SALVAGING THE PLAGIARIST
DIGAMBARA JAIN TEXT PRODUCTION IN EARLY MODERNITY

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1. Introduction

Much ink has been spilled in the academic study of pre-modern Indian religious literature concerning the role and authority of the author and the relationships between received tradition and innovation.[1] In 1991, Padmanabh Jaini contributed to this larger discussion by describing what he termed an obvious case of "skilful plagiarism" committed by a Jain author named Śrībhūṣaṇa, a seventeenth-century Digambara Jain *bhaṭṭāraka*[2] based in Sojitrā in modern-day Gujarat.[3] In his Sanskrit *Pāṇḍavapurāṇa* - a treatment of the deeds of the heroic Pāṇḍava brothers from the *Mahābhārata* - completed in 1600, Śrībhūṣaṇa apparently copied in near totality the work of a previous author, Bhaṭṭāraka Śubhacandra, who had lived some fifty years earlier and belonged to a rival Digambara monastic lineage, the Mūlasaṅgha.[4] Śrībhūṣaṇa's work is not identical to Śubhacandra's; in fact, Śrībhūṣaṇa's *Pāṇḍavapurāṇa* contains 779 additional *śloka* verses not found in Śubhacandra's text. In support of his argument for Śrībhūṣaṇa's plagiarism, though, Jaini points out that both texts are divided into twenty-five chapters (*sarga*) and that the titles of those chapters are identical. He also provides a direct comparison of a single chapter from both authors' texts, one that narrates the five auspicious events (*pañca-kalyāṇaka*) in the life of the seventeenth Jina, Kunthunātha. According to Jaini (2000b: 366): "The correspondence both in the narrative and vocabulary is so manifest that no further argument is necessary to prove […] that Śrībhūṣaṇa had committed a flagrant act of plagiarism." Jaini's comparison is indeed striking. His argument that Śrībhūṣaṇa's text corresponds so closely to Śubhacandra's that the only explanation is Śrībhūṣaṇa's copying his

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[1] See, for instance, Hawley 1988, Novetzke 2003, and Marrewa-Karwoski 2012.

[2] A "noble man" or "cleric."

[3] Here all references are to the reprint of the article that appeared in Jaini's 2000 edited volume *Collected Papers on Jaina Studies*.

[4] On the history and development of pre-modern Digambara monastic *saṅgha*s, see Joharapūrakara 1985.

predecessor's text is compelling. As to the question of why Śrībhūṣaṇa felt the need to copy so flagrantly another author's text, Jaini focuses on sectarian rivalry, a reasonable focus, he argues, as there is ample evidence of intellectual conflict between Śrībhūṣaṇa, in particular, and the Mūlasaṅgha during the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries. Drawing on the work of Nāthūrām Premī (1956: 389-94), Jaini (2000b: 364) points out that another of Śrībhūṣaṇa's works, *Pratibodha-cintāmaṇi*, "was full of sectarian animosity towards the Mūlasaṅgha," and that Śrībhūṣaṇa had also co-opted and altered a Mūlasaṅgha text titled *Darśanasāra* by Devasena (probably 10th c.), "obviously in retaliation for Devasena's uncomplimentary account of the origins of the Kāṣṭhāsaṅgha."

In labelling Śrībhūṣaṇa as a plagiarist, Jaini provides a model for thinking about the phenomenon of text copying among Jain authors in premodernity. Questioning this model, I propose that the practice of textual copying was a valid form of argumentation among Jain authors in pre-modernity, indeed a type of argumentation of which we have additional examples. To make this argument, I proceed in four parts. I first outline the history of the concept of plagiarism in South Asian literary history, highlighting the fact that while an idea similar to plagiarism existed and was condemned, there was little interest among pre-modern authors and theorists to actualize claims of plagiarism itself. Plagiarism existed within the realm of possibility but rarely crossed into that of reality. Further, I argue that the seeming idea of plagiarism that Jaini employs in his discussion of Śrībhūṣaṇa is not grounded in those pre-modern South Asian understandings of the concept. Thus, second, I will examine the sort of definition of plagiarism Jaini actually seems to use in labelling Śrībhūṣaṇa a plagiarist. It is a definition that is informed by western and modern understandings of text production and ownership, consisting of two primary components: the idea of individual intellectual property and a desire to deceive for some type of either personal or communal gain. Third, I explain why this definition of plagiarism is actually unhelpful for evaluating Śrībhūṣaṇa and his copying of Śubhacandra's *Pāṇḍavapurāṇa*. The label of plagiarist is so loaded with ethical condemnation that, intentionally or not, it shuts down further vectors of inquiry and scholarship. By labelling Śrībhūṣaṇa a plagiarist we cut ourselves off from understanding fully his true textual project and his methods for actualizing it. Finally, fourth, to demonstrate that text copying was not an uncommon practice amongst early modern Digambara authors, I introduce an additional example, that of Brahmacārin (Brahma) Jinadāsa's (15th c.) partial copying of Raviṣeṇa's (7th c.) *Padmapurāṇa*, which tells the life story of the epic hero Rāma.[5]

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[5] All proceeding Sanskrit translations are the author's unless otherwise attributed.

2. Plagiarism in Pre-Modern South Asian Literary Theory

Concepts of textual similarity, borrowing, and, in particular, plagiarism (*kāvya-caura*, in Sanskrit), are not unknown to pre-modern South Asian thinkers, particularly Sanskrit literary theorists. According to Sarkar (2013: 41): "Plagiarism […] was highly distasteful in mediaeval scholarly practice and etiquette - and poetry was considered a scholarly practice." The poet Bāṇa (7th c.), in the introduction to his *Harṣacarita*, condemns plagiarists in the harshest language:

> Innumerable are the poets to be found in each house that can write only plain and matter of fact descriptions, like dogs (that are also numberless). By modifying phrases or the words of other poets and hiding the distinctive signs of authorship, a poet without being expressly declared to be so is revealed to be a thief - a plagiarist in the midst of the good (Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita* I: 5-6, quoted in Kulkarni 1983a: 2).

