

## INTRODUCTION

*Contested Jain Identities  
of Self and Other*

is it possible to imagine that you can continue to answer to  
 your name whatever name that is in a serious way or  
 that you can maintain a continuous consciousness and have  
 a sense of its boundaries unless its tested against  
 something that opposes and isnt it (antin 1993, 94) how

In an important sense, we are dealing with the formation of  
 cultural identities understood not as essentializations (al-  
 though part of their enduring appeal is that they seem and are  
 considered to be like essentializations) but as contrapuntal en-  
 sembles, for it is the case that no identity can ever exist by itself  
 and without an array of opposites, negatives, oppositions:  
 Greeks always require barbarians, and Europeans Africans,  
 Orientals, etc. (Said 1993, 52)

## I

Quotations such as these two could be multiplied, all to the same intent:  
 a sense of self-identity, whether in terms of the individual person or a social  
 group, is never constructed in isolation, but rather is always a contextualized

process, in which the sense of “self” is in dialogue, opposition, or dialectical relationship to a sense of what is “not-self” or “other.”<sup>1</sup> This insight underlies *Open Boundaries*.

Constructing a book on the Jains around the premise that the Jains have always been active participants in larger contexts, and that therefore any adequate understanding of the Jains and Jainism must take into account both the larger contexts and the forms of Jain participation in those contexts, would hardly seem to represent a radical move. Yet, in the history of Jain studies over the past century-and-a-half, it does to a significant extent represent a new departure. The authors of the chapters in this book were invited to contribute studies that investigated Jain authors, texts, narratives, rituals, temples, institutions, and ideologies in highly specific contexts, in which the who, what, when, where, and perhaps even why of the situation could be stated with a fair degree of certainty. In other words, the authors were asked to contribute what in ethnographic parlance can be called “thick descriptions,” or in historiographic parlance “micro-histories.” Moreover, the authors were asked to provide studies that investigated the Jains not in isolation, but rather in situations where they were in explicit or implicit interaction with the larger non-Jain social, cultural, and intellectual world of South Asia. The methodological thrust behind these two prerequisites—studying the Jains (1) in specific contexts, and (2) of wider interaction—can be seen in the initial statement of purpose drafted by Richard Davis and myself for the 1991 conference panel which preceded *Open Boundaries*:

We begin with the frank acknowledgement of the current marginality of Jain studies within the broader field of South Asian studies. At its simplest, our goal is to encourage and increase the study of the Jains. But it is not simply a matter of increasing quantity. Jain studies has historically been an intellectual ghetto, largely isolated from South Asian studies. We do not intend merely to enlarge the size of this ghetto. Rather, we wish to avoid approaches that constitute studies of the Jains as a subfield somehow separate from South Asian studies.

We start with the recognition that the exclusion of the Jains from most studies of South Asia has had deleterious results in terms of our understandings of both the Jains and South Asia. At its simplest and most radical, the argument behind this project can be stated as follows: when one views the Jains within a South Asian context, the resultant portrait of the Jains is strikingly different from the received portrait, and equally the resultant portrait of South Asia is strikingly different. This project, then, is seen as participating in the ongoing, never ending efforts of scholars to improve our understandings of the Jains in particular and South Asia in general.

In addition to expanding academic awareness of the Jains by augmenting the amount of data that is easily accessible, this project also aims at questioning the inherited models by which the Jains have traditionally been viewed and represented in scholarship, both Western and Indian. These models are in part responsible for, as well as reflective of, the marginal status of Jain studies. In particular, there are two inherited models which appear to dominate the representations of the Jains.

The first of these is Jainism as the "poor sister," as an essentially marginal, unimportant heterodox group. This model is best seen in the innumerable contentless references to the Jains in the compound, "Buddhists and Jains . . ." The assumption is that by understanding something of the Buddhists one knows all one needs to know about their "darker reflection" (the phrase is Louis Renou's [1953, 111]). As an inherently marginal and unoriginal tradition, the impact of the Jains upon Indian social, religious, and intellectual history can safely be dismissed. As a minority ascetic tradition, it is incapable of influencing political institutions or developing a mass popular following. Thus, the Jain tradition is characterized as boringly ascetic, austere, unimaginative, and so forth.

