landmark moment in the history of Mīmāṃsā because through this treatise Kumārila defends

Mīmāṃsā commitments to the validity of the *Veda* and the performance of animal sacrifice

without presuming that his readers already hold commitments to Mīmāṃsā. He begins with a

claim that applies to all readers irrespective of their religious affiliation. What makes a

"*pramāṇa*" have the status of a valid means of knowing (*prāmāṇyam*)? At stake in this question

is determining what qualifies the authorless *Veda* to be a *pramāṇa*, a valid means of knowing,

over and above all other means of knowing, including perception and authored speech. Of

particular relevance to Kumārila is *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* 1.1.2: "Dharma is a good (*artha*) indicated by

a Vedic command (*codanālakṣaṇaḥ*)." The interpretation of this *sūtra* is paramount for justifying

the performance of Vedic injunctions because it defines the nature of *dharma* and the means for

knowing it (*pramāṇa*). Kumārila's predecessor Śabara[36] argues that unlike perception, which

only expresses objects immediately present to us, utterances make one aware of that which is in

past, present and future as well as that which is imperceptible. In addition, Śabara argues that all

intelligible utterances engender a determinate cognition that can be justifiably believed unless or

until we have a falsifying cognition that identifies a defect in the cause (i.e the speaker) and/or

contradicts our initial cognition. For Kumārila, Śabara's commentary on *MS* 1.1.2 risks

undermining the status of the authorless *Veda* as the exclusive means of knowing *dharma*. If it is

the case that "a human utterance is not false if it comes from a trustworthy person (*āpta*) and if it

concerns a matter that is amenable to perception,"[37] as Śabara claims, then this would entail the

undesirable consequence that the Buddha's or the Jina's utterances could also be taken as valid.

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[36] My readings of *Śabarabhāṣya* are based on Ganganath Jha's translation. Śabarasvāmi, *Śābarabhāṣya*, trans. Ganganatha Jha, vol. 66, 70, 73, 3 vols., Gaekwad's Oriental Series (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1933).
[37] Commentary to *MS* 1.1.2

The utterances of the Buddha and the Jina produce a determinate cognition that is valid, and the Buddha and the Jina are understood by the Buddhist and Jaina traditions to be reliable speakers on account of their omniscience. With this in mind, what is to stop one from believing that the Buddha's and the Jina's words constitute the ultimate means of knowing *dharma*? Buddhist authors from the fifth century onwards began to forward arguments that justify the validity of the Buddha's words and the invalidity of the *Veda* on epistemological grounds. Faced with explicit attacks on the validity of the *Veda* without a solid epistemological framework from his own tradition, Kumārila sought to ground Mīmāṃsā claims about the *Veda* through a robust epistemological basis that could be defended regardless of the religious commitments that a reader might already hold. Kumārila thus elaborates on Śabara's claims, developing a longer commentary on *MS* 1.1.2 that examines the concept of truth, omniscience and killing. There, he aims to validate the authorless *Veda* as the exclusive means of knowing *dharma*, to reject the possibility that omniscient being exists, and to justify the sacrifice of animals as a means of attaining beneficial results (*artha*).

In reading Nārada's refutation of Saṃvarta together with Kumārila's commentary on *MS* 1.1.2, my concern is not to unpack the philosophical technicalities of Kumārila's arguments, but rather, to demonstrate how Nārada's refutation is a rejoinder to the arguments of Kumārila. How do we know that Saṃvarta's arguments voice those of Kumārila given that the *Padmacarita* never identifies Saṃvarta as a Mīmāṃsaka, much less as an adherent of Kumārila's epistemology?

From the outset, Saṃvarta's opening claims summarize the overarching arguments that Kumārila forwards in his commentary on *MS* 1.1.2. Like Kumārila, Saṃvarta rejects the possibility that an omniscient being exists (and indeed the possibility that any reliable [*āpta*]

speaker exists); he considers the *Veda* to be authorless and thereby the exclusive means of knowing dharma; and he contends that killing animals in the context of sacrifice leads to beneficial results. The *Padmacarita* does not allow Saṃvarta himself to expand on his own views. Instead, the *Padmacarita* presents Nārada's position, and it is from Nārada's lengthy refutation, which spans eighty verses,[38] that the *Padmacarita* reveals the justifications that undergird Saṃvarta's opening claims. I undertake a close reading of Nārada's presentation of Saṃvarta's views, and argue that the order and the content of the claims that represent the antithetical position parallel the order and the content of claims expressed by Kumārila in his commentary to *MS* 1.1.2. Nārada's counter arguments read as a blow-by-blow refutation to the claims that Kumārila raises in his commentary to *MS* 1.1.2.

Aside from demonstrating that Kumārila's epistemological claims are a primary intertext for the *Padmacarita's* subtale, I also demonstrate the methodology that Nārada uses to counter Kumārila's claims. Nārada rebuffs Kumārila's claims by exposing the contradictions between Mīmāṃsā discourses, Vedic texts, and Brahmanical narratives. He expresses in systematic form claims that were previously expressed in narrative form by the tale of demon-Brahmā. He draws on Vedic texts that themselves disprove Mīmāṃsā claims; and he refers to discourses from the Brahmanical Epics and *Purāṇa*s as a way of undermining Mīmāṃsā commitments. Just as the tale of Parvata uses the story—the representation of a series of causally related events—to expose contradictions between representations of the *Veda* and of Brahmā in Brahmanical narratives, so too does Nārada's dialogue—the systematic representation of conceptually related claims—expose contradictions between Mīmāṃsā claims and Brahmanical texts.

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[38] *PC* 11.172-252

Nārada's opening claims, in verses 172-78, address Saṃvarta's overarching claim that there exists no omniscient being. This argument is taken up by Kumārila in 2.117-55 of the *Ślokavārttika*. Kumārila does not deny the possibility of omniscience per se. Rather, he denies the possibility that an individual who possesses omniscience exists, on the grounds that no *pramāṇa* can establish the existence of an omniscient being. We do not have a perception of such a being in our era; we cannot infer the existence of an omniscient being since there are no inferential marks; and there is no scriptural testimony that is eternal that attests to the existence of omniscient beings.[39]

Nārada demonstrates how perception, inference and linguistic expressions do in fact establish the existence of an omniscient being. He begins with a linguistic argument. An omniscient being (*sarvajña*) must exist because the word "*sarvajña*" would not yield a cognition unless there existed a referent—an actually existing omniscient individual—to whom the term refers. Nārada explains that speech consists of a linguistic expression (*śabda*), a cognition (*buddhi*) and a referent (*artha*). Just as the linguistic expression "*go*" results from having a cognition of a referent (in this case, a cow) that exists in the world, so too does the linguistic expression "*sarvajñā*" result from a cognition of an omniscient being who really exists in the world.[40] For Nārada, cognitions correspond to the actual state of affairs in the world. Speech

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[39] *ŚV* 2.116-20
[40] *PC* 11.172-3

would be impossible if linguistic expressions and cognitions did not depend on the existence of a referent, external to our cognition, to which words and cognitions refer.[41]

Nārada's underlying point here is that it is problematic to suggest that words refer exclusively to the content of our cognition irrespective of whether or not the referent exists external to our cognition in the real world—a claim that is forwarded by Kumārila. Towards the beginning of his commentary on *MS* 1.1.2, Kumārila anticipates the objection that Nārada raises. Kumārila's opponent states that there is a relation between speech, cognition and the referent that exists outside of cognition and that speech would not be possible unless referents to which they referred exist independently of cognitions.[42] In response to this claim, Kumārila argues that we do not need to posit the existence of referents independent of cognition in order to render cognitions valid because cognitions are in and of themselves valid. The validity of a cognition is inherent to the cognition itself. We take seriously the content of our cognition until or unless a nullifying cognition arises. In the *Ślokavārttika*, Kumārila's theory, which is known as inherent validity (*svataḥ prāmāṇyam*), is presented as a response to the view that words and cognitions can be validated through reference to their referent. In the *Padmacarita*, Nārada argues that cognitions and words *do* refer to externally existent referents. That is to say, the arguments of Kumārila's opponent align with Nārada's own arguments, and Kumārila's own arguments align with that of Nārada's opponent.

Building on this claim, Nārada cites linguistic expressions from scripture that use the word "*sarvajña*." This argument targets Kumārila's claim that there is no scripture (*āgamābhāva*) that attests to the existence of omniscient beings.[43] Kumārila contends that we

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[41] *PC* 11.174
[42] *ŚV* 2.21-32
[43] *ŚV* 2.119-20

cannot defer to scriptural passages (*āgama*) that are written by omniscient beings, such as the

Jina, to prove the existence of these very beings because this incurs the fault of mutual reliance.[44]

Yet, Kumārila claims, there is no eternal, unauthored scripture that attests to the existence of an

omniscient being.[45] Nārada argues the contrary, pointing out that there are a scriptural statements

that express the existence of an omniscient being (*sarvajña*).

> Moreover, I do not accept the [claim that omniscient beings] do not exist. [176cd]
> [There is a Vedic passage that states,] "Where is he who knows all (*sarvajña*),
> who observes all, to whom belongs greatness on earth? He is well established as
> the self in the sky, in the divine fort of Brahman." [177] Your claim contradicts
> this scriptural passage (*āgama*) of yours! Moreover, if the property to be proven
> (*sādhya*) is non-exclusive (*anekānta*), then this would prove something that is
> already established (*siddhaprasādhaka*). [178][46]

Instead of citing a passage from the Jaina scriptures, which would incur the fault of mutual

reliance that Kumārila points out, Nārada cites a verse from the Vedic corpus, which Kumārila

himself considers eternal. Verse 117 is a citation of a verse from the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*.[47]

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[44] *ŚV* 2.118ab
[45] *ŚV* 2.118cd-119ab
[46] *abhāvaśca mamātyantaṃ prasiddhiṃ na kvacid gataḥ // PC* 11.176
sarvajñaḥ sarvadṛk kvāsau yasyaiṣa mahimā bhuvi /
divi brahmapure hyeṣa vyomātmā supratiṣṭhitaḥ // PC 11.177
āgamena tavānena visedhaṃ yāti saṃgaraḥ /
anekānte ca sādhyarthe bhavet siddhaprasādhakam // PC 11.178
[47] *Muṇḍuka Upanisad* 2.2.7a. Note the parallels between this verse and *PC* 11.177. The order of
the words differs, but the meaning is almost identical.
sarvajñaḥ sarvadṛk kvāsau yasyaiṣa mahimā bhuvi /
divi brahmapure hyeṣa vyomātmā supratiṣṭhitaḥ // PC 11. 177
"Where is he who knows all, who observes all, to whom belongs greatness on earth? He is well
established as the self in the sky, in the divine fort of Brahman."

yaḥ sarvajñaḥ sarvavit bhuvi yasyaiṣaḥ mahimā /
eṣaḥ ātmā divye brahmapure vyomni pratiṣṭhitaḥ hi // Muṇḍ Up 2.2.7a

Hence, through verse 178, Nārada exposes a contradiction between the opponent's claim and the contents of the opponent's scripture. Kumārila claims that there is no passage in the *Veda* that proclaims the existence of an omniscient being. Yet the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad,* which belongs to the larger Vedic corpus and is thus deemed eternal, cites the existence of an omniscient being. Kumārila does not cite this particular Upaniṣadic verse, but he is aware of such Vedic passages and argues they should not be interpreted literally.[48] Nārada's comment in verse 178 seems to problematize Kumārila's reading. Kumārila cannot dismiss the literal meaning of Vedic passages on the grounds that they are eternal because the eternality of the *Veda* is precisely under question.[49] Nārada points out that Kumārila's argument is circular.

In verses 179-85, Nārada's arguments counter Saṃvarta's claim that one cannot be both omniscient and a speaker.[50] Saṃvarta argues that an omniscient being cannot be a speaker. If an omniscient being has no desires, he cannot undertake activities such as speaking since all actions are preceded by desire. And, by the same logic, if the omniscient has a desire to speak, then he cannot be omniscient since the presence of a desire contradicts his status as an omniscient being who has no desires. Saṃvarta's argument voices Kumārila's claims in *ŚV* 2.137-40,[51] which similarly argue in favor of the incompatibility of being a speaker and being omniscient. According to Nārada, there is no contradiction in the Jina being both a speaker and omniscient. We can distinguish speakers according to their characteristics. The Jina is distinct from the

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"He who knows all, who observes all, to whom belongs greatness on earth—He is the self in the divine fort of Brahman, having a secure footing in the sky." (Patrick Olivelle, trans., *Upaniṣads* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 273.)

[48] *ŚV* 2.119cd-20

[49] *ŚV* 2.119cd

[50] *PC* 11.165-66

[51] There, Kumārila targets the Buddha as an omniscient speaker, but the parallels between his argument and that of Saṃvarta suggests that the *Padmacarita* reads Kumārila's argument as an attack on the Jina's omniscience.

average speaker because he is a speaker who has attained omniscience and has no desires. In any case, Nārada contends, "the mutual absence of the property to be proven (*sādhya*) and the reason (*sādhana*) ought to be demonstrated within a given locus."[52] Saṃvarta has not proven that one person cannot simultaneously possess both the quality of being omniscient and the quality of being a speaker. He has only argued that an omniscient being cannot exist because he is a speaker. Nārada points out Saṃvarta's, and by extension Kumārila's claim, is not concomitant with his justification: a person who is omniscient must, of course, be a speaker.[53]

What is especially interesting about Nārada's counter-claims so far is the way in which he expresses his arguments. Nārada focuses more on exposing the logical faults in Kumārila's claims and the *Veda* than on proving the existence of the Jina, over other individuals, as an omniscient being. This primary focus continues throughout Nārada's refutation. Nārada's arguments continue to follow the order of Kumārila's arguments as they unfold in his commentary on *MS* 1.1.2.[54] After Kumārila rejects the existence of an omniscient speaker, he summarizes his defense of the *Veda* as the exclusive means of knowing *dharma* (*ŚV* 2.152-85). He relies on his theory of inherent validity, which is expressed at the beginning of his commentary, to argue that the *Veda* is authorless. We take our initial cognitions to be true until a cognition that invalidates our initial cognition arises or is forthcoming. We have no reason to believe that the *Veda* had a first speaker because we witness the *Veda* being transmitted from teacher to student across multiple generations. In fact, it is impossible to have a perception of the *Veda*'s creation. In the absence of any cognition that proves the *Veda* to have been created at a particular moment in time, we ought to take as true the claim that the *Veda* is eternal. On

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[52] *sādhyasādhanavaikalyam udāhāryaṃ sadharmaṇi* // *PC* 11.183cd
[53] *PC* 11.185
[54] *ŚV* 2.152-85

Kumārila's account, the *Veda* is authorless because it is impossible to have a forthcoming cognition that would prove otherwise. It is because the *Veda* has no author that Kumarila takes it as the exclusive means for knowing truth. If the *Veda* has no author, then there is no locus to which we could attribute any possible faults. Kumārila counters the claim that the arrangement of words in the *Veda* is predicated on the existence of an author. The relation between words and their referents is eternal and therefore there is no reason to posit the existence of an author who constructed the relation between words and their meaning.

In the following verses, Nārada rejects Kumārila's justification for the authorlessness of the *Veda*, which Samvarta summarizes in verse 167.

> The claim that the *Veda* has no author is not established through the absence of proofs. On the contrary, there exists perceptible proof that establish that the *Veda* has an author. [189] The fact that the *Veda* has a particular arrangement of words and expressions, which make it possible [for it to express] the meaning of injunctions and prohibitions, is proof that the *Veda* has an author; just as in the case of the poetry of Maitra. [190]
>
> Furthermore, some say that the *Veda* was created by men such as Brahmā-Prajāpati. It is not possible to shrug off this belief. [191] If you think that they are not authors but reciters of scripture, even then, reciters possess faults such as attachment and aversion. [192]. If they are truly omniscient, then why would they author a teaching of the text in one way and an explanation of its meaning in another way, given that their teaching is considered a *pramāṇa*? [193][55]

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[55] *kartrabhāvaśca vedasya yuktyabhāvān na yujyate /*
kartṛmattve tu saṃsādhye dṛśyavaddhetusaṃbhavaḥ // PC 11.189
yuktiś ca kartṛmān vedaḥ padavākyādirūpataḥ /
vidheya-pratiṣedhya-arthayuktatvān maitrakāvyavat //PC 11.190
brahmaprajāpatiprāyaḥ-puruṣebhyaśca saṃbhavaḥ /
śrūyate vedaśāstrasya nāpanetuṃ sa śakyate // PC 11.191
syātte matirna kartāraḥ pravaktāraḥ śruteḥ smṛtāḥ /
tathā nāma pravaktāro rāgadveṣādibhir yutāḥ // PC 11.192
susarvajñāśca kiṃ kuryur anyathā granthadeśanam /
arthasya evānyathā ākhyānaṃ pramāṇaṃ tanmataṃ yataḥ // PC 11.193

In these verses, Nārada argues against Saṃvarta's/Kumārila's claim that the *Veda* is authorless. If he can prove that the *Veda* has an author, then he can identify a fault in the author that would render the scripture invalid. At stake is the validity of the *Veda*. Contrary to Kumārila's claim that we have no proof that the *Veda* was authored, Nārada argues that there are proofs. The *Veda* contains linguistic expressions that convey meaning by virtue of the particular arrangement of words. Such an arrangement, which communicates meaning, implies the existence of an author who arranged words in this particular way. The composition of the *Veda* is not distinct from the composition of all other forms of writing, such as poetry.

Even if this argument is not accepted, Nārada continues, it is not the case that everyone who subscribes to the authority of the *Veda* also accepts that the *Veda* is authorless. Nārada points out that many people do accept that the *Veda* is authored. As an example, he states that some people believe that the deity, Brahmā-Prajāpati, authored the *Veda*. Nārada is not wrong: the *Veda*, epics and *purāṇa*s do describe Brahmā as the creator of the *Veda*. Nārada argues that whether or not such deities authored the *Veda* or simply recited it, they cannot be considered valid speakers because they have attachments and aversions that render them unreliable. When we read Nārada's argument independent of other subtales, it reads as a rejection of the validity of Brahmanical narratives that present the *Veda* as the composition of an omniscient deity. But when we read Nārada's argument in the context of the preceding subtale in the *Padmacarita*— the tale of demon Brahmā—Nārada's arguments take on an additional level of meaning. Since Parvata declared himself to be Brahmā, the author of the *Veda*, Nārada's comments in vv.192-93 can be read as targeting these Brahmanical narrative representations by drawing on perceptions that characters within the *Padmacarita* have had with respect to Parvata. Nārada expresses in dialogical form the epistemological claims that were conveyed through the literary presentation

of demon-Parvata: namely, that there is an author of the *Veda* and that this author possesses irredeemable faults that render him an unreliable speaker.

When we bring these two levels of reading into conversation with Nārada's overarching refutation of Kumārila, a final level of critique emerges. Kumārila rejects the validity of the Brahmanical Epics and *purāṇa*s on the grounds that they are not eternal scriptures. Moreover, he rejects the claim that Brahmā authored the *Veda* because this claim undermines the Mīmāṃsā commitment to the authorlessness of the *Veda*.[56] Kumārila's dismissal of Brahmanical narratives is not lost on Nārada, who points out that one cannot simply shrug off the existence of these alternative beliefs. Not only do Brahmanical narratives themselves attest to their existence, but other characters in the *Padmacarita*'s storyworld seem to be aware of Parvata's antics in his demonic rebirth. In this way, Nārada refers to the existence of alternative interpretations of the *Veda*'s origin as a way of arguing that Kumārila's belief in the authorlessness of the *Veda* was not only invalid, but unrepresentative of, and contradictory to, beliefs held by other Brahmanical practitioners.

This synthesis of multiple Brahmanical discourses is brought to bear again when Nārada rejects the possibility that Brāhmaṇas constitute valid speakers. After rejecting the possibility that a divine being could be a reliable author or speaker of the *Veda*, Nārada counters the claim that Brāhmaṇas, such as Saṃvarta himself, could be valid speakers of the *Veda*. He does this by addressing the concept of brahminhood itself. Brahminhood, Nārada contends, is a social construction that does not confer religious authority by birthright. Again, Nārada connects discourses from diverse Brahmanical texts. He connects the Mīmāṃsā philosophical

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[56] *ŚV Sambandhākṣepaparihāra* 42-114.

understanding of caste (*jāti*) as a universal;[57] narratives about the creation of caste from the *Veda* and *Purāṇa*s;[58] and the *Mahābhārata*'s tale of the Brāhmaṇa, Ṛṣyaśṛṅga.[59] Kumārila understands Brahminhood as universal category, the *Veda* presents the Brāhmaṇa class as a category created by a deity, and the *Mahābhārata* presents Brahminhood as a virtue that is acquired by the character Ṛṣyaśṛṅga, who is not born from a Brāhmaṇa woman. The contradictions between these different presentations undermine the claim that Brāhmaṇas are reliable speakers because there is no unanimous view of what constitutes Brahminhood.

Following the structure of Kumārila's arguments in his commentary on *MS* 1.1.2, Nārada transitions from a discussion of the *Veda*'s authorlessness to the definition of "*dharma*." Mīmāṃsakas subscribe to the definition of dharma expressed in *MS* 1.1.2: "*dharma* is that which is indicated by Vedic command for the sake of attaining beneficial results." But this definition provokes a number of questions. In the first case, how do we know that Vedic injunctions lead to beneficial results, such as the attainment of heaven, when we have never had a perception of this effect? In response, Kumārila develops the notion of "*apūrva*" (ŚV 2.197-200). In Kumārila's thought, "*apūrva*" refers to the results of Vedic ritual acts that are not yet perceived. It allows Kumārila to declare that Vedic rituals are efficacious even though we have not seen their results.

Nārada begins his refutation of the Mīmāṃsā understanding of *dharma* with an argument that rejects the definition of "*apūrva*."

> The dharma known as "*apūrva*" cannot manifest as a result of performing a
> sacrifice if it is eternal, like the sky. Alternatively, if dharma manifests, then it is

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[57] *PC* 11.194-98. See parallel: *ŚV*, *Vanavāda*, 25-34.
[58] *PC* 11.199. See parallel: *RV* 10.90
[59] *PC* 11.200. See parallel: *Mbh* 3.110-113. Ṛṣyaśṛṅga attained the status of "Brāhmaṇa" without being born to a woman of the Brāhmaṇa class.

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impermanent, just as in the case of a pot.[60] [206] Just as the discrimination of forms is the effect that comes about after light has manifested, in the same way, the result (of performing sacrifices) should be perceived in this world after *apūrvadharma* has manifested. [But it is not.] [207][61]

For Nārada, there is a contradiction in the understanding of *apūrva dharma*. *Apūrva dharma* cannot be an eternal substance if it manifests at a particular place and time. Even if "*apūrva*" is understood to be a substance that manifests, then this too is problematic because we never perceive its manifestation. It is certain that Nārada's argument targets Kumārila's conception of *apūrva* because, as should be clear by now, Nārada's refutation follows the order and content of arguments that Kumārila expresses in his commentary to *MS* 1.1.2. More significantly, the particular definition and role that "*apūrva*" has in justifying the imperceptible effects of Vedic sacrifice is Kumārila's innovation—it is not present in Śabara's commentary.[62] The *Padmacarita* elides the specificity of Kumārila's understanding. The *Padmacarita* has Saṃvarta define "*apūrva*" as a type of eternal dharma,[63] and it is this particular definition that Nārada responds to. But Kumārila himself does not define "*apūrva*" as a "*dharma.*" For Kumārila, "*apūrva*" is neither a separate entity that is perceivable by the senses nor the result of a sacrifice,[64] but rather, it is "a mere capacity of a sacrifice that operates towards a fruit […]"[65] Kumārila's understanding

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[60] The pot is a standard example of a substance that manifests and is therefore impermanent.
[61] *apūrvākhyaśca dharmo na vyajyate yāgakarmaṇā /*
nityatvād vyomavad vyakter anityo vā ghaṭādivat // PC 11.206
phalaṃ rūpaparicchedaḥ pradīpavyaktyanantaram /
dṛṣṭaṃ yatheha cāpūrva-vyaktikālaṃ phalaṃ bhavet // PC 11.207
[62] Kiyotaka Yoshimizu, "Change of View on Apūrva from Śabarasvāmin to Kumārila," in *The Way to Liberation: Indological Studies in Japan*, ed. Sengaku Mayeda (New Delhi: Manohar Publishers & Distributors, 2000), 149–65.
[63] *PC* 11.168: "The eternal dharma known as "*apūrva*," which manifests through the sacrifice, produces in heaven a result that arises from desirable sense objects."
[64] *ŚV* 2.197-200
[65] *ŚV* 2.199

of "*apūrva*," combined with his reliance on intrinsic validity, makes it difficult to claim that the sacrifice has negative results because Kumārila can simply respond that the beneficial results are just not yet seen. Thus, Nārada needs to demonstrate that Vedic sacrifices have perceptible results in order to demonstrate that those results are negative, and this is accomplished by eliding Kumārila's distinction between "*apūrva*" and "*dharma.*"

Nārada follows Kumārila in transitioning from a discussion of "*apūrva*" to a discussion of what constitutes beneficial results (*artha*). According to the *Mīmāṃsāsūtra*s, *dharma* is defined as that which is enjoined by Vedic injunctions for the sake of beneficial results. But this definition sparks an objection that Kumārila anticipates. If dharma is enjoined for beneficial results (*artha*), how can animal sacrifice constitute "*dharma,*" given that this act inflicts violence, a negative result (*anartha*), on the animal and incurs sin on the part of the agent? The negative effects of animal sacrifice contradict the Mīmāṃsā definition of *dharma*. Kumārila rejects Śabara's claim that animal sacrifices are "*anartha.*" He forwards an idiosyncratic view. Vedic injunctions only enjoin acts if they will lead to beneficial results. If an action were to incur negative results, the *Veda* would prohibit it.[66] Animal sacrifices are not equivalent to killing in non-Vedic contexts (i.e killing a Brāhmaṇa) because the *Veda* enjoins animal sacrifice as a means of attaining beneficial results and prohibits killing in non-Vedic contexts because it leads to negative results.[67]

Nārada takes up the objection that Kumārila anticipates. First, he counters Kumārila's claim that the *Veda* only enjoins acts that lead to beneficial results. He cites a Vedic text, the *Chāṇḍogya Upaniṣad,* that prescribes expiation rites (*prāyaścitta*) following the animal

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[66] *ŚV* 2.201-25
[67] See *ŚV* 215-18

sacrifice.[68] According to Nārada, the expiation rites enjoined by Vedic texts furnish evidence that

the *Vedas* enjoin rites that incur negative results, for why else would an expiation rite be needed

if not to remove the sin incurred through animal sacrifice? Nārada demonstrates that the *Veda*

does enjoin acts that produce negative results. He then addresses the relation between killing

animals in the context of Vedic sacrifice and killing animals in non-Vedic contexts. He explains

that animal sacrifices harm animals in the same way that hunting does,[69] and as such, the

difference in context does not lead to different results.

While this argument targets Kumārila's broad claim that killing in the context of Vedic

sacrifice is to be distinguished from killing in non-Vedic contexts, it additionally targets a claim

that demon-Brahmā made in the previous subtale. After the demon proclaims the contents of his

Veda to the world, he assures his followers that "since sacrifice will lead to prosperity and to

heaven, killing animals in sacrifice does not constitute 'killing.'"[70] The *Padmacarita* identifies

the demon's words with a claim that is made by Saṃvarta and Kumārila themselves. To put it

another way, through this claim, the *Padmacarita* collapses the distinction between the deity

Brahmā, with Parvata's demonic rebirth, the Brāhmaṇa Saṃvarta, and the Brahmanical

philosopher, Kumārila. The demonic character now reads as an embodiment of multiple

Brahmanical authorities: deities, Brāhmaṇas and Mīmāṃsakas. The *Padmacarita* uses Nārada's

dialogue to reject, on philosophical grounds, Kumārila's distinction among killing in Vedic and

non-Vedic contexts. It connects Brahmā's claims with those of Kumārila's/Saṃvarta's by way of

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[68] *PC* 11.208-15 (*PC* 11.214 is, I believe, a citation from *Chāndogya Brāhmaṇa* 2.2.8)
[69] *PC* 11.216
[70] *Yajñārthaṃ paśavaḥ sṛṣṭāḥ svayameva mayādarāt /*
yajño hi bhūtyai svargasya tasmād yajñe vadho'vadhaḥ // PC 11.84cd

insinuating that Kumārila and Brāhmaṇa priests are no different from demon-Brahmā. None of these figures are reliable speakers.

The collapsing of these identities into a single position is continued into Saṃvarta's final argument—namely, that Svayambhū created animals for the sake of sacrifice.[71] The demon in the previous subtale did in fact proclaim, "I myself am Brahmā! I have arrived in the world which I created […] the sacrificial animals have been carefully created by me myself for the sake of the sacrifice." Kumārila does not claim that Brahmā created animals for the sake of the sacrifice since he does not ascribe to the existence of a creator deity in the first place. Nevertheless, the insertion of this claim allows the *Padmacarita* to insert a ten-verse critique of Brahmanical theism.

> In addition, the claim that Svayambhū created the world is not accepted as true. When you really think about this claim, it is as weak as an old piece of straw. [217] If he is one who has no desires, then how could [he have] a desire to create? If you say, "he creates out of play", then he cannot be one who has no desires. Just as a child [who acts out of play is not devoid of desires.] [218] How can he manifest a desire in person in the absence of additional means (i.e a body) Or else, which beings created that creator? [219] Moreover, some people are benefactors (of God) while others are rejected (by him). He causes some to enjoy pleasure, and he causes others to endure pain. [220] If he is not self-fulfilled, then he cannot be an "īśvara" since he would depend on actions in the same way that any person, such as yourself, would. [221]
>
> "Just as [we infer that] chariots, houses etc. are compositions that are produced through the effort of an intelligent human because they possess a particular form, in the same way there must be a creator on the grounds that (natural phenomena) such as lotuses etc. are the result of his design." This claim is incorrect because it is one-sided. [222-23] It is not the case that chariots etc. are created solely through the efforts of an intelligent man since material substances are used to create them. [224] Furthermore, he would get tired in the same way that a carpenter does. Surely, is he whom you call "īśvara" not just "nāmakarma," the category of insentient karmic matter that determines the shape and size of beings. [225]

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[71] *PC* 11.170

There is no proof that god has a distinct form or that he has a body that was created by the effort of another īśvara. [226] In that particular example, this would require us to posit another īśvara. If [another īśvara] exists, then there is the fault of infinite regress. Yet, he cannot create himself. [227] If is thought to have no body, then he cannot be a creator because he has no physical form; just as the sky (cannot be a creator because it has no physical form). Otherwise, he must be like a carpenter, who possesses a body. [228] […] Therefore, some evil being with sinful activities authored a false scripture and initiated the practice of Vedic sacrifice. [233][72]

In the above verses, Nārada rejects the possibility that there exists a creator deity (īśvara). The

existence of a deity who has no desires (kṛtārtha) contradicts the claim that the same deity could

have an intention to create because the act of creation is predicated on an intention. In the second

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[72] *svayaṃbhuvā ca lokasya svargo neṣyati satyatām /*
vicāryamāṇam etaddhi purāṇatṛṇadurbalam // PC 11.217
kṛtārtho yadyasau sṛṣṭau tasyāṃ kiṃ syātprayojanam /
krīḍeti cet kṛtārtho'sau na bhavatyarbhako yathā // PC 11.218
sākṣādeva ratiṃ kasmān na sṛjet sa vinetaraiḥ /
sṛjato vāsya ke bhāvā vrajeyuḥ karaṇāditām // PC 11. 219
kiṃcopakāriṇaḥ kecit kecid vāsyāpakāriṇaḥ /
sukhinaḥ kurute kāṃcid yena kāṃcicca duḥkhinaḥ // PC 11.220
atha naiva kṛtārtho'sāvevaṃ tarhi sa neśvaraḥ /
karmaṇāṃ paratantratvād yathā kaścid bhavadvidhaḥ // PC 11.221
subuddhinarayatnotthasaṃsthānāḥ kamalādayaḥ /
viśiṣṭākārayuktatvād rathaveśmādayo yathā // PC 11.222
yadbuddhipūrvakā ete bhaviṣyanti sa īśvaraḥ /
ityetaca na samyaktvaṃ vrajatyekāntavādinaḥ // PC 11.223
subuddhinarayatnosthāḥ sarvathā na rathādayaḥ /
vyavasthitaṃ yatas tatra dravyaṃ caivopajanyate // PC 11.224
kleśādiyukatā cāsya vyaśnute takṣakādivat /
nāmakarma ca maivaṃ syād īśvaro yas tvayeṣyate // PC 11.225
viśiṣṭākārasaṃbaddham īśvarasya punar vapuḥ /
īśvarāntarayatnostham iṣyate 'to na niścayaḥ // PC 11.226
apareśvarayatnostham athaitad api kalpyate /
satyevam anavasthā syān na ca svasyābhisarjanam // PC 11.227
śarīram atha naivāsya vidyate naiṣa sarjakaḥ /
amūrtatvād yathākāśaṃ takṣavad vā savigrahaḥ // PC 11.228
[…]
tasmād dviṣṭena kenāpi prāṇinā pāpakarmaṇā /
kugrantharacanāṃ kṛtvā yajñakarma pravartitam // PC 11.233

case, Nārada rebuffs an argument that we might refer to as the argument from intelligent design; does the particular composition of the world and its entities imply that there must exist a creator who designed them? For Nārada, not at all, because the existence of "*nāmakarma*," a type of Jaina karma that determines the shape and form of individual substances, explains why each entity has a particular form. Finally, we cannot accept the existence of a creator deity because his ontological status is compromised. He could not be created by another īśvara, lest we posit the existence of additional creator deities *ad infinitum*; He could not be formless, since he could not undertake the act of creation without a body; and he could not have a body in the same manner as a human for he would experience the same limitations and faults as humans.

Nārada's claims convey and extend in systematic form the rejections of theism and creationism that were previously expressed in narrative form in the tale of Parvata. Brahmā, who is also known as Svayambhū, is not the creator of the world as he so arrogantly proclaims. "Brahmā" is a demonic being, a speaker who has attachments, and an unreliable speaker who authored the *Veda*.

But the philosophical intertext of Nārada's arguments is particularly evocative. In earlier arguments, Nārada draws on Brahmanical narratives in order to undermine the validity of Kumārila's commitments. In verses 217-33, we see the reverse case. Nārada and Kumārila agree that a creator deity does not exist. They both reject the existence of īśvara through arguments that address the creator's intention, the argument from intelligent design, the existence of additional deities and the deity's instruments for creation.[73] Nārada voices Kumārila's own refutations in order to undermine creationist theories that are expounded by Brahmanical narratives.

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[73] *ŚV*, *Sambandhākṣepaparihāra* 42-114.

In his final argument, Nārada continues to point out the contradictions between Kumārila's commitments and that of Brahmanical narratives. He continues to reject the validity of Vedic sacrifice, this time countering the claim that Vedic sacrifice leads to beneficial results. Nārada argues that if humans really do attain heaven as a result of performing sacrifice, then why did King Vasu fall to hell?[74] Nārada refers to the *aja* debate, which prefaces the story of Parvata and Nārada. When Parvata and Nārada disagree over the interpretation of a Vedic injunction, King Vasu is summoned to adjudicate the correct interpretation. Vasu knows that Nārada's interpretation is correct, yet he sides with Parvata and declares that the Jina enjoins the sacrifice of animals. The gods cause Vasu to fall to the earth as a result of his false interpretation. Nārada invokes this episode as perceptual evidence for the claim that sacrifices do not lead to beneficial results. The citation is significant in the context of Kumārila's argument. Kumārila argues that we can justifiably believe that Vedic rituals lead to beneficial results because there is no forthcoming cognition that would prove otherwise. For Kumārila, we cannot have a perception of someone going to hell, or incurring other negative effects, as a result of Vedic sacrifice. But the narrative context of the *Padmacarita* makes it possible for the characters to have this perception. Nārada and the kingdom witness Vasu falling to earth. They have perceptual evidence of the negative results that arise from falsehoods and Vasu's propagation of animal sacrifice. At the meta-level of Nārada's dialogue, the *Padmacarita* refers to the tale of Vasu because this tale is told multiple times in Brahmanical narrative texts themselves with the same outcome. Vasu falls to the earth and to hell as a result of propagating animal sacrifices. Nārada calls out a contradiction that applies to the characters within the story as well as contradictions

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[74] *PC* 11.237-9

between Kumārila's interpretation of animal sacrifice and that of Brahmanical narratives themselves.

To summarize, it is clear that Nārada's refutation targets Kumārila's epistemology because Nārada's rejoinders follow the order and content of the claims that Kumārila voices in his commentary to *MS* 1.1.2. Aside from revealing the primary intertextual target of Nārada's dialogue, it is equally important to note how Nārada achieves his refutation. Nārada elides the particularities of Kumārila's claims and he draws on Brahmanical discourses that address the same themes as Kumārila's claims but from a contradictory perspective. Taken together, the *Padmacarita* uses Nārada's dialogue to connect Mīmāṃsā *śāstra*, the Vedic corpus and Brahmanical narratives from the Epics and *Purāṇas* and presents them as a unified position that is rife with inconsistencies.

But it also probably clear that many of the claims that Nārada takes up in his dialogue have already been expressed through the medium of story in the tale of Parvata. Nārada's claim that the *Veda* must have an author, and one that is unreliable, is expressed by the plotline of the previous tale which re-presents Brahmā as an ignorant demon who authors the *Veda*. Nārada's rejection of the validity of animal sacrifices, and by extension the *Veda*, is brought to bear when the reader and the characters internal to the story witness Brahmā's devotees being tortured. Nārada's rejection of theism is expressed through the character of the demon, who is shown to masquerade as Brahmā and falsely proclaim himself to be the creator of the world. The content of Nārada's claims is expressed through the content of the tale of Parvata.

Similarly, the form of Nārada's arguments mirrors the form of the *Padmacarita* overall. Just as Nārada refers to Brahmanical narratives inside his dialogue to counter Kumārila/Saṃvarta, so too does the *Padmacarita* narrate the tale of Parvata to discredit

Kumārila's/Saṃvarta's arguments. Kumārila rejects the validity of the Brahmanical Epics and *Purāṇas* on the grounds that they are not eternal scriptures. And even when he does address Vedic narratives, he interprets them as explanatory passages that should not be taken literally. He, as Nārada points out, shrugs off the existence of such narratives and their discourses. Thus, aside from the mimesis between the content of Saṃvarta's claims and the content of Kumārila's claims—insomuch as they both reject the authorship of the *Veda*—there is also a mimesis between Saṃvarta's dismissal of Brahmanical narratives about Brahmā and Kumārila's parallel dismissal. Saṃvarta fails to acknowledge the existence of alternative beliefs inside the story-world he inhabits just as Kumārila fails to recognize the authorship of the *Veda* and the existence of Brahmanical narratives.