Rāmacandra, a noteworthy twelfth-century Jain playwright, commented in his *Kaumudīmitrāṇandanarūpaka* about what he saw as the prevalence of plagiarism by contemporary poets: "Nowadays poets make their fame by plagiarizing the work of others. What wise man today would have any faith in them?"[6] Similarly, in the thirteenth century the author Someśvaradeva skewered plagiarists in his *Surathotsava*.[7] Sarkar (2013: 40) translates the relevant passage:

> Someone claiming another's poem as his own is recognized as a plagiarist. Upon seeing a jewel in the hands of the unworthy, who on earth believes that it is his? What merit accrues for a writer from composing a poem forged out of things said by another, for, his livelihood derives from the learned, and ruined by suspicions, he has no fame in this world (Someśvaradeva, *Surathotsava* I. 39-40).

Finally, in the seventeenth century Jagannātha Paṇḍitarāja commented about the unfortunate possibility of ill-bred poets (*jāra-janmānaḥ*) stealing his work.[8]

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[6] Quoted in Granoff 2009: 138. Interestingly, Granoff points out that Rāmacandra actually self-plagiarized this line, as an almost exact copy of it in his treatise on drama *Nāṭyadarpaṇa*.

[7] See Sarkar 2018 for a translation of the narrative portions of the *Surathotsva*.

[8] Full Sanskrit in Devadhar 1954: 1.

As to the question of what actually constitutes plagiarism, Granoff (2009: 135) identifies three pre-modern theorists as the primary contributors to emic discussions of defining the concept, and the authors go to great lengths to "differentiate between outright plagiarism and simple influence." These theorists are Ānandavardhana (9th c.) in his *Dhvanyāloka*, Rājaśekhara (880-920 CE) in his *Kāvyamīmāṃsā*, and Hemacandra (1088-1172 CE) in his *Kāvyānuśāsana*.[9] It is Rājakśekhara who provides the most detailed account of textual borrowing and plagiarism, and, indeed, he has harsh words for plagiarists. In the *Kāvyamīmāṃsā* he writes that "while other acts of theft by man are forgotten with the passage of time, in the case of the theft of words [the offense] is not forgotten, even for two generations."[10] In defining the limits of textual borrowing, though, Rājaśekhara first divides poetry into three primary groups: that which has an identifiable source (*anya-yoni*); that which has an unknown source (*nihnuta-yoni*); and that which has no source (*ayoni*). Further, building on Ānandavardhana's earlier work, Rājaśekhara details four types of narrative borrowing. The first two types fall into the *anya-yoni* category of poetry. These are *pratibimba-kalpa*, or "borrowing that resembles a reflection," and *ālekhya-prakhya*, "borrowing that is like a painting." In the *pratibimba-kalpa* form of borrowing, the exact wording of a poem may differ from its source, but the subject and content are identical. In the *ālekhya-prakhya* form, "the poet has somewhat refined the idea that he has taken from another poet so that it appears different" (Granoff 2009: 140). For Rājaśekhara, only the *pratibimba-kalpa* form of borrowing is to be avoided by good poets; *ālekhya-prakhya* copying is acceptable.[11]

The additional two types of borrowing - *tulya-dehi-tulya*, or "like the resemblance between two individuals who look alike," and *para-pura-praveśa*, "like entering into the body of another" - fall into the *nihnuta-yoni* category of poetry, and Rājaśekhara particularly approves of poets using the *para-pura-praveśa* form of borrowing.[12] Of course, something in

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[9] Hemacandra himself has been accused of committing plagiarism at worst, or "slavish imitation" at best, by De 1923: 203. Kulkarni 1983b: 153f. rejects this analysis.

[10] *puṃsaḥ kāla-atipātena cauryamanyad viśīryati | api putreṣu pautreṣu vāk-caurye ca na śīryati ||*
Sanskrit quoted in Devadhar 1954: 1.

[11] Here, Rājaśekhara differs from Ānandavardhana, who also argues against the appropriateness of the *ālekhya* form of borrowing.

[12] *tat para-pura-praveśa-pratimaṃ kāvyaṃ sukavi-bhāvyam ||*

Sanskrit quoted from Granoff 2009: 140, n. 24. Rājaśekhara further divides these four divisions of types of borrowing into thirty-two total subgroups: four groups of eight each. For analysis of these subgroups, see Kulkarni 1983a: 8-12.

the *ayoni* category would, by definition, not be borrowed from another source.[13] What is clear, though, is that borrowing itself did not necessarily mean "plagiarism," and Rājaśekhara himself confirms this fact: "To be classified as plagiarism […] the words that are borrowed must be '*ullekhavān*,' that is, they must have some special quality that distinguishes them as uniquely poetic."[14]

Finally, theorists of Sanskrit literature were also keenly aware that mere similarity between two works did not necessarily indicate textual borrowing. In his *Dhvanyāloka*, Ānandavardhana cautioned his readers about making such a rash claim:

> It is […] quite natural that great poets very often echo the thoughts of others, but this is not to say that they borrow, since it is possible to hit upon the same or similar ideas quite independently, and great minds often think alike.[15]

We can also inquire as to what was at stake in being accused of plagiarism. Sarkar's (2013: 41) examination of an episode in which Someśvaradeva was accused of plagiarism by a rival court poet, Harihara, highlights the twofold repercussions of such accusations:

> According to the Jaina Rājaśekharasūri's *Prabandhakośa*, Harihara, [Someśvaradeva's] court poet and rival, had once falsely accused [Someśvaradeva] of stealing verses, his ego bruised since Someśvaradeva had not honoured him on his arrival to the Vāghela court. Someśvaradeva was publicly humiliated by this charge, unable to attend the palace. Later Harihara

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[13] Alongside his classification of types of borrowing, Rājaśekhara provides a corresponding classification of types of poets:

> "The *bhrāmaka* poet deludes his audience into thinking that something old is new; the *cumbaka* poet touches the subject matter of another poet, but with language that is original and lovely, giving it a slightly new tinge; the *karṣaka* poet draws into his own poem the subject of another poem, and with some spark of originality situates that older subject firmly in his own work; the *drāvaka* totally melts the subject of an earlier poem down and makes it into something entirely new so that it cannot be recognized any longer as what it once was" (Granoff 2009: 141).