The second model is Jainism as a fundamentally unoriginal movement, the history of which is essentially a history of passive reception of Hindu influences. All innovation can be ascribed to Hinduism, which is a dynamic and changing tradition. Influence moves in only one direction, from the active Hindus to the passive Jains. This is related to a degenerationist model, in which a supposedly pure, original ur-Jain doctrine is contrasted with the later impure, degenerated Jainism largely composed of half-understood and ill-digested Hindu influences and accretions. It is a powerful Orientalist doublebind: "pure" Jainism is defined as conservative and unchanging, and all innovations are portrayed as degenerations. Original Jainism is the essence of Jainism, and historical Jainism consists in falling away from that essence. That this portrait in significant part corresponds to one Jain self-identity further strengthens the doublebind.

The participants in this project seek to locate Jain materials in a more dynamic, reciprocal, and interactive relation to South Asian society. We view Jains as active contestants and participants in socioreligious debates, struggles, and movements, not as either marginal outsiders or passive subjects to the will of others. Accordingly, we are interested in the shapes and stratagems of Jain polemic and Hindu counter-arguments,

representations of Jains by others and others by Jains, the social placement of Jain authors and individuals, and the like. We investigate the interactions between Jains and non-Jains on the social, political, ritual, aesthetic, and intellectual levels. We focus on instances of Jain interaction with non-Jains in which the specifics of who, what, when, and where can be filled out with the sort of specificity usually lacking in studies of influence and interaction in South Asia.

## II

In a stimulating essay, first published in 1972 and justifiably republished twice, the sociologist T. N. Madan (1994) investigated the ways in which the Muslims and Hindus of Kashmir constructed their social identities in the period before the "ethnic cleansing" of the past decade. Internal distinctions within each group were based on two sets of quite different categories, but these categories largely disappeared when Madan turned to each group's representations of the other. From the ideological perspective, to Hindus all Muslims were outsiders (*mleccha*), while to Muslims all Hindus were unbelievers (*kāfir*). Both Muslims and Hindus considered the other to be morally inferior, but the criteria of moral worth differed. For the Muslims, the criterion was acceptance of the Muslim creed, whereas for the Hindus the criterion was ritual purity.

The model of Kashmiri society that results from Madan's analysis is quite complex, as the social facts were guided and interpreted by rather different ideologies, to such an extent that it is difficult to say if there are any significant common social "facts." The two ideologies shared an attitude of mutual exclusion. But, as Madan perceptively observes, this well-known opposition resulted in a situation in which "both ideologies command identical behaviour towards non-believers—total exclusion—and in that sense are mutually reciprocal and reinforcing" (198). In terms of empirical relations, interactions between Muslim occupational groups and their Pandit clients were understood by the former to be economic transactions and by the latter to be ritual transactions. Mutual economic dependence was not matched by reciprocity of perspective. What resulted was a social system that was uniquely Kashmiri, and that encompassed two social orders and two social ideologies which could be accommodated only at a structural level.

Madan's study indicates some of the ways in which identities of self and other can be based on radically different social ideologies, so that the portrait one gains by looking at one group is dissimilar from the portrait gained by looking at the other group. Nonetheless it is possible for the two groups to coexist peacefully as long as the disjunctions in ideology and identity do not lead to disjunctions in social behavior. That this coexistence can be built upon fragile foundations is obvious in Madan's afterward to the 1994 reprint of the essay, in which he comments

upon the severe communal strife between Muslims and Hindus in Kashmir in recent years, and the apparent end of time-honored patterns of coexistence.

Madan's study also alerts us to the pitfalls in studying the Jains from any overly restricted perspective. None of the chapters in this volume fully performs the dual task of Madan's essay, of studying both Jain perceptions of self and other, and the perceptions of self and other held by the non-Jain others. One can begin to construct such a complex dialectic by an intertextual reading of the chapters by James Ryan and Indira V. Peterson. Padmanabh Jaini's (1977, 1984, 1993) researches into Jain and Brāhmaṇa Purāṇic narratives as reflective of an oftentimes agonistic intertextuality also point toward what such a fuller portrait would look like. But the range of situations investigated in the chapters does indicate that there is in fact no single Jain sense of self, as there certainly is no single sense of other. The others with whom the Jains have interacted, and against whom the Jains have in part defined themselves, have been as varied as South Asian history.

