

SOMNOLENT SŪTRAS: SCRIPTURAL COMMENTARY IN
ŚVETĀMBARA JAINISM

The human body has furnished the Jains, as it has the followers of many other traditions, with a powerful metaphor by means of which the structure, status and function of various doctrinal and institutional aspects of their religion can be conveyed and understood. Most famously, the universe is depicted in Jain cosmology as a huge man¹ and, in similar vein, the Jain community also has been said to be like a body, with the monks constituting its head and the nuns and lay people its limbs.² The Jain scriptural corpus too was sometimes envisaged as a man and the twelve main parts (*aṅga*) of the human body equated with the twelve principle texts (*aṅga*) of the canon.³

The sixteenth century devotional poet Ānandghan, who used Gujarati as his medium, employed this last version of the metaphor in a hymn to the twenty first tīrthaṅkara Nami in which he refers to the “doctrine-man” (*samaypuruṣ*), but giving the image a further interesting twist. For Ānandghan, the limbs of the doctrine-man are six: the basic scriptural text (*sūtra*), the four classical modes of commentary upon it, called *niryukti* and *bhāṣya* (written in Prākṛit verse), *cūrṇi* (written in Prākṛit prose, with elements of Sanskritisation) and *vṛtti* (written in Sanskrit prose) respectively, and, lastly, experience of doctrine and practice based on participation in an authoritative teacher lineage (*paramparanubhav*). Whoever cuts off one of those limbs, Ānandghan asserts, will receive a bad rebirth.⁴ As can be seen, the *sūtra* text is here not privileged by being depicted as the head or most important part of the doctrine-man and is instead understood by Ānandghan as merely an equal participant in a broader and interrelated nexus involving root scripture, commentary and interpretation.

My purpose in this paper is not to pursue the ramifications of the use of body imagery in Jainism but, instead, to address the issue of how certain prominent Jain intellectuals in the medieval period viewed the nature of scriptural commentary. It should hardly be surprising, given the lengthy time-span over which Jainism developed, that there have often been differences within the religion about the relative status of scripture and its traditional explication. The non-image worshipping Śvetāmbaras provide good examples of this. Loṅkā (fifteenth century),

who attempted to reactivate the ancient mode of ascetic life described in the scriptures and from whom the aniconic Sthānakvāsī sect still found today ultimately originates, seems to have rejected the authority of what was by his time a voluminous exegetical literature on the sūtras on the grounds that it compromised the purity of the original doctrine preached by Mahāvīra and the other tīrthaṅkaras.⁵ In the last century, however, Jayācārya (1803–1881), one of the most important chief teachers of the other main aniconic Śvetāmbara sect, the Terāpanthīs, which, in advocating a rigorous style of Jainism firmly based on the scriptures only, to a large extent perpetuates the literalist approach of Loṅkā, produced a remarkable rendering into Rājasthānī couplets (*joṛ*) of the fifth *aṅga* of the canon, the *Bhagavatī Sūtra*, into which he actually incorporated portions, also translated into Rājasthānī, of the standard Sanskrit *vṛtti* commentary by Abhayadeva Sūri (eleventh century).⁶ In the one case, then, scriptural commentary is abandoned as promoting laxity; in the other, it effectively becomes scripture itself.

The following account of medieval Jain attitudes towards scripture and the commentary which purports to explicate it will be focused upon Abhayadeva Sūri, Jainism's greatest scriptural exegete, and a later figure, Dharmasāgara (sixteenth century), its greatest sectarian polemicist. A clear linkage between the two can be seen in their mutual reiteration of a claim, to be described below, by an earlier Jain scholar, which was based on etymological sleight of hand (and also furnishes the title of this paper), that a sūtra without some sort of accompanying commentarial explication is equivalent to somebody who is asleep. Firstly, however, it will be necessary to offer some broader contextualisations.

COMMENTARY

In a paper delivered in 1984 but only published in 1993, Kendall Folkert, at the time the only scholar carrying out research into both the Jain community in India and its scriptural tradition, pertinently asked what, in the broadest context, “full awareness of the role and place of commentary would do for our sense of the being of a text.”⁷ The specific example Folkert adduced was the Confucian Analects which had been treated by earlier western scholars as a self-contained sacred book roughly equivalent to the Protestant Bible but which is in actuality a body of material functioning within and drawing its significance from an elaborate and centuries old network of exegesis. In a recent full scale study, Henderson has used the Confucian Analects

and the massive accumulation of explanatory writings upon them to demonstrate the centrality of commentary in the post-classical, pre-modern world as a mode of discourse which played an important part in moulding patterns of thought and he has also made clear that, in the religious environment, whatever the differences which may separate the root scriptures of various traditions, exegetes have throughout history participated in common styles of explication which operate across religious and temporal frontiers.⁸

In the specifically Christian context, Jonathan Z. Smith has argued that, beginning from the Reformation and under the influence of the techniques of Humanist scholarship, commentary on the New Testament came into its own as effectively a Protestant topos in which “the category of inspiration is transposed from the text to the experience of the interpreter”,⁹ and interpretative writings of this sort, from Erasmus to Bultmann, have had and continue to have immense prestige not just as works of scholarship but as intense personal engagements with the scriptures they explicate. Traditional exegesis on South Asian scriptures, however, has much less seldom met with such approval, until comparatively recently either being castigated as misguided, unreliable and pedantic, obfuscating the unmediated understanding of the root text which the philologist is trying to achieve or, alternatively, barely being acknowledged as commentary at all, as often in the case of Śaṅkara’s *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*.¹⁰

Gratifyingly, however, indigenous Indian exegesis has begun to attract increasing interest, a matter of no small importance for the study of South Asian religions, for even if the formation of a scholarly or theological discourse on the basis of accumulating layers of commentary upon a foundational text should not be regarded as an exclusively Indian phenomenon,¹¹ it can nonetheless be accepted as a virtual truism that intellectual progress in traditional South Asia was largely conducted through the interplay of root text, commentary and sub-commentary. Recent stimulating studies have been able to demonstrate how a shift in focus from root text can elucidate the manner in which the concerns of Indian religious or śāstric traditions have often been determined or confirmed by commentators. For example, Burford has highlighted the manner in which Theravāda Buddhist exegetes attempted to smooth out ambivalences within one of the oldest Pāli scriptures, the *Suttanipāta*, and make it conform to later standardised notions,¹² while Clooney has argued that the central authority for normative brahman ritualism, the *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* of Jaimini (c.200 C.E.), was decisively rerouted by the third century commentator Śabara.¹³ Insightful work has also been

carried out into the traditional exegesis of important vernacular texts such as the *Tirukkural* and the *Rāmcariṁmānas*, with specific reference to the part which commentary has played in generating their quasi-scriptural status,¹⁴ and attention has been suggestively drawn by Coburn to the fact that explanation need not always be exclusively literary but can also have visual and other dimensions.¹⁵

It is, of course, the duty of philologists to point to manifest discrepancies between source and exegesis. By and large, however, scholarly approaches to traditional Indian commentary have turned around its success or failure in mirroring the supposed actual intentions of the author of the root text from which it derives¹⁶ or have addressed the various specific hermeneutic strategies used by commentators.¹⁷ Furthermore, as can be seen in the contributions of Burford and Clooney just mentioned, while the intellectual respectability of commentary is no longer seriously questioned, the study of it seems very much linked to the attempt to retrieve the "original" version of a doctrine without dependence on a particular tradition's own understanding of it.¹⁸ Little consideration has been given to the alternative questions of the status of commentary within South Asian traditions as an institution, the extent to which it can be regarded as representing a text as well as explaining it and to the fact that commentary has on occasion itself achieved canonicity.¹⁹

JAIN COMMENTARY

The standard Jain position with regard to scripture, which finds verbal expression for the first time around the second century CE, is that the tīrthaṅkaras are associated with the meaning only of the sūtras, whereas their disciples (*gaṇadhara*) are responsible for its verbal formulation.²⁰ On this basis, it has been said that the whole Jain scriptural corpus is itself a huge commentary on the central truth, enunciated by each tīrthaṅkara throughout beginningless time, that reality is characterised by appearance, stability and disappearance.²¹ The late canonical text, the *Mahānīśītha Sūtra*, goes so far as to state that the tīrthaṅkaras provided a fully developed body of commentarial material with the most important Jain mantra, the *Pañcanamaskāra*, which subsequently disappeared owing to the degenerative effects of time.²² Although Jain teachers do sometimes assert that commentary was provided with all the root sūtras from the very beginning,²³ a view which has a counterpart in Theravāda Buddhism where the claim is found that a substantial corpus of oral explication was uttered by the Buddha

himself to supplement his preaching and subsequently formed the basis of the now lost Sinhalese commentaries upon which the fifth century CE exegete Buddhaghosa drew, there is no evidence to support the historicity of this.²⁴ Nonetheless, early acceptance of the necessity of some sort of reflection upon or explanation of the teachings can be seen in the assertion of what is perhaps the oldest Jain scripture, the *Ācārāṅga Sūtra*, that “the great man, whose mind is not on external things, should know the doctrine by the doctrine, either through his own intelligence or through the explanation of another or through hearing it in the vicinity of others.”²⁵

The term “*śruta*”, “what has been heard”, which eventually developed in Jain philosophy to have the sense of any spoken or written symbol, seems in its earliest usage to have roughly corresponded in meaning to “scripture”, in the same manner as *śruti* in Hinduism denotes the totality of revealed truth as embodied in the Veda.²⁶ *Śrutajñāna*, in Jain epistemology denoting in slightly blurred fashion both “knowledge of scripture” and “knowledge located within scripture”,²⁷ is dependent upon those who reveal it and at the same time reveals the truth itself. It is conditioned by a wide and fluctuating range of karmic influences (technically called *kṣāyopaśamika*) and thus requires correct and controlled modes of interpretation.²⁸ Haribhadra (eighth century) makes clear the broad issue involved:

Even though *śruta* is transmitted to those (who are capable of adopting and maintaining correct practice), human beings cannot gain the desired result (*artha*) from that (statement) whose meaning (*artha*) is not (fully and correctly) understood. Because of that, *anuyoga* of the words of the enlightened teachers is undertaken.²⁹

Anuyoga means “conjoining” each significant word in a scriptural text with its broadest connotative context and thus bringing it into full association with the complexity of reality.³⁰ The standard techniques for employing this particular hermeneutical methodology are enshrined in the *Anuyogadvārāṇi*, “The Doors to *Anuyoga*” (c. third/fourth century CE), itself a canonical work, which demonstrates their applicability to the central text of Jain ritual practice, the *Āvaśyaka Sūtra*.³¹ However, it seems clear that some basic operations of Jain scriptural analysis must have been established earlier than the *Anuyogadvārāṇi*, in one case within the canon itself,³² and the history of the oldest scriptural commentaries, the Prākṛit verse *niryuktis*, which play an important part in implementing the *anuyoga* process, does suggest that exegesis evolved in tandem with the gradual standardisation of the scriptures.