For Rājaśekhara, all four of these types of poets are *laukika*, "worldly." Beyond this group, though, there exists a fifth type of poet, a "super poet," whose verses "are entirely his and have never been seen before, even by the greatest of poets of olden days" (ib.). The super poet is *alaukika*, other-worldly; his or her poetry is inspired by Sarasvatī, the goddess of learning and aesthetics, herself (ib.).

[14] Granoff 2014: 540.

[15] Quoted in Devadhar 1954: 211.

retracted the accusation and Someśvaradeva's credibility was once again restored. But it had been a serious matter throwing much at stake: on top of the nearly irreparable loss intellectual reputation, Someśvaradeva had been at risk of having his patronage severed, jeopardizing his position, networks, and future, were he judged no better than a hack. After all, patrons of *belles lettres* would have wished to promote only writers of original works, not worthless copies.

Thus, there are two interrelated effects of being accused - even falsely - of plagiarism, the one reputational and the other material. In the terminology of Bourdieu, we might say that accusations of plagiarism result in the loss of multiple different forms of capital: economic, due to the loss of physical patronage, and cultural, in the questioning of the author's poetic skills and the subsequent loss of prestige.[16] It is also important to note that these forms of capital exist and are negotiated among specific actors, i.e. poets and literary theorists, with respect to specific literary genres, in particular *kāvya* (Sanskrit *belles lettres*), within a determined social domain, principally the royal court and the systems of patronage that go along with it. None of these factors are identical to the specific textual relationship currently under consideration; thus, even these ideas of plagiarism are not necessarily directly applicable to understanding Śrībhūṣaṇa, his *Pāṇḍavapurāṇa*, and his copying of Śubhacandra's work.[17]

There is, then, a clear interest among pre-modern poetic theorists to classify the phenomenon of literary similarity and, subsequently, the types of textual borrowing that either were, or at least could be, actualized by poets. There also appears to be a tension between discussion and theorization of plagiarism, on the one hand, and actual practices of poetic composition, on the other:

> Plagiarism in general was detestable and was deemed to show a lack of originality on the part of the poet who indulged in such borrowing. It appears, however [...] [that] Sanskrit poets were never prevented from gathering their literary harvest wherever they could, and that 'the notion of literary propriety' did not much trouble their minds (Devadhar 1954: 212).

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[16] See Bourdieu 2011.

[17] Indeed, unlike their Śvetāmbara counterparts, Digambaras rarely seemed to have been participants in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century court life, part of which included the composition of *mahākāvyas*. See, for instance, Dundas's 2007: 53-72 discussion of the early-seventeenth-century *Hīrasaubhāgyamahākāvya* by the Tapā Gaccha author Devavimala.

Lienhard (1984: 43) provides similar analysis of the ideas of pre-modern literary theorists towards the value of originality:

> The question of whether a poem was original or not, in toto or in part, would not have struck an Indian reader as an important one. Authors of literary texts were quite accustomed to borrowing material, constructions, the treatment of attributes, themes and other details from contemporary or earlier poets, neither did they hesitate to make use of artistic ideas, devices or formulations they found elsewhere.

Thus, though plagiarism existed at the theoretical level in pre-modern South Asian literary circles, save for a few examples like that of Someśvaradeva described above[18] there seems to have been less concern about the actual practice of such poetic theft. Further, and this is particularly important for the discussion at hand, in the broader world of Sanskrit literary theory there existed certain stories that were open to use and reuse by any author. Such is the case with the two great Indian epics, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*, both of which, according to Kṣemendra (11th c.) in his *Kavikaṇṭhābharaṇa*, "belong to the world" (*bhuvana-upajīvya*).[19] As the reader will remember, the narrative in question when discussing Śrībhūṣaṇa *qua* plagiarist is that of the Pāṇḍava brothers, that is, essentially the story of the *Mahābhārata*.

3. History of Plagiarism in the West

While South Asian theories of plagiarism have existed for centuries, Jaini does not rely upon such understandings of the concept when labelling Śrībhūṣaṇa a plagiarist. He does not, for instance, discuss any of the theorists examined above. Instead, the portrait painted in Jaini's account of Śrībhūṣaṇa seems to be informed primarily by notions of literary originality and ownership that are markedly western and modern. It is therefore important to understand the history of the concept of plagiarism in western literary and social history before analysing the relevance of its application to pre-modern Jain texts and their authors. First, Grossberg (2008: 160) points out that plagiarism "has never been and is not now a stable term." The concept of plagiarism has a history, and definitions and valuations of textual copying have changed and evolved over time. Abraham (2019: 1-22) provides a comprehensive overview of that history

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[18] Even in that case, it appears that Harihara *lies* about Someśvaradeva being a plagiarist. His motivation for accusing Someśvaradeva does not primarily appear to be a moral one, but rather a monetary one that leads to his own deception.

[19] Devadhar 1954: 212.

of the concept of plagiarism. The word derives from the Latin *plagiarius*, which originally referred to kidnappers, those who abducted children or slaves. The first-century Roman poet Martial was the first to use the term with respect to literary theft, claiming that a fellow poet, Fidentinus, was attempting to pass off Martial's poems as his own. Forms of the word "plagiarism" entered English parlance in the late-sixteenth century, though the *specific* forms "plagiarism" and "plagiarist" emerged in the seventeenth (Abraham 2019: 5). It is not until the eighteenth century that the value of literary originality rose to such prominence that it began to be socially policed, usually by zealous journalists "who performed pre-electronic-era searches to discover borrowings and concordances" (ib., p. 6). This practice did not come without pushback from authors. Emerson, for instance, argued against the idea that any author could truly be original (ib.).