### III

Even in a single region, a diachronic study of the others with whom the Jains have interacted reflects the social and religious history of South Asia. To pick an example seen in a number of the chapters here, we see a complex history of otherness in western India. In the first millenium C.E., the Buddhists were powerful rivals to the Jains. This rivalry existed on both the social plane, as seen in medieval narratives of the interaction between Haribhadra and the Buddhists (Granoff 1988), and also on the philosophical plane, as Haribhadra and other Jain philosophers strove to account for the differences between Jain and Buddhist metaphysics. At the same time, Haribhadra is accepted to have been a Brāhmaṇa by birth, as were many other important Jain philosophers and mendicants throughout the centuries, starting with Mahāvīra's first eleven disciples, the *gaṇadhara*s. When Haribhadra became a Jain mendicant, he renounced being a Brāhmaṇa in the ritual sense of performing the Vedic sacrifice. At the same time, in terms of caste as a biological classification, he remained a Brāhmaṇa. Categories of self and other can be at once contradictory (a Jain cannot simultaneously be a Brāhmaṇa) and encompassing (a Jain can simultaneously be a Brāhmaṇa). Christopher Key Chapple's chapter indicates a further sense of other in western India at the time of Haribhadra. To the extent that Haribhadra presented Jainism as being one among several yogas or techniques of spiritual liberation, he had to take into account those other techniques. Similarly, as Kendall W. Folkert (1993) and Olle Qvarnström (1997a) have discussed, Haribhadra was integrally involved in the Jain effort to map out the various possible alternative metaphysical systems to the Jains, both in terms of the systems actually encountered in South Asia (the various *darśanas*, usually characterized as six), and the number of systems theoretically possible (usually characterized as 363).

In John E. Cort's chapter, we see that several centuries later the opposition between Jain and Brāhmaṇa continued to be a strongly defining one, in this case in terms of cultural understandings of what constituted kingship. But we no longer see in twelfth century Gujarat a strong sense of Buddhists as other; they have been replaced by the Śaivas, in particular Pāśupata Śaivas, who vied with Jain mendicants for influence over the Caulukya kings. This religious rivalry with Śaivas continued for many centuries; in the fifteenth century, Munisundarasūri, the leader of the Tapā Gacch, mercilessly satirized Śaiva mendicants in his *Bharaṭakadvātrimśikā* (Dundas 1996, 153), indicating that at that time the Śaivas were still the Jains' principal contestants for popular support in Gujarat.

The chapters by James E. Cort and Gary A. Tubb, which treat the great twelfth-century polymath Hemacandra indicate how a single wide-ranging intellectual interacted with *śāstric* and *itihāsic* Brāhmaṇical authors when writing on political and aesthetic theory (see also Qvarnström 1997b). The chapters by Christopher Key Chapple and Paul Dundas also show Jain authors interacting with others as intellectuals in terms of the pan-Indian scholarly genre of *śāstra*. This is a genre for which the Sanskrit language has always been the preferred medium. Language is an important marker of identity, both in terms of self (a common language denotes connection) and other (lack of a common language, or use of a private language, denotes separation). Paul Dundas (1996) has discussed some of the Jain attitudes towards Sanskrit and Ardha-Magadhi Prakrit. We find the early Jains privileging Ardha-Magadhi as the bearer of the Jain Āgamas over against Sanskrit as the bearer of the Brāhmaṇic Vedas. As Jainism became more than just a soteriology, but instead became what Frank Reynolds and Charles Halsey (1989) have termed a "civilizational religion," the Jains transformed their tradition into a school of learning that encompassed subfields as varied as aesthetics, logic, tantra, politics, and yoga. They found that they could not ignore the pan-Indian intellectual language of Sanskrit. But the Jain authors redefined Sanskrit, treating it not as a sacred institution ontologically connected with the Brāhmaṇas, but instead as a natural phenomenon that was humanly shaped. To establish that Sanskrit was the lingua franca of Indian intellectual discourse, and therefore available to all, instead of a sacred revelation available only to Brāhmaṇas, Jains such as Hemacandra wrote their own Sanskrit grammars to replace the Brāhmaṇical system canonized by Pāṇini and Patañjali.