4. Conclusion

The *Padmacarita* uses epistemological discourses—that is, questions about what constitutes a valid means of knowing—as a site for constructing Brahmanism as a unified religious other. The tale of Parvata challenges the idea the *Veda*, the deity Brahmā, and the Brāhmaṇas that follow Brahmā constitute a valid means of knowing. This critique is effectuated through the story. The representation of the causally related events depicts the demon as an ignorant being who declares himself to be Brahmā and who composes the *Veda* out a desire to take revenge on the kingdom—this representation shows us that neither Brahmā, his *Veda*, nor his followers are authoritative. Moreover, it challenges the validity of animal sacrifice because they are not sanctioned by the Jina and because they lead to negative effects. At the meta-level of the narrative, because the *Padmacarita* repackages tropes from Brahmanical tales about the *Veda* and Brahmā, the *Padmacarita*'s epistemological critique extends to Brahmanical narratives

themselves. It is not just that Brahmā, the *Veda* and his followers are unreliable speakers, but Brahmanical narrative texts themselves, such as those found in the Epics and *Purāṇas*, are unreliable because, in the *Padmacarita*'s eyes, they narrate the wrong story.

Whereas Brahmanical narratives justify the validity of the *Veda* through recourse to stories about an omniscient author, Mīmāṃsakas justify the validity of the *Veda* through recourse to systematic claims about the authorlessness of the *Veda*. Nārada's dialogical refutation thus extends the *Padmacarita*'s critique of Brahmanical epistemology to Kumārila's theory of the *Veda's* authorlessness. Through the dialogue, Nārada rejects on logical grounds Kumārila's defense of the authorlessness of the *Veda*, his claims against the existence of an omniscient author, and his defense of animal sacrifice. At the level of the story, the mimesis between the character of Saṃvarta and Kumārila, generates an additional critique against Kumārila. Just as Saṃvarta does not take seriously the validity of beliefs about the *Veda* (i.e in the existence of an omniscient author of the *Veda*) that other characters have within the storyworld he inhabits, so too does Kumārila fail to take seriously the validity of the belief in the authorship of the Veda, which is proclaimed by contemporaneous Brahmanical writers. When read together, the story of Parvata and dialogue of Nārada construct Brahmanism as a religion whose believers subscribe to the transcendent authority of the *Veda*, and who follow rituals in accordance with this scripture. However, for the *Padmacarita*, it is a religion that is rife with contradictions, inconsistencies, and discourses that cannot be substantiated.

Finally, I would like to touch on the tone of the *Padmacarita*'s representation. For the *Padmacarita*, every and any discourse that bears association to Brahmanical texts is deeply problematic and the *Padmacarita* takes no pains to hide its view. Brahmā is demonized in order to present him as the antithesis to the Jina. After Nārada has completed his refutation, the

Padmacarita explains that the Brāhmaṇas who accompany Saṃvarta do not accept Nārada's

views.

> [The Brāhmaṇas] trembled excessively with anger that arose from [seeing] Nārada defeat [their] head priest; their minds were entirely devoid of compassion because of studying the meaning of the *Veda*. [253] The pupils of their eyes look like those of a snake. Enraged, they surrounded [Nārada] on all sides and caused an enormous uproar. [254] The evil Brāhmaṇas[75] fastened their waistbands and began to strike [Nārada] with their hands and feet, just as crows do to an owl. [255] As for Nārada, [he hit] some with blows from his hammerlike fists and others with thunderous blows from his heels, just as they did to him. [256] He became extremely tired and out of breath from hitting the Brāhmaṇas with all of his limbs as weapons, which was difficult to maintain. [257] So, after hitting them for some time, he became tired. He was surrounded by many ruthless [Brāhmaṇas], who grabbed him and broke all of his limbs out of their utmost stupidity. [258] [Nārada] was like a bird that suffers excruciating pain when it is bound tightly by snares, unable to fly off into the sky, fearing for his life. [259][76]

Even though Nārada, along with all of the animals being prepared for sacrifice, is eventually

rescued by Rāvaṇa, the import of the subtale is clear. Brāhmaṇas are not even prepared to listen

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[75] "*Sūtrakaṇṭha*." There seems to be double meaning here: the idea being that Brāhmaṇas are those who hold the verses of the Veda in their throats, ready to be recited, and they those who wear the *Brahmasūtra* around their neck. The *Padmacarita* seems to draw on both meanings here since the Brāhmaṇas are described in chapter 11 as those who repeat the words of Brahmā's *Veda* and in chapter 4, they are described as those who wear the *Brahmasūtra*.

[76] *ṛtvikparājayodbhūtakrodhasaṃbhārakampitāḥ /*
vedārthābhyasanātyantadayānirmuktamānasāḥ // PC 11.253
āśīviṣasamāśeṣadṛṣṭatārakalocanāḥ /
āvṛtya sarvataḥ kṣubdhāḥ kṛtvā kalakalaṃ mahat // PC 11.254
baddhvā parikaraṃ pāpāḥ sūtrakaṇṭhāḥ samuddhatāḥ /
hastapādādibhir hantuṃ vāyasā iva kauśikam // PC 11.255
nārado'pi tataḥ kāṃścin muṣṭimudgaratāḍanaiḥ /
 pārṣṇinirghātapātaiś ca kāṃścid anyān yathāgatān // PC 11.256
śastrāyamāṇair niḥśeṣair gātraireva suduḥsahaiḥ /
dvijān jaghāna kurvāṇo recakaṃ śramaṇaṃ bahūn // PC 11.257
atha ghnan sa cirāt khinnaḥ krūrair bahubhir āvṛtaḥ /
gṛhītaḥ sarvagātreṣu bhañjannākulatāṃ parām // PC 11.258
pakṣīva nibiḍaṃ baddhaḥ pāśakair atiduḥkhitaḥ /
viyadutpatanāśaktaḥ samprātaḥ prāṇasaṃśayam // PC 11.259

to logic. They are humans whose violent nature is are likened that of snakes and crows, and whose pitiless actions resemble those of their demonic leader, Brahmā. For the *Padmacarita*, Brahmanism is nothing but a barbaric religion that is the ultimate Other to Jainism.

Unlike earlier Jaina narratives, the *Padmacarita* accounts for the breadth of diverse discourses across genres: narrative, Vedic injunctions, Mīmāṃsā *śāstra*. But it is also a critique that has an incredible depth of engagement with Brahmanical discourses. In the following chapters of this dissertation, it will become clear that the *Padmacarita* set a generic precedence for later Jaina *Purāṇa*s. On the one hand, it set a precedence for inserting dialogues with philosophical discourses into stories that describe the origins of Brahmanism. On the other hand, later Jaina *Purāṇas* dial back the depth of engagement with contemporaneous philosophy and shift the tone of the representation in order to adapt their representations for different audiences. With that said, let us turn now to our second *Purāṇa*, which was composed one century after the *Padmacarita*, Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*.

Chapter 3

Unveiling Hidden Referents:
Representations of Brahmanism in Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*

1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I explored how epistemology becomes a key point of discussion for the *Padmacarita*'s representation of Brahmanism. During the seventh century, in which Raviṣeṇa was writing, philosophers assessed the validity of scriptures from other religious traditions through specifically epistemological arguments. Brahmanical philosophers from the Mīmāṃsā tradition aimed to validate the *Veda* over the Buddhist and Jaina scriptures by demonstrating the particular ways in which one arrives at justified true beliefs. With this in mind, the *Padmacarita*'s use of epistemology as a theme for constructing the religious other reflects the religious and discursive context in which the text was composed. Moreover, epistemological questions allow the *Padmacarita* to construct a hierarchy of religious scriptures, and by extension of religious traditions in a similar way that it allowed Brahmanical philosophers such as Kumārila.

However, in the Brahmanical tradition, questions of scriptural interpretation and the nature of language were as important as questions of epistemology; the correct performance of Vedic ritual, and the attainment of its promised results, depends on the correct interpretation of the scriptural injunctions. We can see the significance of scriptural interpretation from as early as the sixth century before the Common Era, when a corpus of Brahmanical texts known as the *Brāhmaṇa*s sought to specify the contents of sacrificial actions enjoined by the *Veda*. These

commentaries leave no stone unturned. They describe the nature of each action, the materials that should be offered, the length of time of each ritual, and so on and so forth. But despite the elaborate contents of these discussions, the *Brāhmaṇa*s are consistent in their understanding of Vedic sacrifice. They interpret Vedic injunctions as enjoining the sacrifice of animals for the attainment of material rewards, long life, and heaven.

From the early centuries of the Common Era onwards, some Brahmanical texts begin to express interpretations of the *Veda* that diverge from those communicated by the *Veda* and *Brāhmaṇa*s. One Brahmanical narrative that stands out in this regard is the *aja* debate. In Vyāsa's *Mahābhārata,* the *aja* debate describes a dialogue between two sets of Brāhmaṇas who debate the meaning of "*aja*" in the Vedic injunction, "*aja* should be sacrificed," "*ajaiḥ yaṣṭavyam.*"[1] Both sets of Brāhmaṇas accept the validity of the *Veda* as axiomatic, but one set of Brahmins interprets "*aja*" as a "sacrificial animal," in line with the interpretation of the *Veda* itself, while the other set of Brahmins interprets "*aja*" as "seeds," which was historically not sanctioned by the *Veda*. At stake is determining which substance is enjoined as the offering by the *Veda*. The *Mahābhārata* sides with the interpretation that "*aja*" means "seeds." In doing so, the *Mahābhārata* invalidates animal sacrifices that were sanctioned by earlier Brahmanical texts.

Such interpretations of Vedic injunctions did not replace older interpretations. But these diverse interpretations of the *Veda* did provoke a problem that is summarized in the beginning of Kumārila's *Ślokavārttika* in the seventh century.[2] How do we address the issue that many people

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[1] For further discussion see Tamar C. Reich, "Sacrificial Violence and Textual Battles: Inner Textual Interpretation in the Sanskrit Mahābhārata," *History of Religions* 41, no. 2 (2001): 142–69; Michael Baltutis, "Reinventing Orthopraxy and Practicing Worldly 'Dharma': Vasu and Aśoka in Book 14 of the 'Mahābhārata,'" *International Journal of Hindu Studies* 15, no. 1 (2011): 55–100.

[2] *ŚV* 1.1.1.127-28

who accept the validity of the *Veda* still derive contrasting interpretations of the same injunctions? For Kumārila, accepting the *Veda* as a valid means of knowing does not preclude the fact that readers interpret the *Vedas* in diverging, and often contradictory, ways. It is precisely for this reason that epistemological concerns in Mīmāṃsā serve as a prolegomenon to what Lawrence McCrea describes as "the real business of Mīmāṃsā"—the development of a system of textual interpretation of the *Veda*, which constitutes "the most distinctive and most influential contribution of Mīmāṃsakas to Sanskrit linguistic thought and discursive practice."[3] Mīmāṃsakas, such as Śabara and Kumārila, erected a system of scriptural hermeneutics grounded in epistemology that served to elucidate the precise methods for interpreting the *Veda*. Yet, even this highly intricate system of hermeneutics did not check the multiplicity of interpretations derived from Vedic injunctions. The fifth century Mīmāṃsaka, Śabara argues that the Vedic injunctions do not enjoin animal sacrifice, while his seventh century predecessor, Kumārila, argues that the *Veda* does enjoin animal sacrifice.

In the present chapter, we will explore how these diverse understandings of Vedic interpretation are examined in relation to one another by a Jaina *purāṇa* from the eighth century: Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāna*. The *Harivaṃśapurāna* retells the tale of the *aja* debate in the following way. The sage Kṣirakadamba is teaching the *Veda* to his son Parvata and two other students, Nārada and Vasu, when one day he encounters another sage.[4] The sage predicts that two of Kṣirakadamba's students will go to hell as a result of practicing sinful actions and the remaining student will go to heaven because of his meritorious actions.[5] Anxious at this thought,

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[3] Lawrence McCrea, "The Hierarchical Organization of Language in Mīmāṃsā Interpretive Theory," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 28, no. 5/6 (2000): 430.
[4] *HvP* 17.40
[5] *HvP* 17.41

Kṣirakadamba abandons his students and family, leaving his son, Parvata, and his wife, Svastimatī, to grieve for him in his absence.[6]

The text jumps several years ahead so that we rejoin Parvata, Nārada, and Vasu as adults. One day, Nārada and his students visit Parvata, and together they discuss the meaning of the ritual injunction, "*ajair yajñavidhiḥ kāryaḥ svargārthibhir,*" "The sacrificial injunction should be done with *ajas* by those who desire heaven." Parvata states, "It is certain that the word "*aja*" in the injunction that begins with the phrase, "*ajair yaṣṭavyam,*" denotes the object, "*paśu*" (a sacrificial animal), because this meaning has been passed down through reliable transmission. If a twice-born man desires heaven, he should perform a sacrifice by offering animals."[7] Nārada rejects this argument. He refers to the lineage of transmission that they received from their common teacher. "*Aja,*" Nārada explains, refers not to a sacrificial animal, but to "rice seeds." Parvata and Nārada decide that they will take their debate to King Vasu the following day in the hope that the King can adjudicate the correct interpretation.

That evening, Parvata returns home and tells his mother about his interpretation of *aja*. Parvata's mother is distraught because she knows that her son's interpretation contradicts that of her husband, "whose pure thoughts did not diverge from the essence of the collection of all scriptures (*śāstra*)."[8] She sneaks away to Vasu's palace in the middle of the night and entreats Vasu to agree with Parvata's interpretation.[9] Once Vasu agrees, Parvata's mother returns home.

The next day, King Vasu prepares his court for the debate. There, Parvata and Nārada participate in a lengthy debate that constitutes the most substantial innovation to the tale. Parvata

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[6] *HvP* 17.42-50
[7] *HvP* 17.64-5ab
[8] *HvP* 17.77ab
[9] *HvP* 17.78-80

and Nārada each explain the process through which we determine the meaning of words before explaining their respective interpretations of the root injunctions.

After the debate ends, Vasu abides by his promise to Parvata's mother. He declares Parvata to be the winner even though he knows that Parvata's interpretations are wrong. But his falsehood does not go unnoticed. As soon as Vasu declares Parvata to be correct, the demi-gods hurl Vasu to the earth as punishment for his falsehood. When the Kingdom realizes that Nārada is correct, they praise Nārada and send Parvata into exile.[10] The *aja* debate serves as the beginning of an origin tale. Several chapters later, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* narrates how Parvata creates a new religion out of his problematic interpretations, receiving the patronage of another Kingdom that sponsors Vedic rituals throughout the kingdom.

The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*'s tales were composed in a context in which questions of language and scriptural interpretation had become significant for identifying correct religious beliefs and practices. As such, Jinasena reflects on these very topics as a means of constructing the religious other. More precisely, I argue that the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* uses the relation between a word and its referent as a site for defining Brahmanical religion as the religious other. I undertake a close reading of the tale as it unfolds sequentially in the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*. In Part 2, I analyze the introduction to the *aja* debate, which allows us to identify the religious context in which the *aja* debate is set. I return to this staging in part 4 where we will see how the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* re-frames the religious context of the *aja* debate as a way of repositioning the relation between Brahmanism and Jainism. Parts 2 and 3 concentrate on the contents of Parvata's and Nārada's arguments respectively in the *aja* debate. I demonstrate how Parvata's arguments connect multiple Brahmanical texts that subscribe to a common set of terms. Nārada, however,

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[10] *HvP* 17.152-62

anchors Jaina discourses in religious terminology used by Brahmanical texts as a way of highlighting the parallels between Brahmanism and Jainism. Part 4 examines the tales that are narrated after the *aja* debate: the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* narrates how Parvata creates a new religion from the discourses and practices that he cites during the *aja* debate. Moreover, the text contrasts the origin of Brahmanism, the religious other, with a tale that narrates the origin of Jaina religion as the religious self. I demonstrate how these two origin tales continue to use the relation between a word and its referent as a site for defining the identity of the religious other vis-à-vis the religious self.

2. Setting the Scene

As will become clear by the end of this chapter, the sequential order in which events are told in the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* is significant method through which the text constructs Brahmanical religion. We will therefore follow each event as it is told in the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*'s retelling of the *aja* debate, starting with the way in which chapter 17 sets the scene.

Previous retellings clarify the religious context of the *aja* debate by naming the scripture from which the root injunction to be debated derives. In Brahmanical retellings of the *aja* debate, such as those from the *Mahābhārata*, the contested injunction derives is the Brahmanical *Veda.* Jaina texts, too, retell the *aja* debate. They render the *aja* debate as one that pertains to the interpretation of the Jina's words rather than of the Brahmanical *Veda.* Vimalasūri's *Paümacariya* and Raviṣena's *Padmacarita* identify the root scripture, "*forest scriptures*" (Pkt. "*sattam āraṇṇayam*" Skt. "*śāstram āraṇyakam*").[11] They distinguish the Jaina scriptures from the

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[11] *PCV* 11.10; *PC* 11.15

Brahmanical *Veda* by reserving the signifier, "*veda*," for the Brahmanical scriptures alone.[12]

Saṅghadāsa's *Vasudevahiṇḍī* takes a different approach. It labels the root scripture, "*veda" (Pkt. "veya")* but it forestalls the possibility that "*veda*" signifies the Brahmanical scriptures because it explains at the outset of the tale that "*veda*" refers to the teachings of the Jina Ṛṣabha rather than the Brahmanical scriptures.[13]

Unlike the clarity with which the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*'s Brahmanical and Jaina literary predecessors define the religious context of the *aja* debate, the religious context of *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*'s retelling is initially ambiguous. Chapter 17 of the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa,* which is dedicated to narrating the *aja* debate, states that Nārada, Vasu and Parvata were taught the "*Āraṇyaka Veda*" by their teacher, and it describes the *aja* debate as one that pertains to the meaning of the *Veda* ("*vaidikārtha*"), without ever clarifying the referent of "*Veda.*"[14] As a text that retells narratives from the *Vasudevahiṇḍī* as much as narratives from Vyāsa's *Mahābhārata*, it is not clear which retelling the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* aligns with. Nevertheless, the literary

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[12] It is clear from the content of the *Padmacarita* and *Paümacariya* that "āraṇyaka śāstra" does not refer to the collection of texts that are transmitted alongside the Veda Saṃhitās. See Chapter 1 of this dissertation for an extended discussion of the *Padmacarita*'s rejection of Brahmanical scriptures *in toto*.

[13] *Vasudevahiṇḍī* pp.182-193

[14] There is no reason to assume that the reader of the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* would have inferred that the context of its *aja* debate is consistent with that of earlier Jaina retellings. Jaina texts exhibit an inconsistent use of the signifier, "*Veda*" with some Jaina texts, such as the *Padmacarita*, reserving the term to signify Brahmanical scriptures, and other Jaina texts, such as the *Gaṇadharavāda*, fifth century CE, allow "*Veda*" and "*Vaidika*" to refer to the Jina's teachings. See Esther Solomon, trans., *Ganadharavāda* (Ahmedabad: Gujarat Vidya Sabha, 1966). Dundas also notes that some writers refer to the *Ācaraṅga sūtra* as "Veda." See Paul Dundas, *The Jains*, 2nd ed., Library of Religious Beliefs and Practices (London: Routledge, 2002), 44. Moreover, since Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* retells stories from Vyāsa's *Mahābhārata* and *Harivaṃśa* as much as it does from the *Vasudevahiṇḍī*, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* may be retaining the Brahmanical Vedic context of the *aja* debate that is staged by its Brahmanical namesake.

innovations made to the tale that suggest that the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* follows its Brahmanical predecessor in staging the *aja* debate as one that pertains to the Brahmanical *Veda*.

The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* adds new descriptions of the root injunction. The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* refers to the root injunction as "*vedavākya*" ("an expression from the *Veda*") and "*codanāvākya*" ("an injunctive expression"). These compounds are technical terms that are used particularly by Mīmāṃsakas to refer to injunctions expressed by the *Veda*. Such compounds are not used by earlier or contemporaneous Jaina texts to refer to the Jina's words. The use of these compounds in earlier texts that suggests the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* redeploys them as signifiers of the Brahmanical *Veda*.

The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa's* revision to the very words of the injunction lends further weight to this reading. In all previous retellings of the *aja* debate, whether Hindu or Jaina, the root injunction at the heart of the debate is always written as, "*ajair yaṣṭavyam*," "one should sacrifice using *aja*." The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* revises the injunction to "*ajair yajñavidhiḥ kāryaḥ svargārthibhir*," "The sacrificial injunction should be carried out by those who desire heaven using *aja*." This revision puts into practice Mīmāṃsā ideas about the syntax of Vedic expressions: a Vedic expression should communicate an agent, an instrument, an action that ought to be performed, and the result that follows from the performance of said action. In Mīmāṃsā discussions, the injunction, *"agnihotram juhuyāt svargakāmaḥ,"* "He who desires heaven should perform a sacrifice using the *Agnihotra* [rite]", is frequently cited as a paradigmatic injunction precisely because it communicates the agent, the act, the instrument, and the result. The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*'s expansion of the root injunction communicates the subject and result, in line with Mīmāṃsā hermeneutics. And lest this revision be viewed as coincidental, we will soon see that Parvata draws on Mīmāṃsā arguments and even cites Mīmāṃsā's

exemplary injunction, "*agnihotraṃ juhuyāt svargakāmaḥ,*" in support of his interpretation of the

root injunction "*ajair yajñavidhiḥ kāryaḥ svargārthibhir.*"

Far more provocative than the innovations that the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* makes to the

descriptions and wording of the root injunction is the literary setting of the debate. The

Harivaṃśapurāna inserts a description of Vasu's court that replays presentations of the

Brahmanical *Veda* from Brahmanical texts.

> The two sages, Nārada and Parvata, entered the King's assembly and were surrounded by adjudicators who knew the intricacies of all the *Śāstras*. [83] Without exception Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras together with the ascetics (*sāśrāmiṇaḥ*)—came to the assembly of their own accord.[15] [84] Then some people sang melodies (*sāmāni*), which were a sufficient delight to people's ears; there, some wise ones sang [the melodies] clearly. [85] Some who delight in the recitation of hymns that begin with "*auṃ*", recite ritual formulae (*yajuṃsi*); others who delight in the *padakrama* recited mantras. [86] Some pronounce the individual forms [of syllables] that are short, long and prolated; and of tones that are raised, not-raised and mixed. Brahmins recited the *Sāma*, *Ṛg* and *Yajur Veda*. [87] The assembly was quickly filled by brahmins firm in their study, who began to recite the *Sāma*, *Ṛg*, and *Yajur Veda*, deafening the surroundings. [88] [16]

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[15] It is not entirely clear to me what this verse is saying, and a number of scholars have raised a number of queries about this verse that I cannot resolve. In the first case, it is not clear what "*sāśrāmiṇaḥ*" signifies. It may refer to ascetics (lit. "those who dwell in hermitages,") or simply qualify the four classes mentioned (i.e "Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras) by referring to their position in the four stage of life (*brahmacārin, gṛhasta, vanaprastha, samnyāsa*). The more significant problem is with the clause "*aviśeṣādṛte*" which would mean "without non-distinction," but the context suggests that the clause should mean something to the effect of "without exception."

[16] *praviṣṭau ca nṛpāsthānīṃ viprau parvatanāradau /*
sarvaśāstraviśeṣajñaiḥ prāśnikaiḥ parivāritau // HvP 17.83
Brāhmaṇāḥ kṣatriyāḥ vaisyā śūdrā sāśramiṇo 'viśan /
Laukikāḥ sahajaṃ praṣṭumaviśeṣādṛte sabhām // HvP 17.84
Tatsāmāni jaguḥ kecijjanaśrotrasukhānyalam /
Tatra proccāraṇaṃ mṛṣṭaṃ kecid viprāḥ pracakrire // HvP 17.85
Yajūṃsi praṇavārambhaghoṣabhājo 'pare 'paṭhan /
Padakramajuṣo mantrānāmananti sma kecana // HvP 17.86
udāttasyānudāttasya svarasya svaritasya ca /
hrasvadīrghaplutasthasya svarūpamudacīcaran // HvP 17.87
Dvijaiḥ sāmargyajurvedamārabhyādhyayanoddhuraiḥ /
Vadhirīkṛtadikcakrair nicitaṃ sadaso ajiram // HvP 17.88

The above verses resonate less with Jaina descriptions of the Jina's words and more with Brahmanical descriptions of the *Veda*. For instance, they describe the *Veda* as three-fold, consisting of: the *Sāma Veda*, melodies that are sung during the performance of Soma sacrifices; the *Yajur Veda*, ritual formulae that accompany the ritual; and the *Ṛg Veda*, the oldest of the *Vedas* which contains over a thousand hymns dedicated to various divinities. The verses even refer to methods of Vedic recitation. The Brāhmaṇas, who recite mantras in Vasu's court, "delight in the *padakrama*." "*Padakrama*" could be a synonym for the *padapāṭha,* a method of reciting the *Veda* in which the text is expressed without *samdhi* or metrical changes as a way of clarifying the meaning of the text. "*Padakrama*" could also refer two different modes of reciting the *Veda:* the recitation of Vedic words without euphonic changes (*padapāṭha*) and the combination of the first and last syllables of one word with the first and last syllables of the proceeding word (*kramapāṭha*). Whether the Brahmins delight in the *padapāṭha* alone or in the the *padapāṭha* and *kramapāṭha* makes little difference for in either case, the compound refers to modes of recitation that are specific to the Brahmanical *Veda*s. Verse 87 expands on the description of Vedic recitation when it cites the individual pitch accents used by the reciters. Pitch accents are also a feature that is particular to the recitation of the Brahmanical *Veda*. They disambiguate the grammatical and lexical comprehension of Sanskrit words used by the *Vedas*, allowing the reciter to transmit the meaning of the eternal, unauthored *Vedas* without introducing interpolation or error.

Together, the literary innovations that Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* makes to staging of the debate defines the debate as one pertains to the Brahmanical *Veda*. Chapter 17 identifies the root text as "*Veda*" without clarifying the meaning of the signifier. While the absence of referentiality leaves open the possibility that "*Veda*" signifies the Jina's words, the

Harivaṃśapurāṇa's two literary innovations—the revision of the root injunction according to Mīmāṃsā hermeneutics and the description of the Vedic recitation in Vasu's court—when read in the context of earlier Brahmanical literature delimit the possibility that "*Veda*" signifies anything other than the Brahmanical *Veda*. The stage is set for a debate written on Brahmanical terms.

3.0 Parvata's Arguments

Now that we have established that the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* introduces the *aja* debate as one that pertains to the interpretation of the Brahmanical *Veda*, we can turn to the debate itself. The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*'s most significant innovation to the tale is the inclusion of a systematic dialogue in which Parvata and Nārada discuss the nature of language and scriptural interpretation. In this section, I undertake a close reading of Parvata's position, which is marked as the *prima facie* view (*pūrvapakṣa*),[17] in order to explain how the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* unifies multiple Brahmanical texts into a single position defined by their acceptance of a common religious vocabulary.

Parvata argues that "*aja*" refers to "sacrificial animal" (*paśu*). His argument unfolds through a systematic analysis of each word in the root injunction from the *Veda*: "*ajair yajñavidhiḥ kāryaḥ svargārthibhir,*" "The sacrificial injunction should be carried out with *aja* by those who desire heaven." Before Parvata expresses the meaning of each word, he begins with the question of how we determine the meaning of Vedic words in the first place. The *Veda* consists of linguistic expressions that enjoin acts for benefit the agent; the correct performance of

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[17] *HvP* 17.98

religious practices is therefore predicated on determining the correct meaning of the *Veda*. The

polysemic nature of words, however, hinders this interpretative task. How can we understand the

meaning of Vedic injunctions, such as "*ajair yajñavidhiḥ kāryaḥ svargārthibhir,*" if every word

signifies multiple, contradicting referents? Parvata counters this problem. He argues that because

the relation between a word and its referent is fixed, words have only a single referent.

> There is a Vedic injunction that states, "The sacrificial injunction should be carried out with *aja* by those who desire heaven" (*ajairyajñavidhiḥ kāryaḥ svargārthibhir*). It is clear that in such sentences, "*aja*" are four-legged animals that are offered into the sacrifice [99]. That the word "*aja*" expresses a sacrificial animal is not only recognized by the *Veda*; it is also recognized in the world [by people] including old people, women and children. [100] [For example,] there are statements such as, "That man smells like a goat (*ajagandhaḥ*)" and "The milk of the goat (*ajāyāḥ kṣīram*)." These are conventionally established expressions (*prasiddhi*) [that] cannot be overturned even by the thirty gods. [101]
> Given that there is a relation of concomitance between words and their meanings, if we were to go against this fixed relation, we would have no way of engaging in discursive activity—the world would be a blind owl. [102] By contrast, a word operates when these linguistic principles are not overturned; and this being the case, practical activity, whether it is in the context of scriptural injunctions [*śāstrīyaḥ*] or worldly activity [*laukikaḥ*], [will operate] with respect to its appropriate object. [103][18]

Parvata's justification begins with the following claim: there must be a fixed, one-to-one

relation between a word and its referent because this fixed relation is observed every time any

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[18] *ajairyajñavidhiḥ kāryaḥ svargārthibhiriti śrutiḥ /*
ajāścātra catuṣpadāḥ praṇītāḥ prāṇinaḥ sphuṭam // HvP 17.99
na kevalamayam vede loke 'pi paśuvācakaḥ /
āvṛddhādaṅganābalādajaśabdaḥ pratīyate // HvP 17.100
naro 'japotagandho 'yamajāyāḥ kṣīramityapi /
nāpanetumiyam śakyā prasiddhistridaśairapi // HvP 17.101
siddhaśabdārthasaṃbandhe niyate tasya bādhane /
vyavahāravilopaḥ syādandhaghūkamidam jagat // HvP 17.102
abādhitaḥ punarnyāye śabde śabdaḥ pravarttate /
śāstrīyo laukikaścātra vyavahāraḥ sugocare // HvP 17.103

speaker uses the word. This claim draws on a distinction between knowledge that is derived by convention (*prasiddhi*, *rūḍhi*) and knowledge that is derived by grammatical derivation (*siddhi*). We do not learn the meaning of "*aja*" through an etymological analysis of the word as "*a*"+√"*jan*" ("unborn"). Rather, we learn the meaning of words by observing how those words are used by other individuals in the world through everyday expressions such as, "That man smells like a goat (*ajagandhaḥ*)." If the relation is not fixed—which is to say, if speakers use words to signify any or multiple referents—then discursive activity would not be possible for we would not be able to determine which particular referent the speaker uses the word to signify. In this way, this relation between a word and its referent is fixed insofar as the relation is observed every time an individual uses the word, and the relation is conventional because it is acquired through how speakers use words. This argument for the monosemic nature of words explains why, for Parvata, the meaning of a word expressed by the *Veda* is no different from the meaning of the same word when it is expressed in non-Vedic contexts. We observe a relation between word and its referent that operates irrespective of the context in which those words are expressed. If contextual differences do not alter the relation between a word and its meaning, we can derive the meaning of Vedic expressions through recourse to the linguistic relations that we observe in the world. Thus, on Parvata's account, we determine the meaning of "aja" in Vedic expressions with recourse to the way the word is used in non-vedic expressions such as, "That man smells like a goat (*ajagandhaḥ*)," because the relation between the word "*aja*," and its referent "sacrificial animal" is fixed through conventions.

Parvata's position expresses philosophical arguments that were being composed in the same era by Mīmāṃsakas, the Brahmanical exegetes of the *Veda*. Mīmāṃsakas argue that we understand the meaning of words because there is a fixed relation between a word and a referent

that is observed by all speakers. We find a clear statement of this position in *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* 1.1.5, which states that there is an eternal relation between words and their referents. Śabara, the fifth century commentator of the *Mīmāṃsāsūtras*, explains in his commentary to this aphorism that people learn the meaning of words after they observe how the word is used by others in everyday discourse: "Children are seen, visibly, to learn meanings upon hearing their elders using words in their own senses. Those elders too, when they were children, learned from other elders, and they again from others."[19] The arguments of Śabara, and his seventh century commentator, Kumārila, are more technical than that of Parvata since they deploy the epistemological argument of intrinsic validity to substantiate their claims. Namely, we can justifiably believe that there is a fixed, eternal relation between words and their referents because we perceive children learning the meaning of words in each generation, and there is no forthcoming cognition that would reveal the relation to be acquired in any other way. Parvata voices the Mīmāṃsā understanding of language without deferring to their intricate epistemology.

Parvata's claim in vv.102-3—that discursive activity would not be possible unless there exist fixed relations between words and their relations—is similarly expressed by Śabara in his commentary on *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* 1.3.30: "The words in the *Veda* are the same as those in common speech, as are their object. Why? (Otherwise) there would be no injunction of action. The injunction of action is only possible if words are the same as objects. If words were different, their objects could not be known."[20] All words, whether they are used in technical or everyday circumstances, are expressive of meaning, and the fact that there exist fixed relations between all

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[19] Lawrence McCrea, *Selections from Śabarabhāṣya, forthcoming*. See also: *ŚBh* 1.1.5-23
[20] *ŚBh* 1.3.30; Śabarasvāmi, *Śābarabhāṣya*, trans. Ganganatha Jha, vol. 66, 70, 73, Gaekwad's Oriental Series; (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1933), 116–17. For a discussion of *ŚBh* 1.3.30, see Othmar Gächter, *Hermeneutics and Language in Pūrva Mīmāṃsā: A Study in Śābara Bhāṣya*, 1st ed. (Dehli: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983), 71–73.

words and their referents makes discursive activity possible.[21] Although Parvata expresses Mīmāṃsā claims in a more simplified form, his argument does not lead to the same conclusion. Parvata agrees with Mīmāṃsakas on the point that there exists a fixed relation between a word and its referent irrespective of the context in which that word is used. However, Mīmāṃsakas distinguish the Vedic expressions from non-Vedic expressions on the ground that the *Veda* is the exclusive means of knowing "*dharma*." The fact that this distinction, combined with the Mīmāṃsā theory of intrinsic validity, is not mentioned by Parvata indicates less a misreading on the part of the Parvata or the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa,* and more an attempt to undermine Mīmāṃsā discourses. It easier to critique the claim that there is no difference between Vedic and non-Vedic expressions than it is to critique the theory of intrinsic validity or the claim that there is a distinction between contexts. Indeed, as we will later see, Nārada's correct position relies on a distinction between Vedic and non-Vedic expressions. The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* elides the technicalities of Mīmāṃsā arguments as a way of undermining their validity.

The intertextual relation between Parvata's arguments and Mīmāṃsā texts is brought to bear again in the following verses, in which Parvata refers to a Vedic injunction that is commonly cited in Mīmāṃsā discourses: "*agnihotram juhuyāt svargakāmaḥ.*"

> Just as in the Vedic injunction, "*agnihotram juhuyāt svargakāmaḥ*" ("He who desires heaven should sacrifice [with] the *Agnihotra* rite"), there is a conventionally accepted understanding of the meaning of [each] word [in the injunction] beginning with "*agni*"; in the same way, the meaning of the word "*aja*" in "*ajairyajñavidhiḥ kāryaḥ svargārthibhir*" is clear. [104-105ab]. How do

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[21] For a more detailed discussion of Mīmāṃsā and its theory of language, see McCrea, "The Hierarchical Organization of Language in Mīmāṃsā Interpretive Theory"; Monika Nowakowska, "From Permanent Phonemes to Words," in *The Bloomsbury Research Handbook of Indian Philosophy of Language*, ed. Alessandro Graheli (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2020), 27–41; Elisa Freschi, "Meanings of Words and Sentences in Mīmāṃsā," in *The Bloomsbury Research Handbook of Indian Philosophy of Language*, ed. Alessandro Graheli (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2020), 143–61.

we understand the meaning of "*yaj*"? [*Yaj*] is determined to mean "the slaughter of animals" (*paśupāta*). [105cd] Therefore, the action that is enjoined by injunctions such as "*ajair yaṣṭavyaṃ,*" once all of the doubts are dispelled, is the slaughter of young goats. [106][22]

Parvata resorts to a second Vedic injunction, "*agnihotram juhuyāt svargakāmaḥ,*" to support his interpretation of "*aja*" in the root injunction that is under examination, "*ajair yajñavidhiḥ kāryaḥ svargārthibhir.*" He contends that we know that "*agnihotra*" refers to a particular Vedic sacrifice because there is a one-to-one relation between the word, "*agnihotra*" and the referent, a particular sacrificial ritual. Parvata suggests that we derive the meaning of "*aja*" in the syntactically similar injunction, "*ajair yajñavidhiḥ kāryaḥ svargārthibhir*" in the exact same way that we derive the meaning of "*agnihotra*" in "*agnihotram juhuyāt svargakāmaḥ.*" That is, we derive the meaning of the instrument ("*aja*," "*agnihotra*") through recourse to conventionally fixed relations. However, Parvata's comparison breaks down in the context of Mīmāṃsā discourses because "*agnihotra*" is the proper name of a particular Vedic sacrifice whereas "*aja*" is a common noun. Unlike common nouns, proper names of rituals do not express anything about the specific actions that the practitioner must perform; and therefore, a reader could not know which actions specifically are being signified by proper nouns. Parvata's assumption that the meaning of "*agnihotra*" is derived in the exact same manner as "*aja*" contradicts Mīmāṃsaka discussions, which argue that the meaning of "*agnihotra*" and other such proper nouns are derived through an understanding of expressions that surround the primary injunction and that

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[22]*yathāgnihotraṃ juhuyāt svargakāma iti śrutau /*
agniprabhṛtiśabdānāṃ prasiddhārthaparigrahaḥ // HvP 17.104
tathaivatrājaśabdasya paśurarthaḥ sphuṭaḥ sthitaḥ /
kutra yāgādiśabdārthaḥ paśupātaśca niścitaḥ // HvP 17.105
ato anuṣṭhānamāstheyamajapotanipātanaṃ /
ajair yaṣṭavyam ityatra vākyairniṣṭhitasaṃśayaiḥ // HvP 17.106 emd: *nistita, niṣkṛta*

specify the contents of the rite.[23] Parvata's use the example of "*agnihotra*" as supporting

evidence for the claim that we should interpret "*aja*" according to conventionally established

meanings is inconsistent with interpretations that Mīmāṃsakas forward. Again, the

Harivaṃśapurāṇa's presentation of the Mīmāṃsā position obscures the finer details of their

hermeneutics as a way of frustrating their validity.