Further, the idea of plagiarism as commonly thought of today, and as Jaini seems to conceptualize it, is intimately linked with notions of personal intellectual property and the desire for some sort of gain via deception. The idea of a relationship between intellectual property and plagiarism emerged alongside the advent of copyright law in the early eighteenth century which, in turn, was "founded on the concept of a unique individual who creates something and is entitled to reap a profit from those labors" (Rose 1993: 2). Shaw (1982: 327) focuses on an author's attempt at deception as forming the heart of historical debates on plagiarism: "Throughout history the act of using the work of another *with an intent to deceive* has been branded as plagiarism."[20] This focus on deception highlights the inherently ethical nature of modern charges of plagiarism. Indeed, this dimension of plagiarism as being morally transgressive is an inescapable quality of current discussions on the topic, as Grossberg (2008: 161) points out:

> [Plagiarism] is considered theft, the act of stealing another's words or ideas and therefore one of the most serious of all academic crimes. It thus incurs a proportionate condemnation, activating what, in another context, sociolegal scholar Mona Lunch calls the "discourse of disgust" (530). By that she means words that aim to shame, ostracize, and condemn violators with labels like thief and fraud. Such shaming epithets pervade cases of plagiarism.

Thus, in applying modern ideas of plagiarism to pre-modern material, we not only read back an action onto the past, but also a specific, modern *motivation* for that action and a seemingly predetermined moral *evaluation* of that motivated action. We see this in Jaini's depiction of

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[20] Emphasis in original.

Śrībhūṣaṇa, whose integrity he questions and who, he says, suffers from the "unscrupulous habit of altering works of historical importance" (Jaini 2000b: 364f.)

Of course, this newly emergent idea of literary ownership and thus, plagiarism, replaced an earlier model of thinking about textual relationships and borrowing. Shaw (1982: 327) argues that "[i]n the ancient world and through the neoclassical period of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, imitation was admittedly the prescribed mode of composition." McLeod (1992: 12) builds on this idea: "The very notion of being able to 'own' words or ideas is after all a relatively recent one. Classical notions of art involved mimesis, or imitation: originality was not valued, nor was the individual artist; writers borrowed freely from one another." This reflects what we have already discussed with respect to pre-modern South Asian authors' ideas about literary originality. Lindey (1952: 66) argues that "writers of antiquity deemed innovation hazardous, and imitation both necessary and laudable." Further, in medieval Europe there was little distinction between the ownership of ideas and the words used to express them and the ownership of physical texts: "The older, medieval view of literary propriety was that whoever owned a manuscript could do what he or she liked with it. If a bookseller purchased a manuscript from an author, then that bookseller could print it, burn it, cut it into pieces, rewrite it, or sell it to a competitor" (Abraham 2019: 8). To again return to the case at hand, if we set aside our modern conceptions of intellectual property and think more in line with earlier models of literary creation and dissemination as discussed here, Śrībhūṣana no longer appears as an immoral, deceptive villain. Rather, he strikes us merely as an active participant in the literary world in which he flourished.

4. Plagiarism as Unhelpful for Understanding Śrībhūṣaṇa

There is much at stake in labelling someone a plagiarist because an important, if not always intentional, consequence of the act is that subsequent productive inquiry and conversation are halted: to label a person as fraudulent and unethical is also to label their work as lacking value and unworthy of study. Upon labelling Śrībhūṣaṇa a plagiarist, any attempt at further analysis is basically abandoned: Jaini treats the nearly 800 of Śrībhūṣaṇa's original verses as fruit of the poisonous tree that therefore do not merit attention. Similarly, the introduction to Śrībhūṣaṇa's text, which is where Jaini admits much of Śrībhūṣaṇa's originality can be found, need not be examined. Jaini (2000b: 372) reaffirms the fact that he sees Śrībhūṣaṇa as unworthy of further study when he calls Śrībhūṣaṇa's *Pāṇḍavapurāṇa* a "fruitless endeavour." Śrībhūṣaṇa has been found out, his "deception" brought to light for all to see and condemn. There is further evidence of the impact that Jaini's labelling Śrībhūṣaṇa a plagiarist has had on subsequent scholarly engagement with Jain Pāṇḍava narratives. In her 2008 "The Jain *Harivaṃśa* and *Mahābhārata* Tradition: A Preliminary Study," De Clercq refers to Śrībhūṣana only twice, both times

reiterating Jaini's evaluation of him as a plagiarist.[21] It is this reaction to the label of plagiarism - its inherent ability to shut down trajectories of further inquiry - that is problematic. Labels, especially those we place upon figures of the past, involve hermeneutic choices that in turn influence future generations of scholarship.

The concepts outlined above that inform modern western understandings of intellectual property and, thus, plagiarism are not productive in examining a pre-modern Jain literary and socio-theological ethos. We can take first the concept of personal intellectual property, again linked to the advent of copyright law. Thinking about this with pre-modern Digambara Jain textual composition seems obviously inapplicable, as copyright did not exist in seventeenth-century South Asia and, even more broadly, neither did the idea of a religious narrative *belonging* to the individual who wrote it down. This is particularly true in the context of Jain *purāṇic* works, which generally begin with the frame story of a dialogue between King Śreṇika - a prominent figure in much of Jain narrative literature - and the Jina Mahāvīra and his primary disciple (*gaṇadhara*), Gautama. During the dialogue, the king - racked with doubt because he has heard so many different and conflicting versions of any particular tale - asks the men to narrate definitively the story of whomever the *purāṇa* is about. Gautama agrees to the king's request, and narrates the story, ensuring the king that he has learned the truth directly from the Jina himself. In Śubhacandra's *Pāṇḍavapurāṇa*,[22] then, Śreṇika says that he "desires to hear the story of the Pāṇḍavas, who arose in the Kuru lineage." He then describes hearing the story of the Pāṇḍava brothers as told by members of other faiths and gives a brief account the narrative, essentially as laid out in the *Mahābhārata*. Śreṇika asks a series of questions about this account: was Vyāsa really born from Śāntanu and Yojanagandhā, and did he then go on to sire Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Pāṇḍu, and Vidura? Is the story of Gandhārī's pregnancy true, or that of Pāṇḍu's curse, for that matter? Were all of the Pāṇḍava brothers really fathered by different gods? In response, Gautama exclaims that Śreṇika has asked excellent questions, which he will now answer, thus beginning the narrative proper.[23] Since the narrative that follows is the word of the omniscient Jina, later authors of any subsequent work have only a tangential claim to its content, certainly not a singular or authoritative claim. The very act of writing down the narrative is *always*, then, a retelling.