Throughout this same time period in western India there was another identity of self and other that strongly shaped Jain identity, this time with those martial groups that eventually coalesced into the dominant castes of Rajasthan, Saurashtra, and Kacch, the Rājput. Michael W. Meister's chapter shows how this rivalry was expressed in narrative texts, in temple rituals, in diet, and in temple architecture and iconography. This was also a relationship with a strong temporal component, as Osvāl Jains insist that they, too, were once Rājput, but were converted to the superior Jain path, and hence became Vaiśyas or Baniyās. For the

Osvāl Jains, Rājput is an identity of other both in terms of who they are not in the present and who they were in the past.

Lawrence A. Babb's chapter on Jain ritual in Rajasthan further adds to the complexity of definitions of self and other by indicating ways in which past interactions can remain embedded in ritual patterns even when they are no longer socially apparent. The Śaivas have not been significant players on the western Indian scene for several centuries, as they were largely displaced by various Vaiṣṇava devotional groups, in particular among the merchant castes by the Puṣṭimārg established by Vallabhācārya in the late fifteenth century. For contemporary Jains in western India the Puṣṭimārg Vaiṣṇavs are the most pervasively present others, precisely because Jains and Vaiṣṇavs have intermarried for many centuries. But Babb's structural analysis of Jain temple ritual in Jaipur and Ahmedabad reveals a deeper ritual interaction with Śaiva patterns, indicating that the many centuries of Jain-Śaiva interaction in western India have left a lasting mark upon Jain understandings of ritual interaction with divinity.

Finally, Jains in western India have interacted in terms of social others with the Muslims for the past seven centuries, and more recently with Europeans for the past five centuries. The understandings on such basic theological issues as divinity, humanity, and diet erected barriers, so that the distinction between self and other was oftentimes marked more by difference than by similarity. But one has to be careful not to accentuate a sense of difference here, nor to read contemporary communal politics back into history without due consideration.<sup>2</sup> The recent work of Ellison Findly (1987) and Paul Dundas (1995) has shown that there was in fact a very creative interchange between Jains and Muslims in the Mughal court, and similar examples could be advanced from throughout the centuries of Muslim-Jain interaction.

The interaction between the Jains and Europeans has been similarly complex, and even less-studied than that between the Jains and Muslims. This has been an interaction at the socioeconomic level, as Jains were among the Indian merchants with whom the Europeans had their earliest dealings (Findly 1997). It has operated at the sociopolitical level, as Jains for several centuries had to deal with the British as colonial overlords, a relationship in which the Jain social location as bankers, traders, merchants, and eventually textile mill owners brought them into close association with the economic side of the Raj. Finally, it has been an ideological interaction, as in the past century-and-a-half, the Jains have had to respond both to evangelical Christian missionaries and to the full discourse of modernity, enlightenment thought, and the scientific method.

This is just one regional example of some of the ways in which the others with whom Jains have interacted have changed over the centuries, indicating a few of the ways in which Jain senses of self have changed in reflection of the altered contexts. Similar diachronic surveys could be conducted for Tamil Nadu, using among other sources the chapters by Ryan, Peterson, Orr, and Davis, or for Karnataka.



Focusing on Jain interactions with non-Jains could easily lead one to the mistaken assumption that the Jains constituted a single entity in the face of the larger social reality of South Asia. Clearly this has not been the case, as recent scholarship on the oftentimes vituperative debates and disputes among Jains has made clear.<sup>3</sup> The divide between Digambaras and Śvetāmbaras goes back at least two thousand years, and the number of lawsuits and public quarrels in recent years, some even leading to violent encounters and deaths, shows that this is a powerful generator of a sense of otherness between Jain communities. Within these two broader traditions we find further divisions, sometimes sharp and sometimes soft, such as that within the Śvetāmbaras among Mūrtipūjaks, Sthānakvāsīs, and Terāpanthīs. We also find that senses of self and other develop along the lines of caste. But even if Jains may find it difficult, if not impossible, actually to unite socially, we find, at least in the Gujarati language, that the possibility exists of a clear ideological distinction between Jains as self and non-Jains as other, as revealed in the linguistic dyad of *Jain* and *Jainettar*, “Jain” and “non-Jain.”