Parvata's second set of arguments, which reinterpret the meaning of "*jīva*" and

"*svargakāma*," address the violence involved in sacrificing animals for Vedic sacrifice. The

overarching claim of this section is that one should not be anxious about killing animals in

sacrifice because the animal does not experience pain when it is sacrificed (vv.107ab). Parvata

provides a number of justifications in support of this claim. For one thing, Parvata argues, the

incantations (*mantras*) uttered during the sacrifice cause the animal to experience a pleasurable

death.[24] For another, Parvata explains, animal's soul is ontologically distinct from the material

body.

> In any case, what is killed? The soul, which resides as a subtle essence
> (*sūkṣmatām*), cannot be killed by [gross objects] such as fire, poison or weapons,
> much less by the recitation of mantras. [109][25]

According to verse 109, one should not be anxious at the prospect of killing animals for sacrifice

because the animal's soul is not affected by material objects. A soul that is subtle in nature

cannot, by definition, be affected by gross objects such as fire and weapons. The context and

contents of Parvata's argument in verses 107ab and 109 resonates with that of the *Bhagavadgītā*

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[23] On the Mīmāṃsā interpretation of proper names, see McCrea, "The Hierarchical Organization
of Language in Mīmāṃsā Interpretive Theory," 435-36.
[24] *HvP* 17.107cd-8
[25] *Nipātanam kasyātra yatrātmā sukṣmatāṃ śritaḥ /*
Avadhyo agniviṣāstrādyaiḥ kiṃ punarmantravāhanaiḥ // HvP 17.109

(200 BCE-200 CE). Chapter 2 of the *Bhagavadgītā* opens with Arjuna, who is overwhelmed with anxiety at the thought of killing his family in the upcoming war.[26] Kṛṣṇa challenges Arjuna's reasoning: "How can a man bring about the death of something that he knows is indestructible, invariable, unborn, and imperishable? Whom does he kill?"[27] Kṛṣṇa explains that there is no reason for Arjuna to grieve over the prospect of killing his family because the soul is a subtle, immaterial essence that is distinct from the transient physical body in which it resides. It cannot be afflicted by material actions:[28] "Blades do not piece it, fire does not burn it, waters do not wet it, and wind does not parch it."[29] Just as the *Bhagavadgītā*'s claims about the subtle nature of the soul curb Arjuna's anxiety and provide one justification for Arjuna to kill his opponents in the war, so too does Parvata's claim that the soul is a subtle entity, unaffected by gross objects such as fire and weapons, curb his opponent's anxiety (*āśaṅkā*) about killing.[30] Of course, the major difference is that the *Bhagavadgītā* uses the nature of the soul as a justification for a *particular* act of violence that Arjuna, as a warrior, must perform in order to win a cosmic war. Parvata uses the same claim about the subtle nature of the soul to justify blanket acts of sacrificial violence.

The identification of the *Bhagavadgītā* as one possible intertext of verse 109 is secondary to the primary point that Parvata makes in this verse; there is a one-to-one correlation between the word, "*jīva*" and the object, the subtle essence that resides in each living being. Recognizing that verse 109 draws on discourses from the *Bhagavadgītā* generates a second level of

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[26] *BhG* 2.1-10
[27] *vedāvināśinaṃ nityaṃ ya enam ajamavyayam /*
kathaṃ sa puruṣaḥ pārtha kaṃ ghātayati hanti kam // BhG 2.21
[28] See *Bhg* 2.11ff
[29] *nainaṃ chindanti śastrāṇi nainaṃ dahati pāvakaḥ /*
na cainaṃ kledayanty āpo na śoṣayati mārutaḥ // BhG 2.23
[30] *āśaṅkā ca na kartavyā paśoriha nipātane / HvP 17.107ab*

interpretation at the meta level of the text. Parvata uses an argument from the *Bhagavadgītā* to justify the Mīmāṃsā commitment to animal sacrifice even though Mīmāṃsaka texts neither invoke this ontological claim nor consider the *Bhagavadgītā* to be a valid scripture. The recontextualization of the *Bhagavadgītā*'s argument unifies two discourses that Brahmanical texts present as distinct. More pertinently, this recontextualization mocks the *Bhagavadgītā*'s argument because it is re-presented as justifying Vedic animal sacrifices, if not all forms of violence, neither of which the *Bhagavadgītā* promotes.

As a final justification for the performance of animal sacrifice, Parvata refers in verses 110-112 to the beneficial results that arise from performing such rituals. These verses can be read as an explanation of "*svargārthin*" and its synonym "*svargakāma*" in the Vedic injunctions, "*ajair yajñavidhiḥ kāryaḥ svargārthibhir*" and "*agnihotraṃ juhuyāt svargakāmaḥ*," respectively.

> Sacrificers who pacify [*śamitāraḥ*] the animal dispatch its eyes to the sun, its ears to the cardinal directions, its life breath to the wind, its blood to the waters and its body to the earth. [110] The animal is sent to heaven by the [sacrificer's] own mantras as soon as it is sacrificed, and it experiences abundant joy until the end of time, just as the sacrificer [goes to heaven and enjoys pleasure as a result of performing a sacrifice]. [111] Tying up an animal [for sacrifice] leads to heaven when it is done with the animal's consent; [but] there will be no beneficial outcome if an animal is forcibly sacrificed with ghee etc.—which is to say, when the animal says "no." [112][31]

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[31] *sūryaṃ cakṣurdiśaṃ śrotraṃ vāyuṃ prāṇānasṛkpayaḥ /*
gamayanti vapuḥ pṛthvīṃ śamitāro 'sya yājñikāḥ // HvP 17.110
svamantreṇeṣṭamātreṇa svarlokaṃ gamitaḥ sukhaṃ /
yājakādivadākalpamanalpaṃ paśuraśnute // HvP 17.111
abhisaṃdhikṛto bandhaḥ svargāptaiḥ so asya netyapi /
na balādyājyamānasya śiśorvṛddhirghṛtādibhiḥ // HvP 17.112

Verses 110-12 continue to address the ethics of sacrificing animals, this time through recourse to the teleological results. The performance of animal sacrifice does not, on Parvata's account, lead to negative effects such as suffering or rebirth in hell. On the contrary, sacrifice leads the agent of the ritual to heaven. Parvata even claims that it leads the leads the animal, the object of sacrifice, to heaven.

When we read these verses independent of the history of Vedic texts, such claims might seem somewhat ridiculous for they contradict our experience of the sacrifice as well as the grammar of the injunction. Parvata seems to read the animal as a second, possible subject of "*svargakāma*" ("he who desires heaven"), which of course makes no grammatical sense because "*svargakāma*" must refer to the agent of the ritual, the sacrificer. (The animal cannot be the agent of sacrifice.) Even if we did not read Parvata as interpreting the subject of "*svargakāma*" to refer to the animal, the idea that the animal is killed by incantations (rather than by physical violence), that it peacefully consents to being sacrificed, and that is enjoys heavenly pleasures after being sacrifice contradicts our perceptual experience of animal sacrifice. We never witness any of the above.

The contradiction between Parvata's claims and the reality of animal sacrifice is heightened by Parvata's use of the word "*śamitāraḥ*" as a signifier for "the agents of sacrifice" in verse 110. Vedic texts employ "*śamitṛ*" as a technical term that refers to a specific manner in which the agent of the sacrifice slaughters the animal: The sacrificer covers the animal's mouth while he beats the animal severely on the testicles until the animal dies from suffocation. Such texts give the etymology of *"śamitṛ,"* as "silence-maker" because the sacrificer prevents the

animal from making any sound while it is being slaughtered.[32] While Parvata uses the term in a way that is consistent with that of Vedic texts—insomuch as he continues to use *śamitṛ* to refer euphemistically to the sacrificer— because Parvata is cast as the antithetical position in the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*, his use of the term, *śamitṛ,* is ironic. Parvata claims that the sacrificer does not harm animals and that the animal does not cry out in pain, all the while using a technical signifier that conveys the violence inflicting onto the animal. This re-presentation not only undermines Parvata's understanding of sacrificial killings, but it undermines Parvata's claims about monosemy. There are multiple meanings and connotations to the word, *śamitṛ,* and contrary to Parvata's claims, we need to refer to the context in which a word is used in order to determine its meaning.

At first glance, verses 110-12 read as weak justifications for performing animal sacrifices because Parvata's arguments go against the syntax of the injunction as well as our conventional experience of animal sacrifice. However, when these verses are contextualized with Brahmanical texts, Parvata's arguments begin to read as a serious representation of Brahmanical rituals. Verses 110-12 paraphrase the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, a compendium of ritual expositions that are connected to the *Ṛg Veda*. Most relevant to our concerns is section 2.6 of the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa,* which is entitled, "The formula to be recited at the slaughter (*śamitā*) of an animal."[33] That the sacrificer in *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* 2.6 is called, "*śamitṛ*" does not in itself demonstrate that this passage is an intertext for Parvata's arguments, since the term is not confined to the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*. What makes *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* 2.6 a likely candidate for an intertext is the similarity between the narrative context and contents of the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* 2.6 and that of

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[32] Martin Haug, *The Aitareya Brahmanam of the Rigveda,* (Delhi: Bharatiya Publishing House, 1976-77), 58. fn. 8.

[33] Haug, *The Aitareya Brahmanam of the Rigveda*, 58–61.

Parvata's arguments. *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* 2.6 describes a particular mode of sacrificing an animal in which the animal must consent to being offered before it is killed: The gods persuade the goat to be sacrificed by declaring that they will lead the goat to heaven. This recalls Parvata's claims that the animal must agree to be sacrificed and that it will enjoy heaven as a result of being sacrificed. In addition, notice that the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* 2.6 enjoins the following ritual formula to be uttered by the sacrificer before he dismembers the animal:

> "Turn its feet northwards! Make its eyes go to the sun, send its breath to the wind, its life breath to the air, its ears to the sky, its body to the earth." Having uttered these words, he [the sacrificer] connects the animal with these worlds. [34]

The wording of the ritual formula parallels Parvata's words in verse 110: "Sacrificers who quieten [*śamitāraḥ*] the animal dispatch its eyes to the sun, its ears to the cardinal directions, its life breath to the wind, its blood to the waters and its body to the earth."[35] The fact that Parvata's arguments draw on an existing Brahmanical text is significant. It lends textual support to arguments that are unsubstantiated on perceptual and grammatical grounds, rendering what was previously an incredible argument, credible. In fact, Mīmāṃsakas similarly draw from passages from the Vedic corpus, and interpret them in a figurative sense, to support their commitments to Vedic sacrifice.[36] Parvata's method for interpreting Vedic injunctions aligns with Mīmāṃsā methods of scriptural interpretation.

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[34] *Udīcīnāmasya pado 'pi dhattāt sūryaṃ cakṣur gamayatādvātaṃ prāṇaṃ anvavasṛjatādantarikṣamasuṃ diśaḥ śrotraṃ pṛthivīṃ śarīram ityeṣu evainam tallokeṣu ādadhāti ekadhāsya tvacam āchyatāt purā nābhyā api / Aitr Br 2.6*
[35] *sūryaṃ cakṣurdiśaṃ śrotraṃ vāyuṃ prāṇānasṛkpayaḥ /*
gamayanti vapuḥ pṛthvīṃ śamitāro 'sya yājñikāḥ // HvP 17.110
[36] This method of interpretation is known as *arthavāda*.

Parvata's entire justification of animal sacrifice, from vv.107-112, supports the Mīmāṃsā commitment to animal sacrifice. *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* 1.1.2 defines "*dharma*" as sacrificial acts that are enjoined by Vedic injunctions for the sake of beneficial results ("*artha*"). Mīmāṃsakas anticipate the objection that animal sacrifice could not be a "*dharma*" since violence towards animals is not, by definition, an act that promotes or preserves the animal's wellbeing. Although Parvata does not draw on the justifications expressed by Mīmāṃsakas themselves, his justifications—that sacrifice neither affects the animal's soul nor inflicts physical pain, and that the sacrifice leads the agent and the object to heaven—nevertheless support the Mīmāṃsā claim that there is no contradiction between the definition of dharma as both including animal sacrifices leading to beneficial results. In short, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* connects multiple Brahmanical discourses and interpretative methods in support of the Mīmāṃsā commitment to animal sacrifices.

In sum, Parvata argues that the relation between words and their referents is fixed as a way of justifying that the *Veda* enjoins animal sacrifice for the sake of beneficial results. More than this, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* has Parvata voice discourses from diverse Brahmanical texts. These discourses include: Brahmanical retellings of the *aja* debate; Mīmāṃsā discussions of hermeneutics and their interpretation of Vedic sacrifices; the *Bhagavadgītā*'s discussion of the nature of the soul and dharma; and the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*'s depiction of animal sacrifice. Even though Brahmanical texts treat these discourses as distinct, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* unifies them into a single coherent religious position embodied by Parvata because they subscribe to the same conceptual terminology. At the same time, the relations fashioned between these Brahmanical texts allow the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* to expose contradictions in their interpretations of scriptural words. Put simply, the relation between a word and its referent is a site in which the

Harivaṃśapurāṇa unifies Brahmanical discourses into a single position characterized by inconsistent interpretations of the same scriptural words.

4. Nārada's arguments

After Parvata explicates his arguments, Nārada, whom the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* will crown the winner of the debate, details his own arguments through a reinterpretation of every word in the root injunction, "*ajair yajñavidhiḥ kāryaḥ svargārthibhiḥ*." Nārada rejects the referents that are accepted by Parvata in favor of referents that align with Jaina religious commitments. In doing so, Nārada locates Jaina discourses in the words of the Brahmanical *Veda*.

We will begin with Nārada's explanation of the process through which we interpret Vedic expressions. Contrary to Parvata, Nārada argues we should not appeal to conventional or individual interpretations of words when trying to understand Vedic injunctions. Vedic expressions have a context that is distinct from that of non-Vedic expressions and as such, we cannot defer to non-vedic contexts, such as everyday parlance, in order to understand the meaning of the *Veda*.

> What Parvata claimed with respect to injunction, "*ajair yajñavidhiḥ kāryaḥ svargārthibhir"* is false: The idea that "*aja*" refers to sacrificial animals is his own fanciful thinking. [115] The way to understanding the meaning of Vedic expressions is not through recourse to one's own interpretations because this [method for determination] overlooks teachings that are given by a reliable speaker [*āptād*] such as Vedic instruction. [116] The determination of the meaning of words is observed through recourse to meanings [that are transmitted] through a previous lineage of teachers. If that [determination] was produced through another means, then Vedic instruction would be distinct [from the determination of the meaning of words]. [117] Or else, if we accept that Vedic instruction is distinct [from the determination of the meaning of Vedic words],

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then [there would be the fault] that the determination of Vedic words is distinct from Vedic instruction. [118ab][37]

Just because an individual might use "*aja*" to refer to "goat" in one context does not mean that "*aja*" refers to "goat" in every context. The meaning of a word differs according to the context in which it is used. The context-dependent nature of words means that we cannot defer to non-Vedic expressions as a way of understanding Vedic expressions. Instead, the meaning of Vedic expressions is derived from teachings of reliable individuals (*āpta*), such as teachers who transmit the meaning of the *Vedas* to their students in accordance with the meaning that they learnt from their teachers. This argument aligns with the narrative context of the *aja* debate insofar as the teacher, Kṣirakadamba, who is depicted as the knower of all scriptures (*śāstra*),[38] transmits the meaning of the *Veda* to his students, Parvata, Nārada and Vasu, during the period of Vedic instruction.[39] Verses 117-18 elaborate on this point, explaining that Vedic instruction is concomitant with learning the meaning of Vedic expressions. If we were to claim that there exists no such relation of concomitance, then this would lead to the undesirable consequence that Vedic instruction would be a context distinct from the context through which we learn the meaning of Vedic injunctions: To undergo Vedic instruction is precisely to learn the correct meaning of the *Vedas*. The point of Nārada's argument is to establish Vedic instruction as the

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[37] *ajairityādike vākye yanmṛṣā parvato abravīt /*
ajāḥ paśavo ityevamasyaiṣā svamanīṣikā // HvP 17.115
svābhiprāyavaśād vede na śabdārthagatir yataḥ /
vedādhyayanavatsāptādupadeśamupekṣate // HvP 17.116
gurupūrvakramādarthāddṛṣyaḥ śabdārthaniścitaḥ /
sānyathā yadi jāyeta jāyetādhyayanaṃ tathā // HvP 17.117
athādhyayanamanyaḥ syādanyat syādarthavedanaṃ / HvP 17.118ab
[38] *HvP 17.77ab*
[39] Nārada refers to this background explicitly in *HvP 17.120*

privileged site of Vedic interpretation and by extension, that the correct interpretation of the

Veda is one that relays the interpretations passed down from teachers to students.

While Nārada's argument regarding the need for reliable teachers reads as a significant

justification for confining the interpretation of Vedic injunction to the context of Vedic

instruction, the justification itself is unexplored. The concept of reliability (*āptatva*) has different

valiances for Brahmanical and Jaina traditions.[40] Yet, Nārada does not explain that he

understands reliability in the Jaina sense: the Jina is the ultimate reliable speaker because he has

attained omniscience. The ambiguity allows for the possibility that Nārada is referring to the

reliability of individual teachers broadly without committing to Jaina discourses about the

omniscience of the Jina, which would require further justification or even a prior acceptance on

the part of the reader.

In verses 121-28, Nārada moves on to explaining the polysemic nature of words such as

"*go*" and "*aja*" in order to reinterpret these words on Jaina lines.

> Here in the world, there are numerous words-- such as "*go*" -- that sound
> the same but have different meanings. But their different applications [are

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[40] The claim that the meaning of religious scriptures is derived specifically through a lineage of reliable speakers is one that resonates with multiple religious traditions. Mīmāṃsakas and Naiyāyikas argue, albeit with different nuances, that the meaning of the *Vedas* is transmitted through a lineage of teachers: For Mīmāṃsakas, this lineage is *ad infinitum*, whereas for Naiyāyikas, the lineage is finite because they believe the Vedas to have been authored by an omniscient deity. In the context of Jaina discourses, the qualification of reliability refers to the Jina, whose omniscience renders his teachings authoritative, as well as to Jaina teachers, who preserve the transmission of the Jina's teaching through an unbroken lineage of teachers. See Jayandra Soni, "The Notion of Āpta in Jaina Philosophy," The 1995 Roop Lal Jain Lecture (Centre for South Asian Studies: University of Toronto, 1996).

But, neither the narrator of the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* nor Nārada elaborates on the qualification of reliability. It is only five chapters after the *aja* debate is told, when the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* narrates the origin of "*Veda*," that we realize that Nārada's criterion of reliability is in fact limited to Jaina discourses: By the time the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* narrates the *aja* debate, it has not qualified the context of "*āpta,*" much less, "*veda*" by the time the reader reaches the *aja* debate in chapter 17.

evident] because there is a difference in the object [to which the word applies]. [121] In the realms of speech, there are individual instances in which the word "*go*" is used to refer to a domestic animal, a ray of light, a forest animal, directions, thunder, and a horse. [122] A cognition of a ray of light does not arise when we hear the word "*citragur*" ("one who possesses brindled cows"), and, alternatively, a cognition of an animal possessing a dew-lap etc. does not arise when we hear the word "*aśitaguḥ*" ("sun"). [123]. It is through conventions and the verb that is used that the applicability of words to their referents is established. Those in whom the teaching is not well-established forget this (convention), which is taught by the teacher. [124]

Therefore, if you say that "*aja*" in Vedic injunctions means "not born" because of the proximity to the meaning of the verbal root √"*jan*," then this meaning is distinct from the conventional meaning of "*aja*." [125] Because conventional words take precedence (over etymologically derived words), the application of expressions such as "He smells like a goat" is not prohibited by wise ones in the context of the *Veda* or worldly action. [126] Therefore, the fault that was previously raised [by Parvata] (that is, the inapplicability to all worldly activity), does not apply to our position because words that are used for practical purposes relate to their own appropriate context. [127] The word "*aja*" refers to rice seeds that have not undergone the process of modification that causes germination when the nexus of causal factors, such as earth [water, sunlight] etc. are present. And the meaning of the injunction is that the act of worship (*yajanam*) is [to be carried out] using those [seeds]. [128][41]

The above verses make explicit a claim that was implicit in Nārada's opening verses—namely,

that words are polysemic and we derive the particular meaning of a word by referring to the

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[41] *samānaśrutikāḥ śabdāḥ santi loke 'tra bhūriśāḥ /*
gavādayaḥ prayogo 'pi teṣāṃ viṣayabhedataḥ // HvP 17.121
paśuraśmimṛgākṣāśavajravājiṣu vāgbhuvoḥ /
gośabdavyaktayo vyaktāḥ prayujyante pṛthakpṛthak // HvP 17.122
na hi citragurityatra raśmirvastuni śemuṣī /
na cāsitagurityatra sāsnādimati vartate // HvP 17.123
rūḍhyā kriyāvaśādvācye vācāṃ vṛttiravasthitā /
tāmasthiropadeśās tu vismaranti gurūditam // HvP 17.124
tadatra codanāvākye rūḍhiśabdārthadūragaḥ /
kriyāśabdasya cāmnānato na jāyata iti hyājāḥ // HvP 17.125 (variant: *samāmnāto)*
aiśvaryaṃ rūḍhiśabdasya vidvadbhir lokaśāstrayoh /
ajagandho 'yam ityādau prayogo na niṣidhyate // HvP 17.126
tena pūrvoktadoṣo 'pi naivāsmākaṃ prasajyate /
vyavahāropayogitvād vācāṃ svocitagocare // HvP 17.127
satyāṃ kṣityādisāmagryāmaprarohādiparyayāḥ /
vrīhayo ajāḥ padārtho 'yaṃ vākyārtho yajanaṃ tu taiḥ// HvP 17.128

context in which it is used. Verses 121-24 use the word "*go"* as evidence for the polysemic nature of words. "*Go*" is an example of a word that has multiple possible referents, including: an animal, a ray of light, a forest animal, directions, thunder, and horses. We determine the meaning of a word when we index the word to the context in which it is used. Thus, "*aśitaguḥ*" produces the cognition, "sun" rather than "an animal possessing a dewlap" because "*aśitaguḥ*" uses the word "*go*" in a particular context that is distinct from other expressions in which "*go*" is used. Nārada is not objecting to Parvata's claim *that* we understand the meaning of words through observation of conventional uses of language rather than through the etymological derivation of words. His point, rather, is that such observations regarding the conventional use of language do not lead to the conclusion that words are monosemic. Words must be polysemic precisely because we witness people using the same word to refer to different referents in different contexts. Accordingly, the absence of fixed relations between words and referents does not, as Parvata claimed (v.107), lead to the loss of all discursive activity since discursive activity is predicated on words being indexed to their appropriate context. Nārada's argument, regarding the polysemic nature of words, feeds back into his first point. We can only defer to reliable speakers, such as those who have transmitted the meaning of the *Veda* through an uninterrupted lineage because the meaning of Vedic words cannot be derived from non-Vedic contexts.

Nārada's argument for polysemy explains why it is unproblematic to claim that "*aja*" refers to "goat" in the context of quotidian expressions such as "That man smells like a goat" and yet refers to "rice seeds" in the context of Vedic expressions. The two contexts are distinct and since the interpretation of "*aja*" in Vedic injunctions as "seeds" is sanctioned by the teacher of Nārada and Parvata during the period of Vedic instruction, Nārada's interpretation is correct in the context of Vedic injunctions. The multiple relations that words have to referents constitute a

site in which Nārada can reject referents (and by extension, discourses) that support Brahmanical

commitments, and instead justify referents and discourses that support Jaina commitments.

Nārada's arguments draw broadly on Jaina discourses in the philosophy of language.

However, Nārada does not draw on any one Jaina philosophical tradition. Jainas agree with the

Mīmāṃsā premise that the relation between words and their referents is conventionally

constructed, but they, like Nārada, diverge from Mīmāṃsakas in the conclusion that the relation

between words and referents must be fixed. Jaina systematic writers such as Akalaṅka (seventh

century CE) argue that observations about language in the world suggest that a fixed, one-to-one

relation between words and their referents does not exist because we witness speakers using the

same word to signify different referents. Nārada's arguments align with these commitments that

Jaina philosophers have, but he does not express his arguments through the technicalities of Jaina

philosophy in the way that Parvata expresses his arguments through the specifics of Mīmāṃsā

hermeneutics. Later in the debate, Nārada employs a *nikṣepa* when he counters the practice of

sacrificial substitutions (*vikalpa*) in which an alternative substance (such as a flour cake) in

offered in place of the original substance (the animal) with the belief that the flour case signifies

represents the animal.[42] *Nikṣepa* is a method of interpretation that is used profusely by Jaina

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[42] "One should not offer a *piṣṭa* (a flour cake) because sin will arise from the impure intent, in which the flour cake is considered to be the animal. But merit will arise from a pure intent (when the flour cake is not considered to be the animal). The four ways in which something can be considered a "*paśu*" are distinguished by name, material representation (*sthāpanā*), substance (*dravya*) and modes (*bhāvya*): violence to a "*paśu*" (in any of these four realms) should not be considered." *HvP* 134-35. The practice of substituting vegetarian offerings for animal offerings is, for Nārada, as problematic as offering the animal itself because the practice is undertaken with the intent that the flour cake represents the animal. The *nikṣepa* clarifies that one should not offer anything that is signified as "*paśu*," whether that is in name, material representation, substance or modes as a way of rejecting the practice of Vedic substitution.

Prakrit literature. [43] It subjects individual words to a systematic analysis from four perspectives—name (*nāman*), material representation (*sthāpanā*), substance (*dravya*), and mode (*bhāvya*)—as a way of highlighting the complex, multiple ways in which individual words can be used. But Nārada's *nikṣepa* is presented as an afterthought. He focuses on justifying the polysemic nature of words through appeals to the Sanskrit speaker's own observations about the way language is used. He even cites the same referents for "*go*" as those found in the *Amarakośa*, a Sanskrit lexicon from the fifth century that was studied by all Sanskrit students regardless of their sectarian affiliation. Nārada's arguments are rendered accessible to a wider audience because rather than deferring to the technicalities of Jaina hermeneutics or citing justifications that are specific to Jaina philosophers, he refers to the use of Sanskrit words, which is understood by all Sanskrit speakers irrespective of their religious affiliation.

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[43] Unlike later methods that Jaina authors developed, such as *Nayavāda* and *Syātvāda*, the method of *nikṣepa* addresses the interpretation of individual words. This probably also explains why Nārada's arguments do not draw from more contemporaneous Jaina methods of exegesis. Nārada's arguments are expressed neither through the system of *Nayavāda* (the method of viewpoints) nor through *Saptabhaṅgī/Syātvada* (the method of seven-fold modal description)—two frameworks that were used in Jaina systematic discussions of language and ontology. *Nāyavada*, the method of viewpoints, takes as its point of departure the use and interpretation of a sentence and "provides semantic tools to disambiguate a particular sentence by allocating it to a context in which it is true." (Piotr Balcerowicz, "Jain Epistemology," *Brill's Encyclopedia of Jainism Online*, 2020, 846.) *Saptabhaṅgī/Syātvāda*, the method of seven-fold modal description, begins from the object of cognition and argues that we ought to qualify a single description from multiple perspectives/angles because the reality of this cognitive object cannot be exhausted by a single description. The *aja* debate takes as its point of departure the relation between individual words and their referent(s), and, as such, Nārada's arguments regarding the interpretation of individual words need not refer to the technicalities of *Nayavāda* or *Saptabhaṅgī/Syātvāda,* which take the sentence and the object of cognition as their respective points of departure.
For a longer discussion of Jaina discussions in epistemology and the philosophy of language, see Balcerowicz, "Jain Epistemology"; Piotr Balcerowicz, *Some Remarks on the Naya Method* (Dehli: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2003); Piotr Balcerowicz, "Do Attempts to Formalize Syāt-Vāda Make Sense?," in *Jaina Scriptures and Philosophy*, ed. Olle. Qvarnström and Peter. Flügel, vol. 4, Routledge Advances in Jaina Studies; (London: Routledge, 2015); Piotr Balcerowicz, "'Pramāṇas and Language: A dispute between Diṅnāga, Dharmakīrti and Akalaṅka," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 33, no. 4 (2005): 343–400.

In the context of earlier Brahmanical and Jaina retellings of the *aja* debate, the

Harivaṃśapurāṇa's reinterpretation of "*aja*" to mean "seeds" is not controversial since all

retellings agree that the correct interpretation of "*aja*" is "seeds." However, the

Harivaṃśapurāṇa goes beyond earlier retellings, reinterpreting referents that are absent in earlier

retellings but that were exegeted by Mīmāṃsakas: "*yaj*" (the verb that enjoins the action), "*deva*"

(the object of *yaj*), and "*svargārthin*" (the agent who performs the action enjoined).

> The meaning of the verbal root, "*yaj*," is "veneration to the lord"
> (*devapūjā*); the act of veneration (*yajanam*) [is done] with rituals such as *naivedya*
> by the twice-born; [and] the veneration produces the result of heaven. [129] Those
> who desire what is beneficial perform a veneration to Ṛṣabha, the creator of the
> six obligatory acts (*āvaśyaka*), the foremost *purāṇapuruṣa*,[44] the protector, Indra,
> Bṛhaspati, the one praised in the *Veda* as Svayambhū, the teacher of the path to
> liberation, the one who dries up the ocean of rebirth, Maheśvara, known as the
> first Lord ("*Ādīśa*"), made up of unending knowledge and bliss, Brahmā, Viṣṇu
> and Īśāna, the perfected one, the Buddha, the one who is without disease and the
> one who has the appearance of the sun. [130-2] For men [who perform this
> veneration], there is the [temporary] enjoyment of heaven; from heaven, there is
> the permanent enjoyment of liberation; from liberation, there is fame; from fame
> there is beauty; from beauty there is splendor; from splendor there is stability.
> [133][45]

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[44] In Brahmanical texts, the compound can be translated as "primeval man" and can be used as
an epithet of Viṣṇu. However, in the context of Jaina texts, "*purāṇapuruṣa*" is used as a
synonym for a category of Jaina cosmological heroes, known as "*śalākapuruṣa*." As with a
number of words reinterpreted by Nārada, the compound "*purāṇapuruṣa*" is sufficiently
ambiguous so as to allow for multiple interpretations.

[45] *devapūjā yajerarthatairyajanaṃ dvijaiḥ /*
naivedyādividhānena yāgaḥ svargapradaḥ // HvP 17.129
ṣaḍkarmaṇāṃ vidhātāraṃ purāṇapuruṣaṃ paraṃ /
trātāramindramindrejyaṃ vede gītaṃ svayambhuvam // HvP 17.130
deśikaṃ muktimārgasya śoṣakaṃ bhavavārideḥ /
anantajñānasaukhyādimadīśākhyaṃ maheśvaram // HvP 17.131
brahmānaṃ viṣṇumīśānaṃ siddhaṃ buddhamanāmayam /
ādityavarṇaṃ vṛṣabham pūjayanti hitaiṣiṇaḥ // HvP 17.132
tataḥ svargasukhaṃ puṃsāṃ tato mokṣasukhaṃ dhruvam /
tataḥ kīrttis tataḥ kāntistato dīptistataḥ dhṛtiḥ // HvP 17.133

Nārada uses the relation between words and their referents as a site for undercutting

Brahmanical interpretations of, and thereby discourses pertaining to, the *Veda*. He does not reject

Parvata's/Mīmāṃsaka's claims that "*yaj*" refers to an act of worship that involves making

offering, or that "*svargārthin*" refers to the ritual performer who desires to attain heaven. Instead,

Nārada indexes these referents in such a way that restricts their scope of relevance to non-vedic

expressions. He accepts that "*yaj*" refers to religious acts that involve making offerings; but he

specifies that the term, when used in a Vedic context, refers to be particular type of religious

practice that is specific to Jains: "*devapūjā,*" the devotional veneration of the Jina.[46] Similarly,

Nārada accepts that "*svargārthin,*" can refer to an individual who acts out of a desire to attain

heaven; but he delimits the scope of this referent when he states that heaven is the first of the

multiple effects attained by the agent who performs the veneration.

A similar method of reinterpretation is deployed for the word, "*deva.*" For many

Brahmanical texts, "*deva*" signifies a divine being, usually a deity, whereas for Jaina texts,

"*deva*" can signify the Jina or celestial beings who are soteriologically inferior to the Jina. At

stake in the term is determining the object of veneration. According to the Brahmanical *Vedas*

and indeed, the *Mahābhārata's aja* debate, Vedic sacrifices should be performed to the deities

(*deva*), Indra and Prajāpati. The retelling of the *aja* debate in the *Nārāyaṇīya* of the

Mahābhārata—one of the oldest extant texts to exhibit Vaiṣṇava discourses—reinterprets the

root injunction to justify the performance of devotional worship (*pūjā*) to the deity, Nārāyaṇa.[47]

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[46] For a detailed explanation of "*devapūjā*" among Digambara and Śvetāmbara Jainas, see
Caroline Humphrey, "Some Aspects of the Jain Pūjā: The Idea of God and the Symbolism of
Offerings," *Cambridge Anthropology* 9, no. 3 (1984): 5. For a discussion of "*pūjā*" according to
the Jaina *Śrāvakācāras*, see R Williams, *Jaina Yoga: A Survey of the Mediaeval Śrāvakācāras*,
vol. 14, London Oriental Series (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 216–24.
[47] *MBh* 12.324.27-28

In the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*, Nārada invalidates these interpretations when he argues that "Indra," "Viṣṇu," "Brahmā," "Īśāna," etc. are mere signifiers used by Hindu texts to signify the Jina. He specifies that the referent "*deva*," the object of religious action, is the Jina Ṛṣabha and not any other divine being. This reinterpretation denies the existence of Hindu deities as beings who are ontologically distinct from the Jina; presents the Jina as the exclusive recipient of any religious action; and ultimately, implies that Brahmanical readers misinterpret their own religious scriptures.

In the final section of his argument (*HvP* 17.134-47), Nārada addresses the ethical implications of sacrificing animals, claiming that there is no justification for rituals that inflict violence on animals. Nārada counters Parvata's first claim that an animal does not feel pain when it is sacrificed: The utterance of incantations (*mantra*) alone does not, Nārada argues, bring about an animal's death because it is impossible to kill an animal without exerting physical force.[48] He points out that we have perceptual evidence that the animal suffers insofar as we witness the animal crying out in pain when it is killed.[49] Next, Nārada rebuffs Parvata's claim that the animal's soul is unaffected by material actions:

> As for the argument that the soul cannot not be killed because it is extremely subtle, that is not the case, since it is possible for the gross soul, being situated inside the gross body, [to die]. [139] Like a light, it is an embodied being because it is subject to the receptacle that is the body; it meets its own destruction insofar as it is subtle (*sūkṣma*) or gross (*sthūla*). [140] However, the soul that undergoes rebirth is not like [the gross self], the inner experiencer of bodies. It is subtle; how could it be the agent of pleasure and pain? [141] Therefore, when there is a destruction of the body through the application of *mantra*s, *tantra*s, and weapons, there is necessarily a destruction of the embodied self which takes on the form of the body. [142][50]

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[48] *HvP* 17.136-7. See also *HvP* 17.143
[49] *HvP* 17.138
[50] *Susūkṣmatvāt avadhyo ayamātmeti yadudīritam /*
Tannasthūlaśārirasthaḥ sthūlo 'pi saṃbhavedyataḥ // HvP 17.139
Pradīpavadayam dehī dehādhāravaśād yataḥ /

Nārada reinterprets "*jīva*" as being both the subtle and gross soul as a way of overturning Parvata's claim that the soul is a subtle essence unaffected by material actions. According to Jainas, the gross soul refers to an embodied soul which, by virtue of taking up the expanse of the body, can be physically obstructed by other physical entities and, in return, can cause a physical obstruction of other material entities. The gross soul is, on this account, harmed when the body is harmed. A subtle soul is one that having burnt off all karmic residue exists independently of any physical substratum; accordingly, it is capable of pervading all parts of the universe without being obstructed by, or causing obstruction to, other material entities.[51] An animal will feel pain upon being sacrificed precisely because, like all living beings, it possesses a gross soul that is afflicted by gross actions and objects. Nārada expands the meaning of "*jīva*" from the referent accorded to it by Parvata and Brahmanical texts—the subtle, permanent soul that feels nothing— to include the gross self that is affected by material actions. In doing so, he indexes the Brahmanical interpretation of "*jīva*" to a particular context, the subtle aspect of the self, and demonstrates that this definition does not exhaust the reality of the self, which according to Jainas, includes a gross form.

Sūkṣmasthūlatayā yāti svasaṃhāravisarpaṇam / HvP 17.140
Anīdṛśastu saṃsārī śarīrānantavedakaḥ /
Sūkṣma eṣa kathaṃkāraṃ sukhaduḥkhamavāpnuyāt // HvP 17.141
Ataḥ śārirabādhyāyām mantratantrāstrayogataḥ /
Bādhanaṃ niyamādasya dehamātrasya dehinaḥ // HvP 17.142
Mriyamāṇo 'tiduḥkhena cakṣurādibhirindriyaiḥ /
Viyujyate svayaṃ tena ko 'nyasteṣāṃ viyojakaḥ // HvP 17.143
[51] See Kristi Lynn Wiley, "Aghātiyā Karmas: Agents of Embodiment in Jainism" (Doctoral dissertation, Berkeley, University of California, 2000), 120–21.

The concluding verses of Nārada's argument (v.145), which continue to address the ethical implications of animal sacrifice, reject Parvata's claim that animal sacrifices lead to beneficial results for the animal.

> An action is "*dharma*" if it aims to provide shelter for the sacrificial animal; for even a mother would not perform an action inappropriate for her child with the aim of attaining pleasure. [145][52]

Nārada's explanation of the nature of *dharma* highlights a logical contradiction in Parvata's/Mīmāṃsaka's definition of "*dharma*." If "*dharma*" is that which leads to beneficial result ("*artha*"), then animal sacrifices cannot be a "*dharma*" since such violent acts lead to suffering on the part of the animal. Nārada reinterprets "*dharma*" while preserving the claim that "*dharma*" leads to beneficial results ("*artha*"). "*Dharma*," as an act that produces beneficial results, must involve non-violence, as well as acts that contribute to the wellbeing of the animal, such as providing shelter. Although this argument aligns with the Jaina commitment to non-violence, notice that Nārada does not defer to the Jaina model of karmic retribution, which is typically employed by Jaina writers to substantiate the relation between violent actions and their negative effects. Nārada uses an analogy of the relation between a mother and a child to explain the nature of "*dharma*." The analogy allows Nārada once again to justify his interpretations of "*dharma*" and "*artha*" across sectarian lines because it relies on a common experience of familial relations rather than a Jaina specific soteriology.