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[21] Specifically, the first occurrence is on page 400, footnote 5. The second instance is on page 414, under the heading "10. Śubhacandra's *Pāṇḍavapurāṇa* (AD 1552)."

[22] Śubhacandra's *Pāṇḍavapurāṇa* II: 26cd:
caritaṃ śrotumicchāmi pāṇḍavānāṃ kuru-udbh[a]vām ||

[23] Śubhacandra, *Pāṇḍavapurāṇa*, II: 102.
sādhu sādhu tvayā pṛṣṭaṃ śreṇika śruti-kovida | vyākhyāsyāmi kṣitau khyātaṃ yat-pṛṣṭaṃ tat-samāsataḥ ||

Jaini (2000b: 365) too gestures towards the fact that one's telling of a *purāṇic* story is not truly one's own when he remarks that: "The modesty of the Jaina mendicant authors is well known even to this day - their names appear at the end of a long list of the teachers in their lineage."[24] While "modesty" is perhaps an imprecise term here,[25] there is an indebtedness to previous teachers and authors that is important in these lists. Śubhacandra, for instance, writes that while the story of the Pāṇḍavas originated, of course, with Mahāvīra, who then related it to Gautama, it had been passed down through a long lineage of great renunciants before reaching him. This includes the list of *śrutakevalin*s[26] traditionally acknowledged by Digambara tradition: Viṣṇumuni, Nandimuni, Aparājitamuni, Govardhanamuni, and Bhadrabāhumuni.[27] It also includes especially famous Digambara *ācārya*s, thinkers, and authors, including Kundakunda, the credited founder of the Mūlasaṅgha,[28] and the great *purāṇa* authors Jinasena and Guṇabhadra[29] (Jaini 2000b: 365). As numerous scholars have pointed out,[30] demonstrating

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[24] Even compared to this general rule with respect to Jain authors, Śubhacandra, Jaini 2000b: 365 argues, is a paragon of such modesty:

> "But what is noteworthy about Śubhacandra is that at the end of each *sarga* he acknowledges the assistance he received from his disciple Brahma Śrīpāla, and advanced lay disciple (*varṇī*). At the end of the work, while concluding his own *praśasti*, he lavishes high praise on this Brahma Śrīpāla, calling him a great holy man, a brilliant scholar and a logician, who had revised the entire text of the *Pāṇḍavapurāṇa*, and had transcribed it in the form of a book […] Śubhacandra's case seems to be unique, for he chose to acknowledge publicly and repeatedly the assistance received from his junior, lay disciple."

[25] There is a debate among western philosophers as to whether modesty, in the way that Jaini seems to use the term here, should be considered a virtue at all. See, for instance, Ben-Ze'ew 1993, Schueler 1997, 1999, Nuyen 1998, Driver 1999, Ridge 2000.

[26] Literally, "those with complete knowledgeable of the scriptures." Fujinaga 2007: 3 defines the term as those who are "perfect masters of scripture." According to Wiley 2012: 169, the *śrutakevalin* "has an intellect with the special power of knowing the fourteen Pūrvas in their entirety."

[27] Śubhacandra I: 39-40 refers to the *śrutakevalin*s as *uttara-uttara-kartā*, or "creators by succession." They are one removed from Gautama, who is the *uttara-kartā*, or "later/second creator," who in turn is one removed from the Jina, who is the *mūla-kartā*, or "principal creator."

[28] Virtually nothing concrete is known about Kundakunda's life, and there is evidence that not all of the sixteen works attributed to him were authored by the same person or at the same time. Traditionally, Kundakunda has been dated to the second or third century CE, though Dundas 2002: 107f., following Dhaky 1991, seems to subscribe to a much later date of somewhere around 750 CE.

[29] Jinasena (9th century) served in the court of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa emperor Amoghavarṣa I and is best known as the author of the *Ādipurāṇa*. He is also the author of the *Pārśvābhyudaya* and completed the *Jayadhavalā*, a commentary begun by his guru, Vīrasena, on the second-century BCE *Kasāyapāhuḍa*. Guṇabhadra was Jinasena's pupil and literary successor. He composed the *Uttarapurāṇa*. For more on Jinasena, see Clines 2017.

[30] See, for instance, Cort 1995 and Dundas 2007.

proper and unbroken mendicant lineage is an important aspect of inter-sectarian argumentation more broadly. In many cases, one leaves oneself open to attack not simply from what one says - the content of a narrative or argument - but also because of being perceived as unqualified to say it on account of an illegitimate or broken lineage. According to Cort (1995: 480f.):

> For the Jain monks, as with most (if not all) mendicant traditions in South Asia, the purity and authenticity of one's lineage is crucial, for it is the only means of authenticating one's mendicant initiation […] By the same token, a strategy in many intersectarian struggles has been to voice doubts as to the validity of a rival monk's lineage and therefore initiation; if a monk's lineage is spurious, his initiation is therefore invalid, and he has no authority to speak on religious matters.

Dundas (2007: 21) argues that not only might lineage genealogies "be proffered to those otherwise disinclined to accept the credentials of an individual or group," but also that they work in part by a mechanism of exclusion, by "largely omitting mention of members of rival sectarian groups." The textual performance of proper lineage history, then, is not merely an example of modesty, an act of deference to one's own teachers, but also an important way of claiming authority to speak in the first place and, in the process, erasing the claim of one's rival.