#### IV

Another way to talk of this range of interactions, from agonistic to reflexive, is in terms of possible strategies for dealing with the very fact of otherness. A person, text, or community can adopt an exclusivist stance:<sup>4</sup> the other is wrong, and the proper strategy is either to refute and convert or to destroy the other. There are instances where this has been the Jain strategy, and the strategy of non-Jains aimed at Jains. Haribhadra's boiling his defeated Buddhist opponents in oil (Granoff 1988), or the Śaivas impaling eight thousand Jains at Madurai, as discussed by Indira V. Peterson, are perhaps the most graphic narrative examples of this strategy.

But a person, text, or community can also adopt an inclusivist stance: the other is correct, but only partly so, while the self is completely (or at least more fully) correct. In this case, we often find strategies that emphasize hierarchical formulations, which allow for the other to be subsumed and subordinated without being outright refuted or denied. This is a strategy frequently employed in the intellectual genre of *śāstra*, in which the Jains have been avid participants from the time of Umāsvāti. The author of a *śāstra*, whether it be on the subject of aesthetics, tantra, politics, or yoga, will arrange an encyclopedic survey of the field. In some *śāstras* all the various schools or opinions may be ranked, with the author's own position established as superior. In other *śāstras*, such as Haribhadra's *Yogadṛṣṭisamuccaya* or Hemacandra's *Kāvyaṅuśāsana*, they will be presented as appearing to be equal. In this latter case, however, we can still see a hierarchical organizing principle, as the seemingly neutral author presents material in a way that presents his own position in the best light. Even the literary strategy of presenting the material in a seemingly impartial manner can be seen as a way of im-



PLICITLY stating that one is in fact superior to the others, since one strives to be fair whereas the others are quick to judge and rank.

## V

Others are not only human others in social contexts. With the Jains we are dealing with a religious tradition, and with what Lawrence A. Babb terms a "ritual culture." Ritual interactions by definition involve a subject and an object, worshiper and worshiped, self and other. To quote Babb, any ritual involves a "ritual 'other,' the sacred being who is the object of the rite," or, as Babb goes on to say, a "sacred other." The others with whom people have engaged in ritual in South Asia vary widely, and since, in Babb's words, "the actor's sense of self is implicated in the interaction, for these encounters can and do generate a transformed sense of self," any understanding of the multiple senses of self one finds in South Asia must take into consideration the sacred others with whom those selves ritually interact.

In some cases, the other can be a fearsome and awesome being, one who is, in the words of Rudolf Otto (1950), *ganz andere*, "wholly other." Such was the Sacciyādevī at Osian described by Meister before her conversion to Jainism, a goddess who loved "to crunch and munch" on the bones of her animal offerings. But as the narratives related by Meister so clearly show, ritual interaction with a deity who demands animal offerings is unacceptable to Jains, and in response the Jains must either shun such ritual offerings or, in this case, convert the deity by convincing her to accept vegetarian offerings. We see in this story that Jains define themselves as those who offer only vegetarian worship, and worship only deities who accept such offerings, in contrast to others who offer animal offerings to meat eating deities.

By definition, the Jains are those who worship, venerate, and follow the teachings of the Jinās, in obvious and eponymous contrast to Bauddhas, Śaivas, Vaiṣṇavas, and Śāktas, who maintain relationships with the Buddha, Śiva, Viṣṇu, and Śakti. The nature of these interactions reveals much. Babb cites the work of Richard H. Davis, showing that among Śaiva Siddhāntins the goal of the worshiper is to become Śiva. Among the Puṣṭimārg Vaiṣṇavas, the goal is to enter into a permanent dependent relationship with Kṛṣṇa. The worshiper donates the totality of one's being, "mind, body, and wealth" (*man, tan, dhan*) to Kṛṣṇa, in return for which Kṛṣṇa grants the worshiper both worldly success and eventual eternal heavenly concourse with Kṛṣṇa. Both of these ritual paradigms contrast strikingly with the Jain understanding of a ritual relationship with a deity who cannot respond. As Babb observes, the nonresponsive, self-sufficient, totally autonomous Jina represents pure otherness, an otherness without any presence. Whereas Kṛṣṇa in Puṣṭimārg ritual is an "intimate other," Sacciyādevī before her conversion is an "antagonistic other," and Śiva is a "powerful other," the Jina is an "exemplary other."