Overall, Nārada acknowledges the possibility that each word in the injunction "*ajair yajñavidhiḥ kāryaḥ svargārthibhir*" can refer to the referents accepted by Parvata and Brahmanical texts. However, in arguing that each word has multiple referents, Nārada

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[52] *dharmyameva hi śarmāptai karma yājyasya jāyate /*
nahyapathyaṃ śiśor dattaṃ mātrāpi syāt sukhāptaye // HvP 17.145

subordinates Parvata's referents to those that align with Jaina discourses. "*Aja*" can mean "sacrificial animal" in non-Vedic contexts but, Nārada contends, in the context of the *Veda*, "*aja*" refers to "rice seeds." "*Yaj*" can have the broader meaning of "sacrifice," but again Nārada delimits this sacrificial action to devotional worship of the Jina using vegetarian offerings. Nārada agrees with Parvata that "*svargārthin*" qualifies the agent as one who desires heaven, but he explains that the term captures only the first of multiple soteriological effects. In addition to the words explicitly cited in the injunction, Nārada revises the referents of "*deva*," "*jīva*," and "*dharma*." The relation between a word and its referents constitutes the site through which Nārada decouples Brahmanical discourses from the words of the *Veda*, and anchors Jaina discourses in the words of the Brahmanical *Veda*.

5: Re-framing the Debate: The *Ārṣa* and *Anārṣa Veda*

After Parvata and Nārada have expounded their respective positions, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* reveals that Nārada is the winner of the debate. That is to say, Nārada's Jaina interpretations of the Brahmanical *Veda* are declared to be correct. However, the *aja* debate provides the backdrop for a much longer origin tale. Six chapters after the *aja* debate is narrated, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* narrates two additional subtales that describe the origin of the *Veda*.

Chapter 23 opens with Vasudeva hoping to marry a Brahmin's daughter by defeating the Brahmin's opponents in a debate about the meaning of the *Veda*. Vasudeva approaches the Brahmin sage, Brahmadatta, for Vedic instruction, to which Brahmadatta replies, "Do you want to learn the *Ārṣa Veda*, that is dharmic, or the *Anārṣa Veda*?"[53] Vasudeva is taken aback at the

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[53] *HvP* 23.34

declaration that there exists two different *Veda*s. He asks Brahmadatta, "Why are there two

forms of the *Veda*?" Brahmadatta narrates the origin of the *Ārṣa* and *Anārṣa Veda* as a way of

indexing "*Ārṣa Veda*" to the words of the Jina and "*Anārṣa Veda*" to the Brahmanical *Vedas*. He

begins with the origin of the *Ārṣa Veda*.

> The sage (Ṛṣabha) realized two forms of *dharma*: one for householders and one
> for ascetics, which bring about the attainment of heaven and liberation
> [respectively].[54] The teachings regarding the conduct to be followed by
> householders was contained in the *Veda*, which is composed of *The Scripture of
> Twelve Parts* and contains the conduct (to be followed) by ascetics. Those *Vedas*,
> which were revealed by Lord Ṛṣabha to those who abide by the many careful
> actions (*niyama*) and who follow the reinforcing vows and training vows
> (*guṇaśikṣāvratas*), are [called] "*Ārṣaka*."[55]

In Brahmanical texts, '*ārṣa veda*' refers to the Brahmanical Veda: the eternal scriptures that are

retrieved by the Vedic seers (*ṛṣi*).[56] The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*, however, does not subscribe to this

emic Brahmanical distinction between the root verses of the *Ṛg Veda* and its modes of recitation.

The above backstory retains the etymological meaning of "*ārṣa*" as, "derived from the seer," as

well as the claim that "*veda*" expresses eternal truths. However, it jettisons the one-to-one

correlation between the signifier, "*ārṣa veda*," and the referent, the authorless Brahmanical *Veda*,

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[54] *HvP* 23.41

[55] *yau dvau dharmāśramau dharmyau gṛhiśramaṇasaṃśrayau /*
svargāpavargasaukhyasya siddhaye 'darśayanmuniḥ // HvP 23.41
dvādaśāṅgavikalpeṣu vedeṣu yativṛttiṣu /
antargatā gṛhasthānāṃ yathoktācāradarśitāḥ // HvP 23.42
guṇaśikṣāvratasthānāmanekaniyamaśritām /
tena ye darśitā vedā ṛṣabhaprabhuṇārṣakāḥ // HvP 23.43

[56] The Sanskrit grammarian, Pāṇini, suggests a more specific signification for "*ārṣa*" and
"*anārṣa*" in a Brahmanical context: "*Ārṣa*" refers to the *Ṛgveda Saṃhitā,* which derives from the
seers ("*ārṣa"*), whereas "*anārṣa*" refers to primarily to the *padapāṭha*, which constitutes changes
and additions to the text and is authored by non-seers ("*anārṣa"*). Madhav Deshpande, "Ārṣa
Versus Anārṣa in Pāṇini and Allied Literature," *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research
Institute* 62/63 (2002): 190.

and instead, re-presents "*ārṣa veda*" as a signifier for the Jaina scriptures. "*Ārṣa veda*" signifies

the set of the eternal truths ("*veda*") that are realized and first conveyed to the world by Jina

Ṛṣabha, the first seer ("*ṛṣi*") who attained omniscience in this world. Brahmadatta even

identifies the *Ārṣa Veda* as *The Scripture of Twelve Parts* (*dvādaśāṅga*), the canonical scriptures

of Jainas. Furthermore, he describes the *Ārṣa Veda* as enjoining religious practices that are

declared by the Jina: *guṇavratas* (the three restraints enjoined for householders to supplement

and support the accomplishment of the five householder vows [*anuvrata*]); *śikṣāvrata* (seven

vows that enjoin religious practices to be cultivated on a daily basis); and *niyama* (ethical

restraints). These Jaina vows and restrictions inhibit violence towards all beings and help the

practitioner to gradually cultivate a more ascetic lifestyle in line with that of the Jina. The

contents and the context of the narrative work in tandem with one-another to ensure that "*Ārṣa

Veda*" signifies none other than the Jina's words.

   In terms of the structural relation between the tale of the *Ārṣa Veda* in chapter 23 and the

aja debate in chapter 17, the tale of the *Ārṣa Veda* elaborates in narrative form systematic claims

that Nārada expressed during the *aja* debate. Recall that Nārada claims that the meaning of the

Vedas is transmitted through an uninterrupted lineage of teachers who are "reliable" (*āpta*)

without elaborating on the qualification for reliability. The tale of the *Ārṣa Veda* clarifies and

contextualizes Nārada's unspoken criterion. Ṛṣabha has attained omniscience and possesses no

further desires and as such, he is able to communicate eternal truths for the benefit of humanity

without error. Not only does the Jina constitute the foremost reliable speaker on account of

attaining omniscience, but the lineage of teachers who transmit the teaching of the Jina must also

be reliable because they preserve the teachings of the omniscient speaker without introducing

error. Finally, notice that Nārada's interpretation of the Vedic injunction as enjoining the practice

of vegetarian offerings to the Jina, is harmonious with the narrative depiction of the *Ārṣa Veda* as enjoining Jaina practices of non-violence and asceticism. The narrative form of the *Ārṣa Veda* describes, elaborates and contextualizes justifications that Nārada raised in systematic form in the *aja* debate.

After narrating the origin of the *Ārṣa Veda* through a flashback, Brahmadatta describes the origin of the *Anārṣa Veda* through a second subtale that flashes forward to the end of the *aja* debate, picking up the threads of chapter 17.[57] After losing the debate to Nārada, Parvata leaves the kingdom and meets a demigod called Mahākāla. Mahākāla wants to take revenge on King Sagara for deceiving him in an earlier birth: he tells Parvata that Parvata's interpretation of "*aja*" in the debate is correct and that the kingdom was wrong for declaring Nārada the winner of the debate. Mahākāla wins Parvata's trust and together, they can wreak havoc across Sagara's kingdom. Mahākāla and Parvata secretly create hundreds of diseases that ravage the kingdom. When the inhabitants fail to overcome the diseases, Parvata and Mahākāla perform pacifying rituals (*śānti*), recite incantations (*mantra*), and perform fire sacrifices (*homa*) that eradicate the illnesses that they themselves had created.[58] The entire kingdom, including King Sagara and his royal court, take refuge in Mahākāla and Parvata because they believe that the sages have saved the kingdom from the diseases that enveloped them. No-one realizes that Mahākāla and Parvata created the diseases in an elaborate ploy to demonstrate the validity of their words, beliefs, and practices. Surrounded by a host of new followers from Sagara's kingdom, Mahākāla and Parvata

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[57] The subtale is told in *HvP* 23. *HvP* 23.1-130 relates Mahākāla's backstory. In an earlier rebirth, King Sagara won the hand of Mahākāla's intended bride by composing a false *śāstra* that described the qualities of a proper King, none of which Mahākāla possessed. Believing that he did not possess the auspicious qualities of a King, Mahākāla deemed himself unfit for marriage and renounced. Mahākāla's activities with Parvata are related from *HvP* 23.131-54.
[58] *HvP* 23.138-9

compose an alternative *Veda*, which Brahmadatta qualifies is the "*Anārṣa Veda.*" This *Veda* is "*anārṣa*" on account of it not (*an*) being received by the seer (*ārṣa*), the Jina Ṛṣabha. This new scripture is grounded in Parvata's interpretations that he expressed in the *aja* debate: it enjoins animal sacrifices including, the horse sacrifice (*aśvamedha*), cow sacrifice (*gomedha*), and goat sacrifice (*ajamedha*).[59] Sagara's kingdom subscribe to the authority of this new *Veda* without hesitation. They sacrifice hundreds of animals until, eventually, they sacrifice King Sagara himself, hurling him into the fire as the oblation. Unfortunately, Brahmadatta explains, the *Anārṣa Veda* continues to be propagated on earth, even after Mahākāla and Parvata fall to hell, and this is why there exists two different *Vedas* today.[60]

While *"Ārṣa Veda"* is a placeholder for the Jina's words, "*Anārṣa Veda*" is qualified by the second narrative as a signifier for the Brahmanical *Veda*. The ritual performances enjoined by Parvata's scripture align with those that were historically enjoined by the Brahmanical *Veda*. Parvata and Mahākāla employ pacifying (*śānti*) rituals; a category of rituals that are enjoined by the *Atharva Veda* and were performed by the Brahmanical chaplain (*purohita*) in royal courts to counteract inauspicious omens such as plagues.[61] The *Anārṣa Veda* is described as enjoining numerous forms of animal sacrifices that align with the contents of Brahmanical *Veda*. The *aśvamedha* (the Horse Sacrifice) is one of the most eminent of *Śrauta* sacrifices prescribed by the Brahmanical *Veda* for Kings who aim to demonstrate royal sovereignty; the *ajamedha* is, of course, the same animal sacrifice that Parvata propagated in the *aja* debate. The mention of

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[59] *HvP* 23.140-1

[60] Chapter 23 ends with Vasudeva choosing to learn the contents of the *Ārṣa Veda* over the *Anārṣa Veda*, though the chapter never relates the contents of Brahmadatta's instruction nor Vasudeva's arguments for winning the debate.

[61] On the rise of the Brahmanical chaplain and their use of the *Atharva Veda* in courts from fifth century CE onwards, see Marko Geslani, *Rites of the God-King: Śānti and Ritual Change in Early Hinduism*, Oxford Ritual Studies (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018).

pacifying rites together with the *aśvamedha*, *gomedha*, and *ajamedha* delimit the reference of "*Anārṣa Veda*" to the Brahmanical *Veda*, because such rites are expressed, historically, by the Brahmanical *Veda*.

The plot events that unfold in the tale of the *Anārṣa Veda* ridicule Brahmanical understandings of the *Veda*. The presentation of Mahākāla and Parvata composing the Brahmanical *Vedas* undermines the Mīmāṃsā claim that the *Vedas* are authoritative on account of being *un*authored. What is more, Brahmanical *purāṇa*s and the Brahmanical tradition of logic, Nyāya, both argue that the *Veda* was composed by a benevolent, omniscient God: This discourse is equally undermined by the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*, which depicts the Brahmanical *Veda* as the creation of vengeful, ignorant beings who aim to deceive the kingdom. Neither the *Veda* nor its authors constitute valid sources of religious authority. We can take this argument one step further. The behind-the-scenes portrayal of Mahākāla and Parvata caricatures Brahmanical Vedic priests, many of whom held sway in South Asian royal courts, as unreliable, deceitful speakers whose rituals will benefit neither the King nor the state. The narrative challenges the validity of the three distinct pillars of Brahmanical authority—the Brahmanical *Veda*, its divine author and Brāhmaṇa priests.

Collectively, the sub-tales in chapter 23 bifurcate the referent of "*Veda*" through the qualifications "*Ārṣa*" and "*Ānarṣa*," so that "*Veda*" refers to two scriptures of distinct sectarian and epistemological origins. The *Ārṣa Veda* is presented as the Jaina *Āgama,* which expresses the teachings of the omniscient Jina. The *Anārṣa Veda* is presented as the scripture that belongs to the religious other, the Brahmanical *Veda*. The Brahmanical *Veda* is presented as antithetical to the Jaina *Āgama* (*Ārṣa Veda)* on account that it was not received by the Jina (the archetypal *ṛṣi*), and it does not enjoin non-violent religious practices for beneficial results.

When we bring these two origin tales, from chapter 23, into conversation with chapter 17's *aja* debate, more provocative levels of interpretation emerge. In the first case, the tales of the *Ārṣa* and *Anārṣa Veda* express in narrative form a systematic claim that was foundational to Nārada's argument in the *aja* debate: words have multiple referents. "*Veda*" is no exception to this rule. Chapter 17 presents the *aja* debate as one that pertains to the Brahmanical *Veda* because the literary introduction to the tale describes the root text using signifiers that Brahmanical texts use to describe the *Veda*.[62] Chapter 23 reveals to us, for the first time, that there are two referents of "*veda*." Nārada's arguments, which were previously applied to scriptural words, are now extended to the very signifier of the scripture in which those words are located, with the effect that the Brahmanical *Veda* is rejected as a valid means of knowing religious truths.

We can better understand this reading when we compare Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* with Saṅghadāsa's *Vasudevahiṇḍī,* a Jaina Prakrit narrative from fifth century CE. Saṅghadāsa's *Vasudevahiṇḍī* also narrates the story of the *Ārṣa* and *Anārṣa Veda* (pkt. *Anariya/Anarisa Veya*) and the *aja* debate. The *Vasudevahiṇḍī* qualifies the referent of "*Veda*" before narrating the stories of Ṛṣabha's enlightenment, the dissemination of the *Ārṣa Veda*, the *aja* debate, and Parvata's encounter with Mahākāla, in that order. Furthermore, it never describes the Jina's *Veda* using descriptions that Brahmanical texts use to describe their Brahmanical *Veda*. The structure and the contents of the *Vasudevahiṇḍī*'s subtales remove any ambiguity surrounding the referent of "*Veda*" (pkt. *veya*) in the *aja* debate and in Parvata's encounter with Mahākāla. The *Vasudevahiṇḍī* tells us that "*veda*" refers to the Jina's words directly before relating the *aja* debate. By contrast, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* reorders the subtales so that the reader is unaware of

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[62] See section 2 of this dissertation chapter.

what "*Veda*" signifies in the *aja* debate and inserts a philosophical debate that argues in favor of polysemy. Because the tale of the two *Vedas* is re-positioned after the *aja* debate, it now reads as a narrative expression and extension of Nārada's arguments regarding polysemy. Chapter 23's tales express Nārada's arguments about polysemy because their plotlines reveal two different referents of "*veda*." And chapter 23's tales are an extension of Nārada's arguments because they apply Nārada's arguments about the interpretation of Vedic words, to the very signifier of the root text itself. To take this one step further, we could say that chapter 23's subtales are descriptions of the two *Veda*s that allows the reader to index the term "*veda*" to its relevant context. The narrative presentation enacts Nārada's systematic claim that we ought to index words to their relevant context in order to determine the correct meaning.

Beyond the claims about language use, the plotlines of the two origin tales dramatize the diverse ways in which scriptural texts are composed, transmitted, and interpreted. The tale of the *Ārṣa Veda* expresses the importance of religious truths being received by the Jina and the subsequent significance of aligning one's interpretation with that which is passed down through a lineage of teachers that extends back to the Jina. Vice versa, the tale of the *Anārṣa Veda* dramatizes the faults that arise from taking as authoritative religious scriptures that are authored by humans, especially those harboring malevolent intent. The origin tales convey in narrative form the point that Nārada made in his systematic refutation of Parvata. Namely, we can only derive the meaning of the *Veda* through teachings that were transmitted by Ṛṣabha because unlike all other speakers, Ṛṣabha is an omniscient being who has no desires.

The relation between chapter 17 and 23 generates different readings depending on how we read the two chapters. When the chapters are read independently of history of Brahmanical representations of the *Veda*, then the two chapters are consistent with each other. The staging of

chapter 17's *aja* debate opens indeterminate gaps in the meaning of "*veda*" that are filled in by chapter 23's origin tales. But when the chapters are read in the context of earlier representations of the *Veda,* the chapters read as showcasing two different perspectives on the *Veda*. Chapter 17 describes the *Veda* and Vedic reciters in a way that parallels descriptions from Brahmanical texts themselves. Thus, when read in the context of Brahmanical representations of the *Veda*, chapter 17 stages the *aja* debate as one that pertains to the Brahmanical *Veda*. Staging the *aja* debate as one about the interpretation of Brahmanical *Veda* allows the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* to justify Jaina discourses through recourse to a scripture that Brahmanical practitioners accept.

Chapter 23 provides a second level of reading through two origin tales. Whereas the *aja* debate uses systematic arguments to invalidate Brahmanical discourses, and validate Jaina discourses, chapter 23 uses narrative devices such as characterization and plotline to achieve the same effects. More speculatively, we might say that the origin tales in chapter 23 flip the script of chapter 17. Chapter 23 reveals that the Brahmanical *Veda* did not exist at the time of the *aja* debate, for according to the chronology of the tale, Parvata creates his Brahmanical *Veda* only after he loses the *aja* debate. The origin tales show that the scripture at the heart of the aja debate is in fact the Jina's words. They reveal that it was not Nārada who imposes a Jaina interpretation on the Brahmanical *Veda*, but that it was Parvata who was trying to impose his own meanings on the Jina's words. In this way, chapter 23's origin tales re-cast the Jina's words as the only valid religious scripture against which the validity of all other religious discourses is measured. In short, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* uses the relation between a word and its multiple referents to redefine the relation between Brahmanical and Jaina scriptures, and by extension, religious identity; "*veda*," and by extension "Vedic religion," now signify primarily the Jina's words and Jainism respectively, and Brahmanical scriptures and Brahmanism only secondarily.

The significance that the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* places on questions of language and scriptural interpretation throughout the tale portrays Brahmanical religion in a new light. In all Jaina tales about Parvata, Parvata creates a new religion after he misinterprets the contents of the Jina's words. The plotline of the tale in all variants suggest that Brahmanism is sectarian tradition of Jainism because in line with definitions of sectarian religion, Parvata creates his new religion out of his reinterpretations of a common scripture. But the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*'s retelling is the only retelling among Jaina *purāṇa* to commit to the idea that Brahmanism is a sectarian religion. It uniquely centralizes the role that scriptural interpretations and practices of interpretation play in the production of religious identity. The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* inserts a new dialogue that is dedicated to questions of language and hermeneutics, and the interpretations that Parvata express in this dialogue become the foundation of his new religion. The additional innovations that the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* makes to the origin tales—the plotline, language, setting, and character portrayals—emphasize that scriptural hermeneutic plays a pivotal role in the consolidation of a new religious identity.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the innovations that Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* renders to earlier versions of the *aja* debate from Brahmanical and Jaina texts. These changes include systematic innovations (the inclusion of a philosophical debate regarding the relation between a word and its referent) as well as literary innovations (the revised Vedic injunction, the staging of the *aja* debate, the structural order of the subtales, and the subsequent absence of signification of "Veda*"* until chapter 23). Across each of these innovations, the relation between words and their

referents consistently operates as the site through which the identity of the religious other is defined.

In the first case, the relation between words and their referents allows the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* to unify multiple Brahmanical representations of Vedic discourses and practices. Through Parvata's dialogue, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* connects Brahmanical self-representations that subscribe to a common set of texts (the *Veda*) and terms (such as "*aja*," "*dharma*," "*ātmā*," and "*yaj*"). It unites these Brahmanical self-representation while simultaneously invalidating them on the grounds that they express conflicting interpretations of the same words. Through the narrative representation of the *aja* debate, we also see how the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* unites Mīmāṃsā hermeneutics with the *Mahābhārata*'s narrative hermeneutics for they subscribe to the authority of the same scriptures and engaged in practices of Vedic interpretation. These diverse self-representations and their attendant practices of representation are unified through the plotline of the origin tale in chapter 23—Parvata creates a new transcendent scripture, religious practices, a community, and an institutional basis from the discourses and hermeneutical practices he expresses in the *aja* debate.

Language and hermeneutics play a particularly significant role in defining the identity of the religious other (Brahmanism) vis-à-vis the religious self (Jainism). All Jaina retellings, as we are beginning to see over the course of this dissertation, state that Parvata creates a new religion out of his false understanding of the Jina's words. However, none of the retellings except for that of the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* elaborates on the interpretations that Parvata derives. In centering questions of language and hermeneutics and presenting them the impetus for the creation of Parvata's new religion, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* stresses the point that Brahmanism is a sectarian religion of Jainism. The text emphasizes the proximity between Brahmanism and Jainism in two

additional ways. Nārada's dialogue in the *aja* debate reveals that Brahmanism and Jainism accept a common set of terms that are simply interpreted in distinct ways. Finally, chapter 23 reveals that "*veda*" refers primarily to the Jina's words and only secondarily to Parvata's religion. In this way, the relation between a word and its referent not only unifies the internal relation between distinct Brahmanical self-representations and their practices of representation, but it also demonstrates the ways in which Brahmanism and Jainism are related.

Thus, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* reflects on practices of Vedic interpretation that were being used contemporaneously by Brahmanical texts. In doing so, it draws attention to the hermeneutical frameworks that Sanskrit Brahmanical texts were constructing and deploying in the consolidation of their own identity. It re-presents Brahmanical religion as not only as transcendent scriptures, practices, a community and an institution, but as a set of Sanskrit linguistic practices that condition the consolidation of the above.

When we compare the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*'s representation of Brahmanism with the *Padmacarita*'s representation, we can see that the former diverges from latter in a number of respects. First and foremost, whereas the *Padmacarita* casts Brahmanism as a religious other that bears nothing in common with the Jina's religion, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* views Brahmanism as a sectarian religion of Jainism that shares a common vocabulary. Secondly, in terms of form, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* is willing to view Brahmanical discourses on their terms. Recall that in the *Padmacarita*, the antithetical position was voiced by the Brahmin Saṃvarta. However, Saṃvarta speaks for less than five verses. His arguments are elaborated at length by Nārada and consequently, we had to extract the logic of the antithetical (Brahmanical) position from Nārada's rejoinders. The *Padmacarita* does not give Brahmanism its own voice, and it assesses the validity of Brahmanical discourses on exclusively Jaina lines. The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* does

the reverse. The antithetical position—represented in the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* by Parvata— voices his own arguments. Chapter 17 even goes so far as to reject Brahmanical interpretations of the *Veda* on terms that Brahmanical authors would accept (i.e. through a prior acceptance of the Brahmanical *Veda* and though logical arguments that are accepted across Sanskrit speakers).

But for all of these differences, there are some important continuities between the two Jaina *purāṇa*s. The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* continues to present Mīmāṃsā as the primary philosophical foundation on which Brahmanism is based; include a narrative debate that reflects on contemporaneous philosophical discourses; and showcase the contradictions between Brahmanical texts. The *Padmacarita*'s practices for representing Brahmanism as the religious other are re-articulated by the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*, and this rearticulation suggests that such methods continued to be relevant for Jaina writers in the eighth century.

Chapter 4

Creating Brāhmaṇas and the Brāhmaṇas' Creationism: Representations of Brahmanism in Jinasena II's *Ādipurāṇa*

<u>1. Introduction</u>

To recap, we have been following Bruce Lincoln's definition of religion as: 1) a discourse that speaks of things eternal and that claims for itself a similarly transcendent status, 2) a set of practices defined by said discourse, 3) a community whose members construct their identity with reference to the discourses and its attendant practices, and 4) an institution that regulates all of the above.[1] With this definition in mind, the previous two chapters have demonstrated how the *Padmacarita* and the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* each represent Brahmanism. For the *Padmacarita*, Brahmanism is a distinct religion that bears nothing in common with Jainism. It speaks of an eternal *dharma* through recourse to the eternal *Veda*; it practices animal sacrifice based on the authority of Vedic injunctions; its community is defined by a commitment to these practices and discourses; and it must create its own institutional infrastructure because it gains no support from any Jaina court. Brahmanism is presented as a religion rife with contradictions between discourses. Yet, for the *Padmacarita*, it is a unified religion because all members appeal to the authority of the eternal *Veda* however that eternality is conceived.

The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* retains the *Padmacarita*'s representation of Brahmanism as that whose discourses are defined as the eternal *dharma* sanctioned by a similarly eternal *Veda.* However, for the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa,* Brahmanism is not a distinct religion that bears no relation

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[1] Bruce Lincoln, *Holy Terrors: Thinking about Religion after September 11*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 5–7.

to the scriptures and community of Jainism. The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* expands the *aja* debate into a philosophical discussion over the meaning of the Jina's words. By centralizing this debate on the process of scriptural interpretation, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* presents Brahmanism as a sectarian tradition of Jainism. Parvata creates a new scripture and practices out of his reinterpretation of the Jina's teaching. His sectarian tradition finds an institutional support with King Sagara when he presents himself, Mahākāla, and his (false) *Veda* to have the transcendent power to cure the Kingdom's ailments. King Sagara funds state rituals, such as the *aśvamedha* and *rājasūya*, to be performed in accordance with Parvata's interpretations. Despite the different ways in which both Jaina *purāṇa*s present the relation between Brahmanism and Jainism, they have a consistent representation of the discourses and ritual practices that define Brahmanism. They present Brahmanism as justifying the performance of animal sacrifice through recourse to Mīmāṃsā's understanding of the eternal *Veda*.

This representation changes in the ninth century with the composition of the *Mahāpurāṇa*. The *Mahāpurāṇa* is a Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa* that is divided into two halves: the *Ādipurāṇa*, composed by Jinasena II in 860 CE, and the *Uttarapurāṇa*, composed by Jinasena II's student, Guṇabhadra, in 897 CE. The present chapter will focus on the *Ādipurāṇa*. As its title suggests, the *Ādipurāṇa* narrates the "beginnings" (*ādi*) of the Jaina world in which the first Jina Ṛṣabha lived. In it, Jinasena II narrates Ṛṣabha's path to liberation, as well as his social role as someone who institutionalized religious, cultural, and social practices in our world.

As the first text to be entirely dedicated to the life of Ṛṣabha and his sons, the *Ādipurāṇa* rarely discusses Brahmanism. There are only two sections that we can look to in order to reconstruct the *Ādipurāṇa*'s understanding of Brahmanism. The first of these passages is a philosophical refutation of the existence of a universal creator (*īśvara*). Here, the *Ādipurāṇa*

reimagines the philosophical basis of the religious Other. Instead of presenting Mīmaṃsā philosophy as the discourse on which Brahmanism is based, the *Ādipurāṇa* presents creationism (*sṛṣṭivāda*) as the discursive foundation of Brahmanism, and a creator deity (*īśvara*) as the transcendent authority from which the tradition speaks. In Part 2, I undertake a close reading of the refutation. I demonstrate how the *Ādipurāṇa* aligns itself with earlier Jaina, Buddhist, and even Mīmāṃsā texts in order to re-cast the religious Other as Brahmanical traditions that subscribe to the authority of creationism and īśvara. For the *Ādipurāṇa*, creationism is the foundational discourse that informs Brahmanical philosophy, narratives, and ideologies about the "*purāṇa*" genre.

The second passage in the *Ādipurāṇa* to address Brahmanism is the story of the creation of the Brāhmaṇa community by Ṛṣabha's son Bharata. In earlier Jaina texts, this story is an important site through which Jainas use the definition of Brāhmaṇa to delineate the similarities and differences in Jaina and Brahmanical religious identity. In Part 3, I explain how the *Ādipurāṇa* updates this story as a way of authorizing the existence of a community who of Brāhmaṇas who share rituals, social labels, and lifestyles irrespective of their religious beliefs. In this sense, the *Ādipurāṇa* differs drastically from the *Padmacarita* and *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* in its presentation of the community and institutional basis of Brahmanism because it presents Brahmanical followers as belonging to the same institution as lay Jainas.

The final part of this chapter, Part 4, returns to the *Ādipurāṇa*'s construction of the religious Other. The *Ādipurāṇa*'s refutation of creationism is referenced in the end of the *Ādipurāṇa*'s tale, which describes how the Brahmanism emerged as a distinct religious tradition in Bharata's society, as well as the *Uttarapurāṇa*'s elaboration on this story. Read together, these three passages extend the *Ādipurāṇa*'s construction of the religious Other. Unlike earlier

*purāṇa*s, the *Ādipurāṇa* presents Brahmanism as religion that is nevertheless a part of Bharata's society. Moreover, while the *Ādipurāṇa* continues to depict this new religion as committed to Mīmāṃsā understandings of animal sacrifice, it depicts this ritual practice and this new community as predicated on the discourse of creationism. In short, the *Ādipurāṇa* presents Brahmanism as a distinct religion that is defined by its commitment to creationism, but that is socially proximate to Jainism because it participates in the same social practices and inhabits the same institutional basis as Jainas. Moreover, the *Ādipurāṇa* presents these different discourses and rituals as consistent with one another without trying to contradictions among them in the way that earlier Jaina *purāṇa*s do. Put another way, the *Ādipurāṇa* provides a representation of Hinduism as a unified religion that is defined *not* by its contradictory discourses, but by essential discourses and practices that exist harmoniously with one another.

In terms of the form and style of representation, the *Ādipurāṇa* follows the generic form established by the *Padmacarita* and the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa,* insofar as it includes a philosophical dialogue that discusses the content of Brahmanical discourses alongside a story about the origins of Brahmanism. However, the *Ādipurāṇa*'s dialogue is much shorter than that of earlier *purāṇa*s, and it does not engage with the specificities of any one Brahmanical philosophical tradition in the way that dialogues from earlier Jaina *purāṇa*s do. As I will demonstrate, the *Ādipurāṇa*'s dialogue replays criticisms that were expressed numerous times by writers across religious traditions. The *Uttarapurāṇa* presents the shortest philosophical dialogue of all the Jaina *purāṇa*s discussed in this dissertation, and this dialogue constitutes a minor innovation, in the light of the numerous literary innovations that this *purāṇa* introduces into the story. Therefore, aside from demonstrating a shift in the content of the representation, the *Ādipurāṇa*'s and *Uttarapurāṇa*'s

representations suggest that the use of philosophical dialogues in Jaina narratives about Brahmanism began to wane from the ninth century onwards.

2. Refuting the Religious Other

After the *Ādipurāṇa*'s introductory remarks in the first three chapters of the text, chapter 4 describes the contents of the Jaina universe (*loka*), which is swiftly defined in verses 14-5 as "the location in which all animate and inanimate things reside."[2] The entirety of chapter 4 elaborates on the exact contents of this universe, providing a literary and philosophical background to the universe that the characters of the *Ādipurāṇa* and *Uttarapurāṇa* inhabit. It is in this context that the *Ādipurāṇa* inserts a systematic refutation of what I refer to as creationism—*sṛṣṭivāda*, the claim that the universe was created by a deity. I demonstrate the way in which this refutation connects Brahmanical philosophy, narratives, and genre ideology as a single religious Other on the grounds that, in the *Ādipurāṇa*'s eyes, they share a commitment to creationism as a religious discourse.

The *Ādipurāṇa*'s refutation spans twenty-four verses and counters two interrelated claims that undermine Jaina cosmology: the claim that the universe had an origin, and the claim that a deity created the universe. At stake is not so much the existence of divine beings per se, since many Jaina texts accept the existence of deities and mention beings to whom the umbrella term "god" (*deva*) can be applied.[3] Rather, at stake for the *Ādipurāṇa* is demonstrating that the

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[2] *ĀP* 4.14-5

[3] See for example, *Tattvārthasūtra*, chapter 4 for an example of a Jaina typology of *devas*. See:

universe is eternal and is governed by the laws of karma. The existence of a deity who created the universe at the beginning of time and who overrides the laws of karma—a deity whom the *Ādipurāṇa* and South Asian philosophy refer to as "*Īśvara*"— undermines Jaina cosmology and soteriology. The *Ādipurāṇa* therefore aims to demonstrate that the existence of *Īśvara* is impossible on logical grounds.

First, the *Ādipurāṇa* questions the relations between the agent, his instrument, and the result, in the context of universal creation (4.17-21).

> If a creator exists outside of creation, where would he be located to create this world? Moreover, if he created this world without (himself) having any support, and unchangeable, then where would he put it once he made it? [17] No single person has the capacity to create this world comprised of everything. Moreover, a being that has no body is not able to create objects that are material, such as bodies. [18] Finally, how could he create the world without instruments etc.? If you claim that he made those (instruments) before he made the world, then there would be (the fault of) infinite regress. [19] If these (instruments) existed in and of themselves, then this applies to the world as well. The world, like a creator, would be established in and of itself. [20] The claim that the Lord is able to create without any materials according his own will independently is sheer fancy. Who would believe something so illogical? [21][4]

John E. Cort, "Who Is God and How Is He Worshipped," in *Religions of India in Practice*, ed. Donald S. Lopez (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995); John E. Cort, *Jains in the World: Religious Values and Ideology in India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 92–93. For examples of interpretations of "*deva*" in post ninth century Jaina *śāstra*, see Piotr Balcerowicz, *Jainism and the Definition of Religion* (Mumbai: Hindi Granth Karyalay, 2009), 18–19.

[4] *sraṣṭā sargabahirbhūtaḥ kvasthaḥ sṛjati tajjagat /*
nirādhāraś ca kūṭasthaḥ sṛṣṭvainaṃ kva niveśayet // ĀP 4.17
naiko viśvātmakasyāsya jagato ghaṭane paṭuḥ /
vitanoś ca na tanvādimūrttam utpattum arhati // ĀP 4.18
kathaṃ ca sa sṛjet lokaṃ vinānyaih karaṇādibhiḥ /
tāni śṛṣṭvā śṛjellokam iti ced anavasthitiḥ // ĀP 4.19
teṣāṃ svabhāvasiddhatve loke'pyetat prasajyate /
kiṃca nirmātṛvad viśvaṃ svataḥsiddhim avāpnuyāt // ĀP 4.20
sṛjedvināpi sāmagryā svatantraḥ prabhur icchayā /
itīcchāmātramevaitat kaḥ śraddadhyād ayuktikam // ĀP 4.21

There is no instrument which such a creator could use to create the universe. Either the creator

created his instruments—in which case he would need to create additional instruments to make

the very instruments for creation, thus leading to the fault of infinite regress—or else the

instruments must have existed independently of the creator, in which case there is no reason not

to consider that the world, also, existed independently of a creator.[5] The *Ādipurāṇa* returns to the

question of the creator's instruments in verses 26-27. The laws of karma cannot be the creator's

instrument because the existence of karma renders the existence of a creator redundant: "Why

would [the creator] be needed at all simply to support an already existing state of affairs?"[6]

Next, the *Ādipurāṇa* shifts to the problem of intention in order to expose the

contradictions in the ontology of *Īśvara*.

> How could one who has fulfilled all desires have the desire to create? An
> individual whose desires are not fulfilled—such as a potter—is not capable of
> creating the universe. [22] How could a person who has no form, no activity and
> is all-pervasive create the world? [23] The desire to create does not belong to an
> individual who does not change. Go ahead and try to find some purpose in
> creating the world on the part of someone who has everything he needs and does
> not want any of the human goals. [24] To create something just like that with no
> purpose leads to a series of calamities. If it is some sort of play of his, then there
> must be an endless series of delusions. [25] […] If there was a loving being who
> created out of a desire to show favor to living beings, then, surely, he would have
> made a creation that consists of happiness, unafflicted (by suffering)? [28][7]

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[5] *ĀP* 4.19-20

[6] *siddhopasthāyyasau hanta poṣyate kim akāraṇam // ĀP* 4.27cd

[7] *kṛtārthasya vinirmitsā kathamevāsya yujyate /*
akṛtārtho'pi na sraṣṭuṃ viśvamīṣṭe kulālavat // ĀP 4.22
amūrto niṣkriyo vyāpī kathameṣa jagat sṛjet /
na sisṛkṣāpi tasyāsti vikriyārahitātmanaḥ // ĀP 4.23

tathāpyasya jagatsarge phalaṃ kimapi mṛgyatām /
niṣṭhitārthasya dharmādipuruṣārtheṣv anarthinaḥ // ĀP 4.24

svabhāvato vinaivārthāt sṛjato 'narthasaṃgatiḥ /
krīḍeyaṃ kāpi cedasya durantā mohasantatiḥ // ĀP 4.25
[…]
vatsalaḥ prāṇinām ekaḥ sṛjannanujighṛkṣayā /

The creation of any object is always preceded by an intention. For example, a potter desires to

create a pot before exerting the effort to make it. However, the presence of such a desire on the

part a deity who creates the universe is problematic. The existence of an intention contradicts the

claim that the creator is eternal and unchanging, because an individual cannot manifest an

intention without undergoing change. If the creator creates, then his actions must be preceded by

an intention that in turn renders him a transient being who has desires. Alternatively, if he is an

eternal, desireless being, then by definition he cannot manifest an intention that is a necessary

predicate for action. A deity cannot simultaneously be a creator, eternal, and desireless. Even if

the existence of intention did not compromise the possibility of being an eternal creator, the

Ādipurāṇa explains, we are still left with the problem of how to account for a benevolent creator

whose creation is pervaded by suffering.[8]

The *Ādipurāṇa's* final argument against *sṛṣṭivāda*, in verses 32-33, counters what might

be called the argument from intelligent design.