According to the *Āvaśyaka Nirvyukti*, a commentary on the *Āvaśyaka Sūtra* which has achieved virtual canonical status, a *niryukti* is “a treatise

expounding a subject through example and illustration, reasoning and by relating causes and conditions.”³³ While tradition ascribes authorship of the *niryuktis* to Bhadrabāhu who on balance of probability must have lived around the first century CE, these works have in fact been subject to a process of interpolation and expansion and could hardly have been written in toto by one writer.³⁴ Notoriously, the *niryuktis* can be so elliptical, constituting as they do “an interwoven and closed system having its own recurring devices,”³⁵ that a further layer of commentary is often required to render them intelligible, and the extent to which they actually “commentate” on the sūtra to which they are attached, in the sense of explicating difficulties, is frequently limited. It is the *vr̥tti* layer of commentary (sometimes called *ṭīkā*), chronologically the latest to be produced (c.eighth century onwards), albeit incorporating a great deal of earlier material, which corresponds most closely to western notions of exegesis *qua* the providing of a running explanation of the root text.

The Jain position with regard to scripture and commentary upon it, of whatever type or period, is strongly predicated upon the acceptance of meaning as being superior to word.³⁶ This can be seen clearly from the standard Jain etymology for the term “sūtra” which would derive it from the root *sūc*, “indicate.”³⁷ A sūtra “indicates” many meanings which the teacher explicates through commentary, obtaining the sense from the root text in the same manner as a potter creates shapes from a lump of clay.³⁸ A view consequent upon this, which is still to be found today, is that, while scriptural explication is a necessary procedure, the meaning of the ancient texts, frequently characterised as being “secret” or “esoteric” (*rahasya*), should never be written down but revealed only in oral teaching by and to qualified ascetics in order to prevent unauthorised access to it.³⁹

Counterbalancing this somewhat restricted attitude towards the potential audience for scriptural interpretation, some of the most significant Jain commentators such as Śīlāṅka (ninth century) and Malayagiri (thirteenth century) do not appear to have regarded themselves as merely engaging in acts of textual explication, and for them scriptural exegesis seems to have been a means of conferring merit upon those who heard or read it.⁴⁰ As such, commentary could be linked by its practitioners with that compassion which informs the Jain conception of true religiosity.

SCRIPTURE AS UNCULTIVATED GROUND: THE COMMENTATOR
ABHAYADEVA SŪRI

It would appear to have been Haribhadra who was the first medieval Jain scholar to effect a shift away from the old Prākṛit scriptural commentary model of the *niryuktis*, *bhāṣyas* and *cūrṇis* to the production of large scale Sanskrit *vṛttis*.⁴¹ However, Haribhadra only explicated a very few canonical texts and his personality, as least as far as the hagiographical narrative which clustered around his life is concerned, was not regarded as being defined by his exegetical activities. The other important early Sanskrit commentator, Śīlāṅka, has left no biographical trace of himself, beyond an apparent allusion to his lineage affiliation.⁴² Although from the hagiographical point of view the most resonant event in the career of Abhayadeva Sūri, the greatest of Jain exegetes, is his miraculous discovery of a buried image of the tīrthaṅkara Pārśva at Cambay, his scriptural commentating is also a vital narrative component in most versions of his life. This is underscored by the fact that Abhayadeva is generally identified in Jain tradition by the epithet “commentator on the nine *aṅga* texts” (*navāṅgavṛttikṛt*). His importance for later Śvetāmbaras can be gauged by the vigour with which the two main subsects, the Kharatara Gaccha and the Tapā Gaccha, attempted to fit him into their respective lineages.⁴³

Abhayadeva was appointed to the rank of *sūri*, that is, a senior teacher authorised to interpret the scriptures, in 1063 and this also appears to have been the date when he embarked upon his ambitious commentarial enterprise. Ignoring the first two *aṅga* scriptures, the *Ācāra* and the *Sūtrakṛta*, upon which Śīlāṅka had already produced famous *vṛttis*, Abhayadeva commenced with the third *aṅga*, the *Sthāna*, which contains an extremely wide range of subject matter, and produced what is probably his most valuable commentary.⁴⁴ In his introduction and concluding *praśasti* to this work, Abhayadeva provides some interesting remarks on the factors which had prompted his task. He describes how for some reason there had been no previous exegetical activity upon the *Sthānāṅga* so that, despite feelings of inadequacy, he had been emboldened, on gaining the permission of his senior contemporaries, to undertake a commentary upon it, consulting both the work of qualified scholars of the past and the resources of his own intellect.⁴⁵ Abhayadeva acknowledges that there are mistakes (*kṣūṇāṇi*) in his *vṛtti*, the reasons for which, apart from his self-deprecatingly avowed lack of learning, are illuminating. They include the absence of a proper teacher lineage (*satsampradāya*) – an “interpretative community,” in other words – and the appropriate understanding (*ūha*) which it could bring to bear

upon the text, the multiplicity of recensions (*vācanā*) of the scriptures, the corrupt nature of available manuscripts and the general difficulty of the *sūtra* which had led to disagreement about its meaning.⁴⁶

These brief remarks by Abhayadeva provide corroboration of matters that other slightly later Jain writers were to deprecate, most notably the erosion of qualified authority to interpret the scriptures and enact their requirements.⁴⁷ They also provide the necessary background to understanding the traditional hagiographies of Abhayadeva. There are six significant examples known to me. Although the two earliest were composed very near to each other in time, it is not easy to establish whether they derive from a common source, since they were produced to serve different purposes. The version written by Jinapāla in 1248 is intended to demonstrate how Abhayadeva participated within the lineage of the Kharatara Gaccha and discomfited its temple-dwelling opponents,⁴⁸ while the version of Prabhācandra, composed in 1277, lacks any strong sectarian bias and instead identifies Abhayadeva as one of a number of eminent Jain teachers over a period of one thousand years.⁴⁹ Shorter accounts of Abhayadeva's life are also to be found in three Kharatara Gaccha sources, the latest dating from the eighteenth century,⁵⁰ and in the thirteenth century *Purātanaprabandhasaṃgraha*, whose version does not vary substantially from that of Prabhācandra.⁵¹ As Prabhācandra's version (PC) is both the most detailed and most self-contained, it seems best to use this as the basis for discussion, adducing material from the Kharatara Gaccha accounts where necessary.

After a description (PC, verses 4–100) of the defeat by Jineśvara Sūri of the temple-dwelling monks in the court of Durlabha at Patan in 1021, the establishment of an teacher lineage based on scripturally prescribed types of monastic lodging (*vasatiparamparā*) and the subsequent appointment of Abhayadeva as a *sūri*, Prabhācandra continues:

At that time, because of the difficult situation of the region due to the depredations caused by famine, the doctrine was disrupted (*siddhāntas truṭim ayāsīt*) and the commentaries (*vṛttayaḥ*) disappeared. What scriptural texts (*sūtram*) survived (*iṣat sthitam*) then became uncultivated ground (*khilam*) in which the meaning of the regional (*deśya*) words they contained was difficult to understand even for the wise. Then, one night, the tutelary goddess of the Jain doctrine, after making obeisance, spoke tirelessly to the master Abhayadeva, the lord of monks, who was staying in a religiously sanctioned lodging (*dharmasthāna*),⁵² saying, "Previously the stainless (*dhautakalmaṣa*) Śīlāṅka, famous by the name Koṭyācārya,⁵³ composed a commentary on each of the eleven (surviving) aṅga texts but, apart from the two commentaries (on the *Ācārāṅga* and the *Sūtrakṛtāṅga*), they disappeared because of the malign influence of the times.⁵⁴ So make an effort (in respect of composing new commentaries) in order to favour the Jain community."

Then the *sūri* replied, "Mother, how can I, who am slow-witted and foolish and whose mind is incapable of even considering the works (*grantha*) composed

by Sudharman, (do this) ? The ancients have shown that if any incorrect (*utsūtra*) scriptural interpretation is made, then there is great obtaining of the stain (*kalmaṣa*) which brings endless wandering through rebirth. However, your command cannot be disobeyed, so tell me what I am to do". Because he was confused as to his course of action, he did not receive an (immediate?) answer. The goddess (eventually) said, "I speak (now) after reflecting upon your suitability for examining the meaning of the doctrine. So consider this. Whenever your mind experiences doubt (while composing the commentaries), I will always go (to the continent of Mahāvīdeha) and consult the tīrthaṅkara Sīmandhara. So be confident. Undertake this task and do not feel any doubt about it. I will come as soon as you think of me. I give a solemn undertaking about this at your feet." Having heard this, Abhayadeva began that task, although it was difficult, and started an *ācāmla* fast which was to end with the completion of the work.⁵⁵ Then he completed the commentaries (*vṛttayaḥ*) on the nine *aṅgas* and the goddess fulfilled the promise which she had made before. When the commentaries had been checked by eminent scriptural specialists (*śrutadhara*), then senior laymen began the copying of manuscripts" (PC, verses 101–114).

At this juncture the goddess provides an expensive ornament which is bought by the king in Patan, thus enabling further large scale copying of manuscripts and the gifting of them to Abhayadeva (PC, verses 115–127). "So the commentaries on the nine *aṅgas* written by Abhayadeva circulated and were keys to the lock (*tālakuñcikā*) of the correct inner meaning (*iṣṭatattva*) (of the scriptures) which had been taught by Sudharman" (PC, verse 128).⁵⁶

Prabhācandra continues by describing how Abhayadeva, through fasting, lack of sleep and intense exertion while working on his commentaries, was afflicted with a skin disease which was popularly ascribed to punishment for his incorrect interpretation of the scriptures. Eventually, the tutelary deity Dharaṇendra appears to the commentator and reveals to him the means to locate a lost image of Pārśva, the curing of his illness being linked to his composition of a devotional hymn in honour of the tīrthaṅkara.⁵⁷

The Kharatara Gaccha hagiographies have a rather different emphasis. According to Jinapāla, the goddess came to Abhayadeva to inform him that the disease which he had already contracted could be cured by remedying the "defects (in the understanding of) the nine sūtras" (? *nava sūtrakukkūṭikā*),⁵⁸ and that this could further be effected by locating the lost image of Pārśva at Cambay. Jinapāla describes how Abhayadeva, after his return to Patan, wrote his commentary in a lodging place (*vasati*) in the Karaḍihaṭṭi district of the city, thus linking him with the central event in early Kharatara Gaccha history, for it was there that Jineśvara Sūri had stayed subsequent to his great debate with the temple-dwelling monks in Durlabha's darbār.⁵⁹ As in Prabhācandra's version, Abhayadeva's exegetical difficulties are resolved with the aid of

the tīrthaṅkara Sīmandhara, this time mediated by four goddesses who fly to the continent of Mahāvideha to consult him.⁶⁰

Two important narrative themes can be seen in the hagiographies of Abhayadeva: his contraction of leprosy, or some such disease, either before or after writing his scriptural commentary and the role of the tīrthaṅkara Sīmandhara in assisting in exegesis.

In Prabhācandra's version, Abhayadeva's ailment is the result of a combination of exhaustion and his exiguous dietary régime undertaken in the course of producing his commentary, while one of the Kharatara Gaccha sources ascribes it to the fruition of some sort of negative karma.⁶¹ The later Kharatara writers combine these explanations and claim that Abhayadeva originally fell ill because of a dietary penance imposed by his teacher as expiation for a lapse in correct behaviour in preaching when he had overstimulated his audience through use of the *rasa* technique of traditional Indian aesthetics.⁶² The motif of suffering from leprosy and other such afflictions as a result of previous actions or through fasting is common in Jainism, with the universal emperor Sanātkumāra and the princes Kaṇḍarīka and Puṇḍarīka being famous examples of both possibilities.⁶³ Jain poets, including Prabhācandra, also seem to have been largely responsible for the development of the famous story of the Hindu poet Mayūra who became free from leprosy after praising Sūrya, the god of the sun.⁶⁴ In the particular case of Prabhācandra's account of Abhayadeva, there seems to be intended a parallel between the state of his bodily (*aṅga*) health and his production of commentary on the nine *aṅga* texts, and physical cure and retrieval of scriptural meaning can here be regarded as hagiographically linked.