The second concept inherent in plagiarism as Jaini understands it is that of intended deception for some sort of gain. We can examine the second half of this proposition first: did Śrībhūṣaṇa have anything to gain from copying Śubhacandra's text? Jaini postulates two areas of possible gain: personal and sectarian. He touches upon the former only briefly, pondering whether, "in the case of Śrībhūṣaṇa, one must ask the question if he was inspired more by a personal ambition to exhibit skilfulness as a poet" (Jaini 2000b: 365). He also remarks that the nearly 800 original verses in Śrībhūṣaṇa, "suggest a strategy to convey his superior skill in verse-making […] over his rival Śubhacandra" (ib., 371). Thus, perhaps the combination of Śrībhūṣaṇa's copied verses and his original verses actually serve to highlight his being a better poet than Śubhacandra. Śrībhūṣaṇa's personal interest here, and the possible individual gain, is based in being recognized as a superior poet.

While this is a possibility, Jaini discusses the likelihood of sectarian competition and benefit in greater detail. Perhaps, Jaini argues, Śrībhūṣaṇa was impelled by "a sectarian spirit […] to match his Kāṣṭhāsaṅgha lineage with that of the rival Mūlasaṅgha, which had a *Pāṇḍavapurāṇa* of its own, composed by a recent author who also happened to be a *bhaṭṭāraka* in a neighbouring state, and thus a rival for the patronage of the Jaina laity" (Jaini 2000b: 372).

As touched on above, there is a long history of animosity between the Mūlasaṅgha and the Kāṣṭhasaṅgha, and history characterizes the Kāṣṭhasaṅgha as perpetually trying to play catch-up with the more dominant Mūlasaṅgha.[31] With this history in mind, it is certainly within the realm of possibility that Śrībhūṣaṇa's copying of Śubhacandra's text was part of a long history of animosity between the two lineages, and that an interest in either personal or sectarian gain on the part of Śrībhūṣaṇa is completely plausible. Indeed, the two need not be mutually exclusive and in fact would probably go hand-in-hand: personal renown is likely associated with support of and contributions towards the sustenance and growth of the lineage. The short answer, then, to whether or not there was something to gain - either personal or collectively for his Kāṣṭhasaṅgha lineage - for Śrībhūṣaṇa in copying Śubhacandra's text is yes, there certainly was.

What is left, though, is whether or not Śribhūṣaṇa thought that that advantage, either personal or sectarian, depended on deception to bear fruit. On the one hand, Śrībhūṣaṇa never mentions Śubhacandra in his text, unsurprising given the tense relationships between the authors' lineages. Jaini also points out that Śrībhūṣaṇa changes the first and last verses of every *sarga* and, of course, adds verses of his own. All of this Jaini interprets as Śrībhūṣaṇa attempting to hide his plagiarism: "This would appear to be the extent of Śrībhūṣaṇa's originality; he probably thought that by changing the first and last verses of each *sarga* and by adding here and there several verses of his own, he could cover up his act of plagiarism" (Jaini 2000b: 371). Questions that follow are: whom is Śrībhūṣaṇa trying to deceive by covering up this "plagiarism," and would changing two-or-so lines from each chapter, and adding verses throughout the text, accomplish that?

Pre-empting these questions, Jaini associates the technology of text production with sectarian competition over lay patronage; "having" a *Pāṇḍavapurāṇa* made a monastic community more attractive to the laity, thus encouraging them to patronize that *saṅgha* at the expense of others. Why this may be the case is left largely unexplained, but this trajectory of thinking assumes, I think, a pre-modern lay interest in text production itself: perhaps the laity liked best the lineage that produced the largest number of texts. This straightforward equating of text production and lay patronage,[32] though, not only sets up a view of the laity as being extraordinarily fickle, switching their patronage between lineages based on which one

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[31] Dundas 2002: 121 describes the Mūlsaṅgha as exerting "the dominant and most longstanding influence in the Digambara ascetic community." The Kāṣṭhasaṅgha, which traces its history back to a seventh-century ascetic named Kumārasena, had since at least the tenth century been a target of Mūlasaṅgha criticism.

[32] See Chojnacki and Leclère 2018 for an overview of historical trends in Jain patronage practices. In that volume, Flügel 2018 importantly speaks of the challenges to understanding "patronage" specifically as one of many possible forms of material support for religious individuals and communities in pre-modern South Asia.

disseminates the greatest number of texts, but it also ignores the fact that many *bhaṭṭāraka* institutions during the late-medieval and early-modern periods were linked with specific, regional caste communities and that the *bhaṭṭāraka*s, by virtue of their not being the classical Digambara peripatetic *muni*s, actually put down roots in local communities. It is also possible that Jaini is equating text production with the use of texts in monastic sermons. We know, for instance, that mendicants oftentimes used - and continue to use - *purāṇic* narratives as the basis for such sermons to the laity, but we can ask whether or not that would require each *saṅgha* to "have" its own version of each story. Part of the reason, after all, that Kṣemendra labelled the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata* as "belonging to the world" is because of their ubiquity in the South Asian religious landscape. Finally, Jaini never argues *why* or *to what extent* a lay community might value or demand originality as a quality of the texts produced by mendicants. In all, then, the relationship that Jaini sets up between monastic communities, the laity, and textual production is a murky one.

In place of making a direct link between text production and lay patronage, I propose that Śrībhūṣaṇa's project of textual copying was meant to circulate among and between members of different Digambara monastic *saṅgha*s themselves. Further, far from wanting to deceive people into thinking him to be an original poet, Śrībhūṣaṇa *wanted* members of the Mūlasaṅgha to know what he had done, that he was appropriating Śubhacandra's narrative into his own lineage and thus making the claim that his lineage alone was qualified to narrate the story of the Pāṇḍava brothers *in the first place*. In Śrībhūṣaṇa's mind, Śubhacandra's story might have been *factually* correct; but being a member of the heretical Mūlasaṅgha disqualified him from relating it correctly. Śrībhūṣaṇa's project is not to deceive; rather, it is a public declaration about the primacy of his own lineage vis-à-vis the rival Mūlasaṅgha. This analysis is bolstered by the fact that Śrībhūṣaṇa is his most original in the first chapter of the work, where he offers laudatory verses to earlier Kāṣṭhāsaṅgha leaders, a fact which Jaini himself points out:

> [T]he only occasion where [Śrībhūṣaṇa's] recast version differs significantly from the original text […] appears in the beginning portion of the first *sarga*. Here the omission of the name of the venerable Ācārya Kundakunda, the founder of the Mūlasaṅgha is conspicuous by its absence. Instead, we have a long list of lesser known celebrities of the Kāṣṭhāsaṅgha, so unceremoniously ignored by the authors of the Mūlasaṅgha, e.g. Rāmasena, Dharmasena, Vimalasena, Viśvasena, Viśalakīrti, and last but not least, Vidyābhūṣaṇa, the preceptor and immediate predecessor of bhaṭṭāraka Śrībhūṣaṇa himself (Jaini 2000b: 372f.).