> You might say that the existence of bodies presupposes the existence of an
> intelligent cause, since we see that they have a particular design, like cities. [32]
> This claim proves nothing about the existence of God because the particular
> design [of an object] can result from other causes. [33][9]

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nanu saukhyamayīṃ sṛṣṭiṃ vidadhyād anupaplutām // ĀP 4.28

[8] See also *ĀP* 4.21, which addresses the problem of a deity who causes living beings to die.

[9] *buddhimaddhetusānnidhye tanvādyutpattum arhati /*
viśiṣṭasaṃniveśādipratīter nagarādivat // ĀP 4.32
ityasādhanam evaitad īśvarāstitvasādhane /
viśiṣṭasanniveśāder anyathāpy upapattitaḥ // ĀP 4.33

The *Ādipurāṇa* contends that the existence of complex entities does not presuppose the existence

of an intelligent being in the same way that the arrangement of a city suggests that there exists an

architect who designed it. Unlike a city, the universe constantly comes into being as a result of

different *karma*s that govern the arrangement of the universe. The *Ādipurāṇa* uses this claim to

elaborate the position that is specifically Jaina and that it regards as correct:

> We agree that the variety of body parts that people have is a result of the skill of
> the creator that is, "*nirmāṇakarma,*"—the category of karmic matter that
> determines the size and placement of limbs on the body.[10] [35] Because of the
> variety in karmas the world is diverse. One should understand that the self is the
> karma of everything, the driver of karma. [36] (The words) "*vidhi*", "*sraṣṭā*",
> "*vidhātā*", "*deva*", "*karma*", "*purākṛta*", and "*Īśvara*" should be understood as
> synonyms of the agent of action. [37] And because there is a consensus that the
> sky etc. is created by something else [(i.e karma)], even without a creator, the
> learned should refute the one who holds to doctrines of creation, who is infatuated
> by false claims. [38] Therefore, the world is not created; it has no beginning or
> end, like *kāla* and *tattva* (unclear, but it is an adverb); it has as its nature the
> support of [the nine] tattvas, such as the self. [39] It cannot be created, and it
> cannot be destroyed. Its condition/existence is maintained through itself. [40ab][11]

The universe is made up of ontological realia (*tattva*), which are analyzed at length at the

beginning of chapter 3 and the remainder of chapter 4 of the *Ādipurāṇa*. But the diversity of the

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[10] On the definition of *nirmāṇakarma*, see Kristi Lynn Wiley, "Aghātiyā Karmas: Agents of
Embodiment in Jainism" (Doctoral dissertation, Berkeley, University of California, 2000), 168–
69.

[11] *nirmāṇakarmanirmātṛkauśalāpāditodayam /*
aṅgopāṅgādivaicitryamaṅgināṃ saṃgirāvahe // ĀP 4.35
tadetatkarmavaicitryādbhavannānātmakaṃ jagat /
viśvakarmāṇamātmānaṃ sādhayet karmasārathim // ĀP 4.36
vidhiḥ sraṣṭā vidhātā ca devaṃ karma purākṛtam /
īśvaraś ceti paryāyā vijñeyāḥ karmavedhasaḥ // ĀP 4.37
sraṣṭāram antareṇāpi vyomādīnāṃ ca saṃgarāt /
sṛṣṭivādī sa nirgrāhyaḥ śiṣṭair durmatadurmadī // ĀP 4.38
tato 'sāvakṛto 'nādinidhanaḥ kālatattvavat /
loko jīvāditattvānām ādhārātmā prakāśate // ĀP 4.39
asṛjyo'yam asaṃhāryaḥ svabhāvaniyatasthitiḥ ǀ ĀP 4.40ab

world is explained not through recourse to an intelligent creator but through the *karmas* that construct it. For Jainas, *karma*s are insentient, eternal substances that are classified according to their effects. *Nāmakarma* is the category of karmic matter that brings about the form and birth of a living being, and *nirmāṇakarma* is a subcategory of *nāmakarma* that determines the size and placement of limbs on the body.[12] Understood in this way, *nirmāṇakarma* render the existence of a creator deity redundant. We need not infer the existence of a sentient creator from the compositional design of the world and of individual bodies if the insentient karmic matter is the cause of universal and bodily compositions.

The arguments raised by the *Ādipurāṇa* against the existence of *Īśvara* are not novel in the context of South Asian texts composed before the *Ādipurāṇa*. Jaina *suttas* from the early common era already rejected the existence of creator deities.[13] For instance, the *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* rejects the possibility that the universe was created by a god (*Īśvara, Brahmā, Svayambhū*).[14] In terms of systematic debates, the *Ādipurāṇa* articulates critiques that are voiced by earlier systematic treatises across multiple religious traditions. Buddhist philosophers writing before the ninth century, such as Dignāga, Dharmakīrti, Asaṅga and Bhāviveka, reject the existence of a creator deity through recourse to arguments that are similar to that of the *Ādipurāṇa*.[15] A creator

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[12] Wiley, "Aghātiyā Karmas," 117-230.

[13] For Buddhist critiques, see Nathan McGovern, "Brahmā: An Early and Ultimately Doomed Attempt at a Brahmanical Synthesis," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 40, no. 1 (2012): 1–23.

[14] *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* 1.1.3.5-10.

[15] See Parimal Patil, *Against a Hindu God: Buddhist Philosophy of Religion in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009); Bhāvaviveka, *Bhavya on Mīmāṃsā: Mīmāṃsātattvanirṇayāvatāraḥ*, trans. Christian Lindtner, 1st ed. (Chennai: The Adyar Library and Research Centre, 2001), 25–42; Helmut Krasser, "Dharmakīrti's and Kumārila's Refutations of the Existence of God: A Consideration of Their Chronological Order," in *Dharmakīrti's Thought and Its Impact on Indian and Tibetan Philosophy. Proceedings of the Third International Dharmakīrti Conference, Hiroshima, November 4–6, 1997*, ed. Shoryu Katsura (Wein: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1999), 215-223.

cannot have an intention to create; a creator cannot exist independently of his creation; and a creator cannot create the universe while remaining benevolent. Mīmāṃsakas also vehemently rejected the possibility that a creator created the world. The *Ādipurāṇa*'s rejection of *sṛṣṭivāda* closely resembles the rejection forwarded by Kumārila in the *Ślokavārttika.*[16] Both Jinasena II and Kumārila contend that a creator such as Brahmā could not have created the world without an instrument; that the ontological nature of the deity is compromised if we posit a desire or intention on his part to create; and that the argument from intelligent design is untenable.[17]

While it is not surprising that the *Ādipurāṇa*'s critique resembles that of Kumārila, given that the latter provided the foundation for critiques from Buddhist and Jaina authors, what makes the alignment interesting is the way in which the *Ādipurāṇa* understands Mīmāṃsā compared to the way in which earlier Jaina *purāṇa*s view Mīmāṃsā. For instance, the *Padmacarita* embeds in Nārada's dialogical refutation a rejection of creationism and theism. There, Nārada rejects the existence of a creator on the grounds that the creator cannot have an intention to create, that the arrangement of the world does not require the existence of a sentient creator, and that the creator could not possess a body.[18] While the *Ādipurāṇa* does not express the *Padmacarita*'s critique of theism verbatim, it raises similar rejections of theism (which in turn, voice similar critiques by earlier philosophers). Both *purāṇa*s are aligned in their understanding of the universe insomuch

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[16] *ŚV Sambandhaparīkṣepaparihāra* 42-114. See Francis X. Clooney, "Devatādhikaraṇa: A Theological Debate in the Mīmāṃsā-Vedānta Tradition," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 16, no. 3 (1988): 277–98; Elisa Freschi, "Between Theism and Atheism: A Journey through Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta and Mīmāṃsā," in *Puṣpikā: Tracing Ancient India Through Texts and Traditions. Contributions to Current Research in Indology*, ed. Robert Leach and Jessie Pons, vol. 3 (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2015), 24–47.

[17] *ŚV Sambandhaparīkṣepaparihāra* 42-82

[18] *PC* 11.217-33

as they both cite *nāmakarma* as that which causes the construction of the universe and of individual bodies.[19]

The difference in context of the refutations reveals that each Jaina *purāṇa* has a different understanding of who constitutes the religious Other. In the *Padmacarita*, Nārada replays Kumārila's own critiques in order to undermine Brahmanical purāṇic presentations of creation.[20] Nārada's alignment with Kumārila's arguments is fleeting. Aside from this one alignment during the discussion of creationism, Nārada's dialogue is dominated by criticisms of Kumārila's Mīmāṃsā. The *Padmacarita* uses the dialogue to cast Mīmāṃsā as the religious-philosophical Other to Jainism. By contrast, the fact that the *Ādipurāṇa* dedicates the dialogue to refuting creationism alone, and that its criticisms replay arguments that can be found in Kumārila's works, suggests that the *Ādipurāṇa* does not consider Mīmāṃsā to be the religious Other to be refuted. The *Ādipurāṇa* aligns itself with earlier Jaina, Buddhist, and even Mīmāṃsā philosophers, casting creationists as the ultimate religious Other.

The historical context in which Jinasena II is located helps us to suggest which tradition(s) the refutation is targeting as well as why Jinasena II is refuting creationism rather than any other philosophical discourse. Lawrence McCrea explains that before the ninth century, the majority of systematic traditions reject the existence of a creator deity and relegate their critiques of theism to broader epistemological debates. This is certainly the case for the writers whom I have cited above. Buddhist, Jaina and Mīmāṃsā authors before the ninth century relegate their refutations of creationism to other debates, such as epistemology and the nature of language. McCrea argues that after the ninth century, Brahmanical systematic writers begin to

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[19] *Nirmāṇakarma* is a subcategory of *nāmakarma*. Compare *ĀP* 4.35 with *PC* 11.225 on this argument against intelligent design.

[20] See chapter 2 of this dissertation for a further discussion.

argue in favor of a creator deity.[21] One of the earliest Brahmanical philosophers to argue in favor

of a creator deity is Uddyotakāra (seventh century CE), who commented on the *Nyāyāsūtras*.

Uddyotakāra infers the existence of *īśvara* from the claim that *īśvara* must be the efficient cause

of the universe.[22] He employs a number of arguments, some of which resemble the antithetical

position in the *Ādipurāṇa*. Nyāya authors, such as Jayanta Bhaṭṭa, took up and elaborated on

Uddyotakāra's ideas from the end of the ninth century onwards.[23] We might suggest that the

Ādipurāṇa's exclusive focus on *sṛṣṭivāda* captures a historical moment when these Brahmanical

theories of creationism come into vogue and when, in response, Buddhist and Jaina authors begin

to forefront their rejections of creationism. We ought to remain cautious in this suggestion

because the earliest Naiyāyika to develop Uddyotakāra's ideas is Jayanta Bhaṭṭa, who flourished

two decades after Jinasena II's demise. What we can say with certainty is that the *Ādipurāṇa*

departs from previous śāstric and purāṇic writers in its representation of Brahmanical

philosophy. Pre-ninth-century *śāstra*s relegate their critiques of *sṛṣṭivāda* to other concerns, and

this formal presentation is reflected in pre-ninth-century Jaina *purāṇa*s which treat critiques of

sṛṣṭivāda similarly. The ninth century *Ādipurāṇa,* by contrast, forefronts *sṛṣṭivāda* as the sole

discourse to be refuted. Regardless of whether Jinasena II knew of and responds to a

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[21] Lawrence McCrea, "Desecularization in Indian Intellectual Culture 900-1300 AD," in *Religion, Conflict, and Accommodation in Indian History*, ed. Bhargava Rajeevh and Sudipta Kaviraj (New York: Columbia University Press, forthcoming).
[22] See Uddyotakāra's commentary, *Nyāyavārttikā*, on *Nyāyāsūtra* 4.1.21. Jayanta Bhaṭṭa also argued in favor of the existence of god in his *Nyāyāmañjari*. Jayanta Bhaṭṭa, *Jayanta Bhaṭṭa's Nyāya-Mañjarī: The Compendium of Indian Speculative Logic*, trans. Janaki Vallabha Bhattacharyya, 1st ed. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978), 401–22. However, Jayanta flourished during the reign of Śaṅkaravarman, 885-902 CE, and thus Jinasena's *Ādipurāṇa* (860 CE) predates Jayanta's *Nyāyāmañjari.*
[23] John Vattanky, "Aspects of Early Nyāyā Theism," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 6, no. 4 (1978): 393–404. For broader trajectories of Nyāyā discourse, see John Vattanky, *Development of Nyāyā Theism* (New Delhi: Intercultural Publications, 1993).

contemporaneous emergence of creationist discourses from Brahmanical philosophers, the contrast between his presentation of the antithetical position and that of earlier śāstric and purāṇic writers demonstrates that Jinasena II considers creationism to be the philosophical core of Brahmanism.

Besides śāstric targets of the *Ādipurāṇa*'s refutation, there is another, perhaps more apparent target for the *Ādipurāṇa*'s critique: Brahmanical narratives. For instance, the *Mahābhārata* presents the deity Brahmā as the creator of the universe,[24] while *purāṇa*s with sectarian allegiances to Viṣṇu, Kṛṣṇa or Śiva present their respective object of devotion as the universal creator. The *Ādipurāṇa*'s presentation of the antithetical position coheres broadly with Brahmanical narratives that attribute the creation of the universe to various deities. The *Ādipurāṇa*'s systematic refutation of *sṛṣṭivāda* rejects the validity of Brahmanical narratives on logical grounds. Meanwhile, the context of the refutation—the re-presentation of the contents of the Jaina universe in chapters 3 and 4—writes Brahmanical creator deities out of existence because chapters 3 and 4 describe an eternal universe governed by insentient karmic matter.

The frame of the *Ādipurāṇa*'s rejection specifies that one of its targets is Brahmanical *purāṇa*s. Many Brahmanical *purāṇa*s narrate creation at the beginning of the composition. For instance, book 1 of the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* narrates Viṣṇu's creation of the universe and its constituents. This structural presentation was captured in Brahmanical generic discourse as one of the five ideological marks (*pañcalakṣaṇa*) that characterize a "*purāṇa.*"[25] Keeping this

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[24] See for instance, *Mbh* 1.58.35-46. For an overview of Hindu creation myths and their paradoxes, see Wendy Doniger, "You Can't Get Here From There: The Logical Paradox of Hindu Creation Myths," in *On Hinduism* (New Delhi: Aleph Book Company, 2013), 157–69.
[25] On the developments of this generic discourse, see Velcheru Narayana Rao, "Purāṇa as Brahmanical Ideology," in *Purāṇa Perennis: Reciprocity and Transformation in Hindu and Jaina Texts*, ed. Wendy Doniger (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1993), 85–100.

discursive context in mind, the context of the *Ādipurāṇa*'s rejection of *sṛṣṭivāda* is not fortuitous.

Chapters 1 and 2 of the *Ādipurāṇa* are dominated by lengthy discussions of the *Purāṇa* genre.

The *Ādipurāṇa* even prefaces its rejection of *sṛṣṭivāda* in chapter 4 with the generic comment,

"The description of the universe (*loka*) constitutes the first of eight major topics that should be

related by *purāṇa*s."[26] Chapters 3 and 4 then narrate Jaina cosmology: the ontological entities

that make up the universe, the divisions of time and the nature of karmas, all of which are devoid

of a sentient creator. The location, context and content of the *Ādipurāṇa*'s rejection of *sṛṣṭivāda*

work in tandem to challenge the Brahmanical ideological claim that descriptions of universal

creation (*sarga*/*sṛṣṭi*) constitute one of the distinguishing marks of the *Purāṇa* genre. Together,

the Jaina texts replace descriptions of the origins of the universe (*sarga*) with descriptions of the

eternally existing universe (*loka*) as one of the hallmark features that characterize a "*purāṇa*."

We can take this argument one step further. The use of *sṛṣṭivāda* as a site for critiquing

Brahmanical ideas about theism, cosmogony and the *purāṇa* genre is inflected into the very title

of the text itself. "*Ādipurāṇa*" can refer to: the cosmological setting of the tale, "the tale [*purāṇa*]

of the beginning [*ādi*];" the main protagonist of the text, "the first [*adi*] ancient hero [*purāṇa*];"

and the status of the text, "the first [*ādi*] *purāṇa*," as a text that reinvents Brahmanical

conceptions of the genre and inscribes a new ideological model for *purāṇa*s.[27]

In sum, the *Ādipurāṇa*'s refutation raises three challenges. It critiques *sṛṣṭivāda* as a

philosophical discourse expressed by certain Brahmanical philosophers. It critiques creationist

narratives from Brahmanical Epics and *Purāṇa*s that describe the origins of the universe. And it

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[26] *ĀP* 4.3

[27] I think that the *Ādipurāṇa* might be the first Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa* to elaborate at length characteristics that define a "*purāṇa*." Some sparse comments can be found in the *Padmacarita* and *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*. I aim to detail the distinctions among these emic classifications in future research.

critiques Brahmanical genre discourses that present creation narratives as one of the formal characteristics of the *purāṇa* genre. The *Ādipurāṇa*'s dialogue presents the Brahmanical philosophy of creationism as consistent with Brahmanical narratives about creation and Brahmanical ideologies about genre. This contrasts with the philosophical dialogue in the *Padmacarita,* which presents Brahmanism as a tradition whose philosophy does not cohere with its narratives. The *Ādipurāṇa* presents a stable discourse, *sṛṣṭivāda*, as one that unifies Brahmanical philosophy, Brahmanical narratives, and Brahmanical generic discourses into a single position that is antithetical to Jainism.

3. The Creation of the Brāhmanas

In this section, I examine the only other passage of the *Ādipurāṇa* that discusses Brahmanical discourses: the tale of King Bharata's creation of the Brāhmaṇas in chapters 38-41. Through this tale, the *Ādipurāṇa* constructs a nuanced presentation of Brahmanism as a socially proximate, religious Other. The *Ādipurāṇa*'s tale of the Brāhmaṇas draws on versions of the tale found in earlier *Purāṇa*s. Therefore, we will begin with a survey of retellings that predate the *Ādipurāṇa* before turning to the discursive innovations made by the *Ādipurāṇa*.

Earlier Retellings

There are four Jaina narratives texts that retell Bharata's creation of Brāhmaṇas before the *Ādipurāṇa*'s retelling was composed in ninth century: the *Paümacariya* (fifth century), the *Vasudevahiṇḍī* (fifth-sixth century), the *Padmacarita* (seventh century), and the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* (eighth century). All of these versions begin with the same opening. After Ṛṣabha's son Bharata has conquered the country, he returns to his kingdom and reflects on what he should do with the wealth he has acquired through tributaries. Bharata decides to distribute his wealth to the householders who follow the conduct prescribed by the Jina. Each text develops a different storyline here onwards. They each ascribe the Sanskrit label "Brāhmaṇa," or the Prakrit equivalent, "Māhaṇa," to distinct sectors of Bharata's society and they each provide different etymological and literary explanations for the creation of Brāhmaṇas.

According to the *Vasudevahiṇḍī*,[28] some uninvited Jaina laypeople enter Bharata's courtyard to receive food. They "consider the blessings (*darisana*) of a King to be equivalent to the blessings (*darisana)* given by a divinity (*deva*)."[29] The uninvited laypeople misunderstand the relationship between the king and the laity: the king is not, as these individuals assume, a divinity who bestows worship in return for reverence.[30] The worthy Jaina laypeople (*śrāvaka*) follow the Jaina householder vows (*anuvratas*), and, in line with the vow of non-violence, they do not harm living beings. It is these householders whom Bharata intends to give a donation to, bestowing on them the title, "Māhaṇa," because, in line with their beliefs and practices, these worthy householders proclaim, "Do not kill living beings (*mā hanana jive*)!" The etymological meaning of Prakrit "*Māhaṇa*" reinterprets the Sanskrit signifier, "Brāhmaṇa," to convey Jaina

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[28] *Vdh* pp.183-84
[29] *Vdh* pp.184 "*Rāyadarisaṇaṃ devadarisaṇamiva maṇṇamāṇo*"
[30] Jaina retellings of the myth of Viṣṇu-Vāmana provide another contemporaneous example in which Jaina texts are revising the relationship between a King and the householders in his kingdom.

ethics of non-violence. The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* summarizes the *Vasudevahiṇḍī*'s retelling, naming these true householders as "Brāhmaṇas," without any etymological explanation.[31]

The above representation of Brahminhood challenges Brahmanical texts that posit a concomitant relation between a social class and a particular religion. To be a Brāhmaṇa means neither that one has a religious commitment to the Brahmanical *Vedas* nor that one belongs by birthright to the superior tier of the Brahmanical community. According to the *Vasudevahiṇḍī* and the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa,* to be a Brāhmaṇa means that one is within the Jaina householder community and subscribes to the Jina's teachings for householders. For these texts, "Brāhmaṇa" is a religious and social label that distinguishes Jaina householders from ascetic Jainas and Brahmanical householders.

The *Paümacariya* and *Padmacarita* diverge from the *Vasudevahiṇḍī* and the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*. For the *Paümacariya* and *Padmacarita,* the signifier "Brāhmaṇa" identifies the householders who will depart from the Jina's teaching to create a religious tradition that is antithetical to Jainism: Brahmanism. According to Vimalasūri's *Paümacariya,*[32] when the Jaina householders are invited to Bharata's court to receive donations, some householders who are sinful (*samallīnā*) and possess false ideas (*micchattāī*) rush to Bharata's court under the expectation that they too will receive donations.[33] The path that leads to Bharata's palace is covered with vegetation that will be harmed if the householders trample over it. Those who refrain from travelling to Bharata's court are rewarded with a sacred thread and donations by Bharata. This plot event is condensed into just one verse,[34] leaving the reader to infer that these

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[31] *HvP* 11.106ff
[32] *PCV* 4.64-86
[33] *PCV* 4.75
[34] *Na ya te riyanti bhavanaṃ daṭṭhu javavīhiyaṅkure purao /*

Jaina householders are rewarded by Bharata because they did not harm the plants.[35] The

householders who are rewarded by Bharata misinterpret the honor that they are given. They think

that they must be the most accomplished Jaina practitioners because they were rewarded.[36]

Bharata's courtier explains that this pride will cause the householders to become heretics of false

religions (*kutitthapāsaṇḍā*) in the final era.[37] They will compose a false text called the "*Veda*"

that will contain false teachings and they will kill animals in Vedic sacrifices. Their dharma will

consist of problematic activities (*vivariyavittidhamma*), and they will delude other beings with

their false teachings.[38] Bharata, distraught by the prediction, orders these householders to be

expelled from the kingdom. The householders take refuge in Ṛṣabha, who restrains Bharata from

killing them. The *Paümacariya* explains that it is because Ṛṣabha cried out (in Prakrit) "Do not

kill them!" (*mā hanasu*) that these householders became under the Prakrit signifier, "*Māhaṇa.*"[39]

The *Paümacariya* presents Brahmanism as community of householders that consolidated

a new religion because its members misunderstood the nature of Bharata's patronage, and

consequently, their status in Jaina society. At the time of Bharata's reign, the Brāhmaṇas are not

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Kāgaṇirayaṇena tao suttaṃ ciya sāvayāmaṃ kayam // PCV 4.76
"The sacred thread (*sutta*) was given by Bharata, the jewel of the kingdom, to those householders (*sāvaya*) who did not travel to the palace after having seen the grains, rice and shoots in front of it."
[35] The *Paümacariya* says nothing about the deluded householders who rushed to Bharata's palace.
[36] *PCV* 4.77
[37] *PCV* 4.79. According to Balcerowizc, "*kutīrtha*" (Pkt. *kutittha*) in Jaina texts denotes a false (*ku*) religion (*tīrtha*) and has a pejorative sense. It is plausible that "*kutīrtha*" could also refer to a false teacher or adherent of a false religion rather than the religion itself, but Balcerowizc notes that texts tend to use '*kutīrthika*" when denoting an individual person. See Balcerowizc, *Jainism and the Definition of Religion*, 18–19. Thus, we can read the compound "*kutitthapāsaṇḍā"* as either "false teachers and heretics" or "heretics [*pāsaṇḍa*] belonging to false religions." Following Balcerowizc's readings of "*tīrtha*" across Jaina texts, I have opted for the second reading.
[38] *PCV* 4.80-81
[39] *PCV* 4.85

proud or ethically problematic. They adhere to the Jina's teachings for householders. However, the Brāhmaṇas' misinterpretation of Bharata's donation leads them to consider themselves sociologically and religiously superior to all others in Bharata's kingdom. Of course, these householders cannot be superior to all others. The Jaina ascetics, whom Bharata initially wanted to donate to, cannot be invited to Bharata's court because they cannot receive alms that have been prepared for them in advance.[40] Moreover, the ascetics have renounced and so they cannot receive wealth and possessions from anyone. We might read the *Paümacariya*'s retelling as a negative portrayal of Jaina householders that was common to pre-sixth-century Jaina depictions of householders. According to Andrew More, the earliest extant textual layers of the Śvetāmbara corpus privilege ascetics as the paradigmatic Jaina practitioner, devoting very little discussion to the significance of the householder community until the sixth century.[41] The *Paümacariya*'s retelling in the fifth century perhaps articulates a moment of transition in the Jaina representation of householders insofar it dedicates space to discussing householder practice, but nevertheless relegates householders to celibate ascetics.

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[40] *PCV* 4.71-74

[41] Andrew More's dissertation is the most recent work undertaken on Jaina discourses about householdership in the earliest extant texts. Andrew More, "Early Statements Relating to the Lay Community in the Śvetāmbara Jain Canon" (Doctoral dissertation, New Haven, Yale University, 2014). See also Andrew More, "Laity in the Śvetāmbara Scriptural Canon," in *Brill's Encyclopedia of Jainism Online*, ed. John E. Cort et al. (Brill, 2020); Jeffery D. Long, "The Ideal Layperson, Texts on Lay Conduct (Śrāvakācāra)," in *Brill's Encyclopedia of Jainism Online*, ed. John E. Cort et al. (Brill, 2020).
Several earlier studies have attempted to trace the inclusion of the lay community to various degrees of success. See W. J. Johnson, *Harmless Souls: Karmic Bondage and Religious Change in Early Jainism with Special Reference to Umāsvāti and Kundakunda*, 1st ed., vol. 9, Lala Sundar Lal Jain Research Series (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1995). For Dundas' response to this presentations, see Paul Dundas, "The Laicisation of the Bondless Doctrine: A New Study of the Development of Early Jainism," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 25, no. 5 (1997): 495–516. On the medieval representation of lay practices, see R. Williams, *Jaina Yoga; A Survey of the Mediaeval Śrāvakācāras.*, v.14, London Oriental Series, (London: Oxford University Press, 1963).

Related to this, Nathan McGovern argues that by the fifth century, Brahmanical texts present the Brāhmaṇa householder, and not the celibate, as the religious ideal of Brahmanism.[42] Such texts use the term "Brāhmaṇa" to refer to householders who uphold the validity of Vedic rites. The *Paümacariya* articulates these contemporaneous Brahmanical discourses. It presents Brāhmaṇas as the householders who found a new religion that subscribes to the authority of the *Veda* and that propagates animal sacrifices as a form of dharma. Brahmanism is presented as a religion that emerged out of Jaina householders who misunderstood their sociological and religious place in Jaina society.

The *Paümacariya*'s retelling is adapted and taken to the extreme by the *Padmacarita*.[43] In the *Padmacarita*, there existed householders who possess false insight (*mithyādṛśaḥ*) and who know that they do not belong to the same community as the householders who possess correct insight. But knowing that King Bharata will only donate money to those who possess correct insight, the unworthy householders use a form of deception (*māyā*) in order to trick Bharata into patronizing them. The deception proves useless. Bharata is able to distinguish the householders with correct insight from those with false insight.[44] He rewards the worthy householders with wealth and the sacred thread.

The *Padmacarita* invents a new episode in order to explain the origins of Brahminhood. The householders who leave Bharata's palace empty-handed lament their situation with self-deprecating words that makes Bharata feel sorry for them. Bharata gifts them wealth purely in a bid to console them. But ignorant as they are, these householders infer that Bharata's donation is

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[42] Nathan McGovern, *The Snake and the Mongoose: The Emergence of Identity in Early Indian Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019).
[43] *PC* 4.86-132
[44] *PC* 4.109-110

a sign of their own eminent status: "Some of us have been honored by the King out of [his] incredible faith because we are incredibly pure [and] desire to do what is beneficial for the world!"[45] They become so arrogant that they begin to demand donations from other wealthy people. The remainder of the *Padmacarita's* retelling parallels that of the *Paümacariya*. Bharata's courtier predicts that after the final Jina has died, these householders will become arrogant heretics (*pākhaṇḍino*).[46] They will perform sinful rituals and kill living beings out of their confused notions of "dharma"; they will compose a false text known as the "*Veda*"; and their primary aim will be to obtain donations from people (*pratigrahaparāyaṇāḥ*).[47] Bharata tries to kill the householders, but his father restrains him. It is because Ṛṣabha cried out, "Son, do not kill them!" (*mā hananaṃ putra kārṣīr*) that these people henceforth became known as "*Māhaṇa*."[48]

The *Padmacarita* presents the Brāhmaṇas as a religious and social community of householders that has always been distinct from the Jaina community of householders. The Brāhmaṇas are a distinct religious group because they antithetical to the Jaina lay vows, *anuvrata*, that identify the Jaina householders. In previous retellings, the Brāhmaṇas commit violent rituals and become attached to the wealth gained through donations (*dāna*), which contradicts the vows of non-violence (*ahiṃsā*) and non-attachment to possessions (*aparigraha*). To this list, the *Padmacarita* adds that the Brāhmaṇas lie and are willing to use deception to gain

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[45] *PC* 4.113
[46] *PC* 4.116
[47] *PC* 4.116-19
[48] *PC* 4.122. In the *Vasudevahiṇḍī*, the etymological meaning of "*māhaṇa*" is consistent with the practice of non-violence that is performed by people whom the term signifies; in the *Paümacariya* and *Padmacarita*, the meaning of "Māhaṇa" relates to Ṛṣabha's command to Bharata rather than the conduct of the people whom the term signifies. For the *Paümacariya* and *Padmacarita*, the *meaning* of Māhana/Brāhmaṇa no longer characterizes the agents whom the term directly signifies.

material wealth. The conclusion of the *Padmacarita's* retelling sarcastically adds that the

Brāhmaṇas began to wear loincloths as a way of concealing their erections in front of women

whom they lust for.[49] Therefore, not only do they knowingly abandon the vow of truth (*satya*),

but they also reject the vow of sexual restraint (*abrahmacarya*).[50]

The Brāhmaṇas are a distinct social group because they inhabit neither the same social

space as that of the Jaina householders nor do they gain the same institutional support of

Bharata's court as the Jaina householders. The Brāhmaṇas are a community who know that they

do not constitute the community of upstanding Jaina householders, who will be rewarded by

Bharata.[51] Their status as outsiders is institutionalized by King Bharata, who immediately rejects

them in favor of honoring the lay Jainas who follow the *anuvrata*s. For the *Padmacarita*, the

social status of the Brāhmaṇas reflects their religious status, and vice versa. Because they do not

subscribe to the Jina's teachings, they reside at the outskirts of Bharata's kingdom with sustained

financial support from the court, and equally, their location on the outskirts of society reflects

their status as the religious Other.

As we can see, the interpretation of Brahminhood oscillates according to each Jaina

retelling. For the *Vasudevahiṇḍī* and *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*, "Brāhmaṇa" marks the paradigmatic

Jaina householders whose socio-religious community is institutionalized and patronized by King

Bharata. For the *Paümacariya*, brahminhood marks the Jaina householders who create a new

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[49] *Striyam dṛṣṭvā kucittāste puṃliṅgaṃ prāptavikriyaṃ /*
Pidadhur mohasaṃcannāḥ kaupīnena narādhamāḥ // PC 4.127

[50] It is possible to interpret the Brāhmaṇas obtaining donations under false pretenses as a form of stealing, though the *Padmacarita* does not explicitly name it as such.

[51] See *PC* 4.106. Some of the householders who do not follow the *anuvrata*s say that it is futile (*vṛthā*) for them to go To Bharata's kingdom in search of gifts because the king only honors those people who have correct insight and are respected.

religion because they misunderstand their institutional support from the court and their attendant status in Jaina society as inferior to the Jaina ascetics. And for the *Padmacarita,* Brahminhood marks ignorant, malevolent householders who have always resided outside of the Jaina householder community. The different understandings of who is a Brāhmaṇa reveal the different ways in which each Jaina text understands the relationship between Jainism and Brahmanism, and the institutional relationship between householders and the court on the other.

The Ādipurāṇa's Retelling: Creating the Brāhmaṇa Community

The numerous retellings about the origin of Brahminhood attest to the fact that Brahminhood was an important and enduring site through which Jainas negotiated social and religious identity between the fifth and ninth centuries. Moreover, they give us insight into the role that the institution (King Bharata's court) and social identities plays in the construction and regulation of religious identities.

The *Ādipurāṇa* updates and synthesizes earlier Jaina conceptualizations of Brahminhood through a retelling that covers several hundred verses over four chapters. More importantly, as a tale that describes the institutional basis that regulates the community, discourses, and practices, the *Ādipurāṇa* uses Bharata's character as an institutional leader to lend authority to a different conceptualization of the community and different practices that define them. The *Ādipurāṇa,* I argue, presents an institution that regulates a community defined by common social identities, practices, and lifestyles, rather than by common religious beliefs.

The frame of the *Ādipurāṇa*'s retelling is narrated in chapter 38.[52] Consistent with all previous retellings, Bharata acquires an enormous amount of wealth from tributaries and aspires to distribute this wealth to the householders in his kingdom. All the Jaina householders set out in the direction of Bharata's palace, but when they reach the path that leads into the palace courtyard, they discover that the path is covered with various plants and insects. Here, the *Ādipurāṇa* elaborates on the distinction among the different householders. Those who do not follow the *anuvrata*s trample through the vegetation that covers the paths leading to Bharata's courtyard. They disregard the plants and animals that would be harmed in the process of their travel.[53] Those who followed the *anuvrata*s would not enter the courtyard unless the paths were cleared, because in line with their vow of non-violence, these householders did not want to harm the plants and insects that covered the paths.[54] Bharata was pleased with those householders who followed the *anuvrata*s because they had refrained from inflicting violence onto living beings. As a reward, Bharata donates them wealth, the sacred thread,[55] and the title, "Brāhmaṇa."[56]

In terms of the plotline, the *Ādipurāṇa* follows the *Vasudevahiṇḍī*'s signification of Brāhmaṇa. Those laypeople who uphold the Jina's prescriptions for the householders are

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[52] Sarah Pierce Taylor, "Merit Not Birth: The Creation of the Brahman Caste from a Jain Perspective," in *Purāṇa Reader*, ed. Dheepa Sundaram and Deven Patel, forthcoming.
[53] *ĀP* 38.8; 12-13
[54] *ĀP* 38.17
[55] As an aside, it is not entirely clear when the practice of wearing the sacred thread was adopted by Jainas. In his discussion of Jains in Medieval Karnataka, Singh suggests that the earliest record of the practice dates to Jinasena's *Ādipurāṇa*. See Ram Bhushan Prasad Singh, *Jainism in Early Medieval Karnataka, c. A.D. 500-1200*, 1st ed. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1975), 77–78. However, the practice is attested in all previous retellings that I have found and discussed in previous chapters; indeed, the investiture of the sacred thread is mentioned in all retellings. This suggests that the practice was being discussed from at least fifth century CE. However, the extent to which it was practiced in reality is, of course, unclear.
[56] The *Ādipurāṇa* does not provide an etymological account for "Brāhmaṇa," but given that the Brāhmaṇas are those who refrain from killing living beings on the pathway, we might understand the "*Mā hana*" etymology to be in the background.

rewarded by Bharata with donations and the title, "Brāhmaṇa." The *Ādipurāṇa* emphasizes the ethical comportment of the Jaina Brāhmaṇas by inserting a plot event that is specific to the *Paümacariya*. The two sets of householders who arrive at the court are confronted by a path covered with vegetation. This plot event clarifies the difference between each set of householders because it illustrates the contrasting ethical responses that each set of householders have to the same situation.