For both Jinapāla and Prabhācandra, the two main hagiographers, an important element in validating Abhayadeva's exegetical activity is the connecting of him to elevated sources of Jain authority and his achievement is presented by them as not far short of that of the gaṇadharas, the disciples of Mahāvīra who successively redacted the scriptures.⁶⁵ Of most marked significance in this respect is the association of Abhayadeva's commentary, or at least the solving of difficulties within it, with the tīrthaṅkara Sīmandhara who is, according to standard Jain tradition from approximately the beginning of the medieval period, currently living and preaching in the parallel continent of Mahāvideha.⁶⁶

At the conclusion of an exemplary paper delineating the various components of the mythology of the future Buddha Maitreya, Padmanabh Jaini has drawn attention to a comparable Jain tradition concerning the future tīrthaṅkara at the beginning of the next world era (*utsarpiṇī*), whose name is Mahāpadma.⁶⁷ Although there is much data scattered

around Jain literature delineating the names and careers of future tīrthaṅkaras in general, Mahāpadma's interest to devotees always seems to have been comparatively restricted and he has now, and apparently had in the past, no significant part to play in practical religiosity.⁶⁸ Indeed, it would be most awkward were he required to provide some sort of devotional focus, for he is currently languishing in hell working out the consequences of negative karma accumulated in previous existences. In fact, it is Sīmandhara, the tīrthaṅkara of Mahāvideha, who represents a closer Jain parallel to Maitreya. Of the four categories Jan Nattier has posited as typical of the various ways in which Maitreya has been represented throughout Buddhist civilisation in Asia, that of "there/now," in the sense of the future Buddha living in his Tuṣita heaven and yet in some way being accessible "at this very moment" to the faithful, as most famously in the case of the great Yogācāra teacher Asaṅga, seems to correspond reasonably closely to the role medieval Jainism assigned to Sīmandhara.⁶⁹ Although Nattier characterises contact with Maitreya as the result of mystical or visionary but nonetheless direct experience, while the Śvetāmbara Jain sources suggest that of those not actually (re)born in the continent of Mahāvideha only goddesses could have immediate access to Sīmandhara,⁷⁰ there is a clear point of contact between the two figures in a common role of helpers and inspirers of scholars and interpreters of the doctrine.⁷¹

However, for our purposes, the most noteworthy point that emerges from the hagiographies is the centrality of scriptural commentary. The two main versions of Abhayadeva's life suggest that the real danger to the Jain community was perceived as lying not so much in the loss of the scriptures themselves (Prabhācandra makes clear that there were in existence at the time specialists familiar with their wording) as in the disappearance, whether from the effects of institutional disruption through famine or a decline in scholarly standards within the Jain ascetic community, of the commentarial tradition which enabled the scriptures to be understood.⁷² According to Prabhācandra, the problem was unconnected with doctrinal complexity but instead resulted from the often obscure Prākṛit in which the sūtras were written. While his reference to difficult regional (*deśī*) words in the texts in part reflects the statements of contemporary, sometimes secular Prākṛit writers who express doubts about the ability of their audience to cope with the lexical exotica which had been a stylistic feature of Mahārāṣṭrī Prākṛit poetry since the time of Hāla's *Sattasaī*,⁷³ there does exist evidence that the Jain scriptures had become increasingly inaccessible from the early medieval period.⁷⁴ Thus, Prabhācandra can describe them as being

uncultivated ground when lacking the supporting exegetical material with which they could be interpreted.

The hagiographies of Abhayadeva Sūri mirror the gradual development within medieval Jainism of a process by which commentary gradually came to be viewed as *āgama*, as a necessary component part of authoritative scripture as a whole, rather than being merely a secondary, ancillary element. That Abhayadeva himself was aware of the indispensability of commentary can be gathered from his remarks, which echo and borrow from an earlier Jain exegete, Jinabhadra Gaṇin (sixth century CE), about the derivation of the word “sūtra.” After giving the standard etymologies of the word from *sūtra*, “thread” and *sūc*, “indicate” (i.e., “sūtra is that by which meanings are threaded or indicated”), along with *sūkta*, “well spoken,” in the sense of being well-established, inclusive and well-enunciated, Abhayadeva claims that “sūtra” can also be derived from *supta*, “asleep” on the grounds that scripture is effectively unawakened when without a commentary.⁷⁵

DHARMASĀGARA ON THE NECESSITY OF SCRIPTURAL COMMENTARY

Some five hundred years later, towards the end of the sixteenth century, Dharmasāgara, one of late medieval Jainism’s most significant intellectuals, also referred to the analogy of the inefficacious somnolence of the sūtra which is without accompanying exegesis and developed the point still further by arguing for what is effectively the equal status of scripture and commentary.⁷⁶ By his own account, Dharmasāgara had a taste (*ruci*) for establishing Jain orthodoxy and confounding sectarians and all his major writings evince a near obsessive preoccupation with matters of correct ritual practice and lineage, consistently promoting the interests of the Tapā Gaccha, the lineage to which he belonged.⁷⁷ The *Pravacanaparīkṣā* (“Examination of the Doctrine”; henceforth PP), composed in 1575, is the only work of Dharmasāgara’s to have been consulted in any way seriously by scholars, but it has generally been utilised as little more than a source of chronological and doxological information concerning Jain sectarianism. Yet it is unquestionably Dharmasāgara who has most to tell us about the attitudes of a very significant strand of Jainism towards the question of scripture and exegesis, his view on the relationship between the two being most strikingly expressed in the claim that an individual reading a sūtra without a commentary is, as it were, attempting to open a locked adamant casket with his teeth.⁷⁸

Dharmasāgara's overall approach to the Jain sūtras is similar to that of fundamentalists everywhere towards sacred literature, in that he asserts the impossibility of their containing contradictions. The sūtras are based on meaning which is of unified form because the tīrthaṅkaras who enunciated it were (and will be in the future) in a state in which all negative karma has been eliminated (*kṣāyikabhāva*). However, this meaning will inevitably manifest itself in various ways, because both those who transmit it, the disciples of the tīrthaṅkaras, and those who hear it are in the nature of things of disparate attainments at particular times and situated in differing stages on the spiritual path. Those differences which do occur in the sūtras, such as the occasionally conflicting information offered about the tīrthaṅkaras themselves, can therefore be ascribed to the varying karmic states (*kṣāyopaśamika*) of the redactors and those who succeeded them. As a necessary result, scriptural texts on their own should not be regarded as constituting and providing fixed, settled doctrine (*siddhānta*), but instead, and in accordance with the manifold ways in which sūtras manifest themselves externally, they should be conjoined with commentary in which all statements of the root-text are interpreted with as many connotations as possible according to the exegetical prescriptions of the hermeneutic manual, the *Anuyogadvārāṇi*.⁷⁹ Because there are also often key points of interest, relating to, for example, Mahāvīra's wife Yaśodā or the wording of the confessional formula to atone for the unwitting destruction of life-forms while walking (*īryāpathikī*), about which the sūtras say nothing,⁸⁰ Dharmasāgara therefore invokes a broad exegetical principle which holds that "a commentary is another text belonging to a text" (*granthasya granthāntaram tīkā*) and through which he can justify the status of commentary as continuing and amplifying a sūtra by supplying information otherwise not accessible within it.⁸¹

In the PP, Dharmasāgara gives a number of bovine analogies to convey how scripture lacks efficacy in terms of its own nature alone and must instead have its meaning extracted from it through skilful and qualified interpretation. Glossing a story about a cow, its calves and a milker, he explains how the milch-cow is the sūtra and the calves are the commentary (in this case, the *niryukti* variety). Just as the calves predispose the cow to give milk, so the *niryukti* makes the sūtra disposed to yielding up its meaning. The man in the story who skilfully milks the cow is the commentator who is familiar with the canonically sanctioned modes of explanation and analysis (*anuyoga*).⁸² On the other hand, a person who undertakes to teach on the basis of scriptural texts without the necessary qualifications is, as it were, trying to milk an emaciated

cow without feeding it grass,⁸³ while those heretics who base their interpretation of Jainism on the sūtras alone are described as trying to drink milk from a dead cow.⁸⁴

Dharmasāgara's most sustained treatment of the methods of scriptural hermeneutics in Jainism is to be found in his treatise "One Hundred Verses on Rules for Interpreting the Sūtras" (*Sūtravyākhyānavidhiśataka*; henceforth SVVŚ).⁸⁵ This work derives much of its hermeneutic technique from the *Anuyogadvārāṇi*. In common with it, the SVVŚ regards the *Āvaśyaka Sūtra* as the model for scripture as a whole and commences by asserting the primacy of its opening portion, the Sāmāyika, over all other sūtras.⁸⁶ Dharmasāgara then goes on to refer to an old, canonical list of qualities, possession of which serves to define a proper scriptural text,⁸⁷ the first two of which, "small extent" (*appaggaṃtha*; Sanskrit *alpagantha*) and "voluminous meaning" (*mahattha*; Sanskrit *mahārtha*) are of major importance for establishing the necessity of commentary, for "by mentioning these two qualities the various types of commentary (*niryukti*, *bhāṣya*, *cūrṇi* etc.) are to be understood, since the commentaries constitute the meaning of the sūtras (*teṣām eva sūtrārtharūpatvāt*)."⁸⁸

That correct interpretation of the Jain scriptures is dependent upon properly constituted teacher-pupil succession is established by Dharmasāgara by reference to the concept of *adhikāra*. This well known term, whose earliest occurrence is in Vedic literature where it has the sense of both the ability and the desire to recite the Veda and is usually translated by "right" or "authority," has recently been shown by Lariviere to have broader connotations corresponding to "responsibility" and "obligation" which fit well with the standard Jain view of a teacher's *adhikāra* as not merely entitling him to interpret the scriptures but obliging him to do so as well.⁸⁹ For Dharmasāgara, the teacher's *adhikāra* to interpret the meaning of the sūtras lies in his ascetic restraint. But this *adhikāra* is twofold, since it also requires a skilful and competent pupil, that is, one who has received proper ascetic initiation, to hear and understand the correct meaning expounded by such a qualified teacher. The necessity of this interpretative interchange ensures that Dharmasāgara can dispose of a whole range of Jain sectarian groups on the grounds of their being inspired by self-appointed lay or quasi-monastic teachers who have no entitlement to initiate followers. Dharmasāgara warns that the destruction of Jainism will come about through the promulgation of what he calls *pustakasiddhānta*, a version of the religion which is based on the sūtras alone, or some sort of reworking (*anuvāda*) of them, and does not derive from the exegesis carried out by the only

authorised Jain “interpretative community,” that is to say, properly appointed ascetic teachers and their initiated pupils.⁹⁰ Jainism as a soteriological path (*tīrtha*) is based on the entire corpus of scriptural writings (*śruta*), which includes, according to Dharmasāgara, all the varieties of commentarial literature, and this corpus in turn derives from Mahāvīra himself. Rejection of commentary, then, effectively means rejection of the authority of the twenty-fourth tīrthāṅkara.⁹¹