5. Digambara Text Copying in Early Modern North India

We can look for additional examples of pre-modern Digambara text copying to test the theory that it was, in fact, a valid form of argumentation. As mentioned earlier, we see another such example in the fifteenth-century Sanskrit *Padmapurāṇa* of Brahma Jinadāsa.[33] His text - which tells a Digambara version of the story of the epic prince Rāma[34] - is largely indebted to Raviṣeṇa's seventh-century Sanskrit text of the same name.[35] We know this for two reasons. First, the two opening verses of each text - which establish a beautiful image of Indra worshipping at the feet of Lord Mahāvīra - are identical:

> I bow to Mahāvīra, the auspiciousness of the three worlds; who is the ultimate cause of accomplishment; who is himself accomplished; who has fulfilled the most auspicious goal of life; who teaches proper conduct, knowledge, and viewpoint; and whose lustrous feet, the rays of light emanating from which resemble radiant lotus filaments, are touched by the crown of Indra (Raviṣeṇa, *Padmapurāṇa,* I: 1-2 and Jinadāsa, *Padmapurāṇa*, I: 1–2).[36]

The verses are themselves poetically impressive, and Jinadāsa certainly lifted them from Raviṣeṇa's text in order to begin his own. This is an intentional signal to any qualified reader well versed in the tradition of Digambara *purāṇic* composition, that Jinadāsa is placing himself in a direct relationship with Raviṣeṇa, thus positioning himself as an inheritor of sorts of Raviṣeṇa's work. The second reason we know that Jinadāsa copied Raviṣeṇa is that he tells us that it is the case. In the sixty-third verse of his introduction, Jinadāsa begins a series of praise verses describing Raviṣeṇa, and explains that, having acquired the complete knowledge of all the previous *ācārya*s through whom the story of Rāma came down, Raviṣeṇa "made" or "created" (*cakre*, from the Sanskrit verbal root *kṛ*) that story. This creation that Jinadāsa discusses is a specific object, a physical text. All of the previous *ācārya*s that Jinadāsa described simply "tell" the story; only Raviṣeṇa "makes" it. And indeed, it is that object, that text, that

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[33] For more on Brahma Jinadāsa, see Rāṃvakā 1980, Kāsalīvala 1967: 22-39, and Clines 2018.

[34] "Padma" is a common name for Rāma in Jain literature.

[35] All references to Raviṣeṇa are from the three-volume edition edited by Pannālāl Jain 1958-59. Jinadāsa's works are all as yet unedited and unpublished. The manuscript of the *Padmapurāṇa* - also called *Rāmacaritra* - referenced here, *veṣṭan* number 4155, dated to 1855 CE, is housed in the Āmer Śāstra Bhaṇḍāra in Jaipur.

[36] *siddhaṃ sampūrṇa-bhavya-arthaṃ siddeḥ kāraṇamuttamaṃ | praśasta-darśana-jñāna-cāritra-pratipādinam || surendra-mukuṭa-āśliṣṭa-pāda-padma-aṃśu-keśaram | praṇamāmi mahāvīraṃ loka-tritaya-maṅgalam ||*

Jinadāsa eventually admits to working from, saying: "And having received [*prāpya*] the work consisting of his [Raviṣeṇa's] words, here, I make this treatise clear with an introduction so that people will know it" (Jinadāsa, *Padmapurāṇa* I: 64).

I argued previously[37] that this attempt at "clarifying" Raviṣeṇa's earlier *Padmapurāṇa* is the specific textual project that Jinadāsa sets out for himself. In the same article I also demonstrated what such clarity looks like to Jinadāsa at the textual level and the mechanisms by which Jinadāsa goes about achieving that clarity. The product of this act of clarification is a streamlined version of the *Padmapurāṇa* in which the vast majority of complex poetic descriptions and complex theological discussions have been excised.[38] Here, I want to be direct: copying large portions of Raviṣeṇa's earlier *Padmapurāṇa* was a necessary part of Jinadāsa's textual project. He could not have written his *Padmapurāṇa* without relying on Raviṣeṇa's. One example will suffice in demonstrating this. Below is a passage from the introductory chapter of Raviṣeṇa's *Padmapurāṇa*. The excerpt is a set of similes describing the excitement of telling the story of Rāma.

> As deer go along the path that has been completely trampled down by rutting elephants; as soldiers, facing a great army, enter into battle. As people happily behold riches illuminated by the sun; as a thread enters a gem that has been bored by a diamond. My mind, directed by devotion, is eager to question the story of the actions of Rāma, which has come down through the lineage of wise men (Raviṣeṇa, *Padmapurāṇa*, I: 19-21).[39]

We can now compare Jinadāsa's version of the same episode.

> As on earth deer go along happily on trails trampled down by noble elephants; or as soldiers, facing great warriors, enter into battle. As a man happily sees riches illuminated by the sun; or as a string enters into a gem bored by a diamond. My mind is impelled to tell the auspicious story of Rāma, which has come down

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[37] Clines 2019.

[38] Other scholars have demonstrated that this move towards writing less ornate versions of earlier texts is a common phenomenon in the realm of early modern religious literature in Sanskrit. See, for instance, Bangha 2014, Chojnacki 2018a and 2018b, and De Clercq 2014.