The *Ādipurāṇa*, however, broadens the interpretation of Brahminhood to create a new typology of lay Brāhmaṇas. The *Vasudevahiṇḍī*'s hierarchical typology of Brāhmaṇas is based on the extent to which they follow the twelve lay rules. Brāhmaṇas who follow the five *anuvrata*s wear one thread over their shoulder; those who follow the three *guṇavrata*s in addition to the *anuvrata*s wear two threads; and those who follow the four *sikṣāvrata*s in addition to the *guṇavrata*s and *anuvrata*s wear three threads. In the *Ādipurāṇa*, Bharata goes on to explain that there are six Jaina householder practices for worshipping the Jina: worship (*ijyā*), livelihood (*vārta*), donation (*datti*), scriptural study (*svādhyāya*), self-control (*saṃyama*), and austerity (*tapas*).[57] Brahminhood has three spheres of referents: austerity (*tapas*), knowledge of scripture, and birth. Only those who have perfected their austerity (*tapas*) and have correct knowledge (*śruta*) are truly worthy of the name, "Brāhmaṇa."[58] While it is not entirely clear when this new list of lay Jaina practices came into vogue, the *Ādipurāṇa*'s innovation suggests that the text

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[57] *ĀP* 38.24. Each category is subdivided: see *ĀP* 38.25-42.
[58] *ĀP* 38.43; 47. Unlike previous retellings, the *Ādipurāṇa* gives no etymological derivation for "*Brāhmaṇa*."

broadens earlier Jaina definitions of "Brāhmāṇa" to include practices that are not presented by earlier Jaina texts to be exclusive markers of Jaina religious identity.[59]

The *Ādipurāṇa* expands its definition of "Brāhmaṇa" to include not only additional practices but practices that are mentioned in Brahmanical *dharmaśāstra*. Bharata's definition of "Brāhmaṇa," in *ĀP* 38.47, segues into over six hundred verses, from chapters 38 to 40, in which he prescribes rituals for the Brāhmaṇas. This list is unique to the *Ādipurāṇa*'s retelling and it is the most significant innovation to the tale. Here, the text prescribes, through Bharata's speech, the performance of fire sacrifices (*homa*) using vegetarian offerings, incantations (*mantra*s) to be recited during these rituals in veneration of the Jina, and fifty-three rituals that consecrate each stage of life (*saṃskāra*). This list has attracted scholarly attention because, at first glance, the rituals prescribed therein resemble those prescribed by the Brahmanical *dharmaśāstra*s.[60] With respect to *saṃskāra* rites, while they have a long-standing association associated with Hindu

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[59] Jaini notes that this list of practices is contained in Somadeva's *Upāsākādhyayaṇa*. Padmanabh S. Jaini, *The Jaina Path of Purification* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 191–92. See also Mukund Lath, "Somadeva Suri and the Question of Jain Identity," in *The Assembly of Listeners: Jains in Society*, ed. Michael Carrithers and Caroline Humphrey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 19–33.
I have not found evidence that this list of practices is prescribed by texts prior to Jinasena II's *Ādipurāṇa*. However, it is possible that Jinasena II's list of six practices is modelled on a list of six practices prescribed for Brāhmaṇas in the Brahmanical treatise on dharma, *Manusmṛti*. See *ManS* 12.31, "Vedic recitation, ascetic toil (*tapas*), knowledge (*jñāna*), purification (*śauca*), the control of the sense organs (*indriyanigrahaḥ*), righteous activity (*dharmakriyā*) and contemplation of the self (*ātmacintā*). This list is presented with some slight differences in *ManS* 12.83: Vedic recitation (*vedābhyāsas*), ascetic toil (*tapas*), knowledge (*jñāna*), control over the senses (*indriyāṇāṃ saṃyamaḥ*), nonviolence (*ahiṃsā*), and service to the teacher (*gurusevā*). The list of six practices prescribed for Brāhmaṇas is not stable in the *Manusmṛti*, which makes it difficult to suggest that the *Ādipurāṇa* is re-presenting these practices as common to Jaina and Brahmanical householders. A comprehensive study of Jaina and Brahmanical lay practices, which lies beyond the scope of this study, is necessary to substantiate this claim.
[60] Paul Dundas, "Becoming Gautama: Mantra and History in Śvetāmbara Jainism," in *Open Boundaries: Jain Communities and Culture in Indian History*, ed. John E. Cort (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998), 31–52; Jaini, *The Jaina Path of Purification*, 292–304; Williams, *Jaina Yoga*, 14:274–87.

texts, they are not markers of Hindu religious identity. Andrew More points out that saṃskāra

rituals are cited in Śvetāmbara texts that predate the *Ādipurāṇa*.[61] Mantra recitation and fire

rituals are also prescribed by earlier and contemporaneous Jaina texts, as Paul Dundas and Alexis

Sanderson's studies show.[62] Ellen Gough's dissertation substantiates and builds on these claims,

demonstrating that Jainas have a long tradition of practicing *homa* and reciting *mantra*s just as

Buddhist and Hindu traditions do.[63] In addition, Gough demonstrates that the *Ādipurāṇa*'s

discussion of initiation rites for lay people appropriates the language used by non-Jaina texts in

discussions of tantric initiation rites.[64] Keeping all of this in mind, we can suggest that such

rituals and mantras are not, in the *Ādipurāṇa*'s eyes, markers of a distinct religious identity

because such rites operate across multiple religious traditions. The *Ādipurāṇa* re-presents rituals

that are expressed in earlier and contemporaneous Jaina and Brahmanical texts, consolidating

them into a single prescriptive passage in which King Bharata declares such rituals to be

signifiers of his newly institutionalized householder community. In essence, such rituals are

prescribed as markers of a shared social identity.

The claim that the *Ādipurāṇa* does not use rituals to distinguish Brahmanical religious

identity from Jaina religious identity is corroborated by Jaina narratives more broadly. Phyllis

Granoff notes that while some narratives do cite rituals, such as Vedic animal sacrifice, to

distinguish between Brahmanical and Jaina traditions, Jaina narratives draw on ritual

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[61] More, "Early Statements Related to the Lay Community in the Śvetāmbara Jain Canon," 329.
[62] Alexis Sanderson, "The Śaiva Age: The Rise and Dominance of Śaivism during the Early Medieval Era," in *Genesis and Development of Tantrism*, ed. Shingo Einoo (Tokyo: Institute of Oriental Culture University of Tokyo, 2009), 243–49; Dundas, "Becoming Gautama: Mantra and History in Śvetāmbara Jainism."
[63] Ellen Marie Gough, "Making a Mantra: Jain Superhuman Powers in History, Ritual, and Material Culture" (Doctoral dissertation, New Haven, Yale University, 2015).
[64] Gough, "Making a Mantra," 173-82.

descriptions more frequently when they want to distinguish sects within Jainism.[65] She explains

that "[r]itual boundaries did not seem to work as a means to separate Jains from Hindus […]

because their flexibility did not really threaten religious identity in the presence of so many other

differentiating features."[66] Thus, keeping in mind the discursive history of ritual representations

in Jaina texts, the *Ādipurāṇa* is not distinguishing Jaina Brāhmaṇas from Brahmanical

Brāhmaṇas on the basis of ritual praxis. The storyline of the *Ādipurāṇa* demonstrates Granoff's

point, for Bharata institutionalizes a community that is not yet distinct in religious practices but,

on the contrary, shares a common set of practices. The inclusion of a description of *homa*s,

*mantra*s and *saṃskāra*s reveals that the *Ādipurāṇa* considers ritual praxis to be a site in which

Jainism and Brahmanism are not distinguished as distinct religious identities, but rather are

unified as a common society.[67]

Finally, the *Ādipurāṇa* goes beyond these rituals to include the ideology of four stages of

life (*āśramas*) as well as the clothing that serves as markers of a common social community

rather than a specific religious identity. In his study of the *āśrama* system in Brahmanical texts,

Patrick Olivelle notes that by the ninth century, Brahmanical *dharmaśāstra* was presenting a

theory of four obligatory stages of life that each male should successively pass through: celibate

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[65] See Phyllis Granoff, "Other People's Rituals: Ritual Eclecticism in Early Medieval Indian Religious," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 28, no. 4 (2000): 399–424; Phyllis Granoff, "My Rituals and My Gods: Ritual Exclusiveness in Medieval India," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 29, no. 1/2 (2001): 109–34. In this pair of articles, Granoff argues that ritual boundaries are used less for *inter*-sectarian disputes and more for *intra*-sectarian disputes—that is, among different groups of Jains.

[66] Granoff, "My Rituals and My Gods," 131.

[67] As I indicated in the introduction, the aim of this chapter is not to establish the reality of the *Ādipurāṇa*'s representations of Brahmanism or any religious practices. My concern is primarily with the discursive representation of religious belief, practices, and identities and as such, I have not engaged in the question of whether Jains performed such rites, but instead, whether such rites are attested by texts that predate the *Ādipurāṇa*.

student (*brahmacārin*), householder (*gṛhastha*), forest-dweller (*vanaprasthin*) and renouncer (*saṃnyāsa/śramaṇa*).[68] The *Ādipurāṇa* similarly states that Jaina should undergo the same four stages (*caturāśrama*),[69] though it replaces "*saṃnyāsin*"/"*śramaṇa*" with the more Jaina specific term for a Jaina mendicant, "*bhikṣuka*." Olivelle notes that the system is not found in Jaina texts.[70] While this claim is disproved by the *Ādipurāṇa*'s prescription of the system, Olivelle's study nevertheless leads me to suppose that the *Ādipurāṇa* is the earliest extant Jaina text to prescribe the *āśrama* system for a community that includes Jainas. The *Ādipurāṇa*, via Bharata, claims that "the system of four life-stages that belongs to other [traditions] is attractive [but] not established."[71] According to the storyline, alternative traditions do not yet exist. The comment betrays Jinasena II's endeavors to re-imagine the scope of an ideology that is traditionally delimited to Brahmanism. Finally, the *Ādipurāṇa* states that students should have their heads shaven and be invested with a sacred thread, a girdle of *muñja* grass, and white loincloth,[72] just as Brahmanical *dharmaśāstra* prescribes such markers (among many others) for a student's Vedic initiation (*upanayaṇa*).[73]

Taken together, the beginning of the story of the Brāhmaṇas paints a picture of a social community that shares the identifier "Brāhmaṇa," rituals and lifestyles. This community is not characterized by religious or sectarian beliefs. That is to say, for the *Ādipurāṇa*, social markers, practices, lifestyles and even clothing are not indicators of religious identity. Instead, they are

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[68] For an examination of the way in which Brahmanical texts consolidated the system of *āśrama* into four modes of life see, Patrick Olivelle, *The Āśrama System: The History and Hermeneutics of a Religious Institution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).
[69] *ĀP* 39.151-3
[70] Olivelle, *The Āśrama System,* 25.
[71] *caturāśramatvamaṇyeṣāmavicāritasundaram // ĀP* 39.151cd
[72] See *ĀP* 40.166 for the description of clothing.
[73] See *Manusmṛti* 2.36-65

markers of a social identity. The *Ādipurāṇa* portrays a society united by practices that are created and regulated by the institution of Bharata's kingdom, irrespective of differences in religious beliefs.

4. The Creation of Brahmanism

So far, the *Ādipurāṇa* has only constructed the religious Other through the philosophical refutation in chapter 4. The discourses that define the religious Other are not voiced by a subject—a character(s) whose narrative arc is traced. It is through the latter half of the tale of the Brāhmaṇas that the *Ādipurāṇa* begins to construct the character of the religious Other.

Immediately after Bharata has created his community of Brāhmaṇas and has finished prescribing their practices, he returns to his room and falls asleep. He has a dream that is full of omens that require deciphering. Ṛṣabha listens to the contents of his son's dream, and explains that it foreshadows the future of the Brāhmaṇas who have just been created.[74]

> O venerable one, those householders whom you created will continue to act in a proper manner for the rest of *Kṛtayuga*. [46] But when *Kaliyuga* arrives, out of pride over their birth (*jāti*), they will act in a degraded manner, turning away from the correct path. [47]. Those people, overcome with pride about their birth, will think, "We are superior!" In the final era, they will delude the world with their false texts (*durāgama*) out of their desire for wealth. [48] Their pride will increase through the attainment of respect and wealth [given to them by others]. They will be filled with pride and false ideas. After composing false texts (*duḥśruti*), they will deceive people using them. [49] At the end of time, those with false insight will have false intentions (*vikriyā*). They will become inimical to dharma, their minds afflicted by sin. [50] They will be constantly engaged in harming living beings. They will delight in the consumption of wine and meat. Those who do not

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[74] *ĀP* 41.46-54

follow dharma will proclaim a dharma that is characterized by *pravṛttidharma*.[75]
[51] Son, after corrupting dharma, which is characterized as non-violence
(*ahiṃsālakṣaṇaṃ dharmaṃ*), those malicious ones will propagate dharma as that
which is characterized by sacrificial injunctions (*codanālakṣaṇaṃ dharmaṃ*).
[52] They will wear a thread that characterizes their sin. In that era, those rogues,
whose sole desire is to kill living beings, will begin to obstruct the correct path.
[53] Therefore, even though the creation of the twice-borns does not incur a fault
right now, a fault might arise in the future through the activities of [these] terrible
heretics (*kupākhaṇḍa*). [54][76]

Ṛṣabha's prediction in the *Ādipurāṇa* parallels the prediction expressed by Bharata's courtier in

the *Paümacariya* and the *Padmacarita*.

In the *Kaliyuga*, after the Jina Mahāvīra has died, all of these people whom you
created will become incredibly arrogant heretics (*pākhaṇḍa*). They will kill living

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[75] *Pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti dharma* constitute two distinct ways in which dharma can be performed. In
Hindu texts, *pravṛtti* refers to the life of a householder and *nivṛtti* refers to the life of a
renunciate. In a Jaina context, *pravṛtti* has a more specific connotation as referring to action that
involves attachment and aversion (*rāga* and *dveṣa*). See vol. 2, pp. 627 and vol. 3, pp. 149 in
Jinendra Varṇī, *Jainendra Siddhānta Kośa*, 2nd ed., vol. 38, 40, 42, 44, 48, 5 vols. (New Delhi:
Bhāratīya Jñānapīṭha, 1985). It is not entirely clear to me that the *Ādipurāṇa* is referring to these
technical senses of *pravṛtti* or whether the text understand *pravṛttidharma* as the practice of
Vedic rituals. "*Pravṛttidharma*" seems to be glossed by verse 52 as "*codanālakṣaṇam*" and
indeed the editor of the *ĀP* repeats this gloss into his footnote.

[76] *āyuṣman bhavatā srṣṭā ya ete gṛhamedhinaḥ /*
te tāvad ucitācārā yāvatkṛtayugasthitiḥ // ĀP 41.46
tataḥ kaliyuge 'bhyarṇe jātinādāvalepataḥ //
bhṛṣṭācārāḥ prapatsyante sanmārgapratyanīkatām // ĀP 41.47
te 'mī jātimadāviṣṭā vayaṃ lokādhikā iti /
purā durāgamair lokaṃ mohayanti dhanāśayā // ĀP 41.48
satkāralābhasaṃvṛddhagarvā mithyāmadoddhatāḥ /
janān pratārayiṣyanti svayam utpādya duḥśrutīḥ // ĀP 41.49
te ime kālaparyante vikriyāṃ prāpya durdṛśaḥ
dharmadraho bhaviṣyanti pāpopahatacetanāḥ // ĀP 41.50
sattvopaghātaniratā madhumāṃsāśanapriyāḥ /
pravṛttilakṣaṇaṃ dharmaṃ ghoṣayiṣyantadhārmikāḥ // ĀP 41.51
ahiṃsālakṣaṇaṃ dharmaṃ duṣayitvā durāśayāḥ /
codanālakṣaṇaṃ dharmaṃ poṣayiṣyantyamī bata // ĀP 41.52
pāpasūtradharā dhūrtāḥ prāṇimāraṇatatparāḥ //
vartsyad yuge pravartsyanti sanmārgaparipanthinaḥ // ĀP 41.53
dvijātisarjanaṃ tasmānnādya yadyapi doṣakṛt /
syād doṣabījam āyatyāṃ kupākhaṇḍapravartanāt // ĀP 41.54

beings. Deluded by [their] conceptions of dharma and subject to their passions, they will always engage in sinful rituals. They will proclaim a false text, known as the "*Veda*," whose sole focus will be to proclaim violence. They will say that [this scripture] has no author, and they will delude all beings with it.[77]

The *Ādipurāṇa's* prediction of the fate of the Brāhmaṇas in the Kaliyuga follows the one expressed by the *Paümacariya* and *Padmacarita*. In all three texts, the Kaliyuga householders will become "heretics" (*pākhaṇḍa)*, a pejorative term that Jaina *purāṇa*s reserve for denoting persons who not only reject the authority of the Jina broadly but represent the extreme Other to Jainism.[78] Furthermore, in all three versions, the Kaliyuga Brāhmaṇas consider themselves superior to all other beings, and on the basis of this pride they take up violent sacrifices, compose new religious scriptures, and promulgate false conceptions of dharma.

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[77] The quotation is a translation of the *Padmacarita*'s version:
varddhamānajinasyānte bhaviṣyanti kalau yuge /
ete ye bhavatā sṛṣṭāḥ pākhaṇḍino mahoddhatāḥ // PC 4.116
prāṇino mārayiṣyanti dharmabuddhayā vimohitāḥ //
mahākaṣāyasaṃyuktāḥ sadā pāpakriyodyatāḥ // PC 4.117
kugranthaṃ vedasaṃjñaṃ ca hiṃsābhāṣaṇatatparam /
vakṣyanti kartṛnirmuktaṃ mohayanto'khilāḥ prajāḥ // PC 4.118

The *Padmacarita*'s prediction follows that the of the *Paümacariya*:
Jāna tume narāhiva sammāṇo padhasāvayāṇaṃ kao /
Te viīrassa 'vasāṇe hohiṃti kutitthapāṣaṇḍā // PCV 4.79
Aliyavayanesu sattha kāuṇa veyanāmadheya te /
Hiṃsabhāṣaṇimitta jaṇṇesu pasū vahissanti // PCV 4.80
Vivariyavittidhamma ārambhapariggrahesu aniyattā /
Sayameva muḍhabhāvā sesaṃ pi jaṇo vimohanti // PCV 4.81
[78] For example, in the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*, "*pākhaṇḍa*" is used not for Brahmanical traditions, but for materialist traditions. The Jaina use of "*pākhaṇḍa*" is different from the Hindu understanding of "*pāṣaṇḍa*"/ "*pākhaṇḍa*." For Hindu understanding, see Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, "The Origin of Heresy in Hindu Mythology," *History of Religions* 10, no. 4 (1971): 271–333; Wendy Doniger, *The Origins of Evil in Hindu Mythology*, 1st ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 272–320.

For the *Ādipurāṇa*, Brahmanism is not a product of householders who have always been outsiders to Bharata's kingdom, as they are in the *Padmacarita's* retelling. The *Ādipurāṇa* follows the *Paümacariya* in presenting Brahmanism as a religious tradition that arose out of Bharata's community and whose downfall is attributed to the degeneration of time. Nevertheless, the *Ādipurāṇa* follows the *Padmacarita* in connecting Brahmanism with Mīmāṃsā discourse.[79]

The *Ādipurāṇa* maintains a connection between the Brāhmaṇas and Mīmāṃsā through its description of false dharma. Verse 52 states that the Brāhmaṇas of the Kaliyuga will corrupt the Jina's dharma, "which is characterized as non-violence" (*ahiṃsālakṣaṇaṃ dharmaṃ*). These Brāhmaṇas will instead propagate "a dharma that is indicated by Vedic injunctions" (*codanālakṣaṇaṃ dharmaṃ*), a description that re-presents the most famous aphorism from the *Mīmāṃsāsūtra*s, "Dharma is a good that is indicated by Vedic injunctions" ("*codanālakṣaṇo 'rtho dharmaḥ*" *MS* 1.1.2). Through this description of the Brāhmaṇas' false dharma, the *Ādipurāṇa* connects the beliefs and practices of the Brāhmaṇas inside the tale with Mīmāṃsakas who similarly defended the practice of animal sacrifice and the reliability of Brāhmaṇa speakers.

Although the *Ādipurāṇa* maintains a correlation between the Brāhmaṇas and Mīmāṃsakas, this correlation is rather weak in comparison to that which is expressed by the *Padmacarita*. The *Ādipurāṇa*'s presentation replays tropes that can be found across earlier Jaina literature (i.e. the Brāhmaṇas adhere to the wrong scripture and proclaim animal sacrifice). It

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[79] See chapter 1 of this dissertation for a further discussion. Note that *Padmacarita* states that the Brāhmaṇas created by Bharata will proclaim the *Veda* to be authorless. (*PC* 4.118) This claim is later presented as Kumārila's position in Nārada's debate with Saṃvarta in *PC* 11. In addition, Nārada rejects the possibility that Brāhmaṇas constitute a valid means of knowing religious truths. The context of this refutation suggests that the *Padmacarita* considers Brāhmaṇas to be followers of Mīmāṃsā

does not provide sufficient elaborations or innovations to the storyline to help us to clarify the text's understanding of the religious Other.

Once again, it is the *Ādipurāṇa*'s systematic expression of discourses rather than its literary presentation of the story that clarifies the text's understanding of the religious Other. At the end of Bharata's exposition of *homa*s, *mantra*s, and *saṃskāra*s, the *Ādipurāṇa* presents a specific and explicit distinction between the false Brāhmaṇas and the true Brāhmaṇas.[80]

> As for the topic of creation, it should be guarded from critique by the best of Brāhmaṇas, who were the foremost creation (of Bharata) [***uttamasṛṣṭibhiḥ***]; they should throw aside [doctrines of] creation (***sṛṣṭiṃ***) that are made through speculative views because [such views] are too extreme. [187] Otherwise [if the topic is not guarded from critique], those with false insight will delude people and kings with this doctrine of creation (***sṛṣṭivāda***), a false view, and lead them down the wrong path. [188]
>
> He who knows the ontological realia (*tattvas*) and the perspectives (*naya*) should rejects other [doctrines of] creation (***sṛṣṭi***), that are distinct from this [our view]. [Instead], he should endorse the "spread" of dharma (***dharmasṛṣṭiḥ***) as spread (***sṛṣṭā***) by the beginningless Kṣatriyas (the Jinas). [189] This spread of the dharma (***dharmasṛṣṭiḥ***) is spread (***sṛṣṭā***) eternally by the Tīrthaṅkaras. He should reveal the causes of this spread (***sṛṣṭihetūn***) to those kings who take refuge in it. [190] Alternatively, if those best among men resort to the claim that the spread (***sṛṣṭi***) is produced by something else, then they would no longer possess superiority. The same would be the case for the *ārhats* if they were to abide by this position. [191][81]

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[80] *ĀP* 40.184-86

[81] *Rakṣyaḥ sṛṣṭyadhikāro pi dvijaiṛ uttamasṛṣṭibhiḥ //*
Asaddṛṣṭikṛtām śṛṣṭiṃ parihatya vidūrataḥ // ĀP 40.187
Anyathā sṛṣṭivādena durdṛṣṭena kudṛṣṭayaḥ /
Lokam nṛpāṃśca saṃmohya nayantyutpathagāmitām // ĀP 40.188
sṛṣṭyantaram ato dūram apāsya nayatattvacit /
anādikṣatriyaiḥ sṛṣṭām dharmaśṛṣṭim prabhāvayet // ĀP 40.189
tīrthakṛdbhir iyam sṛṣṭā dharmasṛṣṭiḥ sanātanī /
tān saṃśrutān nṛpān eva sṛṣṭihetūn prakāśayet // ĀP 40.190
anyathā anyakṛtām sṛṣṭim prapannāḥ syur nṛpottamāḥ /
tato naiśvaryam eṣām syāt tatrasthāśca syur ārhatāḥ // ĀP 40.191

Verses 187-89 play on the multiple meanings of "*sṛṣṭi*" to express the contrast between two types of Brāhmaṇas. False Brāhmaṇas uphold the discourse that the universe was "created" at a particular moment in time (*sṛṣṭi*). The only "creation" (*sṛṣṭi*) that is accepted by the true Brāhmaṇa is the spread of dharma (*dharmasṛṣṭi*). Jaina *dharma* is also said to exist eternally without an author. Nevertheless, *dharma* is "created" (*sṛṣṭā*) insofar as it was seen by the Ṛṣabha, the first Jina in the current half-cycle of time, and transmitted to living beings who lived during this moment and place in time.[82] Verses 189-91 reinterpret *sṛṣṭi* in the sense of "spread" in order convey the idea that people witnessed the dharma being transmitted by Ṛṣabha in a particular historical moment even though the dharma itself is authorless and eternal.

Even though this passage refers to this debate about *sṛṣṭivāda* in passing, it is not tangential to the *Ādipurāṇa's* construction of Brahmanism because it connects, for the first time, the discourses of the religious Other with the character of the false Brāhmaṇa. The discourse is so problematic, and so emblematic of the false Brāhmaṇas, that even Jaina ascetics (*ārhat*s) would lose their superiority if they were to accept it.

The *Ādipurāṇa*'s story of the Brāhmaṇas leaves us with a complex representation of Brahmanism as the religious Other. Brahmanical followers belong to same social and institutional space in Bharata's kingdom. They are only distinguished as a religious identity through their religious beliefs. What makes Brahmanical followers the religious Other is their dual commitment to Mīmāṃsā praxis and creationism.

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[82] I have not interpreted "*dharmasṛṣṭi*" as the "creation of dharma" because this might suggest that dharma was fabricated by the Jina. Jainas have a commitment to dharma as an eternal discourse that is historically revealed by Ṛṣabha, and as such, "*sṛṣṭi*" must be taken in this compound in the sense of "authorship," or more precisely, the "first transmission of dharma" by Ṛṣabha.

The *Ādipurāṇa* never explains the relationship between Mīmāṃsā praxis and creationist discourses. In premodern Sanskrit narratives, predictions such as the one made by Ṛṣabha function as a literary method for summarizing a subtale that will be told at greater length later on in the text. But Jinasena II died after he composed Ṛṣabha's prediction of the fate of the Brāhmaṇas in chapter 41. We are left to wonder whether, or how, Jinasena II would have connected Mīmaṃsā praxis with creationist discourses in a more elaborate narration of the origins of Brahmanism. It was left to Jinasena II's student, Guṇabhadra, to narrate the downfall of the Brāhmaṇas, and their creation of a new religion, in the *Uttarapurāṇa*. While I do not think Gunabhadra's *Uttarapurāṇa* voices without error Jinasena II's own vision for the latter half of the *Mahāpurāṇa*, the way in which the *Uttarapurāṇa* narrates the downfall of the Brāhmaṇas in the Kaliyuga suggests how Mīmaṃsā commitments to animal sacrifice are being understood vis-à-vis creationism.

The narrative that explains the downfall of the Brāhmaṇas in the *Uttarapurāṇa* is the *aja* debate—a narrative that I explored at length in chapter 3 of this dissertation. The *aja* debate is the only narrative in the *Uttarapurāṇa* that aligns with Ṛṣabha's prediction from the *Ādipurāṇa.* It describes Brāhmaṇas (Parvata and Mahākāla) composing a new scripture and promulgating violent sacrifices.[83] The *Uttarapuraṇa*'s philosophical dialogue is most relevant to our concerns. After Parvata and Mahākāla propagate animal sacrifices across the kingdom, the *Uttarapurāṇa* reveals, via Nārada's words, the arguments that underlie Parvata's and Mahākāla's practices.

> [Nārada states:] "The following [claim] ought to be investigated. If killing fulfills dharma, then actions such as good conduct, donations, and non-violence will produce sin. [401] If this claim were true, then the highest path belongs to sinners

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[83] In the *Vasudevahiṇḍī* the two tales are connected through the theme of the two *Vedas*. The Māhaṇas are those who worship the *Arisaveda* and Parvata and Mahākāla are those who propagate the *anarisaveya*. The *Vasudevahiṇḍī* does not connect the two tales through the theme of Brahminhood. In the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*, the two tales are entirely disconnected.

such as fishermen and the lower realms belong to those who practice truth, dharma, asceticism, and celibacy. [402] You claim that dharma comes from killing animals in sacrifices but not in other situations. This is not so, because killing is the cause of suffering; alternately, in both cases any result would have to be identical: [403] who can deny this? [404ab]

If you accept the following—that there is no arising of sin for the individual who employs [animals in sacrifice]—on the grounds that Svayambhū created animals for the sake of sacrifice, then such a claim is a fanciful desire [that is born out of] complete idiocy [and] is criticized by good people. [404cd-405] If the claim that there is a creation (of those animals by Svayambhū) is accepted, then there is still another difficulty. If something exists for a certain purpose, it will not be useful if employed in another way. [406] Just like using decongestants in a different way, purchasing or selling animals made for a sacrifice will result in great harm. [407ab-408ab]

Seeing that your argument is weak, let us explain this to you: Just as someone who kills people with weapons is destroyed by sin (*aṃhas*), one who kills animals with mantras is probably bound up in the exact same way. [408cd-409] (Is) creation, of things such as animals, manifested (from something that already exists) or else is it created (as new)? If it is created, then why are unreal (objects) such as flowers from the sky not created? [410] If it was manifested, then you have to explain what previously prevented [its manifestation]. So, for example, darkness [prevents us from seeing] pots, etc., prior to the lighting of a lamp. [411] Or so be it: this doesn't then mean that there is a theory of the creation of an unobstructed manifestation**.** [412ab][84]

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[84] *idaṁ tāvad vicārārhaṃ vadhaś ced dharmasādhanam /*
ahiṁsādānaśīlādi bhavet pāpaprasādhanam // UP 67.401
astu cen matsyabandhādipāpināṁ paramā gatiḥ /
satyadharmatapobrahmacāriṇo yāntv adhogatim // UP 67.402
yajñe paśuvadhād dharmo netaratreti cen na tat /
vadhasya duḥkhahetutve sādṛśyād ubhayatra vā // UP 67.403
phalenāpi samānena bhāvyaṃ kas taṃ niṣedhakaḥ /
atha tvam evaṁ manyethāḥ paśusṛṣṭeḥ svayambhuvaḥ // UP 67.404
yajñārthatvān na tasya ativiniyoktur aghāgamaḥ /
ity evaṁ cātimugdhābhilāṣaḥ sādhuvigarhitaḥ // UP 67.405
tatsargasyaiva sādhutvād asti anyacca atra durghaṭam /
yadarthaṃ yaddhi tasya anyathā upayoge 'rthakrn na tat // UP 67.406
yathānyathopayuktaṁ saśleṣmādiśamanauṣadham /
yajñārthapaśusargeṇa krayavikrayaṇādikam // UP 67. 407
tathānyathā prayuktaṁ tan mahādoṣāya kalpate /
durbalaṃ vādinaṁ dṛṣṭvā brūmaḥ tvām abhyupetya ca // UP 67. 408
yathā śastrādibhiḥ prāṇivyāpādī vadhyate 'ṃhasā /
mantrair api paśūn hantā badhyate nirviśeṣataḥ // UP 67. 409
paśvādilakṣaṇaḥ sargo vyajyate kriyate 'thavā /
kriyate cet khapuṣpādi cāsan na kriyate kutaḥ // UP 67. 410
atha abhivyajyate tasya vācyaṁ prāk pratibandhakam /

Through this passage, the *Uttarapurāṇa* constructs the antithetical position as a blend of Mīmāṃsā arguments and theistic arguments. Verses 401-4ab summarize the Mīmāṃsā position that the sacrifice of animals constitutes "*dharma*," and that killing in the context of Vedic sacrifice ought to be distinguished from killing in non-Vedic contexts.[85] Verses 404-12 reveal that Parvata's and Mahākāla's arguments are grounded in *sṛṣṭivāda*, for they believe that "Svayambhū created animals for the sake of sacrifice." According to Nārada, they have a false understanding of the universe and causation. He builds on the *Ādipurāṇa's* refutation of *sṛṣṭivāda* by addressing two questions that logically arise in discussions of *sṛṣṭivāda* discourses but that are not cited in the *Ādipurāṇa*: are beings and objects created by God for a single intended purpose? And are beings created out of material that already exists or do they arise *ex nihilo*?

While the *Ādipurāṇa's* philosophical refutation in chapter 4 presents creationism as the religious discourse that is the foundation of Brahmanical philosophy, narrative, and genre discourses, the *Uttarapurāṇa* extends this to present creationism as the discourse that also justifies the practice of animal sacrifice. *Sṛṣṭivāda* is the religious discourse that *underlies* the practice of animal sacrifice. The *Uttarapurāṇa* and the *Ādipurāṇa* present creationism as compatible with the practice of animal sacrifice, even though, to my knowledge, there is no Brahmanical tradition that justifies animal practice through recourse to a creator deity. The representation is therefore an important example of the way in which Jainas were beginning to unify disparate traditions and discourses into a single religion.

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pradīpajvalanāt pūrvaṃ ghaṭāder andhakāravat // UP 67. 411
astu vā nāhatavyaktisṛṣṭivādo vidhīyate / UP 67.412ab
[85] See *ŚV* 2.190-276

5. Conclusion

The *Ādipurāṇa*'s narrative about the creation of Brāhmaṇas presents Bharata's newfound

community as one marked by a common social identity. The *Ādipurāṇa* presents a community of

householders who are characterized by external markers such as, the label of "Brāhmaṇa,"

rituals, and social practices. Put another way, such markers identify neither Jaina religious

identity nor Brahmanical religious identity, but instead, the social identity of householders who

are patronized by King Bharata. According to the *Ādipurāṇa*, what distinguishes Brahmanism as

the religious Other is its discursive commitment to creationism. Creationism is presented as the

discursive foundation of the tradition's philosophy, narratives, genre ideologies, and ritual

practices. By the *Uttarapurāṇa*, it is revealed that creationism is ultimately what distinguishes

the religious identity and community of some Brāhmaṇas over others.

The *Ādipurāṇa*'s representation is significant in the context of earlier Jaina *purāṇa*s

because it reimagines the institution and discourses that make up Brahmanism. It views

Brahmanism as a religion that seemingly participates in the same social practices and institution

as Jainism. Moreover, it reimagines the discursive basis of Brahmanism. The *Padmacarita* and

the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* consider Mīmāṃsā to be both the philosophical and the ritual basis for

Brahmanism. By contrast, the *Ādipurāṇa* and *Uttarapurāṇa* present Brahmanical creationism as

the philosophical basis for Brahmanism, and Mīmāṃsā as the basis of Brahmanical ritual praxis.

The *Mahāpurāṇa* therefore shows us how Jaina writers were synthesizing multiple discourses

and communities into a single religion. In the following chapter, I turn to the tale of Ekanāsā in

order to demonstrate how Jaina authors connect the philosophical basis of Brahmanism to the ritual practices of those who worship the Hindu martial goddess, Durgā.

Finally, the form of the *Mahāpurāṇa*'s representation differs from that of earlier Jaina *purāṇa*s. The *Ādipurāṇa* includes a philosophical refutation of a Brahmanical discourse, in line with the generic precedence for philosophical dialogues established by earlier Jaina *purāṇa*s. But the *Ādipurāṇa*'s philosophical refutation is much shorter. It includes neither any intertextual specificity in the presentation of the antithetical position nor systematic justifications for the correct position. The *Uttarapurāṇa*'s philosophical dialogue is even shorter than that of the *Ādipurāṇa*—it is a tangent to the longer, more elaborate storyline that Guṇabhadra creates. The shift in length and density of engagement with Brahmanical philosophy suggests that, by the ninth century, Jaina *purāṇa*s used such dialogues less as a site for constructive examination of Brahmanical discourses, and more as a literary trope that follows a generic precedence set by earlier Jaina *purāṇa*s.

Chapter 5

Seeing Double:
Representations of Śākta and Hindu religion
in Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*

[The baby girl] was on the child-bed, her hair still wet from the amniotic fluid, when she was disturbed and placed on the ground in front of Kaṃsa. He took her by the foot, whirled her around, shook her about, then suddenly he lifted her up high and smashed her down on a stone. She was shaken about; but before being smashed on the stone surface, she flew up to heaven. Leaving the infant body behind, she headed swiftly into the sky, her hair flying loose. And when she got there she was a young girl forever, a divine woman praised by the gods, with divine garlands and unguents. Wearing clothes of blue and yellow, she had breasts like the globes on an elephant's head, a bottom as broad as a chariot, a face like the moon and four arms. [...] When the night had been swallowed up by the darkness and was thronging with gangs of sprites, she would appear, dancing, laughing and shining uncannily.

Vyāsa's *Harivaṃśa* 48.27-30, 32[1]

1. Introduction

For many Brahmanical readers in the eighth century CE, the first image that would come to mind when thinking about Kṛṣṇa's sister is the one cited above, from Vyāsa's *Harivaṃśa (HV)*[2]—a baby girl who is revealed to be the incarnation of a Brahmanical goddess after she is dashed against a rock. Not only was this a famous image of Kṛṣṇa's sister, Ekānaṃśā, at the time but it was perhaps one of the only depictions to exist. No extant text narrates the life of Ekānaṃśā outside of her birth story. That is, until Jinasena composed a narrative about Kṛṣṇa's sister in his eighth century text, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa.*

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[1] Vyāsa, *Krishna's Lineage: The Harivaṃśa of Vyāsa's Mahābhārata*, trans. Simon Brodbeck (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2019), 157–58.

[2] *HV* 47-48

According to Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*, Kṛṣṇa's sister—here called, Ekānāsā[3]—is a mortal girl whose nose is crushed by Kaṃsa. Kaṃsa hopes that her disfigurement will ward off any potential suitor who might usurp him in the future. We find out that Kaṃsa's hope comes true when the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* narrates the life of Ekānāsā as an adult in chapter 49. The story goes as follows. Ekānāsā is a beautiful young woman. Yet, she remains unmarried presumably because of her crushed nose. One day, Ekānāsā's nephews mock her nose, and this overwhelms her to such an extent that she resolves to find a Jaina mendicant who can explain to her why she was mutilated in her current birth. Through the power of clairvoyance, the Jaina mendicant explains that in a previous birth, Ekānāsā was obsessed with appearances. Moreover, in that prior existence, she drove a cart and ran over the nose of a Jaina ascetic while he was practicing asceticism. This is why in her current birth, Ekānāsā's nose is mutilated.

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[3] In Vyāsa's *Harivaṃśa*, Yaśodā's daughter is called "Ekānaṃśā." An appended passage explains that she is called Ekānaṃśā because she was the portion (*aṃśa*) who alone (*ekān*) protected Kṛṣṇa. A more grammatically sound interpretation of the name would involve splitting the "Ekānaṃśā" into "*eka*" and "*anaṃśā*." This would render the translation of 'Ekānaṃśā' as the "single portion-less one," although it remains obscure what idea the name is meant to express. Jaini suggests that Jinasena used 'Ekānāsā' rather than "Ekānaṃśā" because by the seventh century, the character came to be known as "Ekānāsā." Padmanabh S Jaini, "Jaina Purāṇas: A Purāṇic Counter Tradition," in *Purāṇa Perennis: Reciprocity and Transformation in Hindu and Jaina Texts* (Albany, 1993), 223.

However, to my knowledge, there exist no extant Jaina narratives about Kṛṣṇa's sister prior to Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāṇa,* and earlier Jaina narratives about Kṛṣṇa do not mention his sister, much less her name. Buddhist texts cite the name "Ekadaśā" as the name of one of the *Diśakumārīs*, the thirty-two maidens who preside over the quarters. Yoku Yokochi argues that "Ekadaśā" in these Buddhist texts corresponds to the name "Ekānāsā" in a similar list of *diśakumārīs* in Jaina *sutta*s. See Yuko Yokochi, "The Rise Of The Warrior Goddess In Ancient India: A Study Of The Myth Cycle Of Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī In The Skandapurāṇa" (Groningen, University of Groningen, 2004), 67–68. Nevertheless, it is not clear why we should connect "ekadaśā" or "ekānāsā" in these lists to the character of Yaśodā's daughter, given that there is no story about 'Ekānāsā' in Jaina literature prior to Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*. There is a syntactical relation between "Ekānāsā" and "Ekānaṃśā": "Ekānāsā" would be the Prakrit rendering of the Sanskrit, "Ekānaṃśā." Yet "Ekānāsā" as both a Prakrit and Sanskrit word can mean "She who has one nose." This translation seems to inform the plotline of her tale in the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*.

Having learnt about her past life, Ekanāsā renounces. She leaves behind her former life as a Jaina lay woman and joins a caravan of nuns to perform Jaina asceticism. Once she advances through the stages of realization, becoming an advanced Jaina nun, she retires to the forests at the foot of the Vindhya Mountains where she can perform a more severe form of asceticism on her own.