The genre of commentary with which Dharmasāgara is particularly preoccupied is the *niryukti*. However, it is not the antiquity of these texts or their supposed authorship by the ancient teacher Bhadrabāhu which cause him to ascribe so much importance to them. Rather, it is the fact that the *niryuktis* describe or allude to early heretics who are not otherwise mentioned in any detail in the sūtras, apart from mere reference in the *Sthānāṅga Sūtra* to their names and doctrines, the latter unintelligible without supporting explanation. All the developed Jain traditions about the ancient “concealors of the doctrine” (*nihnava*), one of whom, Jamāli, is supposed to have been related to Mahāvīra himself, derive from the commentary literature and there is no alternative evidence for them.⁹² It may be that these commentarial stories are in part a retrospective attempt both to flesh out the history of the early Jain community and to identify and tighten up specific areas of doctrinal difficulty, but there is no question that for Dharmasāgara they represent genuine evidence of the dangers that have continually beset Jainism throughout its history and provide supporting authority for the attacks upon medieval sectarian modes of Jainism mounted by him throughout his writings.⁹³

So Dharmasāgara can use such precedents to argue that a later Jain sect, the Paurṇamīyakas, which dates from around the beginning of the twelfth century and attempted to redate the ritually important full-moon day, had been in fact already described with opprobrium in the early commentary literature.⁹⁴ The heretics whom Dharmasāgara seems to have regarded as the most pernicious, the anti-iconic Loṅkā (fifteenth century) and his immediate followers, could also be controverted by reference to the manifold references in the *niryuktis* to temples and images and, in particular, their foundation and installation by Bharata, the first universal emperor (*cakravartin*) of this world age. Loṅkā’s unwillingness to acknowledge such unimpeachable commentarial sources demonstrates his general rejection of authority within the Jain community and the fact that neither he nor his followers can be regarded as Jains.⁹⁵

Dharmasāgara's position, then, is that scripture lacks any possible autonomous existence without commentarial explanation and that to reject commentary on the sūtras places one in the old scriptural category of "enemy of meaning."⁹⁶ Sūtra and *niryukti* must be regarded as interpenetrating each other so that there is effectively no difference between the two, and acceptance of the authority of a sūtra of necessity entails acceptance of the authority of the commentary attached to it.⁹⁷ If this is so, then an obvious objection for an opponent, or indeed a critically-minded scholar, to raise is the status of the many interpolated (*prakṣipta*) verses found in the *niryuktis*.

Medieval Jain scholars had always been aware that the *niryukti* layer of commentary had from an early period been interspersed with verses apparently interpolated from another layer of Prākṛit commentary, the *bhāṣyas*, as can be clearly seen from the fact that manuscript tradition assigned different numberings to these interpolation.⁹⁸ However, Dharmasāgara regards any questions of possible inauthenticity and a consequent watering-down of the authority of the Prākṛit verse commentaries through extensive interpolation as immaterial. He points to the fact that the *Bhagavatī Sūtra*, the most extensive scriptural exposition of Jain metaphysics, has incorporated huge portions of other canonical scriptures without any diminution of its authority. Furthermore, Dharmasāgara claims somewhat circularly, since the Jain community depends on the totality of scriptural tradition (*āgama*), it would hardly have approved any interpolations contrary to that. Because interpolations have been made by the great teachers of the past such as Bhadrabāhu and, subsequently, Vajrasvāmin (second century CE?), who have the authority (*adhikāra*) to do so, the scriptures and commentary upon them should be regarded as having been strengthened by the process.⁹⁹

As has been mentioned above, Dharmasāgara follows Abhayadeva Sūri's commentary on the Sthānāṅga Sūtra and proposes multiple etymologies for the term "sūtra" (from *sūc*, "indicate," *sūkta*, "well spoken" and *supta*, "asleep"). This polyvalency, involving three different meanings, is not, he argues, in any way inappropriate, since a sūtra is defined precisely by its voluminous nature (*mahārthatā*) and multi-dimensionality (*sarvatomukhatva*).¹⁰⁰ Only full commentarial explication can bring this out. If a sūtra did not have this necessary amplification, it would quite simply not be a sūtra.¹⁰¹ As nothing doctrinally significant is described in a commentary which does not also occur in a sūtra, viewing commentary as authoritative and equivalent to the word of the tīrthaṅkaras is for Dharmasāgara the same as possessing the central Jain religious attitude of *samyaktva*, or correct disposition. *Mithyātva*,

or false belief, comes about when one does not believe every syllable preached by the Jinas.¹⁰² Unfortunately, heretics fail to appreciate that inference, rather than mere literalist reliance on a root text, is often required in order to see the authority of commentary, as a result of which their sūtra-derived standpoints are based on merely a crude, transactional (*vyavahāra*) model of reality.¹⁰³

CONCLUDING REMARKS: SCRIPTURE, COMMENTARY AND ŚVETĀMBARA JAINISM

The production by Abhayadeva Sūri of his commentaries upon the nine *aṅgas* appears to have been regarded by contemporaries as a defining doctrinal point for medieval Śvetāmbara Jainism, the moment when apparent inexorable decline was arrested and a standard for correct understanding and practice reconfirmed. Ironically, the danger which Dharmasāgara saw himself as combatting at the end of the sixteenth century was not inability to understand the sūtras but an all too eager desire to read them and attempt to put them into practice. In rejecting the literalist lay-inspired approach to scripture which ignored the guiding assistance of authoritative ascetic-derived commentary, effectively the only instrument by which heresy could be kept at bay, and in advocating in hardline fashion the centrality of correct teacher succession, Dharmasāgara clearly believed, like the desert fathers of early Christianity, that only those qualified by virtue of their spiritual practice were entitled to interpret the scripture.¹⁰⁴ To invoke more recent Christian history, Dharmasāgara might well have recognised a similar situation in respect to sacred texts in the European Reformation, of which he was a near contemporary, where an original reforming doctrine of "*sola scriptura*" was soon counterbalanced by the understanding that scripture had to be protected from maladroit interpretation by various exegetical institutions, thus ensuring that in the last resort it could and should only be fully understood by the specialist.¹⁰⁵

As Abhayadeva Sūri himself pointed out, lack of a commentary is not sufficient in itself to establish the non-canoncity of a sūtra.¹⁰⁶ It is also obvious enough from examining manuscript catalogues that by no means all copies of the Jain scriptures were transmitted in the late medieval period with accompanying exegesis. During the twentieth century, a variety of perspectives about the manner in which scripture should be presented have been present within the Jain community and the question has sometimes led to serious tension within the dominant Śvetāmbara subsect, the Tapā Gaccha. So, one party, associated with the renowned

preacher Rāmcandra Sūri (1895–1991), has argued that the scriptures should not be published at all, a view which found many partisans, while the other party followed the views of Sāgarānanda Sūri (1875–1950), celebrated as “the uplifter of the scriptural tradition” (*āgamoddhāraka*), who advocated the publication of the scriptures but along with the old *niryukti* and *vṛtti* commentaries.¹⁰⁷ However, both these apparently mutually exclusive standpoints can be regarded as tradition-inspired and as relating to the prevention of totally unrestricted access to scripture, with Rāmcandra reiterating the claims of exegetical exclusivity centring around oral exposition by qualified senior monks and Sāgarānanda echoing the views of his lineage “predecessor” Dharmasāgara about the absolute necessity of commentary.¹⁰⁸

More recently, another perspective has emerged with the founding of the “Jaina Āgama Series” in 1968 to publish critical editions of the scriptures. Editorial activity is being carried out by monastic and lay scholars, with no western input, and reflects modern academic preconceptions, according to which religious traditions do not merely have sacred books but scientifically validated editions of sacred books which can facilitate unmediated access to a tradition’s “original message.”¹⁰⁹ Yet, even in a critical enterprise of this nature, the guiding hand of the medieval exegetes can not be avoided. To mention two examples: the text of perhaps the most important Jain scripture, the *Āvaśyaka Sūtra*, does not exist, as its editors realised, in any manuscript independent of surrounding layers of commentary from which it has to be extracted,¹¹⁰ while the edition of the *Sthānāṅga Sūtra* has been stated by its editor to be ultimately dependent on the readings provided in Abhayadeva Sūri’s commentary.¹¹¹

Wilfred Cantwell Smith has recently suggested that the contemporary western world’s understanding of the category of scripture is outmoded and that, instead, we should now approach scripture as a human activity, realising that it is the manner in which people treat and react to a particular text which renders it sacred.¹¹² Although Smith holds that part of this process will entail that conceptual boundaries between types of texts will become less fixed, he demurs at whether the question of what he calls “the widespread scripture/commentary phenomenon” can be settled, merely pointing in passing to the fact that some traditions have drawn less sharp distinctions between sacred text and exegesis than others.¹¹³ Nonetheless, Smith’s point is well made. Critical scholars and advocates of an atemporal literalism alike will always call for a “back to the scriptures” approach, but those who would wish to consider at the deepest level Jainism, or any religious tradition which involves

sacred texts, would do well to reflect on the extent to which religions as encountered today should be deemed as being the product not so much of their scriptures as of their adherents' exegetical activities.

NOTES

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¹ See Colette Caillat and Ravi Kumar, *The Jain Cosmology*, Basle/Paris/New Delhi: Ravi Kumar, 1981. In some late medieval Jain representations, this *lokapuruṣa* is depicted as female. Cf. Friedhelm Hardy, *The Religious Culture of India: Power, Love and Wisdom*, Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 23, who refers to the Jain "World Woman". For body symbolism in religious traditions in general, see Jane Marie Law (ed.), *Religious Reflections on the Human Body*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995.

Note that in this paper "Jain" signifies "Śvetāmbara image-worshipping (*mūrtipūjaka*) Jain", unless otherwise specified.

² Dharmasāgara, *Pravacanaparīkṣā* 8.112, Surat: Ṛṣabhdevji Keśarmalji Śvetāmbar Saṁsthā, 1937.

³ See Paul Dundas, *The Jains*, London and New York: Routledge, 1992, p. 64 and Suzuko Ohira, *A Study of the Bhagavati Sūtra*, Ahmedabad: Prakrit Text Society, 1994, p. 31. For a seventeenth century example, see Yaśovijaya, *Dharmaparīkṣā*, ed. Vijayabhuvanabhānu Sūri, Mumbai: Śrī Amdherī Gujarātī Jain Saṅgh, v.s. 2041, p. 116.

⁴ *Śrī Nami Jina Stavan*, verse 8, in *Ānandghan Caubīsī*, ed. Bhaṁvarlāl Nāhtā, Jaipur: Prakṛt Bhāratī Akādamī, 1989, p. 149: *cūrṇi bhāṣya sūtra niryukti vṛtti parampar anubhav re / samay puruṣnām aṁg kahyā e je ched te durbhav re*. This verse is quoted by Sādhvī Sudarśanāśrī, *Ānandghan kā Rahasyavād*, Vārāṇasī: Pārśvanāth Vidyāśram Śodh Saṁsthān, 1984, p. 54.

⁵ See Dharmasāgara, *Pravacanaparīkṣā* 8.54-5. For Loṅkā, see Dundas, *The Jains*, pp. 211-15. Another Śvetāmbara roughly contemporary with Loṅkā, Pārśvacandra Sūri, also seems to have rejected the authority of scriptural commentary, yet remained an image-worshipper. This at any rate is one of the major criticisms of him by Dharmasāgara, expressed at *Pravacanaparīkṣā* 11.5.