[39] *matta-vāraṇa-saṃkṣuṇṇe vrajanti hariṇāḥ pathi | praviśanti bhaṭā yuddham mahābhaṭa-puras-sarāḥ ||*
bhāsvatā bhāsitānarthān sukhenālokate janaḥ | sūcīmukha-vinirbhinnam maṇim viśati sūtrakam ||
budha-paṅkti-kramāyātam caritam rāma-gocaram | bhaktyā praṇoditā buddhiḥ praṣṭum mama samudyatā ||

through the lineage of knowledgeable people, with complete devotion and for the sake of creating happiness (Jinadāsa, *Padmapurāṇa*, I: 16-18).[40]

There are both parallels and differences between these two versions of the same set of similes. With regard to similarity, and speaking most broadly, the logic, order, and general meaning of the similes in Jinadāsa's version are drawn directly from Raviṣeṇa's. There is also, in some cases, a closer and more nuanced alignment of word choice. In the first half of the first verse, Jinadāsa directly imports *kṣuṇṇa*, meaning "beaten" or "trodden down," from Raviṣeṇa's text. In the second half of the verse, Jinadāsa incorporates *bhaṭa*, "soldier," twice, and *praviśanti*, the verb "to enter," into his work. There are also, though, clear differences between the verses. Jinadāsa's language is consistently simpler than Raviṣeṇa's, for instance. Take, for example, Jinadāsa's straightforward compound *gajendra-kṣuṇṇa-mārge*, meaning "on the path trampled by noble elephants." *Mārga* is a common word for "path;" *kṣuṇṇa*, as we have already discussed, means "trampled;" and *gajendra* (*gaja* + *indra*) is a familiar compound here meaning "noble elephants." Raviṣeṇa's corresponding verse is more complicated. It begins with an independent word in the locative case for "path," *panthi*, which is paired with an agreeing compound that literally translates to "completely trampled (*saṁkṣunna*) by rutting elephants (*matta-vāraṇa*)." Raviṣeṇa's addition of the affix *saṁ* to the verbal root *kṣud* adds a sense of completeness or totality to the action of the elephants' trampling. Adding to this is the fact that Raviṣeṇa's elephants are driven mad with aggression by being in rut (*matta*). This aspect is absent from Jinadāsa's verse. The fact that Jinadāsa simplifies his predecessor's language is unsurprising. Jinadāsa does this consistently with Raviṣeṇa's language; simplification at the level of language is one of the primary strategies Jinadāsa employs to achieve his stated textual project of "clarity." What should be clear from the above example, though, is that Jinadāsa needed to copy from Raviṣeṇa's earlier text in order to achieve his own literary goal, and he wanted people to know about his textual project in relation to his predecessor's text. For Jinadāsa, as with Śrībhūṣaṇa, text copying serves to highlight and announce textual difference and its social importance.

This is, of course, not to say that Jinadāsa's case is identical to Śrībhūṣaṇa's. Jinadāsa admits that he is working from Raviṣeṇa's text; he "cites" Raviṣeṇa in a way that - as already discussed - Śrībhūṣaṇa does not do with Śubhacandra. Historically, of course, there is also the fact that between Raviṣeṇa and Jinadāsa lies a span of some 700 years, while between Śrībhūṣaṇa and Śubhacandra there is only fifty years. Related to this is that there is no animosity

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[40] *gajendra-kṣuṇṇa-mārge aho mṛgāḥ yānti sukhena vā | subhaṭa-agra-sarāḥ nūnam praviśanti bhaṭāḥ raṇam ||*
sūrya-saṁdarśitānarthān janaḥ paśyati saukhyataḥ | hīra-utkīrṇe maṇau sūtram yathā viśati bhūtale ||
vida-śreṇi-kramāyātam rāmasya caritam śubham | tabhaktyā preritā kartum buddhirme sukha-hetave ||

between Raviṣeṇa and Jinadāsa, no sectarian rivalry like in the case of Śrībhūṣaṇa and Śubhacandra. The differences are recognizable and inescapable, but the very phenomenon of text copying is similar, and both serve to highlight a relationship between the two texts and their respective authors in order to make some further claim. The impetus behind each of our examples constitutes two sides of the same coin. On the one hand, we can understand Srībhūṣaṇa copying Śubhacandra's as his making a public claim about the supremacy of his own lineage over that of his rival. Śrībhūṣaṇa challenges Śubhacandra's very legitimacy to narrate the story of the Pāṇḍavas by using his own words against both him and his larger monastic lineage. On the other hand, Jinadāsa copies the words of Raviṣeṇa - a universally admired Digambara poet - in an attempt to portray himself as the proper inheritor of the Rāma story, which, of course, is traced back to the mouths of Gautama and Mahāvīra. In copying the texts of their predecessors, both Śubhacandra and Jinadāsa are thus making arguments about lineage and about authority to speak. As Jonathan Z. Smith (2000) points out, making sense of difference is the interesting part of any comparative project; it is through interrogating the differences between two similar exempla that important information can be gleaned. With this idea in mind, and setting aside our own ethical evaluations of Śrībhūṣaṇa's textual copying, new and dynamic questions emerge from a comparative reading of sectarian *Pāṇḍavapurāṇa*s. What more might an analysis Śrībhūṣaṇa's original verses reveal to a reader, both about Digambara sectarian relationships and the religious landscape of pre-modern South Asia, writ large? What topical trends might a reader identify in what the two authors discuss? What aspects of the narrative might they highlight or gloss over? How might language be used differently and what might that signify? While directly answering these questions is outside the scope of the current article, I am confident in arguing that in the context of pre-modern Jain textual composition and dissemination, recognizing that the majority of a text is copied highlights the importance of even limited areas of textual difference. What I have hoped to demonstrate here is that we can access these questions only if we set aside from our interpretive toolbox our modern, western concept of plagiarism, so replete with connotations of ethical failure, and take seriously the roll of textual copying as a form of argumentation.

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