While Ekānāsā practices asceticism, a group of forest-dwellers, known as the Śabaras, catches sight of her. They witness her standing in a meditational pose, and reflecting on the severity of this beautiful woman's asceticism, they infer, "This woman must be a forest goddess!" The Śabaras venerate her and leave. But in their absence, Ekanāsā draws her last breaths in the final stages of her meditation before she abandons her body entirely. At the very moment she dies, a lion approaches and devours her, leaving nothing but a pool of blood and three fingers.

The Śabaras return to the scene and, seeing the earth flooded with blood, they conclude that the "Goddess" must be pacified with blood offerings lest she inflict her wrath onto other living beings. As a result, they begin to hunt buffalo, cut themselves using their weapons, offer meat, and drink blood, in the belief that the Goddess will grant them any boon that they desire. Following the tale, the *Harivaṃśpurāṇa* pans out from narrating the events of the story to discussing the nature of poets, temple worship and epistemology.

This origin tale has been referenced in passing by a handful of scholars as a tale that describes the origin of the worship of Durgā, a martial goddess who became a significant object of worship during the time that Jinasena was writing. For instance, in his passing remarks on the tale, Padmanabh Jaini says, "the Jainas must have seen here [in the story of Ekanāsā] an excellent opportunity to educate at least their own devotees, if not also the Vaiṣṇavites (who

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believed this story to be literally true), about the error of the Hindu accounts of her becoming a bloodthirsty goddess."[4] Jaini's comment provide a springboard for the present chapter. How does the tale of Ekanāsā consolidate multiple Hindu representations of Goddess (Śakti) worship into a single religion? What does the tale understand as "Śākta" religion?

As with all tales about the religious other, the tale of Ekanāsā offers a portrayal of the religious other through the construction of the Jaina religiosity. In part 1 of this chapter, I analyze the first half of the tale (vv.1-25) which narrates Ekanāsā's renunciation. Here, I argue that Ekanāsā is presented as the self of Jainism—the literary embodiment of Jaina ideals for female asceticism. This presentation ambiguates the contrasting perspectives that Digambara Jainas and Śvetāmbara Jainas bring to bear on questions about woman and asceticism, and instead, presents a single laudatory view of Ekanāsā that is reinforced across multiple narrative devices of the text. This allows the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* to convey a picture of Jainism as a single coherent religion devoid of different systems of meaning making that did historically differentiate Digambara Jainism from Śvetāmbara Jainism.

Parts 2, 3, and 4 undertake to a close reading of the second half of the subtale (vv.26-51), which describes the origin of Śākta religion. With respect to self-representations of Śākta religion, Bihani Sarkar demonstrates that by the eighth and ninth century, Hindu texts collectively represent Śākta religion as that which crosses theological, sociological, sectarian boundaries.[5] The worship of Durgā was connected to Vaiṣṇava circles (via the identification of Durgā with Kṛṣṇa's sister), Śaiva circles (through tantra) and Brahmanical circles (through the worship of Durgā as a martial goddess). Equally, Hindu practitioners of Durgā worship come

[4] Jaini, "Jaina Purāṇas: A Purāṇic Counter Tradition," 222.
[5] Bihani Sarkar, *Heroic Shāktism: The Cult of Durgā in Ancient Indian Kingship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

from diverse communities and perform diverse practices, from the Śabaras, Kings, and court chaplains. However, even though Hindu representations of Śākta religion capture a diversity of beliefs, practice, and individuals, such self-representations typically dissociate the Śabaras from worshippers of Durgā in the court. Parts 2, 3, and 4 demonstrate how the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* synthesizes presentations of Durgā worship that can be found in Vaiṣṇava, Śākta, and Brahmanical texts through the character of the Śabaras. In essence, I argue that the *Harivaṃśapurāna* uses the characterization of Śabaras as a site for unifying distinct beliefs, practices, communities and institutions into a single religion that pertains to Durgā.

Finally, I use the tale of Ekanāsā to think about the ways in which Jainas were expanding the Jaina conceptualization of the religious other. So far in this dissertation, we have explored narratives about Brahmanism as the religious other to Jainism. But what is the relationship between Brahmanism and Śākta religion? In the conclusion to this chapter, I reflect on the conceptual parallels and literary threads that tie together the two religions into a shared Hindu identity that is defined by distinct systems of meaning-making. In doing so, I suggest that the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* constructs a shared Hindu identity made up of individual systems of meaning-making, in contrast to the shared identity of Jainism, which is presented a single, consistent system of meaning-making.

2. The Jaina Self: Ekanāsā the Nun

Aside from one verse in which Kṛṣṇa greets Ekanāsā during his reunion with his biological

parents,[6] the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* says nothing about Ekanāsā after her birth story in chapter 35[7] for

thirteen chapters. Chapter 49 re-introduces us to Kṛṣṇa's sister as a young woman who, having

been tormented because of her facial deformity, decides to renounce her status as a lay woman in

order to become initiated as a Jaina nun. The first twenty-five verses of the tale describe

Ekanāsā's journey to renunciation, creating a paradigmatic image of a Jaina woman as she

abandons lay life. In this section, I demonstrate how verses 1-25 present Ekanāsā as an archetype

of the Jaina female self by expressing in narrative form contemporaneous Jaina discourses about

female renunciation.

In order to understand how the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* constructs Ekanāsā as an ideal nun, I

will refer primarily to Mari Jyväsjärvi's studies of female monasticism in Jaina commentaries.[8]

Jyväsjärvi focuses on Śvetāmbara literature, the most extensive and prominent of which are

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[6] *HvP* 36.50
[7] *HvP* 35.31-2
[8] See Mari Johanna Jyväsjärvi, "Fragile Virtue: Interpreting Women's Monastic Practice in Early Medieval India" (Doctoral dissertation, Cambridge MA, Harvard University, 2011); Mari Jyväsjärvi, "Retrieving the Hidden Meaning: Jain Commentarial Techniques and the Art of Memory," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 38, no. 2 (2010): 133–62; Mari Jyväsjärvi Stuart, "Female Renouncers: Premodern Perspectives," ed. John E. Cort, Paul Dundas, and Kristi Wiley, *Brill's Encyclopedia of Jainism*, 2019. I exclude any Jaina presentation of a "Sati," a virtuous women who renounces her lay status after fulfilling her responsibilities as a chaste wife, because this monastic identity is dependent on a woman fulfilling her domestic role as a wife.
I have also consulted Padmanabh Jaini, *Gender and Salvation: Jaina Debates on the Spiritual Liberation of Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); N. Shantā, *The Unknown Pilgrims, The Voice of the Sādhvīs: The History, Spirituality, and Life of the Jaina Women Ascetics*, 1st English ed., vol. no. 219, Sri Garib Dass Oriental Series; (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1997); N. Shantā, "Women Ascetics in the Jaina Tradition," in *Vasantagauravam: Essays in Jainism: Felicitating Professor M.D. Vasantha Raj of Mysore on the Occasion of His Seventy-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Jayandra Soni (Mumbai: Vakils Feffer & Simons, 2001).

Saṅghadāsa's commentaries on monastic codes from the sixth and seventh centuries CE. Saṅghadāsa's commentaries provided one of the most extensive and authoritative extant Jaina accounts of female monasticism in the era during which Jinasena composed his tale.[9] My point in the following sections will not be to suggest that the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*'s depiction of Ekanāsā's renunciation was directly influenced by Saṅghadāsa's commentaries, but rather to demonstrate how the tale narrativizes a repository of Jaina discourses about female renunciation, which were previously expressed in systematic form by Saṅghadāsa's commentaries. In doing so, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* presents Ekanāsā as the embodiment of Jainism without engaging in the distinct discourses and practices that differentiated Digambara Jainism from Śvetāmbara Jainism.

The description of Ekanāsā's practices during initiation (*dīkṣā*) is a fitting place to begin. The practices that Ekanāsā undertakes during her initiation most strongly resonate with Jaina prescriptions found in Saṅghadāsa's commentaries. First, Ekanāsā abandons her entire family, plucks out her hair, removes all of her jewelry and garlands, and puts on a single piece of cloth to covers her body.[10] Second, Ekanāsā is accompanied by a *Mahattarikāryikā*,[11] a senior Jaina nun who can instruct newly initiated nuns.[12] Third, in line with the prohibition against female ascetics wandering alone, Ekanāsā joins a caravan of nuns after she is newly initiated.[13] And fourth, Ekanāsā undertakes practices that are prescribed for Jaina ascetics: *gunavrata*s (three vows which restrict one's activities and engagements in the world), *saṃyama* (practices of restraint), and *upavasana* (fasts).[14]

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[9] Jyväsjärvi, "Fragile Virtue," 16.
[10] *HvP* 49.21-3
[11] *HvP* 49.21
[12] Jyväsjärvi, "Fragile Virtue," 344–45.
[13] *HvP* 49.25-7
[14] *HvP* 49.25

Beyond the explicit description of Ekanāsā's actions during renunciation, Ekanāsā's backstory plays into Jaina commentarial discourses that distinguish female lay status from female ascetic status. Jyväsjärvi argues that Jaina commentaries on female renunciation are primarily concerned with divesting the female body of any markers that would identify it as belonging to a woman.[15] This concern finds its expression in the narration of Ekanāsā's backstory. The beginning of the narrative implies that, prior to her decision to renounce, Ekānāsa was attached to her physical appearance, because she feels ashamed (*trapitā*) when Balarāma's sons make fun of her disfigured nose.[16] Ekanāsā experiences suffering as a result of her attachment to her physical form. This attachment is magnified when she learns about her actions from a previous lifetime: the clairvoyant Jaina monk explains that Ekanāsā suffers a deformed nose in this life because she was attached to sensual objects in a previous life and, moreover, she crushed the nose of an ascetic by running over his face with a cart. Ekanāsā's deformed nose is the literal embodiment of her negative karma, which she accrued through her mental attachment to appearances as well as her violent actions. This backstory emphasizes the point that prior to renunciation, Ekanāsā is a lay woman with an excessive attachment to her physical body.

The depiction of Ekanāsā's actions and motivations before initiation heightens the dramatic impact of her transition to ascetic status when she renounces in verses 21-5. Whereas previously Ekanāsā was a woman who was attached to her physical appearance and who had harmed the body of another human, at the moment of her renunciation, Ekanāsā detaches herself from physical appearances in order to realize the essence of her self as an impersonal entity that remains stable throughout all the modifications (that is, physical embodiments) it undergoes. In

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[15] For further discussion about Jaina depictions of female bodies and female renunciation, see Jyväsjärvi, "Fragile Virtue," 227-90.

[16] *HvP* 49.13

short, the abandonment of all attachments to her body in verses 21-5 redresses Ekanāsā's prior

attachment to physical appearances. For the reader, Ekanāsā's backstory explains the difference

between lay and ascetic status for women and emphasizes the suffering that, according to Jaina

theory, is inherent in the female lay body.

The contrast between Ekanāsā's status as a lay woman before initiation and as a female

ascetic after initiation is expressed not only through Ekanāsā's own relationship to her physical

embodiment but also through the narrator's description of Ekanāsā's appearance. Chapter 49

opens with eleven verses that celebrate the beauty of each of Ekanāsā's limbs through verses that

resemble the order, style, and content of descriptions of women from *kāvya*: Verses 1-11

describe Ekanāsā's appearance by beginning with her feet and ending with her face; the

descriptions are expressed in the form of double entendres (*śleṣa*) and comparisons (*upamā*); and

the content of these verses utilize standard tropes of feminine beauty from *kāvya* (the comparison

of her thighs to elephant trunks, her arms to a creeper, and so forth). These glorifications of

Ekanāsā's physical form, prior to her renunciation, are inverted by verses 21-25, which describe

Ekanāsā removing her bodily markers at the moment of her initiation. For example, Verse 10

describes Ekanāsā's braid as both a flower stem and the noose of Kāmadeva; this description is

reversed by verses 21-22ab, which portray Ekanāsā ripping out locks of her hair with her bare

hands. Her delicate locks of braided hair—a symbol of female sexuality that is accentuated by its

comparison to the noose of the God of Love—are now uprooted in the ceremony for plucking

out one's hair (*keśaloca*) during initiation to symbolically and ritually uproot sexual drives and

attachments.[17] Verse 8 compares Ekanāsā's arm, hand and fingernails to a creeper that splits into

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[17] Patrick Olivelle, "Hair and Society: Social Significance of Hair in South Asian Traditions," in *Hair: Its Power and Meaning in Asian Cultures*, ed. Alf Hiltebeitel and Barbara D. Miller (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 21.

a cluster of shoots with individual blossoms hanging from them. A similar image is redeployed in verse 22cd. Ekanāsā is again described as having soft creeper arms that bear flowers,[18] except that now the comparison is used to express the removal of mental afflictions: "She who has soft, creeper arms with flowers shines with the appearance of one who extracts the cluster of curved and crooked thorns from her mind."[19] Finally, verse 11, which describes Ekanāsā's body as adorned with garlands, delicate cloth, unguents and fourteen shining ornaments, is inverted by the description in verses 22-3 in which Ekanāsā removes all of her ornaments and garlands and puts on a single garment that covers her body, literally and metaphorically stripping Ekanāsā of all physical markers that identify her female sexual status in society. Thus, the concern that arises in Jaina commentarial discussions surrounding the female body is expressed through the inversion of literary tropes between verses 1-11 and verses 21-5, which intensify the presence and absence of femininity respectively. Prior to initiation, Ekanāsā is presented in terms of her beauty—literary comparisons to flora and fauna essentialize and glorify Ekanāsā in terms of her feminine form. However, once she has renounced her attachment to her body, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* converts these earlier literary tropes, which reduce Ekanāsā to her femininity, into tropes that divest Ekanāsā of any such sexual signification and mark her as a Jaina lay woman.

More speculatively, I would argue that Ekanāsā's renunciation of her former lay status finds its expression in the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*'s use (or, more precisely, absence) of names. Apart from the opening verse of chapter 49, which calls Ekanāsā the "younger sister of Kṛṣṇa," chapter 49 uses neither the name "Ekanāsā" nor any epithet for her. Instead, the entire chapter refers to

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[18] *kusumakomalabāhulatā*
[19] *pravidadhatī babhau kusumakomalabāhulatā sphuṭamiva dhīkuṭīkuṭilaśalyakuloddharaṇam //* *HvP* 49.22cd

Ekanāsā with the female pronoun, *sā* (she/that woman), or the masculine/feminine pronoun, *asau* (she/that woman).[20] This absence of proper nouns is peculiar to the presentation of Ekanāsā in Chapter 49, insofar as no other chapter in the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* refrains from naming a character, much less the protagonist of a subtale. But given the thematic focus of the subtale—Ekanāsā's renunciation—the absence of proper nouns is not fortuitous.

In Jaina discourses about renunciation, an individual who is initiated as monk or nun should abandon the birth name along with all social relations and physical identifiers, such as hair, clothes, and ornaments.[21] With this in mind, we can read the absence of signification in chapter 49 as an actualization of Ekanāsā's ascetic identity, as a self that is distinct from physical embodiments, at the moment of her renunciation. The name "Ekanāsā" recalls her familial relation to King Kaṃsa (who deformed her nose at birth), binds her to her previous life (as one who ran over the nose of an ascetic), and essentializes her in terms of a physical deformity. But the use of personal pronouns such as *sā* and *asau* signify the character (Ekanāsā) without attributing to her any identifications that would particularize or essentialize the character as a social or bodily identity. The absence of proper nouns constructs an image of Ekanāsā that the character herself brings into fruition at the moment of her renunciation in verses 21-25—a Jaina nun, a referent without any identifying signifier. We might even say that the lack of personal attribution allows the character to embody the abstracted ideals that Jainas aim to emulate, rather than the individualized identity to which Hindu devotees of Durgā appeal to (as we will soon see in the following verses).

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[20] Chapter 49 often adds the suffix "*ka*" to pronouns: e.g. "*sakā*" instead of "*sā*"; "*takām*" instead of "*tām*"; "*asakau*" instead of "*asau*"; "*vayakam*" instead of "*vayam*"

[21] Although the text does not explicitly state that Ekanāsā abandons her name, it seems that such an act would be implied given the context of Jaina renunciation.

In sum, verses 1-25 depict Ekanāsā as a woman who renounces her social and sexual status, which define a laywoman, in order to adopt the ascetic life of a Jaina nun. This picture is expressed through multiple narrative devices. Each device—the plotline, the literary descriptions, and the language—conveys a consistent set of practices and discourses about female Jaina renunciation that collectively echo discourses from Jaina commentaries. Ekanāsā's initiation into female asceticism and her motivations for renouncing are described through the plotline of verses 1-25; these descriptions resonate with Jaina prescriptions for female renunciation. The thematic focus on the body in verses 1-25—which appears through the plotline (Ekanāsā's attachment to her body) as well as through the narrator's descriptions of Ekanāsā— parallels Jaina systematic commentaries which evoke an anxiety about the female body. Finally, just as female ascetic practices prescribed by commentaries divest the female lay body of any sexual or social status, so too do verses 1-25 use the body as a point of comparison for differentiating lay and ascetic status for women. In this way, verses 1-25 provide a "thick-description" of female Jaina renunciation that enacts, explicitly and implicitly, discourses about female asceticism that are expressed by near-contemporaneous Jaina commentaries. And by re-presenting these discourses through multiple narratives devices across each verse, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* validates these discourses. In other words, verses 1-25 reenforce the image of Ekanāsā as the Jaina female self—the embodiment of Jaina discourses about female renunciation.

Verse 26 is a turning point in the tale. Verse 26 describes Ekanāsā's advancement through the stages of awareness as she begins to undertake a more severe form of asceticism away from the large caravan of nuns.

> After many rains and seasons had passed, she advanced with respect to [understanding] the condition of the Jina's birth, renunciation, and liberation. One day, she left the large caravan of nuns and, together with a small cohort of her followers, she went to the dense forests in the Vindhya Mountains. [26][22]

Ekanāsā's realizations and practices continue to follow the Jaina model of soteriological progress—she comes to realize the grounds for the Jina's birth, renunciation and liberation and leaves the caravan of nuns with the aim of intensifying her practice of asceticism. But the very end of verse 26 drops a single reference that complicates the perception of Ekanāsā that chapter 49 has constructed so far. Ekanāsā retires to the *Vindhya Mountains.*

Vyāsa's *Harivaṃśa* mentions the Vindhya Mountains when narrating the story of the birth of Kṛṣṇa's sister, Ekānaṃśā. In that text, Viṣṇu requests the goddess Nidrā (Sleep) to incarnate herself as Yaśodā's daughter, Ekānaṃśā, at the same moment that he incarnates as Devakī's son, Kṛṣṇa:[23] Viṣṇu proclaims that as a result of assisting him with his incarnation, Nidrā will be rewarded a permanent abode in the Vindhya Mountains[24] and as a result, the character of Nidrā is known as "Vindhyavāsinī," "She who dwells in the Vindhya Mountains."

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[22] *bahuṣu tu varṣavāsaragaṇeṣu gateṣu tato jinajananābhiniṣkramaṇanirvṛtibhūmiṣu sā / kṛtavihṛtiḥ kadācana gatā pṛthusārthavaśānnijasahadharmiṇibhir uruvindhyamahāgahanam //* *HvP* 49.26
[23] *HV* 47.48
[24] *HV* 47.48

Kṛṣṇa's sister is therefore, according to Vyāsa's *Harivaṃśa*, the incarnation of the Goddess of the Vindhya mountains.

It is debatable whether Vyāsa's *Harivaṃśa* understood Nidrā to be identical with the martial Brahmanical goddess, Durgā, since Durgā is rarely named in texts that were composed during or prior to Vyāsa's *Harivaṃśa.* Nevertheless, regardless of how readers in the early centuries of the Common Era understood the ontological relation between these two female characters, textual and material evidence suggests that, by the time Jinasena composed his *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* in the eighth century CE, readers were equating Nidrā/Vindhyavāsinī with Durgā, and that, by extension, they understood Kṛṣṇa's sister to be the incarnation of Durgā.[25] The *Devī Māhātmya* (fifth-sixth century CE), the earliest extant composition to centralize the mythology and worship of female deities, proclaims Nidrā/Vindhyavāsinī as a manifestation of the Goddess Durgā.[26] The *Gaüḍavaho* (eighth century CE), a Prakrit *kāvya* that includes a lengthy description of the worship of Durgā, describes Durgā as dwelling in the Vindhya Mountains and her incarnation as Ekānaṃśā.[27] And the iconography of Durgā in texts and art from the fifth century CE onwards draws on descriptions of Nidrā from Vyāsa's *Harivaṃśa*.[28] She lives in the Vindhya Mountains, has four arms, carries weapons, is surrounded by spirits, and appears as a young girl.[29] The fact that identification between Ekānaṃśā,

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[25] Thomas B. Coburn, *Devī Māhātmya: The Crystallization of the Goddess Tradition*, 1st ed. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1984); Yokochi, "The Rise Of The Warrior Goddess In Ancient India: A Study Of The Myth Cycle Of Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī In The Skandapurāṇa"; Sarkar, "Heroic Shāktism."

[26] *DM* 1.1-78; Thomas B. Coburn, *Encountering the Goddess: A Translation of the Devī-Māhātmya and a Study of Its Interpretation* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1991), 32–39.

[27] *Gaüḍavaho* 296, 297, 308, 316, 326, 334, 337

[28] See *HV* 47.39-54; 48.29-35

[29] Yokochi argues that even through it is ambiguous whether such representations signified the same character as the Goddess who slays the Buffalo demon, textual and epigraphic sources

Nidrā/Vindhyāvāsinī and Durgā is as widespread in Vaiṣṇava texts as much as Brahmanical and

Śākta texts suggests that the identification was significant for many readers irrespective of Hindu

sectarian affiliation.

In short, by the time that Jinasena was writing, the Vindhya Mountains had become a

significant trope of Durgā, and Ekānsaṃsā had become well-accepted as Durgā's incarnation.

Read in this literary context, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*'s reference to the Vindhya mountains is not

inconsequential. It evokes of the ontological identification between Kṛṣṇa's sister and Durgā that

is given by the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*'s Brahmanical precursors, such as Vyāsa's *Harivaṃśa*.

The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* continues to play on the relation between Kṛṣṇa's sister and Durgā

in verse 27 and 28, where we are introduced to the Śabaras.

> At night, she who stood beside the path, her mind sharp and pure as a whetted
> sword, appearing as the embodiment of the *pratimā* ("*pratimayā
> pratimāpratimā*") [27ab], was seen by the army of the best Śabaras, who appeared
> like the night and who had initially arrived in order to steal large amounts of
> wealth from the caravan of nuns. [27cd] They [the Śabaras] thought, "This
> woman standing here is a forest deity (*vanadevatā*)!" So, hundreds of Śabaras
> bowed down to her and requested individual boons from her: "Goddess, we are
> your first attendants. May we obtain wealth from you, the bestower of goodwill
> and security." [28][30]

In Brahmanical narratives, the Śabaras outsiders are presented as the debased outcastes of Hindu

society. This is depicted in Hindu narratives through their geographical location as those who

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from sixth century onwards unify these multiple figures into the character of Durgā/Caṇḍikā.
Yokochi, "The Rise Of The Warrior Goddess In Ancient India: A Study Of The Myth Cycle Of
Kauśikī-Vindhyavāsinī In The Skandapurāṇa."

[30]*niśi niśitāsinirmalaniśātamanāstvasakau pratipathamāsthitā pratimayā pratimāpratimā /
varaśavarasenayā sphuṭamadarśi nisānibhayā bahudhanasārthapātavidhaye drutamāgatayā //
HvP* 49.27
*iha vanadevatā sthitavatīyamiti praṇataiḥ śabaraśatair iti svavaradānamayācyata sā /
bhagavati vaḥ prasādanirūpadraviṇo draviṇaṃ yadabhilabhemahi prathamakiṅkarakā vayakaṃ
// HvP* 49.28

outside of urban society as well as through their association with death and slaughter because of their hunting activities and their violent propitiation of the goddess.[31] We will see this presentation developed in subsequent verses that describe the Śabaras in greater depth. For now, we will focus on the relation between the Śabaras and Durgā. In Hindu portrayals, the Śabaras are presented as ardent devotees of Durgā in the Vindhya Mountains;[32] Durgā's relationship with the Śabaras is so well attested that one of her epithets is "Śabarī" ("She who belongs to the Śabaras"). The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* replays presentations of the Śabaras and their worship of Durgā that are found in earlier and contemporaneous Hindu texts.

However, whereas in Hindu representations the existence of the goddess herself is not questioned, in the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* the Śabaras' object of veneration is a fabrication borne out of the Śabaras' ignorance. The Śabaras misinterpret what they see before them. They see a woman performing asceticism and they mistake her asceticism for a sign of divinity rather than ascetic status. At one level, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* reenforces the view that the Śabaras are outsiders. Their inadequate thinking reflects their sociological status as outcastes of society. At another level, simply rejects the existence of Durgā as a female deity.

But the fact that the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* casts Kṛṣṇa's sister as the object of misperception is, again, not a coincidence. When verses 27 and 28 are read in the context of Hindu texts that equate Ekānaṃśā with Durgā, the Śabaras' error is read a mimetic representation of these Hindu texts. That is, the Śabaras see Kṛṣṇa's sister as a goddess in the same way that Vyāsa's *Harivaṃśa* and the *Devī Māhātyma* present Kṛṣṇa's sister to be Durgā's incarnation. But in the

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[31] For a full discussion of this presentation of the Śabaras as Durgā worshippers, see Sarkar, *Heroic Shāktism*, 15–16.
[32] See examples from *Harṣacarita* p.126; *Kādambarī* pp.30-1, *Gaüdavāho* 336, and *Kathāsāritasāgara* 4.2.88.

context of Jinasena's subtale about Ekanāsā, the Śabaras' perception is an epistemic *error* because chapter 49 has spent the previous twenty-five verses establishing that Ekanāsā is a Jaina nun. The characters inside the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa's* subtale perform an act of epistemic error that parallels the act of hermeneutical error on the part of Hindu authors who equate Durgā and Ekānamśā in their retellings.

That the presentation of the Śabaras' mistake doubles as a meta critique of Hindu authors is substantiated by the meta-verses at the end of the chapter, which address the status of poets.

> Just as a true painter draws when he has obtained a flat surface, a poet (*kavi*) composes poetry (*kavitām*) about what is true and what is false (*sadasatīṃ*). [35cd] Even if [the composition] is true (*sadapi*), if it is produced with poor intensions or is produced in secret, when it is expounded by one person to another in an assembly it will produce sin. This understanding is well known among good people (*satāṃ jagatāṃ*). What good person (*kasya sato*) would say that a false [composition] (*asato*) will not lead to hell? [36]
>   Cheating poets (*śāṭhāḥ kavayaḥ*), who are the utmost enemy of themselves and others, compose useless compositions (*vikathākathanam*) that are in fact, false (*vitathameva*), thinking them to be true (*avitatham iti*). If people on earth think that those compositions are true, since their intellect is confused by the word of god, they fall onto erroneous paths that involve harming others—just as a straw [falls into the mouth] of a sheep.[33] [37] Why does the path of highest dharma, which is concerned with giving compassion to others, exist in the world? [Because] according to those who act in accordance with injunctions, [this path] is shown to give joy to embodied beings. And why does there exist a path of adharma, which causes violence towards others and which causes one to go to hell? Because it is taught by false poets (*kukavi*) to be dharma in order [to cause] intense strife.[34] [38] [35]

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[33] *Gaḍḍarikākaṭavat. Emd: Gaḍḍārikākaṭavat*

[34] *Khalakalau*. It is not entirely clear to me what this compound means. It is plausible that it could refer to the era of Kali as the Hindi commentary suggests. However, 38cd is meant to provide a direct contrast to 38ab, and therefore I am inclined to read "*khalakali*" as the result that is produced. While the correct path is that which bestows joy (*tanubhṛtāṃ sukhadaḥ*), the incorrect path of the false poets is taught to produce arguments or confusion.

[35] *Racyati bhittimātramupalabhya kaviḥ kavitām sadastīṃ yathā ca likhati sphuṭacitrakaraḥ // HvP* 49.35cd

Sadapi durīhitaṃ rahasīyaṃ hi parasya paraiḥ sadasi nigadyamānamaghamāvahatīti satāṃ / Matamidamasya tu prakaṭanaṃ jagatāmasato na narakapātaheturiti kasya asato vacanam // HvP 49.36

Avithatamityāmī vitathameva śaṭhāḥ kavayaḥ svaparamahārayo vidadhate vikathākathanam /

According to verses 35 to 38, the validity of any given literary composition is determined according to the extent to which it represents truth. The verses enumerate several criteria of literature (*kavitā*): it must reflect the reality of the world, it must be produced out of good intensions, and it must produce beneficial results. Verses 38 clarify that those false compositions do not fulfill these criteria for they are falsely proclaimed to true even though they enjoin incorrect actions and are produced by poets who hold false intentions. Verse 38 goes so far as to call these false poets, "*kukavi*"—a term that refers to a poet who goes through manuscripts to steal writings and pass them off as his own.[36]

While the above verses do not mention the Śabaras, the fact that they are included in the meta-commentary on the tale suggests that the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* is collapsing the distinction between the Śabaras and authors of Hindu representations. For the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*, Hindu narratives about Ekānaṃśā, such as the one told by Vyāsaʾs *Harivaṃśa*, are false (*asat*) because they capture and convey a false view of reality (*asat*), proclaiming it to be true, just as the Śabaras convey a perception of Ekanāsā that is false and yet proclaim their perception to be true. The plotline of the tale is connected with the meta-description of poets at the end of the tale through shared hermeneutic. Or to put it another way, the epistemology of those who are typically cast in Hindu narratives as the religious other, is connected with the epistemology of

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Paravadhakāpatheṣu bhuvi teṣu tatheti janaḥ suraravamūḍhadhīḥ patati gaḍḍarikākaṭavat // HvP 49.37
Kva paradayāparaḥ paramadharmapatho bhuvane vidhivadanuṣṭhitastanubhṛtāṃ sukhadaḥ prakaṭaḥ /
Kva ca paraghātajo narakaheturadharmakaliḥ kukavivikalpitaḥ khalakalau khalu dharmatayā // HvP 49.38
[36] Hartmut Scharfe, *Education in Ancient India*, vol. 16, Handbuch Der Orientalistik (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 32.

those poets who condition the production of knowledge itself. The poets employed in courts are no more reliable than the outcaste Śabaras because both fail to capture reality of the world.

In order to fully appreciate how this meta-critique functions, we will re-read verses 26-8 and reflect on how perspective, as a narrative device, is used to convey the validity of Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* over and above the validity of Hindu representations, embodied by the Śabaras.

> After many rains and seasons had passed, she advanced with respect to [understanding] the condition of the Jina's birth, renunciation, and liberation. One day, she left the large caravan of nuns and, together with a small cohort of her followers, she went to the dense forests in the Vindhya Mountains. [26]

In verse 26, the narrator presents two perceptions of the same object. Ekanāsā is presented as the ideal Jaina nun because she performs a more severe form of Jaina asceticism with a small group of nuns, and she is presented as a sort of double for the image of Ekānaṃśā/Durgā from Brahmanical texts when the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* locates her in the Vindhya Mountains. The verse admits the possibility that Ekanāsā can be viewed as Ekānaṃśā/Durgā without committing itself to this perception. Notice how verse 27ab continues to hold these two images in tandem:

> […] One day, she left the large caravan of nuns and, together with a small cohort of her followers, she went to the dense forests in the Vindhya Mountains. [26] **At night, she who stood beside the path, her mind sharp and pure as a whetted sword, appeared as the embodiment of the *pratimā* ("*pratimayā pratimāpratimā*").** [27ab]"

Verse 27ab generates multiple images of the same object. On the one hand, we are presented with Ekanāsā performing asceticism with a single-minded concentration, in line with Jaina prescriptions for asceticism. The comparison between her mental focus and the sword resonates well with Jaina texts that use martial imagery to describe asceticism. On the other hand, the verse alludes to Durgā's martial iconography in Hindu texts and art, which typically portray Durgā

holding a sword. Sarkar even notes that the worship of weapons accompanied the veneration of the Goddess during the festival of nine nights.[37]

The description, "*pratimayā pratimāpratimā*" in verse 27 is particularly striking for the way in which it generates multiple images of Ekanāsā. "*Pratimayā pratimāpratimā*" is a difficult phrase to translate because it contains the same word (*pratimā*) three times and because *pratimā* signifies multiple referents. In a Jaina context, *pratimā* refers to the eleven stages of spiritual advancement that a householder proceeds through. In Digambara thought, male ascetics can ascend beyond these initial eleven *pratimā* stages towards the three additional stages that lead an ascetic towards enlightenment; female ascetics, by contrast, cannot move beyond the eleventh stage because they cannot renounce the cloth that covers their body. A Digambara nun is consequently understood as one who resides in the eleventh *pratimā.* In a Śvetāmbara context, the compound "*pratimāpratimā*" can refer to the meditation pose of the *kāyotsarga* in which one stands upright with the arms hanging at the sides of the hips.[38] In both a Jaina and Brahmanical context, "*pratimā*" can be used as a technical term for a statue of a deity. And, finally, "*pratimā*" can have the general meaning of "appearance," "image," or "reflection," regardless of the sectarian orientation of the text in which the term is used.

All four images are evoked by "*pratimayā pratimāpratimā*" because each of the possible referents is brought to bear in the content of the subtale. The compound could be interpreted as capturing Ekanāsā's status as "an embodiment of the *pratimā* vows" because, as a Digambara

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[37] Sarkar, *Heroic Shāktism*, 251-53

[38] According to Williams, *"pratimāpratimā*" is also known as the "*kāyotsargapratimā*" for the Śvetāmbaras, which "embraces a provision for continence by day and moderate sexual congress by night' but it does not appear that the compound would be used among Digambara texts. R Williams, *Jaina Yoga: A Survey of the Mediaeval Śrāvakācāras*, vol. 14, London Oriental Series (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 173. I'm not entirely sure if this interpretation makes sense in the context of Ekanāsā's tale.

nun, she is classified as an advanced, celibate layperson who cannot go beyond the eleventh *pratimā* vow. But it is equally possible that "*pratimāpratimā*" refers to Ekanāsā's Jaina meditational position because the plotline of the verse entire describes Ekanāsā practicing a more severe form of Jaina asceticism. Finally, the compound can express a homology between Ekanāsā's asceticism and statues of Hindu deities. Ekanāsā stands motionless with her hands by her sides, thus resembling a statue. Typically, statues of the Jina present him with his hands by his sides. While images of Durgā do not typically portray her with her hands by her sides, I would not discount the possibility that the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* is alluding to her image worship because at the end of the tale, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* critiques Brahmanical worship of images.[39] These later verses argue that it is problematic to worship statues in the belief that a sentient being resides in them because, according to Jaina discourses of temple worship, no such being resides in statues. The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* equates the Śabaras' misidentification of Ekanāsā as a Jaina nun (on the basis that she is performing asceticism) with priests who misidentify insentient images as the sentient beings they portray.

The multiplicity of meanings generated by "*pratimayā pratimāpratimā*" represents and enacts the multifarious nature of reality itself, which can be perceived in equally numerous ways. It is especially poetic that the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* refracts the image of Ekanāsā by using the very word (*pratimā*) that, at its most general level, signifies "image," "reflection," "appearance." The word stands in for the character herself. Just as the meaning of "*pratimayā pratimāpratimā*" specifically and verses 26-7 broadly paints multiple images of the same object (Ekanāsā), so too does the manuscript confront the reader with the same word (*pratimā*) written in three ways. The repetition of the same word, "*pratimā,*" in three forms is a visual representation of the multiple

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[39] *HvP* 49.39-43

perceptions of Ekanāsā constructed at both the microscopic level, by the phrase "*pratimayā*

pratimāpratimā," and the macroscopic level of chapter 49 entire, through narrative devices in the

subtale. In this way, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* produces multiple perspectives of Ekanāsā not just

through re-presentation of literary tropes but through the use of language itself. It is just one

example of the way in which the text conveys the validity of its expression.

Put simply, while the Śabaras represent Hindu texts that convey the wrong, one-sided

perception of Kṛṣṇa's sister, Jinasena's own representation of Ekanāsā preserves the multiplicity

of ways in which she has been understood by both Jaina and Hindu writers and audiences. The

narrator's own presentation of Ekanāsā reflects the criteria for what makes a "true" composition,

while the Śabara's misperception embodies the false perception of poets.[40] The

Harivaṃśapurāṇa collapses the distinction between the Śabaras, Hindu poets, and even devotees

of Durgā at large by revealing the ways in which their beliefs, hermeneutics, and practices are in

fact shared.

4. The Śabaras, the Kings and the Patrons

After praising Ekanāsā and proclaiming themselves the first devotees of the Goddess, the

Śabaras leave the scene to steal wealth that can be offered to the Goddess in return for boons

(vv.29). In their absence, Ekanāsā dies.

> Up until the moment of death when a tiger approached her, she [Ekanāsā]
> practiced equanimous meditation and reached the stage in which she abstained
> from food. With her [final] breaths mixed with sweetness [and] the fragrance of
> fallen flowers, she, by whom death was obtained through the *pratimā,* entered
> heaven. Good people do not falter from good conduct. [30] At the exact moment

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[40] See also *HvP* 66.34 for Jinasena's additional comments on the nature of valid poets.

of her death, while she [resided] in a state of undivided meditation, she was torn apart by [the lion's] nails, mouth, teeth, and monstrous claws, because of the dharma she had acquired. The only part of her body that was left intact was her three fingers. [31][41]

Ekanāsā's final moments draw on narratives about Jaina ascetics insofar as she endures a violent calamity at the end of her life,[42] which allows her to burn away the final remnants of her karma, and she enters a state of equanimous meditation (*praśamasamādhi*) and takes up the final Jaina vow of abstinence from all food (*anaśanasthitim*) as a way of inhibiting any further action. Such practices characterize the Jaina practice of *sallekhanā*. The images expressed by verse 30, such as her sweet breaths, her calm release and gentle exit from her body, evoke a peaceful sentiment (*śānta rasa*)[43] which, in subsequent centuries, became the sentiment that was used to express

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[41] *Praśamasamādhibhāganaśanasthitim āmaraṇādupagatasiṃhāt durupallavacaṇḍatayā / Svayamupapadya sā divamagāt pratimāptimṛtirmadhumathanasvasā skhalati na sthititaḥ sujanaḥ // HvP* 49.30
Nakhamukhadaṃśtrikāvikaṭakoṭivipāṭitayā yadapi kalevarakhaṇḍamupārjitadharmatayā / Mṛtibhitayā vimuktamavimuktasamādhitayā tadapi karāṅgulitrikaśeṣamaśeṣam abhūt // HvP 49.31

[42] See John E. Cort, "When Will I Meet Such a Guru? Images of the Yogī in Digambar Hymns," in *Yoga in Jainism*, ed. Christopher Key Chapple (London: Routledge Press, 2015), 192–96.