⁶ Jayācārya, *Bhagavati-Jor*, two volumes, ed. Ācārya Tulsī and Yuvācārya Mahāprajña, Lādñūm, 1981 and 1986. Compare also the ritually important *Kalpa Sūtra* which is understood by Jains to consist of both Prakṛit root text and Sanskrit and vernacular commentary. See John E. Cort, "Śvetāmbar Mūrtipūjak Jain Scripture in a Performative Context", in Jeffrey R. Timm (ed.), *Texts in Context: Traditional Hermeneutics in South Asia*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992, p. 178 and Dundas, *The Jains*, pp. 57-9.

⁷ Kendall W. Folkert, *Scripture and Commentary: Collected Essays on the Jains*, ed. John E. Cort, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993, p. 68.

⁸ John B. Henderson, *Scripture, Canon and Commentary: A Comparison of Confucian and Western Exegesis*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991. Henderson suggests (p. 65) that the origins of commentary may plausibly be traced back to the interpretation of omens, oracles and dreams in various ancient and preliterate societies. In this context, it is noteworthy that Trawick compares the Tamil exegete with whom she studied Māṇikkavācakar's *Tirukkōvaiyār* to a spirit medium. See Margaret Trawick, "Ambiguity in the Oral Exegesis of a Sacred Text: *Tirukkōvaiyār*

(or, The Guru in the Garden, Being an Account of a Tamil Informant's Responses to Homesteading in Central New York State)", *Cultural Anthropology*, 3, 1988, p. 318.

⁹ Jonathan Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990, p. 55.

¹⁰ A notable recent exception to this is Francis X. Clooney, S. J., *Theology after Vedanta: An Experiment in Comparative Theology*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993, where full recognition is given to Advaita Vedānta's status as a commentarial tradition.

¹¹ Cf., for example, William Smyth, "Controversy in a Tradition of Commentary: The Academic Legacy of al-Sakkākī's Miftāḥ Al-'Ulūm", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 112, 1992, pp. 588–97.

¹² Grace G. Burford, *Desire, Death and Goodness: The Conflict of Ultimate Values in Theravāda Buddhism*, New York/Bern/Frankfurt am Main/Paris: Peter Lang, 1991.

¹³ Francis X. Clooney, S. J., *Thinking Ritually: Rediscovering the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā of Jaimini*, Vienna: Publications of the De Nobili Research Library, 1990.

¹⁴ See Norman Cutler, "Interpreting Tirukkural: The Role of Commentary in the Creation of a Text", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 112, 1992, pp. 549–66 and Philip Lutgendorf, "The View from the Ghats: Traditional Exegesis of a Hindu Epic", *Journal of Asian Studies*, 48, 1989, pp. 272–88. Compare also the collection of essays in Jeffrey R. Timm (ed.), *Texts in Context: Traditional Hermeneutics in South Asia*.

¹⁵ Thomas B. Coburn, *Encountering the Goddess: A Translation of the Devī-Māhātmya and a Study of its Interpretation*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991, p. 119.

¹⁶ As is well known, the validity of authorial intention has proved highly controversial in recent western literary criticism. However, the necessity of taking intention into account is to some extent reemerging in critical discourse. See Annabel Patterson, "Intention", in Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin (ed.), *Critical Terms for Literary Discourse*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990, pp. 135–46. In the South Asian context, John Powers, *Hermeneutics and Tradition in the Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra*, Leiden/New York/Köln: E.J. Brill, 1993, pp. 11–12, note 22 and p. 142, note 5, asserts that Buddhist hermeneutics is predicated upon the belief that it is possible to determine, or present, plausible theories about an author's original intention. Compare George C. Adams, Jr., *The Structure and Meaning of Bādarāyaṇa's Brahma Sūtras (A Translation and Analysis of Adhyāya 1)*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1993, p. 3, whose "concern is not with what Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, or other theologians have said about the Brahma Sūtras, but what the Brahma Sūtras themselves say", and also Christopher Key Chapple, "Reading Patañjali without Vyāsa: A Critique of Four Yoga Sūtra Passages", *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 62, 1994, p. 87, for the possibility of insight into "Patañjali's original intention" when the *Yoga Sūtras* are read in sequence, without commentarial intervention.

¹⁷ See Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (ed.), *Buddhist Hermeneutics*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1988 and also Donald S. Lopez, Jr., *The Heart Sūtra Explained: Indian and Tibetan Commentaries*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998, p. 13 for varying motivations prompting commentary on a famous Mahāyāna Buddhist text.

¹⁸ See Charles Hallisey, "Recent Work on Buddhist Ethics", *Religious Studies Review*, 18, 1992, p. 280, for observations on Burford (op. cit.). Wendy Doniger and Brian K. Smith, *The Laws of Manu*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991, pp. lxx–lxxi, although respectful towards medieval commentators, argue for their obfuscation of the original "openness" of the *Manusmṛiti*.

¹⁹ The central Digambara Jain scriptures, the *Ṣaṭkhaṇḍāgama* and the *Kaṣāyapāhuḍa* are comprised of root-text and commentary. See Dundas, *The Jains*, pp. 55–57. In the Pāli canon of Theravāda Buddhism, the *Niddesa*, an old commentary on part of the *Suttanipāta*, seems to have been deemed canonical as a result of its antiquity. Certain explanatory texts in Mahāyāna Buddhism have had canonical status popularly attributed to them. See José Ignacio Cabezón, *Buddhism and Language: A Study of Indo-Tibetan Scholasticism*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994, p. 95.

²⁰ See Dundas, *The Jains*, p. 53.

²¹ Dalsukh Mālvanīyā, Hindi introduction to *Niśītha-Sūtra*, ed. Amar Chand and Kanhaiya Lal, Delhi/Varanasi: Bharatiya Vidya Prakashan, 1982, p. 51.

²² Walther Schubring and Jozef Deleu, *Studien zum Mahānisīha: Kapitel 1–5*, Hamburg: de Gruyter, 1963, p. 25.

²³ See Bhadrāṅkaravijaya, *Pratimā Pūjan*, Madras: Svādhyāya Saṅgh, 1991, pp. 152–3 for a modern statement of this. According to Dharmasāgara, *Sūtravyākhyānavidhiśataka*, ed. Muni Lābhasāgara, Āgamodhāraka Granthamālā Vol. 17, Kapaḍvaṃj, v.s. 2018, verse 77, “the Prakrit commentaries enunciated by the Jinas which have now disappeared (in fact became) the canonical sūtras of extended meaning. Otherwise there would have been disappearance of the meaning of the sūtras as a whole” (*nijjuttibhāsacunnī jiniṃdabhāṇiā ya jāu vucchinā/tā vittharatthasuttā annaha sut-tatthavuccheo*). This statement is based on Dharmasāgara’s broad standpoint, to be discussed below, that the scriptural commentaries constitute the meaning of the sūtras which are themselves only words.

²⁴ See George D. Bond, “Theravada Buddhism and the Aims of Buddhist Studies”, in A. K. Narain (ed.), *Studies in History of Buddhism*, Delhi: B. R. Pub. Corp., 1980, pp. 59–60 and the same author’s “The Word of the Buddha”: the *Tipiṭaka* and its Interpretation in Theravada Buddhism, Colombo: Gunasena, 1982, pp. 101–2. According to the *Atthasālinī* of Buddhaghosa, Mahākassapa, one of the Buddha’s greatest disciples, provided an extemporaneous commentary on the Abhidhamma section of the *Tipiṭaka* which formed the basis for later, orthodox Mahāvihāra understanding. See Ronald M. Davidson, “An Introduction to the Standards of Scriptural Authenticity in Indian Buddhism”, in Robert E. Buswell, Jr. (ed.), *Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990, p. 304.

²⁵ *Ācārāṅga Sūtra* 1.5.6: (... *je maham abahimane, pavāṇa pavāyam jāṇijjā, sahasammaiyyāe paravāgaranenam annesim vā amti succā*). I give the text of the reprint of the Āgamodaya Samiti edition (which includes Śīlāṅka’s commentary), *Ācārāṅgasūtram and Sūtrakṛtāṅgasūtram*, reedited by Muni Jambūvijaya, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978, p. 152. Hermann Jacobi, *Jaina Sūtras*, Part One, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1884, p. 50, translates “*paravāgaranenam*” as “through the instruction of the highest”, thus following Śīlāṅka who glosses “*paraḥ tīrthakṛt tasya tena vā vyākaraṇam yathāvasthitārthaprajñāpanam āgamaḥ paravyākaraṇam tena vā jāṇiyā*”.

²⁶ See Nathmal Tatia, *Studies in Jaina Philosophy*, Varanasi: P. V. Research Institute, 1951, p. 54. Tatia points out that scripture was regarded as the virtual equivalent of the continuing physical presence of the liberating tīrthaṅkaras.

²⁷ See Tatia, *Studies in Jaina Philosophy*, p. 48. Cf. Folkert, *Scripture and Community*, p. 47, for *sūyanāna* (the Prakrit equivalent of *śrutajñāna*) coming to have the sense of “transmitted knowledge.”

²⁸ See Nathmal Tatia, introduction to Taiken Hanaki (trans.) *Aṇuogaddārāim*, Vaishali: Bihar Research Institute of Prakrit, Jainology and Ahimsa, 1970, p. vi. Note that the source of the tīrthaṅkaras’ knowledge is not *śrutajñāna* but omniscience (*kevalajñāna*) which, unlike *śrutajñāna*, is free of the occluding influence (*āvaraṇa*) of any type of karma.

²⁹ Haribhadra on *Nandisūtram*, Prakrit Text Series Vol. 10, ed. Muni Punyavijaya, Varanasi/Ahmedabad: Prakrit Text Society, 1966, p. 1: *tatrāpi śrutapradāne saty api nāvijñātārthād eva tasmād abhilaṣitārthāvāptiḥ prāninām ity atah prārabhyate 'rhadvacanānuযোগ*.

³⁰ See Nalini Balbir, *Āvaśyaka-Studien: Introduction générale et Traductions*, Alt- und Neu-Indische Studien 45,1, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1993, pp. 305–6. Balbir proposes the translation “adéquation”.

³¹ Translated by Hanaki (see note 29).

³² See Bansidhar Bhatt, *The Canonical Nikṣepa: Studies in Jaina Dialectics*, Leiden: Brill, 1978.

³³ *Āvaśyaka Nirukti*, verse 86, translated by Tatia, introduction to Hanaki, *Aṇugaddārām*, p. xxv. For a general characterisation of *nirukti*, see Balbir, *Āvaśyaka-Studien*, pp. 39–41 and for a survey of their contents, see Mohanlāl Mehtā, *Jain Sāhitya kā Bṛhad Itihās, Bhāg 3: Āgamik Vyākhyāṇ*, Vārāṇasī: Pārśvanāth Vidyāśram Śodh Saṁsthān, 1989, pp. 56–116. Traditionally, ten *niruktis* were written, although only eight have survived. It is not clear why some sūtras had *niruktis* attached to them and not others, although some sort of original notion of core canonicity was possibly involved. Dharmasāgara, *Mahāvīravijñaptidvātrīṁśikā*, in Muni Lābhasāgara (ed.) *Dharmasāgaragranthasamgrahaḥ*, Āgamoddhāraka Granthamālā Vol. 18, Kapadvanḥ: Mīthābhāi Kalyāncand Pedhī, v.s. 2018, p. 16, quotes a verse which he ascribes to the lost *Sūryaprajñapti Nirukti*, although on inspection it turns out to be *Sūtrakṛtāṅga Nirukti*, verse 125.