The transformations engendered by Jain ritual, therefore, are unlike those engendered through two-way interaction with Śiva or Kṛṣṇa; instead, the actions are reflected back upon the worshiper by a ritual other that is pure reflectivity, a mirror that absorbs and transforms nothing but rather shows the worshiper the truth of who he or she is. Differences in emphasis on how one worships relate directly to differences in who the other is that one worships, which in turn lead to differences in the understanding of the self that does the worshiping.

## VI

In the case of the Jains, the dialectic of self-and-other is not restricted to the spheres of social and ritual relations. It is found in the form of a fundamental dualism at the very heart of Jain ontology and soteriology. Jain metaphysicians posit the existence of an infinite number of souls or selves (*jīva*, *ātman*), which are nonsubstantial and characterized by consciousness (*caitanya*), bliss (*sukha*), and energy (*vīrya*). Sentient soul is the first of the six elemental categories (*dravya*) that together constitute the whole of existence. The other five are insentient physical matter (*pudgala*), and the four insentient and immaterial categories of space (*ākāśa*), the principle of motion (*dharma*), the principle of rest (*adharmā*), and time (*kāla*). These latter five are frequently lumped together as non-soul (*ajīva*), indicating that beneath the list of six lies a basic dualism between sentient soul and insentient non-soul.

Bondage is precisely the state of connection between soul and matter, and liberation the cessation of any such connection. Jain teachers have emphasized different methods of effecting this disconnection; most have followed Umāsvāti's *Tattvārtha Sūtra* in emphasizing the simultaneous cultivation of right world view (*samyagdarśana*), right knowledge (*samyagjñāna*), and right conduct (*samyakcāritra*), whereas a minority position exemplified by Kundakunda has deemphasized conduct and focused upon knowledge alone (Johnson 1995b). But all are agreed that the state of liberation is marked by the total separation of any connection between soul and matter. Hence, the liberated soul is described as a *kevalin*, a being that is isolated, alone, autonomous.

This sense of a dualism between the self or soul as that which is integral and important, and everything else as other, is explicitly stated in various ways by a number of Jain philosophers. In fact, in various texts we find early Jain philosophers using the Sanskrit term *anya* (Prakrit *aṇṇa*) in a manner that would almost seem to presage contemporary postmodernist understandings of "otherness." Kundakunda, for example, discusses the dualism between self and other in several ways in various texts. In the *Pravacanasāra*, a text aimed at delineating the bases of correct mendicant praxis, he shows how the correct understanding of this duality leads to that defining characteristic of Digambar mendicant praxis, nudity (*Pravacanasāra* 3.4, Upadhye translation, pp. 24–25):

“I do not belong to other, nor do others belong to me; there is nothing that is mine here”: thus determined and conquering his senses, he adopts a form similar to that in which he is born.

In a slightly earlier passage of this text, Kundakunda uses the same language to address his characteristic concern with the self as pure knowledge, and nothing else, and the need therefore for mendicant praxis to be based less upon ascetic practices focused on eliminating karmic bondage and instead upon spiritual exercises that lead to salvific insight and self-realization (*Pravacanasāra* 2.99, Upadhye translation, p. 23):

“I do not belong to others, nor do others belong to me; I am mere knowledge”: he, who meditates thus in concentration, comes to meditate on his (pure) self.

In the *Niyamasāra* (141–50), Kundakunda uses the dualism between self and other to stress the autonomy of self (Prakrit *appavasa*, Sanskrit *ātmavaśa*), which comprises liberation as opposed to a dependence upon others (Prakrit *aṅṅavaśa*, Sanskrit *anyavaśa*), which comprises bondage. Kundakunda goes on to explain that the autonomous self is the internal soul (Prakrit *antarangappā*, Sanskrit *antarangātmā*), what we might call the “true self,” whereas the dependent self is the external soul (Prakrit *bahirappā*, Sanskrit *bahirātmā*), what we might call the “social persona.” The duality between self and other is not only a matter of external relations, it is even internalized in terms of correct and incorrect self-understandings, what we might call “true and false consciousness” of the self.

Kundakunda was not the only Jain philosopher to use the opposition between self and other to explain the duality of soul and binding matter. The Śvetāmbara Haribhadra, in the *Yogabindu*, uses *anya* as a shorthand for karma, the ultimate binding matter. He writes (*Yogabindu* 6, Dixit translation, p. 4):

A soul as a result of getting connected with something other than itself experiences worldly existence while as a result of getting disconnected from this something it experiences *mokṣa*.