[43] Even though *śānta rasa* was officially enfolded into the scheme of *rasa*s two centuries after Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*, it is evoked by earlier Jaina compositions including Ravisena's *Padmacarita.* Anne Monius, "'And We Shall Compose a Poem to Establish These Truths': The Power of Narrative Art in South Asian Literary Cultures," in *Narrative, Philosophy, and Life*, ed. Allen Speight (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2015), 162. On the use of *śānta rasa* in other Jaina *purāṇa*s, see Gregory Clines, "The Lotus' New Bloom: Literary Innovation in Early Modern North India" (Doctoral dissertation, Cambridge MA, Harvard University, 2018); Gregory Clines, "Taming the Tamed Elephant: Rāvaṇa, Aesthetics, and the Generation of Humor in Raviṣeṇa's Padmapurāṇa," *South Asian History and Culture* 10, no. 3 (03 2019): 309–23; Gregory Clines, "Grief, Tranquility, and Śānta Rasa in Raviṣeṇa's Padmacarita," in *The Bloomsbury Research Handbook of Emotions in Classical Indian Philosophy*, ed. Maria Heim, Chakravarthi Ram-Prasad, and Roy Tzohar, Bloomsbury Research Handbooks in Asian Philosophy (London: Bloomsbury, 2021). My thanks to Greg for supplying me proofs of his Bloomsbury chapter.

disenchantment with the sensorial world when narrating scenes of Jaina liberation.[44] The

peaceful sentiment, which consequently reflects and enhances Ekanāsā's withdrawal from the

sensorial world, complements the explicit description of her practices. Together, the content and

the sentiment of the verse conveys and validates Ekanāsā's religious practices.

In addition, the image of Ekanāsā's death in verse 30 is reminiscent of the image of the

Goddess's emergence from Ekānaṃśā's body in Vyāsa's *Harivaṃśa*. In that text, after Ekānaṃśā

is dashed against a rock, the Goddess emerges out of the infant's body and enters heaven,

attaining her divine form adorned with divine unguents and garlands.[45] In Jinasena's

Harivaṃśapurāṇa, after Ekanāsā enters heaven after inhaling her last breaths that are "mixed

with sweetness [and] the fragrance of fallen flowers." The fact that Ekanāsā does not transform

into a goddess undercuts the *Harivaṃśa*'s ontological identification of Kṛṣṇa's sister with Durgā.

When read together with the Jaina image expressed by verse 30, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*

emphasizes the validity of Ekanāsā's identity as a Jaina nun over and above her identification

with Durgā.

When Ekanāsā dies a tiger appears and devours her body. [46] In Brahmanical iconography

and narratives, a tiger or lion is Durgā's mount. The *Devī Māhātmya* states that Durgā rode into

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[44] Monius, "'And We Shall Compose a Poem to Establish These Truths': The Power of Narrative Art in South Asian Literary Cultures."
[45] *HV* 48.29
[46] "*Upagatapuṇḍarīkāt.*" The editor notes the manuscript variant, "*upagatasiṃhāt.*"
This is also supported by Guṇabhadra's condensed retelling of the Ekanāsā tale in his
Uttarapurāṇa (*UP* 70.408- 411)
sā suvratāryikābhyarṇe śokātsvavikṛtākṛteḥ /
gṛhītadīkṣā vindhyādrau sthānayogamupāśritā UP 70.408
devateti samabhyarcya gateṣu vanavāsiṣu /
vyāghreṇa *bhakṣitā maṅkṣu svargalokam upāgamat // UP 70.409*
Aparasmin dine vyāghair dṛṣṭvā hastāṃgulitrayam /
tasyāḥ kṣīrāṅgarāgādipūjitaṃ deśavāsinaḥ // UP 70.410
mūḍhātmānaḥ svayaṃ caitad āryāsau vindhyavāsinī /

battle against the army of demons on her tiger which "tore open the bellies of some [demons] with his claws," "beheaded others by cuffing them with his paws," and "drank the blood of others."[47] Verse 31 re-casts Durgā's vehicle and protector as the killer of Ekanāsā—a poetic inversion that undermines Durgā's status as indestructible. Indeed, we could even go so far as to say that the verse re-casts Durgā's mount, the tiger, as that which devours the body that became the object of deification for both the Śabaras and for texts such as Vyāsa's *Harivaṃśa* and the *Devīmahātmya*. The text literally and metaphorically kills off the identification between Kṛṣṇa's sister and the Goddess.

Finally, the verses contrast aesthetic sentiments as a way of emphasizing the otherness of Durgā worship vis-à-vis Jaina asceticism. Verse 31 inverts the peaceful sentiment of verse 30, using sentiments of fury (*raudra*) and horror (*bībhatsa*). In contrast to *śānta rasa*, which expresses the *abandonment* of all actions and sensorial experiences, the evocation of fury and horror through the lion's violent actions focuses the reader on Ekanāsā bodily existence in the world. In other words, while *śānta rasa* epitomizes the withdrawal of oneself from the material world, *raudra rasa* and *bībhatsa rasa* centralize one's material or bodily existence in the world, which is pervaded by violence and suffering, and provoke a sense of disgust at this existence. The aesthetic contrast in sentiments can be read as implicitly conveying the point that Brahmanical discourses promote violence and suffering, and affect the material body alone;

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devateti samabhyarcya tadārabhyāpramāṇayan // UP 70.411
She (Kṛṣṇa's sister) went to the Āryā, Suvratā, out of her sorrow of her disfiguration; She took initiation and performed sthānayoga in the Vindhya Mountains. [408] When the mountain dwellers arrived and began to worship her, thinking that she is a Goddess, she was eaten by a **tiger** and in an instant, she went to heaven. [409] The next day, the stupid mountain dwellers (came back) and seeing her three fingers, they began to worship them with milk and unguents, thinking that "This venerable woman is the Goddess Vindhyāvāsinī" and having undertaken this worship, they took it as authoritative. [410-11]
[47] *DM* 6.11-15

whereas Jaina discourses promote non-violence and the removal of suffering, and benefit the

soteriological progress of the self.

Verses 30-31 tell us explicitly what happens to Ekanāsā while the Śabaras are away,

presenting us with two distinct perspectives of the same scene. Verse 30 describes the trajectory

of Ekanāsā's self and verse 31 describes the destruction of her body on earth. This multi-

dimensional perspective of Ekanāsā's death is once again juxtaposed with another incorrect

perception of the Śabaras, who arrive back on screen in verse 32.

> The Śabaras were bewildered upon seeing the surface of the earth smeared with
> blood on all sides. They thought, "The Goddess must have been satisfied since
> there is blood here." Having established her three fingers as the form of the deity
> [32], the many cruel Kirātas hunted the troublesome forest buffalo; they scattered
> offerings of blood and meat, which were covered with flies and mosquitoes,
> abhorrent to look upon, and made every direction stink with the awful stench of
> raw flesh.[48] [33]

The Śabaras return to the scene to discover a pool of Ekanāsā's blood and her three fingers. From

this, they wrongly infer that Ekanāsā is satiated with offerings of blood rather than through

material wealth alone. The Śabaras believe that they must pacify her with blood offering to

prevent her from devouring other living beings. Here, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* reveals the full

extent of the consequence of incorrect perception. Not only is misperception the cause of

incorrect religious beliefs, but, according to the above verses, it spurs the performance of

incorrect religious practices, such as offering meat and blood. The description of the meat and

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[48] *Rudhiraviliptaguptapathabhūtalamākulitaḥ sakalābhitas tatas tadabhivīkṣya tadā śabarāḥ /*
Dhṛtir iha vadhyate varadevatayā rudhire iti vinidhāya daivatamadas trikarañgulibhiḥ // HvP
49.32
Vaṇamahiṣaṃ nirpātya viṣamaṃ viṣamāḥ paritaḥ paruṣakirātakā rudhiramāṃsavaliprakaraṇaṃ
/
Vicakarur unmagnamaśakamakṣikamakṣiviṣaṃ pravitatavisragandhadurabhīkṛtadigvilayam //
HvP 49.33

blood, "covered with flies and mosquitoes, abhorrent to look upon, and made every direction stink with the awful stench of raw flesh," uses the aesthetic sentiment of disgust to convey the point that such offerings are invalid.[49] The grotesqueness of the offerings alerts the reader to the violence and suffering inherent in such rites. That this line concludes the narrative is particularly evocative because it leaves readers, literally and metaphorically, with a bad taste in their mouths—repulsed by violent sacrifices. After the tale has ended, the first of the meta verses extend the Śabaras' practices to include the consumption of meat and blood, self-mutilation using weapons, and murder.[50]

Collectively, such descriptions of the Śabaras' practices resonate with Brahmanical depictions of the Śabaras. Even though Brahmanical presentations vary in tone, with some texts glorifying the Śabaras as the most ardent devotees of Durgā and others mocking them, the majority of Brahmanical presentations by the eighth century present the Śabaras' violent practices as problematic. For instance, Bāṇa's *Harṣacarita* (seventh century) describes the Śabaras sacrificing buffalos during the festival for Durgā.[51] Bāṇa's *Kādambarī* (seventh century) describes the Śabaras as hunters who perform animal sacrifices and offer oblations of flesh and blood to Durgā,[52] and the leader of the Śabaras as one whose "wrists [were] roughened with scars from repeated slashing done with his sharp sword for making blood offerings to Caṇḍikā."[53] The *Kādambarī* brands these practices as problematic with the following statements: "The life of these people [the Śabaras] is filled with folly, and their actions are censured by good men. […]

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[49] *HvP* 49.35-36
[50] *HvP* 49.35ab
[51] *Harsacarita* 1.4
[52] Bāṇa, *Kādambarī: A Classic Sanskrit Story of Magical Transformations*, trans. Gwendolyn Layne, Garland Library of World Literature in Translation (New York: Garland Publications, 1991), 33.
[53] *Kādambarī* pp.31

Their only work is hunting. Their Śāstras are the howlings of jackals."[54] The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*'s portrayal of the Śabaras' practices replays similar images from Hindu texts. In this sense, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* aligns itself with these Hindu presentations insomuch as they both present the Śabaras as the religious other.

However, unlike Hindu texts which portray the Śabaras as a marginalized other—an anomaly who should not be emulated—the *Harivaṃśāpurāṇa* uses the Śabaras to also represent urban communities that worship Durgā. We see this in the practices attributed to the Śabaras. Ritual treatises and the *Devī Māhātmya* implore kings and warriors to worship Durgā with blood and weapons,[55] and Tantric texts dedicated to the worship of goddesses elaborate and prescribe antinomian offerings on the part of advanced practitioners. The Śabaras' practices represent practices undertaken by the royal elite and advanced tantric practitioners just as much as they represent practices undertaken by the outcastes of Hindu society.

Notably, after the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* explicitly labels the Śabaras' practices as wrong (v.35), the text connects the Śabaras' esoteric practices with the more pervasive practice of image worship by Brahmanical priests in royal courts.

> While kings, who are famous for protecting the world, grant favors to living beings and protect them from fear of evil people, they arrange for the slaughter of buffalo sheep for the supreme deity. But why are there stories of such wrong people? [39] Why does an individual, having obtained the accomplishment of an effect, think that it was caused by a deity inside an image, as a result of feeding [that] deity? Or how can an individual who offers blood [to the deity], having lacerated his own body with weapons, be compassionate when slashing the body of other beings? [40]
>   If it were the case that that, in the world, a desired boon is granted by a wish-fulfilling, supreme deity who is satiated by people who honor (the deity) with grand venerations, and by whom negative qualities are removed—then no humans would be deprived of what they desired! [41] [Therefore,] the following

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[54] *Kādambarī* pp.33
[55] *DM* 13.9 "They gave her offerings sprinkled with blood from their own limbs."

should be completely ridiculed: 1) The creation [of] images and temples on the part of wealthy individuals; 2) [The performance of] daily rituals that involve lamps, oil, offerings and flowers; and 3) [The belief that] the god of stupid people invariably grants desired boons to individuals. [42] An image of the Lord of Jinas, who has no desires, is worshipped on earth using offerings, sentiments and various types of rituals, by those who understand Bhakti. [This worship] produces a desirable result in a different way because [the cause] undergoes distinct types of modifications, just as a creeper of the wish-fulfilling *Kalpavṛkṣa* tree produces a fruit when it undergoes a distinct type of modification. [43][56]

By the time Jinasena composed his *Harivaṃśapurāṇa,* the worship of Durgā was no longer confined to the margins of society. Sarkar's research demonstrates the numerous ways in which Durgā worship was institutionalized and patronized by royal courts and religious institutions from the seventh century onwards.[57] The above verses recognize this patronage. Verse 42 notes that wealthy individuals endow the construction temples and images; verses 41-2 gesture to Hindu priests who perform grand venerations; and verse 39 refers to the way in which kings arrange for the slaughter of animals as way of propitiating the deity.

The verses emphasize the difference between Jaina practices of worshipping images of the Jinas and Hindu practices of worshipping images of deities. What distinguishes the two religious practices is fundamental belief regarding whether a sentient being resides inside the image. For Jainas, the Jina does not reside as a sentient being in the image worshipped. The

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[56] *Prakaṭitalokapālacaritāḥ khalalokabhayāttanubhṛdanugrahaṃ vidadhataḥ parirakṣaṇataḥ / Samahiṣameṣaghātamadhidaivamatra nṛpāḥ vidadhati yatra tatra kujaneṣu tu kaiva kathā // HvP* 49.39

Kathamapi kāryasiddhimupalabhya hi daivaghaśātpratinidhidevatākṛtamiti pratipadya naraḥ / Nijavapurāyudhairsuvinikṛtya dadadrudhiraṃ paratanukartaṇe bhavati vā sa kathaṃ saghṛṇaḥ // HvP 49.40

Vipulasaparyayā praṇatalokasutoṣitayā vigataviparyayatvaguṇayā jagatīṣṭavaraḥ / Yadi hi vitīryate varadayā varadevatayā na bhavati kaścidapyabhimatena jano vikalaḥ // HvP 40.41

Pratinidhirāśrayaśca sadhanasya parasya kṛtiḥ pratidinadīpatailapuṣpavidhiḥ parataḥ / Atha ca varaṃ parasya niyataṃ pradadāti vṛtaṃ jaḍajanadevatā jagati hāsyamidaṃ paramam // HvP 40.42

[57] Sarkar, *Heroic Shāktism*, 116–35.

image of the Jina does not represent or possess the Jina as a sentient being who can produce results for his devotee. Jinas are liberated from the material world and cannot override the laws of cause and effect that govern the universe. For Jainas in this era, images of the Jina embody in material form the ideal, spiritual virtues that the Jina possesses, and therefore the worship of the Jina's image directs the practitioner to embody that ideal and act in accordance with it.[58] With this in mind, verses 40-43 distinguish Hindu practices of image worship from Jaina practices by drawing attention to the epistemic error that underlies the former. Just because a beneficial result might arise after venerating a statue does not mean that a benevolent deity resides in that statue with the ability to grant the practitioner's wishes. It is logically incoherent to deduce a relation of cause and effect on the basis of a correlation that we observe in the world because this observation does not capture the reality of the world, which, according to the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*, is governed by the laws of karma rather than the activities of deities.

Verse 40 suggests that the non-violent worship of images by the urban Hindu elite is as problematic as the Śabaras' violent sacrifices because both religious practices are predicated on misperception. In the case of the Śabaras, the practice of offering animals arises when they misinterpret the bloodly aftermath of Ekanāsā's death as a sign that the Goddess desires blood offerings. In the case of temple priests and wealthy patrons, the practice of image worship arises because they consider beneficial results to be the direct effect of deities who are venerated through images.

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[58] John E. Cort, *Framing the Jina: Narratives of Icons and Idols in Jain History*, ACLS Humanities E-Book. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010), 28–60.

5. The Śabaras and the Philosophy of Perception

All the above critiques expressed in the verses thus far are brought together in the concluding

verses of chapter 49, which ridicule the epistemology of one-sided perception.

> It is established in the world that there are three types of stupidity which
> constitute a form of blindness. This is enough to obscure pure insight; there is no
> cure for it. Therefore, even if a person desires to perceive what is real and what is
> not real, being confused at every step, how would they be able to perceive it? [46]
> The world [is filled] with insentient objects such as fire, wind, water, earth,
> creepers, trees and [even] images of gods that are constructed for temples; and the
> sky is filled with insentient objects such as the sun, moon, stars, and groups of
> planets. How could stupidity not arise for a person here in this world? [47]
>
> Thinking about the world in terms of binaries is entirely natural but
> completely stupid. For example, thinking that everything is real or unreal; plural
> or singular; permanent or impermanent; thinking there are distinctions between
> the form of oneself and of others; parts or wholes; distinctions between qualities
> and quality-bearers, effects and causes. [48] If there is a negative result—the
> contradiction between two [standpoints]—then this would constitute a falsehood.
> But [two perspectives] that are mutually seen cannot be false. These viewpoints
> (*naya*), of which the foremost include the comprehensive (*nigamaṇa*), collective
> (*saṃgraha*) and empirical (*vyavahāra*), are applicable to objects, and these
> objects are entirely understood through a valid cognition (*pramāṇa*), which
> constitutes [the coordination of] all viewpoints.[59] [49]

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[59] *timirabharaṃ trimūḍhimayamatra dṛḍhaṃ jagataḥ sthagayadalaṃ*
pavitranetramanauṣadhakam /
tadiha jano didṛkṣurapi tattvamatattvamapi pratipadamākulaḥ kimu nirūpayitum kṣamate // HvP
49.46
atinicitāgnivāyujalabhūmilatātarubhiḥ kṣitirapacetanaiśca gṛhakalpitadevatakaiḥ /
tavividhutārakāgrahaganair jananetrapathair gaganamato astu mūḍhiriha kasya janasya na vā
// HvP 49.47
sadasadanekamekamatha nityamanityamapi svakapararūpabhedamapi śeṣamaśeṣaparam /
guṇaguṇikāryakāraṇabhidādyakhilātmatayā jagadidam ityāmī niyāminī dṛḍhamūḍhatayā // HvP
49.48
yadi ca parasparavyudasanavyāsanāḥ syur mṛṣā sphuṭa itaretarekṣaṇatayā na mṛṣā hi tathā /
nigamaṇasaṃgrahavyāvṛtipramukhāśca nayāḥ sakalanayapramāṇapariniścitavastuni yāḥ //
HvP 49.49

Verses 46-49 explain that one should not rely on sensual perception as the sole means of knowing because perception cannot grasp the multi-faceted nature of reality. Perception only grasps a material object that is immediately present. It can grasp neither the modifications that an object undergoes nor the objects that are imperceptible by the senses, such as the self. The point is less to reject the possibility of perception as *a* means of knowing and more to argue that we should not privilege perception as the *exclusive* means of knowing. The reality of any given object cannot be exhausted by one single perspective (*naya*). Therefore, to adopt one perspective at the expense of all other perspectives constitutes an epistemic failure because one perspective can grasp only one aspect of what is in fact a multifaceted reality. This renders binary thinking problematic since the multifaceted nature of reality cannot be reduced to a single category. A valid cognition (*pramāṇa*) constitutes, as verse 49 states, the coordination of multiple perspectives of an object. The adoption of multiple perspectives does not constitute a falsehood since each perspective reveals a different aspect of reality.

The epistemological ideas expressed here draw on a repository of Jaina discourses about *nayavāda*. For Jaina authors, the claim that one viewpoint cannot exhaust the reality of any given object, and, by extension, that a valid cognition arises when we understand the same object from multiple perspectives, is the axiomatic principle that explains the need to account for multiple perspectives. According to Balcerowizc's presentation of *naya*s in Jaina philosophy, there is some degree of variation in the number and interpretation of *naya*s. Nevertheless, Jaina writers such as Umāsvāti, Akalaṅka and Kundakunda[60] include three of the *naya*s that are cited in verse 49—comprehensive (*nigamaṇa*), collective (*saṃgraha*) and empirical/conventional denotation

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[60] Piotr Balcerowicz, "Some Remarks on the Naya Method," in *Essays in Jaina Philosophy and Religion* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2003), 47–55. Balcerowizc notes that *nigamaṇa*/*naigama* is absent in Siddhasena's works.

(*vyavahāra*). According to these Jaina philosophers, *nigamaṇa*, *saṃgraha* and *vyavahāra* are the three perspectives that express the stable substance (*dravya*) of an object rather than the mode of transformation (*paryāya*) the object undergoes.[61] *Nigamaṇa* is the comprehensive perspective because it "grasps a given phenomenon in a most general way," insofar as it does not distinguish between universals and particulars. *Saṃgraha* lays stress on the universal, and *vyavahāra* grasps an object for a practical purpose.[62]

By referring to Jaina philosophical understanding of perception, the final verses of the tale of Ekanāsā specify that the figure of the religious other includes those who have a one-sided view of reality. Put another way, these verses make explicit what was implicit in the tale so far. The conclusion clarifies that there is a common epistemology that underlies the perceptions of the various agents cited. The Śabaras misinterpret Ekanāsā's asceticism and the pool of her blood as signs of her divine and bloodthirsty nature respectively. Priests, kings, and wealthy patrons worship images of deities with the belief that the deity resides inside the image. They misinterpret the relation between cause and effect because they believe that the deity will grant wishes from inside the image in return for offerings. The false poets are those who do not capture reality as it is. Indeed, the final epistemological verses suggest that even philosophers misunderstand and misinterpret the world. The concluding verses collapse the distinctions among the Śabaras, Brahmanical priests, poets, and philosophers, uniting them through a common epistemology—the adoption of a one-sided view that does not capture the multivalent nature of reality.

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[61] Balcerowicz, "Some Remarks on the Naya Method," 47-55.
[62] Balcerowicz, "Some Remarks on the Naya Method," 47-55.

6. Conclusion

Through the tale of Ekanāsā, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* constructs a vision of the religious self and the religious other. The first half of chapter 49 presents Ekanāsā as the literal embodiment of the Jaina self. Ekanāsā performs Jaina asceticism in accordance with prescriptions expressed by Jaina commentaries on monastic practice. The narrative emphasizes the validity of her beliefs and practices by re-enforcing the same picture through multiple narrative devices that include, character, plotline, descriptions and language. And, in doing so, the text plays down the differences between Digambaras and Śvetāmbara perceptions of women and asceticism in order to present Jainism as a single consistent system of meaning.

The second half of chapter 49 introduces us to the Śabaras who mistake Ekanāsā for a goddess and begin to propitiate her with blood offerings. While it is important to understand that Jinasena presents these lower-class hunters as the embodiment of the religious other, drawing on caricatures of the Śabaras in Hindu texts themselves, his subtale makes a point to expand the conception of the religious other from what previous Hindu texts set out to include those individuals, beliefs, and practices that are upheld by Hindu self-representations.

The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* presents Śākta religion as that which includes: beliefs in the existence of deities, such as Durgā, who can grant wishes and override the laws of karma; the practice of animal sacrifice, blood offerings and Hindu image worship; the belief that Kṛṣṇaʾs sister is an incarnation of a Goddess; the belief in the veracity of Brahmanical texts, which mis-identify Kṛṣṇaʾs sister as a Goddess; and the adoption of a one-sided epistemology. This representation of Śākta religion preserves the heterogeneity of discourses that Hindu texts themselves associated with Śākta religion, but it uses this diversity to critique the validity of the

religion. Related to this is the way in which the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* uses the character of the Śabara to otherize elite Hindus. Many Hindu presentations of the Śabaras caricature the hunters as the ignorant outcastes of society. The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* takes up this representation, expanding the Hindu representation of the religious other to include those who create and perpetuate these very representations of otherness. It argues that the Śabaras are no different from poets, Brāhmaṇas, patrons, and philosophers who create—through their intellectual work, their institutional positions, and their economic standing—the conditions through which the Śabaras are ostracized. In this way, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* expands the religious other to include practices, discourses and communities that are as associated with the outcaste Śabaras as they are with the Brahmanical elite. Finally, the tale of Ekanāsā preserves the porousness of Śākta religion as a sectarian Hindu identity. The identification and veneration of Kṛṣṇa's sister as Durgā is found in Vaiṣṇava texts, the worship of Durgā in temples is prescribed by Brahmanical texts, and the blood offerings to Durgā are presented by Hindu texts as that which is performed by the Śabaras and Tantric practitioners. The tale of Ekanāsā connects beliefs, practices, communities and institutions that pertain to Durgā into a single, consistent religion.

Although this dissertation has focused primarily on narratives about the origins of Brahmanism, Jainas *purāṇa*s are not dedicated solely to tales about Brahmanism. The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* includes tales about the origins of Śākta religion, through the tale of Ekanāsā, and the origins Vaiṣṇava religion, through the tale of Kṛṣṇa. Each religion is presented as expounding distinct beliefs and practices. The literary boundary between each subtale marks off the religious boundary between each religion such that each origin tale is a literary representation

of what Elaine Fisher understands as independent systems of meaning (which I simply call, "religion").[63]

At the same time, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* connects these individual systems in order to present a shared Hindu identity. Specific to the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*, we can see that this text connects the tale of Ekanāsā (that is, the origins of Śākta religion) with the tale of Parvata (the origins of Brahmanism) through overlapping presentations of the religious other. Brahmanism and Śākta religion both arise out of misinterpretations, whether it is of language, texts or the world. Both propagate violent practices of animal sacrifice and even image worship. At the literary level of the text, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* connects these origin tales through a common storyline. In this way, the text itself demarcates the boundaries of a shared Hindu identity inflected by co-existing religions that are represented in individual subtales. In contrast to Jainism which is presented in this tale as a single religion devoid of differences, the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* represents Hinduism as a religion fragmented by individual systems of meaning making.

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[63] Elaine Fisher, *Hindu Pluralism: Religion and the Public Sphere in Early Modern South India*, South Asia across the Disciplines (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2017).

Chapter 6

Conclusion:
Understanding Hinduism through Jaina *Purāṇa*s

This dissertation has reconstructed representations of Hindu identity from Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s written between the seventh and ninth centuries. We have seen that a common method that these texts use to represent the Hindu religious other is to narrate an origin tale—a representation of a series of causally related events that explain the consolidation of what Bruce Lincoln calls "religion." Each tale describes how discourses that appeal to a transcendent authority are in fact created by characters within particular social circumstances; how these discourses become the justifications for ritual practices; how a religious community is created out of those who define themselves in relation to said discourses and practices; and the role that the institution plays in the regulation of all of the above. Through this basic framework, each Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa* connects contemporaneous representations and practices of representation of the religious other that were circulating in the era in which the tale was composed. Put simply, origin tales about religious others, set in the distant past of Jaina universal history, provide a unique site in which Jaina authors can reflect on constructions of religion from earlier and contemporaneous texts that the religious other was historically producing.

Tales that narrate the origins of Brahmanism consistently present Brahmanism as a religion because it espouses discourses that appeal to a transcendent *Veda*, animal sacrifices and rituals enjoined by the *Veda*, and a community that defines itself in relation to these discourses and practices. Nevertheless, each Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa* exhibits a different representation of the

contents of Brahmanical discourses, practices, communities, and institutions; the relation

between Brahmanical texts; and the relation between Brahmanism and Jainism.

We have seen that each Jaina representation of Brahmanism reflects on earlier and

contemporaneous Brahmanical self-representations. This is especially the case with respect to the

representation of the philosophical foundations of Brahmanism. The *Padmacarita* and the

Harivaṃśapurāṇa present Brahmanism as having its philosophical basis in Mīmāṃsā. They

reflect contemporaneous Mīmāṃsā treatises, which predicate their religious commitments on the

claim that the *Veda* is authorless and eternal rather than on the claim that the *Veda* was

composed by an author. In the ninth century, the *Ādipurāṇa* and *Uttarapurāṇa* re-imagine

Brahmanism as rooted in theism. These later retellings reflect the rise of Brahmanical

philosophers and theologians who predicate their discourses and practices on the existence of a

transcendent deity.

Each retelling examines one or more relations among Brahmanical doctrines and rituals.

In some cases, the Jaina retellings extrapolate discourses that pertain to the same object or theme,

but that are interpreted by Brahmanical texts in contradictory ways. The *Padmacarita*, for

instance, presents Brahmanism as a religion of contradictions. The story of Parvata exposes

contradictions in the Brahmanical portrayal of Brahmā and Vedic sacrifice. Similarly, Nārada's

dialogue cites contradictions between his opponent's claims about the *Veda* and the contents of

the *Veda* itself. When read together, the tale of Parvata and the tale of Nārada cast Brahmanism

as a religion whose narratives proclaim the *Veda* to be the creation of Brahmā but whose

philosophy proclaims the *Veda* to be unauthored. The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* continues to portray

Brahmanism as a contradictory religion, but this time it is because the religious other is

inconsistent in its interpretation of words. The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* presents Brahmanical texts as

united through their use of common conceptual terms, such as "*dharma*," "*yaj*," and "*veda*," but contradictory on the grounds that each Brahmanical text expressed a different interpretation of these common words. What is more, Brahmanism, in the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*'s eyes, is a religion that claims that the relation between words and their meaning is fixed. The *purāṇa* exposes inconsistent interpretations of common words across multiple Brahmanical texts, before presenting the hermeneutics of the religion as unrepresentative of the contents of their scriptures.

In other cases, Jaina retellings extrapolate overlaps among Brahmanical discourses and practices that tie together elements into a consistent religion. The *Ādipurāṇa* and *Uttarapurāṇa* mark a shift in understanding. They do not present Brahmanism as a religion of contradictions. For the *Ādipurāṇa*, Brahmanism is a religion whose creationist discourses, practices of Vedic sacrifice, and purāṇic mythology are consistent and complementary. In fact, the *Ādipurāṇa* and *Uttarapurāṇa* dedicate less attention to exploring relations among Brahmanical discourses, and more attention to the relation between Brahmanism and Jainism.

This brings me to my third and final point with respect to Jaina representations of Brahmanism. As narratives about the religious other, Jaina origin tales inevitably examine the relation of Brahmanism as the religious other to Jainism which is presented as the religious self. The basic framework of the tale of Parvata would lead one to assume that all Jaina *purāṇa*s understand Brahmanism as a sectarian tradition of Jainism; in all of the *purāṇa*s, Parvata reinterprets the meaning of the Jina's words and creates a new religion on the basis of his reinterpretations. However, the innovations to the tale by each *purāṇa* evidence distinct representations of Jainism's relation to Brahmanism. In the *Padmacarita*, Parvata creates a new religion only after he has been reborn as a demon who lives on the outskirts of the Jaina kingdom. The physical embodiment of Parvata's demonic rebirth and his geographical location

constitute a literary representation of his extreme otherness to the Jina. (The *Padmacarita*

employs the same method to narrate the creation of the Brāhmaṇas. It casts the Brāhmaṇas as

those who have always resided outside of the Jaina kingdom and who can be identified through

physical markers.) This *purāṇa* divorces Brahmanism from Jainism, presenting Brahmanism as

the ultimate antithesis of Jainism. The *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* reimagines this relationship. If

"sectarian tradition" is understood as a tradition that breaks away from a common religion due to

differences in scriptural interpretation, then the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* is the only *purāṇa* to

emphasize the representation of Brahmanism as a sectarian tradition of Jainism. It inserts a

lengthy dialogue in which Parvata expresses his interpretations of the Jina's words. The story

stresses, more than any other Jaina *purāṇa*, that Parvata's interpretations are the foundations of

his new religion. The *Ādipurāṇa* presents the most intricate depiction of the relation of

Brahmanism to Jainism among all of the Jaina *purāṇa*s studied in this dissertation. It presents a

single society under the patronage of Bharata's court. This society is defined by a common set of

social signifiers (such as "Brāhmaṇa"), social practices, and institutional positions in Bharata's

court. The *Ādipurāṇa* distinguishes Brahmanism from Jainism only through differences of

beliefs and religious practices. Here, Brahmanism subscribes to the authority of creator deities

and propagates animal sacrifice through the authority of the deity. In marked contrast to the

Padmacarita, the *Ādipurāṇa* does not map religions on distinct geographical space, nor does it

suggest that Brahmanical followers can be identified through distinct social or physical markers.

In the final chapter of this dissertation, we explored the construction of Śākta religious

identity as a bounded system of meaning-making in conjunction to its relation to Hinduism as a

shared religious identity. I argued that the tale of Ekanāsā in the *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* unifies

discourses, practices and communities that pertain to the worship of Durgā into a single religion,

defined by its own system of meaning-making. Nevertheless, the tale also presents overlaps between the contents of Śākta religion and the contents of Brahmanical religion, and it connects the two tales through a common storyline. The tale of Ekanāsā suggests that the construction of individual systems of meaning-making is concomitant with the construction of a shared Hindu identity. Once again, as a tale that reflects on the construction of the shared Hindu identity as a religious other, the tale of Ekanāsā also discloses a presentation of a shared Jaina identity as devoid of differences in the understanding of female asceticism that historically divided Digambaras from Śvetāmbaras.

In short, Jaina origin tales about religious others constitute a significant site in which Jainas construct Brahmanical, Hindu, and Jaina religious identity in relation to one another. Hindu texts present Hindu religious identity as eternal, static, and existing independent of dialogue with religious others. Jaina tales, by contrast, present Hindu religious identity as fluid, historically situated, and constructed through a network of dialogical relations. This makes the study of Jaina texts as relevant to the study of Hinduism as the study of Hindu texts themselves. As texts that seek to understand the identity of the religious other, they acknowledge the nuances of Hindu self-representations without ignoring their diversity and breadth of representation.

This dissertation has also shown that narrative mediums are a significant site through which Jainas in the first millennium constructed religious identity. Jaina origin tales employ dialogues to connect discourses on logical grounds; they use literary devices to connect diverse representations on thematic grounds; and, through the causal relations forged between events narrated, the narrative concatenates all representations explored throughout dialogues and literary devices into a single religion, which is literally and literarily represented as the conclusion to every origin story. Recognizing the narrative medium is therefore indispensable for

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the study of Hinduism specifically and the study of religion broadly because it challenges the assumption that Hindu identity is constructed in later periods through other mediums of discourse. In centering narrative mediums, we have been able to how narratives from the seventh to ninth century accomplish similar effects as doxography prior to the formal rise of doxographical texts from the fourteenth century onwards.

I have located Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s within a broader network of South Asian texts and suggested the intervention that these texts make therein. Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s innovate origin tales that are told in earlier Prakrit texts. They expand the scope of dialogical engagements, increase the depth of examination of the religious other, and examine the epistemological foundations of the religious other. These innovations allow Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s to participate in the culture of Sanskrit textual practices that Brāhmaṇas were employing in their constructions of Brahmanical identity.

We see that Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s are consistent in critiquing one particular aspect of the way in which Brāhmaṇas construct and use Sanskrit textual practices. They argue that philosophy and narrative should be read together, in contrast to Brahmanical texts of this era which present philosophical discourses from systematic texts (*śāstra*) as distinct from narrative texts such as the epics and *purāṇa*s. For instance, Kumārila rejected the validity of the Hindu epics and *purāṇa*s, and tales of Vedic rituals in Vyāsa's *Mahābhārata* reject the practice of animal sacrifice, which is justified by the *Veda* and Mīmāṃsakas. Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s place these diverse Brahmanical texts into conversation with one another. We see this in the explicit contents of their dialogues; characters cite narrative discourses alongside philosophical discourses. But we also see this method of representation enacted through the form of the Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*. While Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s discuss philosophical premises during

dialogues between characters, they also do so through the storyline and literary devices of the text. Similarly, while Jaina narratives discuss the validity of Brahmanical narratives through the story and literary devices, they also continue this discussion of Brahmanical narratives in the philosophical dialogues of the text. the content of discourses is not tied inextricably to a particular form. In this way, Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s undermine the formal distinction that Brahmanical authors enforce between texts and practices of representation.

All of the earliest extant Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s are consistent in their methods for representing religious others. They each update Prakrit origin tales by expanding the scope and depth of representation, and they each read across texts and genres. The consistency in these innovations suggests that the Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s were consolidating a method for representing religious others that would distinguish them from methods used by their Prakrit predecessors, as well as from methods of representation used by contemporaneous texts. Nevertheless, it remains to be seen what impact Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s had upon Jaina texts in subsequent centuries.[1]

Over the course of this dissertation, we have seen that narratives from Sanskrit Jaina *purāṇa*s were a significant site in which Jainas defined the contours of religious identity and generated new methods for representing the religious other. The authors of these narratives were clearly intervening in a moment in which their Hindu contemporaries did not regard Jainas and

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[1] There seems to be parallels in the methods that Jaina philosophers use in subsequent centuries. See Phillis Granoff, "Unspoken Rules of Debate in Medieval India and the Boundaries of Knowledge," in *Les Scholastiques Indiennes: Genèses, Développements, Interactions*, ed. Émilie Aussant and Gérard Colas, vol. 32, Études Thématiques (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 2021), 165–84. See also: Haribhadrasūri, *Dhūrtākhyāna of Haribhadra Sūri: Haribhadra's original Prākrit text, Saṅghatilaka's Sanskrit version and an old-Gujarati prose rendering.*, ed. A. N. Upadhye and Muni Jinavijaya, 1st ed. (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1944).

their narratives as serious interlocutors. This context is not dissimilar from the context of the Western Academy today. Despite acknowledging that the plural, dialogical landscape of South Asia implicates the construction of Hindu identity, the study of Hinduism does not take seriously the study of Jaina writers, much less their narrative compositions. This dissertation has recovered the unheard voices of Jaina narrative authors whose reflections augment our understanding of the interreligious history of South Asia, Hinduism today, and, indeed, of the very history of the concept of "religion" in South Asia.

Abbreviations of Frequently Cited Texts

ĀP	Jinasena II's *Ādipurāṇa*
BhG	*Bhagavadgītā*
DM	*Devīmāhātyma*
HV	Vyāsa's *Harivaṃśa*
HvP	Jinasena's *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*
Mbh	Vyāsa's *Mahābhārata*
MS	Jaimini's *Mīmāṃsāsūtra*
PC	Raviṣeṇa's *Padmacarita*
PCV	Vimalasūri's *Paümacariya*
Rām	Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa*
ŚV	Kumārila's *Ślokavārtika*
UP	Guṇabhadra's *Uttarapurāṇa*
Vdh	Saṅghadāsa's *Vasudevahiṇḍī*
ViP	*Viṣṇupurāṇa*

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