³⁴ Dharmasāgara, *Pravacanaparīkṣā* 8.148, p. 150, is aware of the fact that Bhadrabāhu did not write the *niruktis* as such but partly constructed them out of preexisting material.

³⁵ Nalini Balbir, “Jaina Exegetical Terminology: Pk. *vibhāsā* “Detailed Exposition””, in Rudy Smet and Kenji Watanabe (ed.), *Jain Studies in Honour of Jozef Deleu*, Tokyo: Hon-no-Tomosha, 1993, p. 67 and cf. the same author’s *Āvaśyaka-Studien*, pp. 56–63.

³⁶ Note, however, that in the early medieval period at least this was not regarded as legitimising any possible translating or rewording of the Ardhamāgadhi scriptures. I discuss this matter in a paper on Jain attitudes to Sanskrit to be included in a volume on the ideology and status of the Sanskrit language to be edited by Jan Houben.

³⁷ See, for example, *Sūtrakṛtāṅga Nirukti*, verse 3: ... *bhāve suttam iha sūyagam nāṇam* (see Jambūvijaya’s reedition of the *Sūtrakṛtāṅga Sūtra* mentioned in note 25, p. 2); Haribhadra on *Āvaśyaka Nirukti*, Bherulāl Kanaiyālāl Kothārī Dhārmik Trast, v.s. 2038, p. 16, verse 19: *sūcanāt sūtram: Śānti Sūri, Ceiyavaṁdaṇamahābhāsa*, Bombay: Jina Śāsana Ārādhana Trast, v.s. 2043, verse 18: *sūyanamettam suttam* and Jinapati Sūri on Jineśvara Sūri, *Ṣaṣṭhānakaparakarṇa*, ed. Muni Sukhasāgara, Śrījinadattasūriprācīnapustakoddhār Phand Vol. 34, Surat: Jinadattasūri Jñānbhaṁdār, 1933, 3.1: *sūtram arthaviśeṣasūcatvādīlakṣaṇam. yad uktam, sūyanamittam suttam, suiḥjai [sic] kevalo tahiṁ attho tti, jam puṇa se vakkhāṇam, āyariyā parikahanti*. For a similar etymology by the Theravādin Buddhaghosa, see W. B. Bollée, *Studien zum Sūyagaḍa 1: Die Jainas und die anderen Weltanschauungen vor die Zeitwende*, Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1977, p. 31.

³⁸ *Niśīthabhāṣya*, verse 5232, *cūrṇi: jahā egāto piṁḍāo kulālo aṇege ghaḍādirūve ghaḍeti evaṁ āyariyo egāo suttāo aṇege atthavigappe daṁseti*. See Kanhaiyalal and Amar Chand (ed.), *Nishith Sutram: Part IV*, Delhi/Varanasi: Bharatiya Vidya Prakashan, 1982, p. 30. The analogy is perhaps slightly more pointed in the Jain context where speech is viewed as a substance.

³⁹ See John E. Cort, “Śvetāmbar Mūrtipūjak Jain Scripture in a Performative Context”, p. 185 (see note 6 above) and the final section of this paper.

The content of the Jain scriptures is often characterised as being “*rahasya*”, a word which most normally means “secret” but can also correspond to “inner essence”. See, for example, Mehtā, *Jain Sāhitya kā Brhad Itihās*, p. 5, for this latter meaning. In modern North Indian vernaculars, the sense of *rahasya* can very often also be “mystical”. As the contribution by Muni Jambūvijaya to the recent volume in honour of Jozef Deleu (see note 34; pp. 1–12), there was published an article compiled on the basis of the English version of the Gujarati general introduction to the first volume of the Jaina Āgama Series (Muni Puṇyavijaya et al. ed., *Nandisuttam and Anuogaddārām*, Bombay: Śrī Mahāvīra Jaina Vidyālaya, 1968). On p. 18 of the original Gujarati version, there occurs a reference to the “*rahasyamaytā*” (i.e. “secret nature”) of one section of the scriptures, the *Chedasūtras*. This has been rendered in the English version (p. 25) as “mystical nature”, to which in the Deleu Volume version has been appended (by the editors?) in square brackets “sic”. Few texts less mystical in tone than the *Chedasūtras* could be imagined and in fact the reference to their “*rahasyamay*” nature most likely derives from the traditional view that these texts which delineate orthopraxy and law often contain exceptions to general rules about behaviour, interpretation of which had to be handled cautiously and unguided access to which was restricted. See Dundas, *The Jains*, p. 154. For the structure of the *Chedasūtras*, see Colette Caillat, “Le genre du sūtra chez les jaina”, in Nalini Balbir (ed.), *Genres Littéraires en Inde*, Presses de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1994, pp. 73–101.

⁴⁰ See Śīlāṅka, conclusion to his commentary on book one of the *Ācārāṅga Sūtra*, Jambūvijaya reedition p. 212: *kṛtvācārasya mayā tīkām yat kim api samcitam punyam/tenāpnuyāj jagad idam nirvṛtim atulām sadācaram*. See also Mehtā, *Jain Sāhitya kā Brhad Itihās*, p. 355 and p. 402, for similar statements by Malayagiri.

⁴¹ Folkert, *Scripture and Community*, p. 243. See Mehtā, *Jain Sāhitya kā Brhad Itihās*, p. 330, for the sūtras upon which Haribhadra wrote commentaries.

⁴² At the end of his commentary on chapter one of the *Ācārāṅga Sūtra* (Jambūvijaya reedition, p. 54), Śīlāṅka contextualises it as relating to real practice by describing the ascetic initiation ritual. The wording suggests that he saw himself as belonging to the Vajra *sākhā* of the Koṭika Gaṇa. According to Mehtā, *Jain Sāhitya kā Brhad Itihās*, p. 39, Śīlāṅka belonged to the Nirvṛtti Kula. At the beginning of his commentary, Śīlāṅka describes his indebtedness to an earlier explication (*vivarāṇa*) of the first chapter by Gandhahastin, for whom see Mehtā, *Jain Sāhitya kā Brhad Itihās*, p. 351.

⁴³ See Paul Dundas, “The Marginal Monk and the True Tirtha”, in Smet and Watanabe (ed.), *Jain Studies in Honour of Jozef Deleu*, p. 258. In his commentary *praśastis*, Abhayadeva describes himself as belonging to the Candra Kula, a prestigious lineage apparently dating from early medieval times which later Śvetāmbara sectarian groups attempted to incorporate into their own traditions.

⁴⁴ For a rough chronology of Abhayadeva’s commentaries, see Mehtā, *Jain Sāhitya kā Brhad Itihās*, p. 366.

⁴⁵ See the *Sthānāṅga Sūtra* with Abhayadeva’s commentary, in *Sthānāṅga Sūtram and Samavāyāṅga Sūtram*, reedited by Muni Jambūvijaya, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1985, p. 1.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 352. Abhayadeva suggests that the wise should follow that meaning which is in accord with the general tenor of Jain doctrine and make corrections accordingly.

⁴⁷ See Paul Dundas, “The Tenth Wonder: Domestication and Reform in Medieval Śvetāmbara Jainism”, *Indologica Taurinensia*, 14, 1987–8, 181–94.

⁴⁸ Jinapāla, *Yugapradhānācāryagurvāvali*, in *Kharataragaccha-Brhadgurvāvali*, ed. Jinavijaya, Simghī Jain Granthamāla Vol. 42, Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1956, pp. 6–9.

⁴⁹ *Prabhāvakacarita*, ed. Jinavijaya, *Siṃghī Jain Granthamālā* Vol. 10, Ahmedabad/Calcutta, 1940, pp. 161–66.

⁵⁰ *Vṛddhācāryaprabandhāvali*, in *Kharataragaccha-Brhadgurvāvali*, p. 90 and *Kharataragacchapattāvalīsamgraha*, ed. Jinavijaya, Calcutta, 1932, pp. 23 and 45.

⁵¹ Ed. Jinavijaya, *Siṃghī Jain Granthamālā* Vol. 2, Calcutta, 1936, pp. 95–6. Cf. also Merutuṅga's *Prabandhacintāmaṇi*, trans. Charles Tawney, Calcutta Asiatic Society, 1901, p. 133, for a very brief account of the story put in the context of the biography of the alchemist Nāgārjuna.

⁵² The translation in clumsy but intended to convey that Abhayadeva was not staying in a temple, which would otherwise mean he was a lax *caityavāsin* monk.

⁵³ For Koṭyācārya and his possible identification with Śīlāṅka, see Balbir, *Āvaśyaka-Studien*, p. 78.

⁵⁴ The standard enumeration would normally list twelve *aṅgas* but Jain tradition accepts that the *Drṣṭivāda* disappeared some time before the fifth century C.E.

⁵⁵ This involves the exclusive consumption of sour, unappetising food.

⁵⁶ For the words *tāla* and *kuñcikā*, see Oskar von Hinüber, *Sprachentwicklung und Kulturgeschichte: Ein Beitrag zur materiellen Kultur des buddhistischen Klosterlebens*, Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, Mainz: Franz Steiner, 1992, pp. 16–17.

⁵⁷ Although not directly relevant to this paper, the conclusion of Prabhācandra's version exemplifies a theme found elsewhere in medieval Śvetāmbara hagiography, namely the subordination of learning to the requirements of devotion.

⁵⁸ Cf. in the same context in the *Vṛddhācāryaprabandhāvali* the Prakrit expression “*suttassa kukkaḍḍo choḍaṇattham*.” I assume that the *Prabhāvakacarita* text must be emended to “*navasūtra*—” and that Abhayadeva is being asked to solve or remove the “*kukkūṭikā*” affecting the nine sūtras on which there were no commentaries available. At present, I am uncertain as to the precise significance of *kukkūṭikā/kukkaḍḍi*. Ratnachandra, *An Illustrated Ardhamagadhi Dictionary*, Bombay, 1923, s.v. *kukkūḍi*, gives the meanings “deceit, fraud”. Cf. W. B. Bollée, *Materials for an Edition and Study of the Piṇḍa- and Oha-Nijjuttis of the Śvetāmbara Jain Tradition, Volume II: Text and Glossary*, Beiträge zur Südasiensforschung, Südasiens-Institut, Universität Heidelberg, Vol. 162, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1994, p. 180, who glosses the word as *kukkūṭi*. Muni Jambūvijaya (personal communication, Palitana, September 1994) has tentatively suggested a connection with *kūṭa*, “defective”, referring specifically to the Gujarati introduction to *Namdisuttam and Anuogaddārāim*, ed. Muni Punyavijaya, Jaina Āgama Series Vol. 1, Bombay: Śrī Mahāvīra Jain Vidyālaya, 1968, p. 16, note 2, where Abhayadeva is quoted as referring to the difficulties of commenting on the *Praśnavyākaraṇa Sūtra* owing to the corrupt manuscripts of the text (*prāyo 'sya kūṭāni ca pustakāni*).