Haribhadra is quite explicit that by “other” he is referring to karma, as later in the text (405–9) he alternates the terms “connection with something other” (*anyasamyoga*) and “connection with karma” (*karmasamyoga*). But for Haribhadra as for Kundakunda, the “other” is not merely material karma which stands in opposition to spiritual soul. It also can refer to the material aggregate of the body and mind in which the soul finds itself located. As the translator K. K. Dixit notes in a comment to verses 10–11 (p. 6), “By ‘foreign element’ [*anya*] he will usually mean *Kārmās*. . . Sometimes, however, this ‘foreign element’ will stand just for the ‘physical apparatus consisting of body and *manas*’ with the help of

which the soul undergoes the experiences it does." Even these are matter that is other to the self. Thus, a distinction between self and other lies deep at the heart of Jain ontology.

## VII

So who are the Jains? What is Jainism? The chapters in this book tell us that these questions do not admit single answers. Instead, we must rely upon a post-modern variant of *anekāntavāda*, the Jain philosophical doctrine of the multiplicity of valid perspectives on any phenomenon.<sup>5</sup> The answers to "Who are the Jains?" and "What is Jainism?" will depend upon a complicated set of factors which are themselves dependent upon the context within which the question is raised.

Babb's chapter presents the Jains as a variant of larger South Asian ritual patterns. At the 1993 Amherst workshop, he commented, "Jainism so-called is Indian civilization, just from a particular angle of vision. It is all of Indian civilization, seen in a particular way." This same perspective emerges when one looks at other facets of South Asian culture, such as the Hindu Marriage Act, which applies to Jains, and even the Indian Constitution, according to which Jains and Sikhs are Hindus. So it is possible to see the Jains as representatives of larger South Asian patterns, or as a miniature form of the entirety of South Asian civilization.

At the same time, there is much to be said for the traditional approach of Jain studies, an approach in which the Jains are studied in isolation with little reference to the broader contexts in which they have lived. This approach allows us to see more clearly certain trends, continuities, and points of conflict in the Jain tradition in a diachronic fashion. This also reflects the world view portrayed in much if not most Jain literature, whether it be philosophical, narrative, or devotional. In most Jain texts, we enter a world that is entirely Jain, guided by Jain cosmological and metaphysical principles, and inhabited by souls who are either Jain in the sense of having attained right world view (*samyagdarśana*, *samyaktva*), or are ranked as non-Jain due to their possessing only wrong world view (*mithyādarśana*, *mithyātva*) in the totalizing scheme of the fourteen *guṇasthānas*. John Carman commented at the Amherst workshop that for all the similarities exhibited by the Jains with what one might already know of South Asian religion and culture, after reading the chapters presented here one comes away struck with the distinctiveness of the Jain version of Indian civilization. Babb responded to this comment in the affirmative, saying, in a statement that in no way contradicts his earlier comment, "there is a distinctive Jain caste of mind, perspective on world, and way of constructing life and doctrines. This is what we call Jainism." In other words, it is useful to view Jainism not as a thing but rather as a style, one style (or family of styles) among many in South Asia. In the end, such efforts in pursuit of

simple definitions, useful as they may be in clarifying one's thoughts, peter out in inconclusiveness. We do not have a single Jainism, but multiple Jainisms, and multiple visions of what Jainism is. We have contested identities of what it means to be Jain, and since identity is an inherently relational concept, these contested identities of what it means to be Jain can only be studied as paired with contested identities of what it means to be non-Jain.

Thus, a book about the Jains ends up problematizing not only who the Jains are, but also the identities of those who are non-Jain. In particular, the chapters here each in its own way problematize the identity of "Hindu," a term that has come under scrutiny from a number of directions in recent years.<sup>6</sup> If identity is relational, and if we see that both identity and the relationships that shape identity are always at best contextual and provisional, then this should lead us to problematize the other half of the relationship. In other words, we do not see a Hindu other here, but rather a number of more discrete others. We see Brāhmaṇas and Rājapūts; we see Buddhists, Śaivas, Vaiṣṇavas, and goddess-worshippers; we see authors on aesthetics and tantra and politics; we see scholars, mendicants, women religious, kings, and yogis; we see temples, rituals, and sex. But all of these varied others do not add up to a single Hindu other.