It is conceivable that the forms *kukkūṭikā/kukkaḍḍi* may have resulted from some sort of confusion between *kūṭa* and *ku-kṛta*, “badly done” or the abstract *kaukrtya*. However, it is noteworthy that the expression “*sūtrakukkūṭika*” also occurs in Abhayadeva's commentary on Haribhadra's *Pañcāśaka*, Bombay: Nirṇayasāgar, 1912, 8.22, pp. 143–4, in the context of a description of the ritual for image-installation, where it seems to refer to the four threads hanging down from an auspicious parasol (*śubhapūrṇacatratantukāvastṛtāḥ pūrṇaṃ sūtrakukkūṭikāpūritam yac catram tarkus tasya sambandhi yac catustantukam tantukacatuṣṭayam tat tathā*). However, there is no suggestion here that the threads (*sūtra*) are entangled which might have facilitated taking the *Prabhāvakacarita* reference as some sort of pun, e.g., “the thread-like entanglements affecting understanding of the sūtras”.

⁵⁹ *Yugapradhānācāryagurvāvali*, p. 4, translated by Phyllis Granoff, *The Clever Adulteress and Other Stories: A Treasury of Jain Literature*, Oakville/New York/London: Mosaic Press, 1990, p. 177. Jinapāla makes a further sectarian point by describing

how Droṇa, whose assistance in completing the commentary on the *Sthānāṅga Sūtra* was acknowledged by Abhayadeva himself (*Sthānāṅga Sūtra*, Jambūvijaya's reedition, p. 352), was a temple-dwelling monk who abandoned his lax habits through having his inadequate scriptural knowledge corrected by reading Abhayadeva's commentary. See Phyllis Granoff, "Going by the Book: The Role of Written Texts in Medieval Jain Sectarian Conflicts," in Smet and Watanabe, *Jain Studies in Honour of Jozef Deleu*, p. 321.

⁶⁰ *Yugapradhānācāryagurvāvali*, p. 7..

⁶¹ PC, verse 130 and *Vṛddhācāryaprabandhāvali*, p. 90.

⁶² *Kharataragacchapattāvalīsamgraha*, pp. 23 and 45. For the inappropriateness of preaching in this way, see the early seventeenth century Devavimala Gaṇin, *Hīrasaubhāgya*, ed. Shivadatta and Kashinath Sharma, Kālandrī: Śrī Kālandrī Jain Śve, Mū. Saṃgh (reprint), v.s. 2041, 10.119, autocommentary.

⁶³ For Sanātkumāra, see V. M. Kulkarni, *A Treasury of Jain Tales*, Ahmedabad: Shardaben Chimanbai Research Council, 1994, pp. 33–4 and for Kaṇḍarīka and Puṇḍarīka, see the entry under "Puṇḍarīya" in Mohan Lal Mehta and K. Rishabh Chandra, *Dictionary of Prakrit Proper Names: Part 1*, Lalbhai Dalpatbhai Series Vol. 28, Ahmedabad, 1970, p. 459.

⁶⁴ See G. P. Quackenbos, *The Sanskrit Poems of Mayūra edited ... with the text and translation of Bāna's Caṇḍīśataka*, Columbia University Indo-Iranian Series Vol. 9, New York 1917, introduction.

⁶⁵ See *Yugapradhānācāryagurvāvali*, p. 7 and PC, verse 128.

⁶⁶ See Dundas, *The Jains*, p. 230.

⁶⁷ See Padmanabh Jaini, "Stages in the Bodhisattva Career of the Tathāgata Maitreya," in Alan Sponberg and Helen Hardacre (ed.), *Maitreya: The Future Buddha*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, p. 79.

⁶⁸ This has been heroically collected by Nalini Balbir, "Tīrthaṅkaras of the Future," in M. A. Dhaky and Sagarmal Jain (ed.), *Aspects of Jainology, Vol. 3: Pt. Dalsukhbhai Malvania Felicitation Volume 1*, Varanasi: P. V. Research Institute, 1991, pp. 27–67. Representations of Mahāpadma appear to be rare. However, at least one modern temple, in this case in Udaipur, has the future tīrthaṅkara as its presiding image (*mūlnāyak*). See *Śrī 108 Jain Tīrth Darśanāvalī*, Pālitāṇā: Śrī Anilbhāi Gāṇḍhī, 1990, pp. 204–5.

⁶⁹ See Jan Nattier, "The Meaning of the Maitreya Myth: A Typological Analysis," in Sponberg and Hardacre (ed.), *Maitreya: The Future Buddha*, pp. 29–30.

⁷⁰ According to Digambara Jain tradition, the great teacher Kundakunda was physically transported to Sīmandhara's presence. See Dundas, *The Jains*, pp. 230–1.

⁷¹ Cf. N. Ross Reat, *The Śālistambha Sūtra*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1993, p. 3. For the connection in Buddhism between scriptural interpretation and visionary experience, see Donald S. Lopez (ed.), *Buddhist Hermeneutics*, p. 8 and José Ignacio Cabezón, *Buddhism and Language: A Study of Indo-Tibetan Scholasticism*, p. 233, note 16.

⁷² The specific reference is to the lost commentaries of Śīlāṅka. Steven Collins, "On the Very Idea of the Pali Canon," *Journal of the Pali Text Society*, 15, 1990, pp. 96–99, has argued that the writing down of the Theravāda Buddhist scriptures and the commentaries upon them, usually ascribed to the effects of the difficult times brought about by war and famine, was most likely prompted by issues of sectarian dispute and royal patronage within the Sinhalese *saṅgha*.

⁷³ Some Prakrit poets state that they have deliberately omitted *deśī* words from their compositions. See Kōṭhala, *Līlāvaī*, ed. A. N. Upadhye, Siṃghī Jain Granthamālā Vol. 31, Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1966, verse 41: "*paviraladesisulakkhaṃ kahasu kahaṃ divvamāṇusayaṃ*" and Maheśvara Sūri, *Nānapaṃcamīkahāo*, ed. A. S. Gopānī,

Simghī Jain Granthamālā Vol. 25, Bombay, 1949, verse 4: “*gūḍhatthadesirahiyam sulaliyavannehim gamthiyam rammam / pāiyakavvam loe kassa na hiyayam suhāvei.*” Cf. also H. C. Bhayani, “Another Rare Specimen of Archaic Jain-Mahāraṣṭrī”: Taramgavaṅgāhā of Pādalipta,” *Sambodhi*, 7, 1978–9, p. 115, note 5, for the author having left out of his abridgement of an earlier text *deṣī* words which were in abundance in the original.

⁷⁴ The most obvious example is the tradition that Siddhasena Divākara wished to translate the scriptures into Sanskrit to facilitate their availability. See Phyllis Granoff, “Buddhaghosa’s Penance and Siddhasena’s Crime: Remarks on Some Buddhist and Jain Attitudes towards the Language of Religious Texts,” in Koichi Shinohara and Gregory Schopen (ed.), *From Benares to Beijing: Essays on Buddhism and Chinese Religion*, Oakville/New York/London: Mosaic Press, 1991, pp. 17–33. Nathmal Tatia, introduction to Hanaki, *Anuogaddārāṁ*, p. viii, suggests that Prakrit was so ambiguous that it required some sort of analytical commentary. Cf. also note 101.

⁷⁵ Abhayadeva’s commentary on *Sthānāṅga Sūtra*, Jambūvijaya’s reedition, p. 35: *sūtryante sūcyante vā ’rthā aneneti sūtram, susthitatvena vyāpitvena ca sūsthūktatvād vā sūktam, suptam iva vā suptam, avyākhyānenāprabuddhāvasthatvād iti.* He then quotes as the source for this interpretation (“*bhāṣyavacanam tv evam*”) two Prakrit verses, for which see Jinabhadra Gaṇin, *Viśeṣāvaśyakabhāṣya*, ed. Nathmal Tatia, Vaishali: Research Institute of Prakrit, Jainology and Ahimsa, 1972, verses 1370–1 (identified as 1368 and 1369 in the appendix to Jambūvijaya’s reedition, pp. 374 and 408): *simcai kharai jam attham tamhā suttam niruttavihinā vā / sūei savai suvvai sivvai sarae va jen’ attham* (1370) and *avivariyam suttam piva suṭṭhiyavāvittao va suttam ti / jo suttābhippāo so attho ajjae jamhā* (1371).

It has become customary for scholars of Theravāda Buddhism to derive Pāli *sutta* not from an original Sanskrit *sūtra* but instead from *sūkta*. Such an etymology would imply that the *suttas* were understood by the early Buddhists as equivalent to, and by their ethical content superior to, the hymns (*sūkta*) of the Ṛg Veda. In a recent article, Oskar von Hinüber, “Die Neun Aṅgas: Ein Früher Versuch zur Einteilung Buddhistischer Texte,” *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens*, 39, 1994, pp. 131–2, has cast doubt upon this derivation, pointing out that Buddhist tradition preserves no memory of it.

⁷⁶ For a list of Dharmasāgara’s writings, see Lābhasāgara Gaṇin’s edition of his *Sarvajñaśataka*, Āgamodhāraṅkagranthamālā Vol. 18, Kapadvamj, v.s. 2024, pp. 9–10.

⁷⁷ *Pravacanaparīkṣā* (for details, see note 2) 8.160, p. 219: *yathā sampraty api mādrśasyāpi tathāvidhoktaprakāreṇa karmakṣayopaśamavaicitryāt kupākṣikavikal-pitāmārgatiraskārapūrvakatīrthavyavasthāpane ruciḥ.* For further general observations on Dharmasāgara, see Dundas, *The Jains*, pp. 123–24.

⁷⁸ *Mahāvīravijñaptidvātriṁśikā* (for details, see note 33), verse 25.

⁷⁹ PP 8.145–7 and pp. 219–220. Cf. also Balbir, *Āvaśyaka-Studien*, p. 41, for the *niryukti* layer of commentary completing and developing a *sūtra* but not contradicting it.

⁸⁰ See PP 8.78, p. 89 and 8.162, p. 220. The earliest source for the *īryāpathikī* confessional formula is the *Āvaśyaka Niryukti*, a commentarial text. Dharmasāgara wrote a treatise, the *Īryāpathikīdvātriṁśikā*, Āgamodayasamiti Vol. 49, Līmvdī, 1927, to establish what he felt to be the correct procedure for this ritual, wanton misinterpretation of which he attributed to the Paurṇamīyaka sect. In the *Sūtravyākhyānavidhiśataka* (see note 23) p. 79, Dharmasāgara rejects the view that a topic which does not occur in a *sūtra* can therefore not appear in a *niryukti*.

⁸¹ See PP 8.148, p. 162 and 8.162, p. 220, *Ṣoḍaśślokī* (text in *Dharmasāgaragrantha-saṁgrahaḥ*; see note 33), p. 116 and *Sūtravyākhyānavidhiśataka*, p. 90.

⁸² PP 1.53–4, pp. 41–2. Cf. *Nandisuttam* and *Anuogaddārāṁ*, Jaina Āgama Series

edition, introduction, p. 49, and for another bovine analogy, see Balbir, *Āvaśyaka-Studien* pp. 307–9.

⁸³ *PP* 1.54, p. 42.

⁸⁴ *PP* 1.56, p. 43. Cf. also *PP* 1.79, p. 53 for a sūtra being like a bull which follows the path of whoever leads it.

⁸⁵ Emend the reference under SVVD in Dundas, *The Jains*, p. 259.

⁸⁶ *SVVŚ*, verse 3 and compare *PP* 8.145. See also Ohira, *A Study of the Bhagavatī Sūtra* p. 30.

⁸⁷ *SVVŚ*, p. 4. For this list, see Nalini Balbir, “The Perfect Sūtra according to the Jainas,” *Berliner Indologische Studien*, 3 1987, pp. 3–21. Abhayadeva refers to this list in his commentary on the *Sthānāṅga Sūtra* (Jambūvijaya’s reedition p. 4). There is a parallel list of 32 scriptural defects (*doṣa*) described by *SVVŚ*, pp. 4–7 which derives from the *Anuyogadvārāṇi*.

⁸⁸ *SVVŚ*, p. 4 and cf. pp. 79 and 90.

⁸⁹ See Richard W. Lariviere, “Adhikāra-Right and Responsibility,” in Mohammad Ali Jazayeri and Werner Winter (ed.), *Languages and Cultures: Studies in Honor of Edgar C. Polomé*, Berlin/New York/Amsterdam: Mouton de Gruyter, 1988, pp. 359–64. For the *adhikāra* of the Jain teacher involving non-contradiction of the meaning of the tīrthāṅkaras, see Mālvaṇiṃyā, Hindi introduction to *Niśītha Sūtra*, Vol. 1, p. 53. For Vedic *adhikāra*, see Charles Malamoud, *Le Svādhyāya: récitation personnelle du Veda: Taittirīya-Āraṇyaka, Livre II*, Publications de l’Institut de civilisation indienne Vol. 42, Paris, 1977, pp. 67–70, and for *adhikāra* in general, see Wilhelm Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection: Explorations in Indian Thought*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991, pp. 66–74 and Purushottam Bilmoria, “Is Adhikāra Good Enough for “Rights?”,” *Asian Philosophy*, 3, 1993, pp. 3–13.

⁹⁰ See *SVVŚ*, pp. 8–10, and compare also pp. 81–2 for books, that is, copies of the scriptures, serving merely to improve the knowledge of ignorant monks studying with an appropriate teacher. For *anuvāda* of the scriptures being satisfactory on a crude, transactional level (*vyavahāra*) but not on the more profound (*nīścaya*) level, see *SVVŚ*, pp. 53–61. The *PP* devotes much time to attacking those who would make Jainism a “religion of the book.” See, in particular, *PP* 1.49–50, 59–64, and 84–7, as well as chapter 8, *passim*.

⁹¹ Dharmasāgara claims (*SVVŚ*, verse 8, with autocommentary) that the *anuyoga* method of exegesis is used in the *Bhagavatī Sūtra*, which is *jinavacana*.

⁹² *SVVŚ*, verses 21–38. Of the various heretics described in the main early commentarial source, the *Āvaśyaka Nirvyukti*, only the Digambaras are mentioned by name, the rest being alluded to in general terms (*SVVŚ* verse 21: *tesu vi nijjuttīe nāmaggāheṇa dūsi[o] khamāṇo / sesā parūvaṇāe nīameṇaṃ dūsiyā huṃti*). Dharmasāgara, as do most modern scholars, identifies the Botika sect described in the *Āvaśyaka Nirvyukti* with the Digambaras. M. A. Dhaky and Sagarmal Jain, “A Propos of the Botika Sect,” in Dhaky and Jain (ed.), *Aspects of Jainology, Vol. 3: Pt. Dalsukhbhai Malvania Felicitation Volume*, pp. 131–39, have argued that this group more likely represents the Yāpanīyas.

⁹³ For the early Jain heresies, see Paul Dundas, “Food and Freedom: The Jain Sectarian Debate on the Nature of the Kevalin,” *Religion*, 15, 1975, p. 188, note 8. The *Sthānāṅga Sūtra*, sūtra 587, Jambūvijaya’s reedition, p. 273, lists the *nihnavaś* and their places of origin. The *Bhagavatī Sūtra* seems to refer to Jamāli’s heretical teaching about the nature of action, albeit without mentioning his name. See Ohira, *A Study of the Bhagavatī Sūtra*, pp. 147–8.

⁹⁴ *SVVŚ*, verse 31, with autocommentary which cites *Āvaśyaka Nirvyukti*, verse 470, the first half of which refers to Jinadāsa, a merchant of Mathurā, and provides an explanation by citing Haribhadra’s commentary (in fact, on verse 468). The story

tells how Jinadāsa, who fasted on *aṣṭamī* and *caturdaśī* days, was imitated by his two bulls, Kambala and Sambala. Since this narrative occurs in the broader context of Mahāvīra's pre-enlightenment biography as treated by the *Āvaśyaka Nirvyukti*, Dharmasāgara points to the fact that Jinadāsa must have been a lay follower of Mahāvīra's predecessor Pārśva, which he takes as establishing the time-honoured nature of religious observances on *caturdaśī* days, a practice which the Paurṇamīyakas were trying to emend. Cf. also SVVŚ, p. 79.

⁹⁵ SVVŚ, verses 37 and 42 and pp. 28 and 41. See also PP, chapter 8, *passim*.

⁹⁶ SVVŚ, p. 34. The *Sthānāṅga Sūtra*, sūtra 208, Jambūvijaya's reedition, pp. 113, describes three categories: inimical to scripture, inimical to its meaning and inimical to both. According to Abhayadeva, "meaning" here signifies the *nirvyukti* commentary.

⁹⁷ SVVŚ, verses 38–9 and compare PP 8.64, p. 75. See Johannes Bronkhorst, "Two Literary Conventions of Classical India," *Asiatische Studien / Études Asiatiques*, 45, 1991, pp. 212–16, for the aphoristic sūtra texts produced in the early common era becoming embedded within commentaries.

⁹⁸ See Balbir, *Āvaśyaka-Studien*, pp. 45–6. Ludwig Alsdorf, "Jain Exegetical Literature and the History of the Jaina Canon," in A. N. Upadhye et al. (ed.), *Mahāvīra and his Teachings*, Bombay, 1977, pp. 1–8, argued that the *bhāṣyas* are a versification of the early Prakṛit prose commentarial tradition as represented by the *cūṛṇis*. This view has recently been challenged by B. K. Khadabadi, "Reflections on the Jaina Exegetical Literature," in Dhaky and Jain, *Aspects of Jainology*, Vol. 3: *Pt. Dalsukhbhai Malvania Felicitation Volume*, pp. 27–33.

⁹⁹ SVVŚ, verses 41–2, with autocommentary. The scriptures involved in this process (the *Jīvābhigama*, *Nandi* and *Prajñāpanā Sūtras*) do not belong to the *aṅga* class of sūtra. Their incorporation into the *Bhagavati Sūtra* was presumably effected at one of the councils where the scriptures were redacted.

¹⁰⁰ SVVŚ, p. 38 and p. 79. Dharmasāgara exemplifies the polyvalency of Prakṛit by discussing a riddle verse, the solution to which requires taking the word "saro" as equivalent to Sanskrit *śara*, "arrow," *saras*, "lake" and *svara*, "voice". Cf. also PP 8.146. It might be added that by the seventeenth century the Jain scriptures had come to be accused of imprecision and indeterminacy of meaning. See Satya Vrat, *Studies in Jaina Sanskrit Literature*, Delhi: Eastern Book Linkers, 1994, p. 181.

¹⁰¹ SVVŚ, pp. 86–99, discusses how information given in a sūtra, in this case the *Prajñāpanā*, can only be understood and contextualised fully with the aid of commentary.

¹⁰² SVVŚ, p. 41 and verses 48–9.

¹⁰³ SVVŚ, pp. 73, 79 and 91–2. Dharmasāgara quotes a verse from the *Pañcavastuka* which states as a hermeneutic principle that the scriptural should be interpreted by scripture and that which is amenable to logic by logic (*taṃ taha vakkhāṇijjāṃ jahā jahā tassa avagamo hoi / āgamiāṃ āgamaṇaṃ juttīgamaṃ juttī*). See Haribhadra, *Pañcavastuka*, Mumbāi: Jinaśāsana Ārādhanā Trast, v.s. 2045, 4.191.

¹⁰⁴ See Douglas Burton-Christie, *The Word in the Desert: Scripture and the Quest for Holiness in Early Christian Monasticism*, New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 23. In the Jain context, cf. the *Oghanirvyukti*, ed. Bollée (see note 58), verse 611, for correct behaviour stabilising the meaning of a sūtra (*suttatthathirikaraṇaṃ vīṇao ...*).

¹⁰⁵ See Euan Cameron, *The European Reformation*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991, pp. 142–4. For a recent perspective on this subject from an American Protestant background, see Stanley Hauerwas, *Unleashing the Scriptures: Freeing the Bible from Captivity to America*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993, the main contention of which is that (p. 3) "the Bible is not and should not be accessible to merely anyone, but rather it should only be made available to those who have undergone the hard discipline of existing as part of God's people." According to Hauerwas (p. 27), [*sola*

[*sola scriptura*] preserves intact the *distinction* between *text* and *interpretation*, while the Catholic conception is in danger of ascribing to an interpretation the value of an authoritative text.... When *sola scriptura* is used to underwrite the distinction between text and interpretation, then it seems clear to me that *sola scriptura* is a heresy rather than a help in the Church. When the distinction persists, *sola scriptura* becomes the seedbed of fundamentalism, as well as Biblical criticism. It assumes that the text of the scripture makes sense separate from a Church which gave it sense."

¹⁰⁶ See Abhayadeva on Haribhadra, *Pañcāśaka* (for details, see note 58), 1.44, pp. 33–4, where he points out that a sūtra like the *Aupapātika* which does not have a *niryukti* or *cūrṇi* commentary attached to it is still to be regarded as canonical (*ārṣa*).

¹⁰⁷ For some remarks on this dispute, see Marcus Banks, *Organizing Jainism in India and England*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992, p. 110.

¹⁰⁸ Strictly speaking, Dharmasāgara is not a direct predecessor of Sāgarānanda Sūri, since the Sāgara lineage was disrupted in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Nonetheless, there is clear evidence that Sāgarānanda felt there to be some sort of linkage between them. See, for example, his impassioned Sanskrit encomium to Dharmasāgara in the introduction to *Sapariśiṣṭa Śrī Tattvatarāṅginīṭīkānuvāda*, Dabhoī: ŚrīMuktabhāi Jñānmandir, no date, pp. 5–6. Dharmasāgara's writings seem to have been suppressed even during his lifetime and in recent times have largely been kept in circulation by the minority Sāgara lineage of the Tapā Gaccha, being little studied by the numerically dominant Vijaya lineage.

¹⁰⁹ For a critique, see Colette Caillat, "The Recent Critical Editions of the Jain Āgama," in Fritz Steppat (ed.), *XXI Deutscher Orientalistentag vom 24. bis 29 März in Berlin*, Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1983, pp. 234–40.

Another recent venture to publish the Jain scriptures, along with an accompanying Hindi translation, has been carried out since 1975 by the Śvetāmbara Terāpanthī sect which places a strong emphasis on Jainism as being located in the sūtras. However, it is noteworthy that the ultimate authority for this edition is Ācārya Tulsī, until 1995 head of the Terāpanthīs, who is described on each volume as "reciter" (*vācaka*) of the text of the sūtra.

¹¹⁰ See Balbir, *Āvaśyaka-Studien* p. 34. As Greg Schopen has reminded me, this is also true of the *Pāṭimokkha Sutta* in Theravāda Buddhism which was found by its first editors to be likewise embedded in commentary.

¹¹¹ See *Thānamgasuttam and Samavāyamgasuttam*, Jaina Āgama Series Vol. 3, ed. Muni Jambūvijaya, Bombay: Śrī Mahāvīr Jain Vidyālaya, 1985, introduction, p. 56.

¹¹² Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *What is Scripture?*, London: SCM Press, 1993, p. 18.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 204–5.

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