And yet . . . It would be easy to be carried away in a postmodernist frenzy and deconstruct all categories, and insist that neither Hinduism nor Jainism exist except as reified artificial constructs. But this would deny important and obvious evidence. Jains have been content to discuss "Jains" and "Jainism" for two millennia. "Hindu" and "Hinduism" may not have such a hoary pedigree, but they are clearly terms that have entered into South Asian discourse in recent centuries, and in recent years with a vengeance. The chapters in this book help us see better when terms such as "Jain" and "Hindu," "Jainism" and "Hinduism," are appropriate as elements of certain large-scale discourses about religion, culture, and identity in South Asia, and when they are inappropriate. In focusing on specific instances of Jain interaction with non-Jains, we see that the use of the term "Hindu" to characterize those non-Jains is frequently problematic, as it glosses over on-the-ground differences of great significance. But we also see that there are instances when the use of the term "Hindu," however vague it may be in terms of its referent, is useful and appropriate.

The chapters in this book provide the curious reader with a significant body of information about the Jains that was previously unavailable. This information should serve to alter scholarly understandings of the Jain tradition. We are not dealing only with grim life denying ascetics or "Buddhism's darker reflection." In addition to ascetics, we find that the Jains are yogis, encyclopedists, tantrics, aesthetic theorists, erotic poets, heroic warriors, kings, political theorists, temple builders, image worshippers, and religious women. And that is obviously not all. Incorporating this wealth of information into the standard scholarly portrait of the Jains should leave that portrait permanently transformed and exponentially more complex. The Jain tradition can no longer be seen as static and unimaginative.

tive. We see that nearly every social and cultural development in South Asian history is reflected in the Jain tradition, and even more importantly we see that the Jains were not merely passive receivers of these developments, but instead were active participants in creating and changing South Asian history. Once the vital role of the Jains in shaping South Asian civilization is recognized, it is no longer possible to isolate the Jains from the study of South Asia by segmenting South Asian history into discrete, bounded categories such as "Jain," "Buddhist," "Hindu," "Sikh," and "Muslim." To say that in order to understand the Jains adequately, one needs to understand South Asia, is a truism. The chapters in this volume should make it clear that the opposite statement is equally a truism, and one ignored by scholars of South Asia only at their own peril: in order to understand South Asia adequately, one needs to understand the Jains.

## NOTES

1. This emphasis on the dialogical relationship between self and other, in which "self" can be understood only when juxtaposed to an "other," entered into contemporary critical and cultural studies to a significant extent from the structural linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure. In his *General Course in Linguistics* (1986), written in the early years of the twentieth century and published posthumously in 1931, Saussure states that the meaning of any one word in a language depends on its "diacritical" difference from other words. For example, we can understand the meaning of "red" only by understanding the ways in which "red" is not "blue," "green," and so forth. But whereas Saussure based his theory on a static, atemporal model of language, post-Saussurean, post-structuralist semiotics has striven to bring history and change into this model, a move with which the chapters in this volume are in sympathy.

2. I thank Richard H. Davis for this observation.

3. Among others, see Carrithers 1988, Cort 1997, Dundas 1985, and Jaini 1991.

4. This use of the terms "inclusive" and "exclusive" is indebted to, yet different from, Paul Hacker's notion of *Inklusivismus*, on which see Halbfass 1988, 403–18.

5. I term this a postmodern variant of *anekāntavāda* because I allow for the possibility of there being no single final answer, whereas in traditional Jain usage *anekāntavāda* is always tempered by the Jain insistence on there being a single true vision of the absolute truth, a vision perceived fully by the Jina in his infinite perception (*anantadarśana*) and infinite knowledge (*anantajñāna*), and striven for by the Jains in their right perception (*samyagdarśana*) and right knowledge (*samyakjñāna*). See Johnson 1995a.

6. See, among many others, Dalmia and von Stietencron 1995, Larson 1993, Sontheimer and Kulke 1991, and Thapar 1985. Still worth reading on this subject is Wilfred Cantwell Smith's 1964 detailed philological investigation into the history of the use of the word "Hindu" to denote a religious community or tradition.